

INSPECTION REPORT

CEDAR PARK SCHOOL

High Wycombe

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 131907

Headteacher: Mr Tony Fermor

Reporting inspector: Vreta Bagilhole
17517

Dates of inspection: 18-21 February 2002

Inspection number: 242893

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Cedar Avenue Hazlemere High Wycombe Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	HP15 7EF
Telephone number:	01494 711918
Fax number:	01494 717125
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Anne Bell
Date of previous inspection:	n/a

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

17517	Ms Vreta Bagilhole	Registered inspector	English information and communication technology (ICT) music foundation stage	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught?
09624	Mr Graeme Norval	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
19897	Mr Arthur Evans	Team inspector	science history geography physical education special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20415	Mr James McHugh	Team inspector	mathematics art and design design and technology religious education English as an additional language equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

Bedford Primary Inspections
2 Grange Lane
Cople
Bedford
MK44 3TT

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cedar Park School is a new primary school that opened in September 1999. It takes pupils from the immediate locality of Hazlemere near High Wycombe and, also, about one third of pupils come from out of the area. The school is about the same size as the average primary school, nationally, and the number on roll is 208. There are seven classes and, in addition, there is a nursery for 14 children who attend a morning session each day. The average class size is 30. One per cent of pupils is entitled to free school meals, which is well below the average. The vast majority of pupils are from a white UK heritage, but there are eight pupils who have arrived from Belgium, Germany and Japan and have English as an additional language. The pupils live in privately owned and local authority housing in the area. Overall, the pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are above average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (eleven per cent) is below the national average. There are two pupils with statements of special educational need which is also below average. Children are admitted to the nursery in the term following their fourth birthday and enter the reception in the year in which they are five. The attainment of children on entry to the reception class is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective and successful school. Leadership and management are excellent. The teaching is very good and the children are enthusiastic learners. Pupils achieve very well especially in English, mathematics and science. The school works very well to include everyone and provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are high in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of leadership and management is excellent
- Teaching is very good.
- The parents' involvement in the school is excellent.
- The quality and range of the curriculum is very good.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is very good.

What could be improved

- There are no major areas of the school's provision which require special attention to effect improvement.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This is a new school, which has been open for two years and has not been inspected before. The school has built up many strengths over these two years. There is a strong commitment to maintaining successful practice and it is in a very good position to raise standards further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	n/a	B	A	A
mathematics	n/a	A	B	C
science	n/a	A	A	B

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

In the national tests in 2001, pupils' results in Year 6 were well above the national average in English and science. Standards in English were also well above those found in similar schools and those in science were above average. In mathematics, standards were above average nationally, but were in line with the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that standards in mathematics have risen this year. More pupils are attaining higher levels because of the effective action taken by the school on improving the attainment of the more able pupils. Pupils in Year 2 attained high standards in English and mathematics. The school's performance in reading in Year 2 was in the highest 5 per cent nationally and also when compared to similar schools. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well above average in writing and mathematics. The school's introduction of the national initiatives for literacy and numeracy has been very well focused and pupils do very well. It is too early to judge trends but pupils have been achieving well for the last two years. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, those who are more able, and those with English as an additional language make very good progress. The school sets challenging targets and is on course to meet them.

Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are typical for those expected nationally and are improving at a good rate with the opening of the new computer suite. Standards are high in art and design and design and technology. Standards throughout the school are above those usually found in religious education and music, history and geography. Standards in physical education are above those normally found in Years 3-6. Standards are typical of those found nationally in physical education in Years 1 and 2. The children make good progress in the nursery and reception classes. By the end of the reception year, the children exceed the expected standards in all areas of learning. However, the children's progress in the nursery could be better if there were more adult support.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good: Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and are proud of their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good: The behaviour of most pupils is very good but there is a very small minority of boys who do present challenging behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: Pupils show initiative and take on responsibility very well. Year 6 monitors discuss issues very responsibly and thoughtfully, showing very good awareness of the needs of younger pupils.
Attendance	Good: Attendance exceeds the national average. These high rates of attendance ensure that all pupils are able to make the most of the very good quality of education available to them.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Very good	Very good

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

Teaching is very good and pupils learn very well. It is equally effective for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, those who are more able and those with English as an additional language. Excellent teaching was observed in English, geography and design and technology. There is consistently very good teaching in English and mathematics and the skills of literacy and numeracy are very well taught. In other subjects teaching is consistently good with many very good lessons particularly in music, design and technology, art and design and physical education. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, attention and standards. Very thorough planning and preparation of lessons and the marking of pupils' work are major strengths. Pupils put a great deal of intellectual, physical and creative effort into their work. They show interest and concentrate very well. In the nursery and reception classes, teaching and learning are good in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. They are very good in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development and teachers plan very motivating and exciting opportunities for the children. However, with more adult support in the nursery the rate of children's learning could be increased.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum with a very wide range of worthwhile learning opportunities. This includes French and instrumental music tuition. There is a very good programme for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE).
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very Good: The teachers identify those pupils who need extra support as early as possible. Individual education plans are of very good quality, with clear targets for improvement. There is very good provision for gifted and talented pupils to progress further in English and mathematics.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good: The needs of pupils with English as an additional language are quickly identified on their admission to the school. An individual education plan is drawn up if they have communication difficulties.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very Good. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and the provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils are well prepared for life in a culturally diverse society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good: Pupils are cared for within a very well organised school community where there are high expectations and strong staff support. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and for monitoring their academic progress are very good.

The school has an excellent partnership with parents. A large number of parents help out in the school on a regular basis. The quality of information the school provides to parents is excellent.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent: The headteacher, senior management team and the governing body share a very clear vision for the future of the school, and a vigorous determination to ensure that this vision becomes a reality. The headteacher has achieved a successful amalgamation of the first and middle schools, blending together two philosophies to enable a smooth transition during a time of great change.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Excellent: The governors are knowledgeable and play a significant role in supporting the work of the staff, making an excellent contribution to the management of the school. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent: Rigorous evaluation of the standards achieved and the quality of education provided takes place so that the school is constantly challenging itself to improve even further.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent: Finances are being finely targeted at the identified priorities for the school. The principles of best value are applied well. Staffing and learning resources are good and accommodation is very good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their child likes school and is making good progress • The school is well led and managed and teaching is good. • The school is helping their child become mature and responsible. • They feel very comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspection evidence agrees with the very positive views of the parents. Although some parents feel that there are insufficient activities outside lessons, inspection evidence indicates that provision for extra-curricular activities has improved lately and is now good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the 2001 national tests, Year 2 pupils attained high standards in English and mathematics. The school's performance in reading in Year 2 was in the highest 5 per cent nationally and also when compared to similar schools. In comparison with similar schools standards were well above average in writing and mathematics. In the teachers' assessments of seven year-olds in science the performance was above the national average. Pupils in Year 6 attained high standards in English and science and above average standards in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, standards were well above average in English, above average in science and average in mathematics. There is no previous inspection report with which to compare standards. The parents are highly satisfied with the standards in the school and this is justified by inspection evidence. Pupils are doing very well. Inspection evidence shows that standards in mathematics have risen this year. More pupils are attaining higher levels because of the effective action taken by the school on improving the attainment of the more able pupils. The school has carefully analysed previous test results and has produced effective guidelines for improved teaching and learning opportunities throughout the school.

2. Girls are doing slightly better than boys. This is most noticeable in English. The school is monitoring this carefully and has recently purchased books of special interest to boys. The school's introduction of the national initiatives for literacy and numeracy has been very well focused and pupils do very well. These strengths are perceived and appreciated by parents. The school sets and exceeds challenging targets in English and mathematics. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, those who are more able, and those with English as an additional language make very good progress. This is because of the very good teaching and assessment and the rigorous attention to the planning of work.

3. Attainment on admission to the nursery is above expected levels. The children make good progress in the nursery and reception and, by the end of the reception year, they exceed the early learning goals in all of the areas of learning. There are particular strengths in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development because of the very exciting opportunities planned for the children. The children experience a very good range of activities based on first-hand experiences that encourage exploration, observation, problem solving and have plenty of opportunities that offer good physical challenges. They work with a range of materials and experience different methods. However, the children's progress in the nursery could be better if there were more adult support and there is an imbalance between the amount of adult-initiated activities and those the children choose for themselves.

4. In English, the structure of the literacy hour is very well focused. Pupils show a great interest in a variety of books both fiction and non-fiction and read very well and with expression. Pupils listen closely to staff and other pupils and express ideas confidently. Good teaching has enabled pupils to become independent and confident writers using a comprehensive range of writing styles. A particular strength in writing is the creative and imaginative use of language and pupils explore ideas and experiment with words very well. Pupils use their literacy skills well in all other subjects of the curriculum. They apply their writing skills well in other curriculum subjects such as history and science and work is presented very well. Work is very well marked by teachers, who use this opportunity to raise the levels of attainment of individual pupils even further by providing effective guidance.

5. In mathematics, teachers apply the National Numeracy Strategy very well in all classrooms. As a result, the pupils are confident and well motivated. Pupils have a good range of calculation strategies and make good use of these to solve problems. Pupils are particularly strong in using number facts and in responding quickly and accurately to mental arithmetic questions. Data handling is well developed. Pupils use their mathematics skills well in subjects such as science and geography.

6. Pupils achieve well in science by the end of Year 2 and do very well by the end of Year 6. Teachers provide them with good opportunities for independent research. Scientific procedures are clearly evident and build progressively through the school. The pupils make good progress in applying their scientific knowledge and understanding. Presentation of work is usually very good.

7. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are typical for those expected nationally and are improving at a good rate. The school has just opened a new suite that will give the pupils the opportunity to use the Internet for the first time and to share information via email. Pupils achieve well when using graphics software and when presenting work in English. By the end of Year 2, pupils are confident users of ICT. They know most of the functions of the main keys on the keyboard and select the desired key or tool to do the job they want to do. By the end of Year 6, pupils present information when using the word processor, database or spreadsheet to add, amend and improve that information. There are some good examples of ICT being used to support learning in English, science and art and design.

8. Standards are high in art and design and design and technology and pupils make very good progress. In art and design the pupils enjoy a wide range of experiences and use a variety of media. By the end of Year 6, pupils develop their creativity and imagination through more complex activities. In design and technology pupils work on their own and as part of a team on a range of designing and making activities. Pupils in Year 6 can work from a detailed construction plan, checking the quality of their work at every stage and evaluating whether it matches the required criteria.

9. There are strengths in religious education and music and standards are above those usually found at the end of Years 2 and 6. In religious education, pupils make good progress and show a better than average grasp of religious ideas and knowledge. In music, the quality of singing throughout the school is very good and pupils make good progress in playing instruments and performing to an audience. They become actively involved in creating music. There are also strengths in physical education. Standards are above those normally found in Years 3-6 and pupils show good levels of fitness and stamina and they sustain energetic activity well. Evaluation of the work of others is good. Pupils enjoy being active and using their creativity and imagination in physical activity. Standards in physical education are typical for those expected in Years 1 and 2. Pupils make good progress in history and geography and standards are above those expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' good attitudes to work and good behaviour support their learning. They are keen to come to school and take part in the many activities available. These include a French club, cooking organised by parents, extra tuition for talented pupils, music and sports activities. Ninety eight per cent of parents answering the questionnaire say that their children like school. Discussions with pupils during the inspection confirm this opinion. Pupils of all ages are very courteous to visitors, staff and each other. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect between adults and pupils. They behave well in lessons, are polite and move around the school in an orderly manner. Pupils are very well behaved, quiet and respectful when coming into assembly. Pupils are confident that there is very little bullying and that any incidents are dealt with quickly. They show consideration and care for others' beliefs and an awareness and value of other cultures.

11. The attitudes of pupils are positive in all lessons and contribute to their good progress. Pupils are very keen to contribute their ideas, enjoy the challenging tasks set for them and concentrate hard on their work. They give and seek help from each other when necessary. Pupils in Year 1 have a great enthusiasm for maths and all agree 'we love numbers'. In Year 4 pupils show very good attitudes when learning how to make 'pop-up' books in design and technology. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, play their full part in the lesson.

12. Ninety five per cent of parents responding to the questionnaire and parents at the meeting are generally very satisfied with the pupils' attitudes and behaviour. However, a number of parents are concerned about behaviour in Year 2. Evidence from inspection supports both opinions. The interruptive and sometimes rude behaviour of a number of boys in Year 2 regularly disrupts learning for other pupils. There are a few pupils in Year 2 who present challenging behaviour. The school has reacted well to this and procedures are in place to improve this, such as 'Golden moments will be taken away for those who don't listen'. This behaviour mainly takes place during whole class discussions or activities but at other times these pupils do apply themselves well to their work and behave appropriately.

13. In the foundation stage, the children make good progress in their attitudes to learning and their personal, social and emotional development. Children in the nursery and reception are fully absorbed in the stories being read by the teachers and make comments on the pictures they see. They very much enjoy taking a full part in the good range of activities available. They willingly help to tidy up and are very well behaved when lining up to go to the hall for physical activity. In reception the children's attitudes were excellent in the hall when they take part in action songs with the boys standing up when it is their turn and then the girls. They all join in showing a complete involvement and total enthusiasm.

14. Personal development and relationships are very good. As they move up the school, the pupils develop in confidence and maturity so that, by the time they reach their final year, they have become self-assured and enthusiastic ambassadors for their school. Pupils show initiative and take on responsibility very well. They are very happy to carry out the duties required of them, such as closing the curtains and operating the projector in assemblies. Three pupils in Year 6 organised a book fair, raising more than £100 for a new children's hospice. Pupils are proud of their achievements and value the house points and personal recognition available. The school is considering the merits of starting a school council shortly.

15. When disputes arise, there are certain 'key words' which pupils use if a situation is getting out of control. Both parties then debate the issue, discussing their feelings about each other's actions. There are monitors in all year groups. Year 6 monitors have duties that cover the entire school, such as controlling corridor and stair discipline. They also act as register monitors for every class.

16. As part of pupils' welfare the school has started a system called 'Friendship Stop' in the playground at lunchtime. Year 6 monitors for this duty are invited to complete an application form and undergo a short interview. They demonstrate significant pride in their responsibility. In other year groups, monitors have duties specifically for their own class, for example, preparing light equipment for physical education and tidying chairs at the end of the day. Year 5 monitors prepare for Year 6 duties by taking over when Year 6 take their annual residential visit.

17. Attendance and punctuality for the majority of pupils are good and contribute to the pupils' very good progress. These also support the good progress children under five and pupils make. Attendance in the last full academic year exceeded the national average. These high rates of attendance ensure that all pupils are able to make the most of the very good quality of education

available to them. There is very little evidence of unauthorised absence. In this year to-date, attendance started at the same good level. In this term a large minority of pupils have been absent for short periods due to a national outbreak of gastric influenza. Pupils are rarely late by a significant amount. However, there are a very small number, recently admitted to school, whose parents have not yet recognised the importance of regular prompt attendance.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is very good. Over half of the lessons are very good or better. Excellent teaching was observed in English and geography in Year 1 and in design and technology in Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and those identified as being the highest attaining in each year group, learn very well and make equally good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The main strengths in learning are the amount of intellectual, physical and creative effort that the pupils make in lessons. Pupils are mainly well behaved and motivated and involved in their lessons. The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills are very effective. Teachers' planning and the marking of pupils' work is very good and a key strength in all subjects. The teachers set regular homework in English and mathematics and occasionally in other subjects. The amount increases as the pupils move up towards Year 6, in preparation for secondary schooling.

19. In the foundation stage teaching and learning are good in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Teaching is very good in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. Teachers plan rich opportunities for the children to develop their skills in all areas of learning. Very exciting activities are planned in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development that inspire the children to take part and make very good progress. The children enjoy the activities, which contribute to their growing levels of confidence. However, with more adult support in the nursery the rate of children's learning could be increased.

20. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well. Both are strengths of the school. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and standards. One of the main strengths in literacy is the very good attention paid to the structure of the literacy hour. Teachers give high priority to reading texts with greater accuracy and understanding and to using creativity and imagination in writing. Marking is particularly good and most pieces of work are rewarded with well thought out comments by the teachers which identify targets for the pupils to work towards and give pupils positive feedback. Very good and excellent lessons are characterised by a brisk pace and very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and standards. Pupils work willingly and productively. They show great care in the layout of text on the word processor and talk enthusiastically about what they do.

21. Teachers have a very good knowledge of mathematics, the programmes of study and the National Numeracy Strategy, and these strengths have had a major impact on standards. Lessons are very well planned, well paced and effective and introductions are clear. The very good teaching is often inspirational and the enthusiasm of the teachers is infectious. Pupils concentrate very well, work hard and produce a good quantity of work in each lesson. The teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and exercise discipline in a friendly and firm way. Detailed analysis of pupils' responses in assessments enables teachers to identify areas where pupils can improve.

22. In science, the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good throughout the school. Teachers make the pupils clear about what they will learn and produce interesting work and assignments for pupils. Good learning comes about because teachers have a good subject knowledge

and ensure a good emphasis on key processes and terminology. A wide range of resources to support practical work is used effectively.

23. No teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2 in ICT, but teaching and learning are good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are confident in their use of computers. Basic skills are taught well and the pupils make good progress in their learning. There are some good assessment procedures in place, which have been well used to identify gaps in the pupils' knowledge and used to inform future planning. The new computer suite is now available and teachers have very clear plans on how they will use this to improve the quality and breadth of pupils' learning. Training for teachers has been given a good focus and will continue.

24. Teaching in music and design and technology is very good. In music, pupils undertake work which makes increasing demands on their skills, knowledge and understanding and they practise and refine these producing good standards. This is the direct result of the very good teaching in the subjects. In design and technology, staff have excellent subject knowledge and give good support to the development of practical skills, with lots of positive comments and encouragement, so that pupils have the confidence to try things out for themselves. No teaching was observed in art and design in Years 2-6 but from the good amount of evidence available it is clear that teaching is at least good and probably better. It is very good in Year 1. The teacher uses frequent stimulating questions to promote discussion, establishing a very good rapport with pupils that inspired them to do their best. In physical education teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3-6. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and make tasks progressively more difficult.

25. Teaching and learning in religious education, history and geography are good. The objectives of the lesson are clearly established and effectively communicated which results in good learning. Teachers use resources well. They set homework regularly. It is sufficient and of a good standard, further extending the taught curriculum at home. Teaching support assistants are well deployed. They know what they are expected to do with these pupils and enable them to make good progress.

26. All teachers and members of support staff provide a very good level of support for pupils with special educational needs. This makes a positive contribution to the very good rate of progress that pupils make in their learning. The progress of pupils on the register is very carefully tracked and is formally reviewed each term. Pupils work towards their targets within the classroom and in smaller withdrawal groups depending on the specific needs of individuals. Pupils are able to achieve their targets and this helps raise their self-esteem. Teachers are very well supported in their work by the co-ordinator for special educational needs. Parents are fully involved in this process and they are informed of new targets as they are set. Teaching is also very good for gifted and talented pupils in English and mathematics. There is detailed guidance for teachers which lists expectations and strategies for these pupils. In lessons in English, these pupils progress well in their learning. They maturely discuss their ideas with the teacher and plan their own work well, involving ideas to extend their skills in writing and presentation.

27. Pupils with English as an additional language fully participate in all classroom activities. Teachers sensitively encourage them to contribute when there are opportunities for speaking, with appropriate support, so that they quickly feel involved in what is going on. Their developing listening skills are also promoted through careful questioning that assesses their degree of understanding. Classroom assistants also support these pupils effectively. Dual language resources have been purchased and are used well. Teachers use high-quality, culturally relevant visual aids and interactive displays that are informative for all pupils with English as an additional language. They value the beliefs and artefacts of the cultures of these pupils. For example, a copy of the Koran and a prayer

mat are carefully displayed during a religious education lesson, and their importance to Muslims is discussed.

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

28. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum with a very wide range of worthwhile learning opportunities, which afford a very good preparation for the next stage of the pupils' education. Parents appreciate what the school has to offer. There is some teaching of French for pupils in Year 6. About 25 pupils currently take advantage of opportunities for instrumental music tuition. All the pupils have the opportunity to learn to swim in the school's outdoor heated pool between April and October. Total weekly teaching time exceeds national recommendations. There is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics. The school is implementing the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy very well. The school makes good provision for equal opportunities and ensures that all pupils are included.

29. There are clear policies and schemes of work for all subjects and the school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Implementation of the full range of programmes of study in information and communication technology (ICT) will be possible when the new suite is fully operational. Curricular planning is very detailed and thorough. It is based on guidance provided by the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and by national and some commercial schemes of work. The teachers plan very carefully for the work which the pupils will do each term and each week and they are mindful of the wide range of academic ability in each class. The school meets its obligations to provide a daily act of collective worship. Religious education conforms with the requirements of the new locally agreed syllabus.

30. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The Headteacher, who acts as the co-ordinator, is raising the teachers' awareness of the requirements of the recently revised Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. The teachers identify those pupils who need extra support as early as possible. Individual education plans are drawn up for them by the class teachers, in consultation with the co-ordinator. These plans are of very good quality, with clear targets for improvement. The school works closely with relevant outside agencies. There is very good provision for gifted and talented pupils to progress further in English and mathematics. Class teachers teach groups of the most able pupils for separate lessons while the headteacher teaches their class.

31. The school takes good account of the language and learning needs of pupils with English as an additional language and they make good progress. The needs of pupils with English as an additional language are quickly identified on their admission to the school. The class teacher writes an individual education plan for each pupil with communication difficulties. The quality of the plans is high and the teachers ensure that the child's needs are clearly identified. Provision is fully integrated within the day-to-day curriculum and is not simply an addition to it. The progress of pupils towards the attainment of the objectives on their plans is monitored through the school's tracking and record-keeping systems that are applied to all pupils. The school made arrangements for three 6th form students studying the appropriate foreign language to visit on one afternoon per week to support pupils in their own language.

32. Although some parents feel that there are insufficient activities outside lessons, inspection evidence indicates that provision for extra-curricular activities has improved lately and is now good. Younger pupils can take part in playground games and story sacks. Older pupils can join clubs for recorders, chess, French, netball and football. Matches are played against local schools. The

curriculum is enriched further by a wide range of visitors to the school and by visits to places such as Reading, St Albans, Windsor and Legoland. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 participate in residential visits.

33. There are very good links with partner schools. Headteachers meet regularly to discuss educational issues of common interest. They have set up curriculum support groups, musical evenings, drugs awareness evenings and Year 6 games afternoons and they share resources as necessary. The pupils sometimes join with pupils from a neighbouring school to listen to a visiting speaker. The foundation stage staff meet regularly with colleagues from other schools and nurseries. Children from these nurseries are invited to the school's Christmas Nativity. Secondary students sometimes come to the school for work experience. Pupils in Year 6 receive visits from secondary school staff. They attend an induction day at their intended secondary school and watch its Christmas production.

34. The school makes very good use of the community to enhance the pupils' academic and personal development. Coaches from Wycombe Wanderers Football Club have taken lessons in each class and lead after-school sessions. There are coaching sessions in the summer, led by members of Hazlemere Tennis Club. Some Year 6 pupils, who do not participate in the annual residential visit, attend Handycross and Amersham leisure centres. During the inspection, some Year 6 pupils participated in the annual Wycombe Mini Enterprise Competition. Visitors from the community have included police, fire brigade, nurse and dentist. Some Hazlemere Church of England services are held in the school on Sunday mornings. Year 6 pupils sing Christmas carols for senior citizens at Cedar Barn. Local businesses also make a good contribution to the school such as sponsoring the prospectus.

35. Provision for the pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is very good. Issues, such as good manners, bullying, peer pressure, friendship and rules, are discussed in good quality PSHCE sessions, in religious education lessons and in assemblies. In a very good PSHCE session observed in Year 3, the pupils reflected on how their actions can affect the feelings of other people. In Year 6, the pupils talked about learning to learn and how they could apply these skills as they grew older. Aided by local police and the drug action team, the teachers make the pupils aware of the dangers of drug misuse. The pupils have participated in the Healthy Hearts programme and, in science, they learn about the importance of a balanced diet, exercise and personal hygiene in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. There is a very good programme of formal sex education for pupils in Year 6, including a mother and daughter's evening, led by the Year 6 teacher and the school nurse.

36. Overall, the school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for their spiritual development is good. Most parents appreciate the values and attitudes which the school seeks to promote. The pupils participate in celebrations of the Christian calendar and they have been visited by Wycombe Youth for Christ. The teachers encourage the pupils to reflect on ideas, such as the significance of poppy day in Year 2 history. Year 6 pupils have written some effective poems about their favourite places. The teachers celebrate achievement in and out of school, both in lessons and in a weekly rewards assembly. Assemblies make a good contribution to spiritual development on themes such as fairness, honesty, taking the blame and everyone is good at something. The teachers instil a sense of awe and wonder into learning. In a Year 6 science lesson, the pupils were somewhat awestruck by the revelation of germs under nails.

37. Provision for the pupils' moral development is very good. There are clear behaviour and anti-bullying policies and the school rejects racist attitudes, language and behaviour. The pupils are made aware of the difference between right and wrong and of the need for politeness. Class charters and behaviour codes are displayed in some rooms and good effort and behaviour are rewarded by team points, stickers, badges and letters sent home. Peer mediation strategies have been introduced in an effort to eliminate playground squabbles. Some pupils on the register for special educational needs

have appropriate targets for improving behaviour and further help is sought from the local behaviour unit team.

38. There is very good provision for the pupils' social development. Almost all parents feel that the school helps their children to mature and to become responsible. Monitors carry out tasks in all classrooms and Year 6 pupils have additional responsibilities, including help in assemblies, the library, sports stores and with younger pupils. Outside, older pupils act as 'friendship stop' monitors, ensuring that no pupils are left on their own. Pupils in Year 6 learn road safety skills on a cycling awareness course and they learn about safety and drugs during a visit to Hazard Alley. They have participated in a visiting citizenship workshop. The pupils are made aware of environmental issues and they took part in the 2000 schools' litter programme. The pupils develop social skills by participating in class assemblies, in school productions and in extra-curricular activities. Year 5 and 6 pupils develop skills during residential visits to Woodrow High House and the River Dart Country Park in Devon respectively. The pupils think of people less fortunate than themselves by supporting charities, such as the Shooting Star Trust, Marie Curie and the Royal British Legion, often using their own initiative to raise funds. In lessons, such as science and physical education, the teachers encourage the pupils to develop collaborative skills of working whenever necessary.

39. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. In history, the pupils learn about the legacy of the Romans, Tudors and Victorians. They have participated in Tudor and Victorian days and they have been visited by theatre groups to enhance learning. During an annual Book Week, the pupils have listened to a visiting author and some pupils have participated in the Wycombe Swan art competition. Pupils are well prepared for life in a culturally diverse society. An effective display on the theme of 'The name, creed and colour don't matter' reinforces this. Some pupils have visited Neasden's Hindu temple and they have had a visit from a Greek restaurant owner. Younger pupils recently celebrated the Chinese New Year. Alternative swimming arrangements are agreed with the parents of Muslim girls and there are special arrangements for Muslim pupils at lunchtime during Ramadan. In religious education, the pupils learn about aspects of Sikh and Islamic faith and culture and in geography, they learn about aspects of life in India and Ghana.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The educational and personal support and guidance for pupils are very good. The school has a very positive caring ethos that is much appreciated by parents. Pupils are well known within their year groups and generally well known across the school. They are cared for within a very well organised school community where there are high expectations and strong staff support. Pupils feel secure and appreciate the help they receive from staff. No comparisons with previous inspections can be made.

41. The school has good procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety. The procedures adopted are based on the detailed local authority guidelines. Pupils feel safe at school and know that they can approach any member of staff for help and will receive it. There are two fully trained first aiders and all teaching staff receive training in emergency procedures. The welfare assistant has her own office that also provides an area where sick or injured pupils wait for collection in privacy. Swimming does not take place in the school's own pool unless trained staff are present.

42. Child protection procedures are good. The deputy headteacher is the designated person for child protection. The policy is comprehensive and reviewed regularly. The school is aware of the need to ensure that every member of teaching, administration and support staff receive regular training in child protection procedures. This evidence supports parents' opinion that their children are secure and cared for.

43. There are good procedures to promote good behaviour in most classes. The policy contains high expectations and guidance on the use of sanctions. Overall, good behaviour supports pupils' learning. Special procedures are in place to address the concern over the behaviour of a small group of boys. They are rigidly in force in the classroom and being evaluated and improved by the class teacher and leadership on a regular basis.

44. Playground behaviour is boisterous but carefully monitored by staff at play and lunch times. Midday supervisors have good printed guidelines covering safety and pupil control. The headteacher often plays with pupils at lunchtime. Parents commented on this at the parents' meeting as an example of the support from all staff and of the headteacher in particular. There is an adequate supply of small games equipment. Parents and their children are satisfied that should bullying ever occur it would be quickly and effectively controlled. Evidence from the inspection supports them. There is no evidence of sexism or racism.

45. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress and using the information to guide future planning are very good. The procedures are particularly effective in English, mathematics and science. There are recent good developments in recording progress in religious education and ICT. Assessment and recording are very good in the foundation stage. The local authority baseline procedures are used to assess children's academic and personal development when they enter the nursery. Thereafter, pupils develop a portfolio of work and personal achievement as they progress through school. Teachers maintain up to date and very detailed records. These are used very well to plan future lessons. For example, pupils are re-grouped each half term following assessment tests to ensure the work matches their level of achievement. Assessment records are monitored to ensure that they represent a consistent standard across the school. Pupils contribute to the contents of their own portfolio. Each term they choose a piece of 'best work' with the class teacher for inclusion in the portfolio. They also choose a 'Starburst' item, either an achievement at school or elsewhere. There is a 'portfolio' afternoon each year in the summer term. Parents review the portfolio with their children and both write comments in it. Class teachers are available to discuss any concerns and answer questions.

46. Procedures to monitor and improve attendance are good. Registration procedures meet statutory requirements. Parents know the importance of good attendance and most keep the school informed of the reason for absence. They are encouraged to contact school on the first day of absence. If they do not, the school writes to them after three days requiring a response. The education welfare service intervenes when necessary. A number of families take holidays in term time. They are required to submit a written request beforehand.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The great majority of parents believe this school has an excellent relationship with parents. Inspection evidence justifies this opinion. Parents are included in consultation about major events. Their wishes are included in the 'school mission' statement. A significant minority of parents answering the questionnaire believes that the school lacks adequate extra-curricular activities. Inspection evidence does not support this opinion and considers the provision good. Since the questionnaire was published, a number of new clubs has started. These include playground games and story clubs.

48. A large number of parents help in school on a regular basis. For example, a parent helps with cooking every Tuesday afternoon. Three parents provide valuable support for music and information and communication technology. Fathers help in the reception class with the computers and general support. Many other parents support the school on visits and at school events. A large number of

parents and grandparents attended the weekly rewards assembly in the week of inspection. The parent governors view parental links as one of their most important duties. They make a point of being available at the school gate whenever possible.

49. There is an excellent, active and very successful parent teacher association. Last year they raised £8000. They work very hard to raise substantial amounts of money. For example, they recently raised money in a very short period to equip each classroom with new books to a value of £500. They also funded a new skin for the swimming pool. Their work and the work of parent helpers are invaluable and highly appreciated by the school.

50. The information provided to parents is excellent. It encourages pupils to develop academic and personal skills. It also encourages parents to help at home. There are regular and specific newsletters and a parent notice board inside the main door. All staff are approachable and act promptly if concerns are brought to their notice. Many parents writing notes on the back of the questionnaire comment favourably on this matter. In particular the headteacher is praised for his approachability and response. For example he set up a new routine immediately following a complaint about cleanliness in the reception class toilets. There is copious information available about pupils' progress. Annual reports are very detailed and identify pupils' strengths and areas for improvement. They clearly demonstrate very good knowledge of the pupils as individuals. Inspection evidence confirms parents' high opinions of these aspects of the links established by the school.

51. There is an excellent range of booklets designed to help new parents and to inform existing parents. These include a 'welcome letter', homework guidelines and handwriting information. A parents' handbook is produced each year. The handbook and detailed prospectus are published with help from sponsors. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents comply with statutory requirements. They also contain additional useful information.

52. There are two formal meetings with class teachers each year and a portfolio afternoon when parents can view the portfolio that each pupil builds up as they progress through school. This contains samples of 'best work' selected by the pupil and teacher and a 'Starburst' sheet. On this sheet the pupils have the opportunity to write down their views on their own progress during the last year and to record personal achievements in clubs and events both in and out of school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The headteacher provides excellent professional leadership. The headteacher, senior management team and the governing body share a very clear vision for the future of the school, and a vigorous determination to ensure that this vision becomes a reality. They are completely committed to maintaining the high standards already achieved in many aspects of school life, but they are also aware of areas requiring further development and are determined to raise standards even further. They have worked closely to determine the strategic direction of the school, with priorities established on the basis of clear analysis of pupil performance data from a range of sources, and the areas for improvement are incorporated into a comprehensive and carefully budgeted school improvement plan. A budgetary surplus, accumulated over the three difficult financial years when the amalgamated schools were operating on two sites, has been earmarked for projects intended to raise standards further and improve the school environment. The action taken by the school and the strategic use of its resources to meet its targets are excellent.

54. The management of the school is excellent. The headteacher has achieved a successful amalgamation of the first and middle schools, blending together two philosophies to enable a smooth

transition during a time of great change. He has established a powerful 'whole team' ethos of continuous improvement that promotes and sustains high standards in many aspects of school life. The qualities of his leadership and management have already won the confidence of governors, parents and staff. Parents perceive the staff, including non-teaching staff, as professional, competent, enthusiastic and caring. The headteacher has initiated an effective dialogue with parents, and channels of communication are good. They have contributed ideas for the future development of the school through survey questionnaires and meetings, and the headteacher has responded to their views. The school is very popular and well respected by parents and pupils.

55. The governors are knowledgeable and play a significant role in supporting the work of the staff, making an excellent contribution to the management of the school. They have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. An effective sub-committee structure is in place, and is having an increasing influence on the management of the school and its resources. There is an excellent relationship between staff and governors. The governors believe that standards are high because of the ethos and the quality of the school's human resources: its teachers and support staff. The governing body complies with its statutory requirements regarding reporting to parents and all other requirements.

56. The headteacher is determined to ensure that all those who work in the school are provided with appropriate training and support to enable them to develop professionally, and the school has achieved Investors in People status. Implementing a programme of continuing professional development is a high priority, particularly in relation to ICT, to maintain and continue to improve standards in all areas. There is a good number of suitably qualified and experienced staff to teach the curriculum. Support staff are effectively utilised and are valued by teaching staff. However, more support staff are needed in the nursery.

57. Those with management responsibility provide very good quality leadership. The roles of the senior management team are well established, with clear areas of responsibility identified for each member. They feel very much valued by both the headteacher and other colleagues. The headteacher is accomplished at delegating aspects of the management role, clearly identifying staff strengths and extending their experiences and responsibilities. The staff perceive him as being very supportive of their efforts and relationships are very positive. An annual budget is delegated to subject leaders, with additional needs-related elements for aspects relating to the school improvement plan. Subject leaders are receiving non-contact time, using a rota system, to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their subject and to pass on their expertise. Overall, the standards of monitoring and evaluation of teaching are excellent. Systems are well established in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, with procedures at earlier stages of development in some foundation subjects that have been given a lower priority within the school improvement plan.

58. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and the gifted and talented are well managed and benefits from the careful identification of pupils' needs, regular reviews and well-maintained records. The school receives satisfactory support from outside agencies. The headteacher and staff give very good attention to issues related to equal opportunities. Any entrenched attitudes related to gender and stereotyping are challenged and the school does all it can to address these issues. However, the school does not yet have a developing profile for language competence that can be used for pupils with English as an additional language. There needs to be a clearer differentiation in provision between those children who need to learn English and those with learning difficulties. The school needs to produce a clear and specific policy outlining the support to be given to pupils with English as an additional language.

59. The induction procedures for new teachers are very good. Two newly qualified teachers joined the staff at the beginning of last year. In their second year they have responsibility for subject co-ordination. Placements for initial teacher training ceased during the amalgamation of the two separate schools but the potential for this training is very high. The system of performance management is effective and operates for all teachers according to statutory guidelines. It is linked to the school improvement plan and sets targets for the school and individual performance. It is an ongoing cycle involving the three stages of planning, monitoring performance and reviewing performance.

60. The school is efficiently run. Day-to-day procedures and the school's use of technology to reduce the administrative workload are very good. Ancillary staff make a valued contribution to the excellent management procedures. Administration is very efficient, providing regular information to senior management and the governing body. The school caretaker keeps the accommodation on two levels very clean and attractive. Principles of best value are well applied, and secure and effective financial procedures are in place. A grant for improvements to the infrastructure for ICT has been very well used, and supplemented by expenditure from other school income. The impact has been to provide excellent facilities that will have a major impact on standards in ICT over the next few years.

61. The accommodation is very good. The amalgamation of two schools into one unit has been very effectively planned. Classrooms are adequate in size for pupils of all ages. There are two spare classrooms currently allocated to design and technology and cookery. The library is large with facilities for independent study. There are small computer areas for infants and juniors and a large new computer suite is near completion. The room where dining tables and chairs used to be stored is now a music room. A small number of parents have expressed concern that pupils now eat lunch in classrooms. They describe this practice as anti-social and unhygienic. This is a matter for the school to discuss and resolve in pupils' best interests. Although access to the school is suitable for staff or pupils who require wheelchairs, this facility is lacking inside the buildings. External accommodation is also very good. There is a well-drained games field and heated swimming pool. Pupils benefit from a safe environmental area with a pond for science experiments. There are separate infant and junior playgrounds with an attractive seated area between them. There is a fenced off external area for nursery children which is attractive and well resourced. Resources to support teaching and learning are good overall. They are very good for English, mathematics, art and design, ICT and design and technology.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. There are no major areas where the school should improve further. However, an action plan is required following an inspection and the school should send in its place its school improvement plan.

There are minor areas for improvement and these elements should be included as an addition to the school improvement plan.

The school should:

- review the balance between adult led and the children's free choice of activities in the nursery and providing adult support. (paragraph 65)
- produce a clear policy and procedures for the support of pupils with English as an additional language. (paragraph 58)

- secure further improvement in the use of information and communication technology to support learning in design and technology, geography, history and religious education. (paragraphs 98, 101, 108, 132)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	24	21	2	0	0	0
Percentage	6	48	42	4	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	7	208
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	25

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	13	14	27*

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	25	25	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (84)	93 (77)	96 (94)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	25	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (87)	93 (97)	93 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	19	34*

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	14
	Girls	18	16	19
	Total	31	28	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (82)	82 (91)	97 (97)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	12	14
	Girls	18	18	19
	Total	32	30	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (79)	88 (88)	97 (91)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

*These figures include one pupil in each key stage who was disapplied from the 2001 tests because they had arrived from Europe and spoke no English.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	180
Any other minority ethnic group	6

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	136

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.5
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.5

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	428499
Total expenditure	398469
Expenditure per pupil	1935
Balance brought forward from previous year	34414
Balance carried forward to next year	64444

Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	215
Number of questionnaires returned	120

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	28	2	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	53	43	2	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	42	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	46	11	0	4
The teaching is good.	58	39	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	43	9	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	28	1	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	35	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	48	43	8	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	63	33	1	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	43	1	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	28	30	8	8

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

63. There are 44 children in the foundation stage, 14 children in the nursery and 30 children in the reception class. The nursery opened for the first time in the summer of 2001. This year it has opened in the spring term to run for two terms. Children are admitted to the nursery in the term following their fourth birthday. The nursery teacher is supported by a nursery nurse for some of the time but more support is needed to ensure the quality of provision. The children enter reception in the year in which they are five. A qualified teacher and a nursery nurse support the reception class. Most children entering reception have attended local playgroups, private nurseries or the school nursery school. One child in the nursery has a statement of special educational need and is very well supported and makes good progress. Attainment on entry to the reception class is above average. Assessment is very good and is used well to inform planning. Both nursery and reception provide an appropriate learning environment for younger children. Resources are good. By the end of reception year, all children will exceed the expected goals in all areas of learning and many will be working on National Curriculum levels. The school follows the nationally recommended foundation stage curriculum.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good and reflects the good teaching in this area of learning. Children in the nursery make good progress and are well on their way to achieving the expected learning goals. By the end of the reception year the children exceed the expected learning goals. The school provides good opportunities for each child to become a valued member of their group and community so that a strong self-image and self-esteem are promoted. Teaching is good across the foundation stage and effectively contributes to standards achieved because consistent messages are clearly given and reinforced in a friendly but firm way. The staff create a secure environment, children enjoy coming to school and happily leave their parents and carers. Children have well-developed co-operative skills. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong because the teacher identifies expectations clearly. They play alongside each other and share equipment well and their ability to work independently is well developed. They develop a sense of responsibility, for example, in the nursery children know how to move quietly into the hall for physical education. In the reception classes, children are sensible and good at tidying up. The teachers clarify procedures and expectations clearly. Children respond to the clear explanations and very good organisation and this ensures that they understand their activities and settle well.

Communication, language and literacy

65. The children exceed the expected levels by the end of the reception year and are prepared well for the National Curriculum. Teaching is good and the foundation stage classrooms provide good opportunities to develop language and literacy skills. However, there is a weakness in the nursery because of a lack of adult support. The children are given good play opportunities to communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems. However, because there is not another adult practitioner to use these opportunities to extend and develop children's language and communication the rate of children's learning is reduced. In a reading lesson the teacher takes small groups of children to read and talk about their books. These children make good progress while they are with the teacher. They answer questions and talk about the book and the characters. They give their opinion such as 'We like Chip because he's got a tee shirt on'. The teacher gives the rest of the class some good activities to do such as making breakfast in the role-play corner or building a Lego house for the animals. Without another adult to support in helping children communicate, observe, question

and experiment, these activities soon turn into free play and the intended task is very soon forgotten. Good adult support is available for a child in the nursery who has a statement of special educational need. When sitting with the teacher as a whole group the children listen closely to the teacher and each other as they talk confidently about their holidays. Teaching here is very effective leading to good learning. There is a good level of adult support in reception from a nursery nurse and often from parents who come in and help. The children make good progress in their learning because the teacher plans exciting opportunities for the children to become fully absorbed in what they are doing. When reading a big book, 'The Toys Party', the children read with the teacher quickly recognising many of the words. They look on with horror and say 'Ugh!' as the teacher asks the children to help mix a cake adding cornflakes, tomato sauce, milk and jam. They all help stir the cake. The teacher emphasises the vocabulary well. The children make good progress in writing. There are good opportunities for independent writing in the nursery and reception. The children can write their name and spell and sound out three letter words. The more able write simple sentences. The children are very interested and attentive, listening closely to the teacher but sometimes when they have finished their work the pace of the lesson drops and many children can be seen waiting round with nothing further to do. The nursery nurse and teacher mark the children's work and point out how they can improve it.

Mathematical development

66. The children exceed the expected levels of learning by the end of the reception year. Good progress is made because the teacher provides a good range of activities to promote mathematical understanding. Teaching is good. In the nursery and reception there is a very good use of action songs on a mathematical theme. Most of the nursery children can count to ten and the more able count past twenty. In outdoor play they count the spots on the mushroom and find there are seven. In the reception class the children learn to understand the meaning of one more or one less by acting out 'five currant buns' and then 'ten in a bed'. They know that one less than one is zero. Many can do simple subtraction sums using a teddy number line. The children make good progress in their understanding of shape and pattern because of the good teaching. In the nursery the children make a bus out of circles, squares and rectangles and the teacher asks questions as they do it such as 'What shape will you use for the wheels?' They make patterns for Humpty Dumpty's belt and arrange flowers 'all in a row'. In reception they make 30 pairs of shoes with different colour tops and soles and put circles, stars and diamonds on the strap.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Teaching is very good and children will exceed the expected levels of learning by the end of the reception year. The children achieve well in this area of learning. A strength in teaching is the planning of a very good range of activities based on first-hand experiences that encourage exploration, observation and problem solving. There is a good range of resources including small world toys and construction materials. In the nursery the children investigate black and white and make paper penguins and zebras. They stick patches on Elmer the elephant. They find out what objects are attracted to magnets. In reception the children plant hyacinth bulbs and watch them grow. They take a tour of the school and look at building materials and back in the classroom they distinguish differences between different materials such as glass, plastic, wood and metal. Having discussed the story of the three little pigs, they make houses out of junk modelling. All the children are involved in the discussion. They make houses, castles and a pigsty that they show to the school in assembly. They make thirty dwarfs out of paper and material and give them names such as 'Muddy, Snowy and Bouncy' that they type on the computer and print out. They spend good amounts of time on the computer and are helped by fathers who show them how to choose colours and encourage them in drawing characters from their reading book. They write names using the correct tool by their picture.

Physical development

68. The children will exceed the expected levels of learning by the end of the reception year. Teaching is good in the nursery and very good in reception. Planning identifies learning clearly and activities are well organised. Hand eye co-ordination is well developed through matching and positioning shapes, decorating and sticking. Provision for outdoor play is good and there are plenty of opportunities for children to climb and slide with confidence and control. They enjoy riding on the wheeled toys. Both the nursery and reception have one hall slot once a week for a lesson in physical development. Nursery children learn how to use the big space in the hall and practise 'freezing' and making a statue when the teacher says so. They take big strides round the hall and then try to improve their performance. Children in reception walk, run hop and skip round the hall. They then move round on their hands and feet going forwards and backwards. The teacher challenges them well and asks to see interesting ways that they can move under, over and through the small apparatus and climbing equipment. The children show very good progress in their sense of balance and control.

Creative development

69. The children will exceed the expected levels of learning by the end of the reception year. Teaching is very good in reception and the nursery. Children have good opportunities throughout the foundation stage to work with a range of materials and experience different methods. In the nursery they use paint well. They make thick brush strokes on the paper and choose bold colours. They do marble tracks in paint on white paper and do patterns for Humpty's belt, which they colour in wax crayon. They paint pictures of themselves. In the reception class, children they draw their faces and add wool for hair. They stick them on silver paper and mount them to make very good mirrors. They use a range of colours well in their painting and have developed a good idea for pattern. Singing is very well developed throughout the foundation stage and the children learn quickly. They sing with obvious enjoyment and tackle new songs well. They have a very good memory of songs they have learnt and know all the actions. There are good opportunities to handle and play instruments. In the reception class the teacher marks the beat as the children accompany her with maracas. They sing 'Sunday Monday' and those children with wood blocks come in at the right time. When moving in the hall the teacher manages the class very well and keeps the children highly focused. They join in enthusiastically, listen carefully to instructions and respond very well. They use their skipping skills well to play a game and when singing songs show very good facial expressions such as when reacting to the 'wicked witch'. The role play area in the new nursery is used by the children and they happily spend a lot of time in there, but the management and use of imagination of this area is not yet as good as it could be.

ENGLISH

70. Results of the National Curriculum tests for seven and eleven year-olds in 2001 were well above the national average. By the time they leave the school, pupils attain standards that are well above the average of schools with a similar intake of pupils. The school has exceeded the national improving trends for the last two years. Inspection findings reflect the test results. Pupils read and write with increasing accuracy and relevance. This is because of the good level of consistency in the quality of planning and teaching in all classes. Speaking and listening skills are above average. Pupils are effective communicators. They use language well in private conversations with peers and adults but skills are not as good when speaking in front of a large group or when adapting their speech for a range of purposes and audiences. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and those who are more able, do very well. Pupils with special

educational needs have detailed individual education plans, which are followed carefully, and this results in good teaching. Girls do slightly better than boys. The school's introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has been very well focused.

71. Throughout the school, pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average. Pupils listen closely to staff and other pupils in whole class and small group sessions. Pupils' listening ability enhances learning and contributes to the very good behaviour. Pupils express ideas confidently and have a good command of spoken English. They ask questions to check their understanding. Year 1 talk about matters of immediate interest following the story of Goldilocks. In Year 2, pupils are good at remembering and retelling stories and facts about characters. After reading 'Bubble and Float' they know Arthur the shark had a nasty grin. They take part in very good role-play sessions at the end of lessons and interview pupils who are taking the part of characters. When asked 'How did it feel to be underwater?' the reply is that 'It felt scary and all you could see was darkness'. Through the use of questioning, teachers challenge the pupils to think and express themselves. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are good at discussing ideas with their teachers. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils use imaginative vocabulary to add effect and atmosphere to their stories and all the class contribute well. They contribute ideas such as 'heart thumping and sweat running down my face' and 'my legs turned to jelly'. Standards are good, not only in English but also across the curriculum. In a Year 3 design and technology lesson the pupils discussed the characteristics of a photograph frame that make it stand or not stand up. In a Year 5 history lesson pupils suggest ideas on the experiences of evacuees in World War II using a relevant vocabulary. Pupils of all ages are also very confident speakers with visiting adults. However, when presenting to the class or a large group such as assembly some of the pupils speak with low voices and lack confidence.

72. Standards in reading are high. Pupils are very confident readers and show a deep appreciation and care of books. Pupils have clear views on what they like to read and which authors please them and teachers find a very good selection of books of interest to all. The school has recently purchased books for boys and identified the provision of non-fiction books in Years 1 and 2 as an area of improvement. Pupils in Year 1 listen to a taped version of a book and also the printed version and identify differences in the character of Daddy Bear in the two versions. Pupils with English as an additional language read dual language versions of books such as Goldilocks. The average pupils in Year 2 are able to read a story fluently and with good levels of expression. They discuss confidently whether they like it. They say what they think the book will be about by looking at the cover. Pupils enjoy a good range of books and find poetry and non-fiction just as interesting. Pupils in Years 3-6 are presented with a wide variety of texts and are good at scanning them for information. They underline or highlight phrases and sentences that may help them in their work. They read a good variety of books fluently in well organised group sessions during the literacy hour, such as 'The Watchers' by Helen Cresswell. They research information from books but as yet are only able to research information from the Internet at home.

73. Standards in writing are well above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Teaching has enabled pupils to become independent and confident writers across a comprehensive range of writing styles. Pupils in all classes make good progress in writing and final presentation of work is very good. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to use a joined handwriting style and pupils in Years 3-6 are able to present their work very well. A particular strength in writing is the creative and imaginative use of language. Pupils explore ideas and experiment with words very well. Pupils in Year 1 write firework words such as 'whizz and sparkly' and those in Year 2 write words from the story such as 'sandy and salty'. Year 2 pupils write imaginative letters to a shark asking him not to bite things he shouldn't. Pupils are good at describing the characters and settings from a story. Year 3 and 4 develop and extend the use of language. They plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing, selecting an appropriate form and style of writing suitable for the task. They write instructional texts for recipes

and for using a public telephone and show good attention to the best way of presenting the information such as the use of bullets. In Years 5 and 6, pupils produce a very good range of imaginative writing. Words are chosen imaginatively and used with precision. Pupils write play scripts and leaflets for their school. They examine newspaper headlines and give their point of view, saying why the headline catches the eye. They understand what fables, proverbs and limericks are. Pupils use and spell common prefixes and suffixes. They apply their writing skills well in other curriculum subjects such as history and science and work is presented very well. Year 4 write explanatory texts and make good links with science as they identify the key features in a text on muscles and bones. ICT is used well in most classes to present finished pieces of writing and there is good attention to the layout and presentation of text.

74. Teaching and learning are consistently good. In Years 5 and 6 they are very good. There is some excellent teaching in Year 1. A very good lesson was also observed in Year 4 for a group of more able pupils. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and there are effective methods for teaching literacy skills. They make sure pupils know what they are expected to learn. One of the main strengths in teaching literacy is the high quality of the lesson planning throughout the school. There is very good attention paid to reading texts with greater accuracy and understanding and pupils are taught to identify and comment on features of English such as adjectives and connectives. Effective questioning and discussion helps to deepen pupils' understanding and clarity. There is good use of resources such as the overhead projector to display print in large text to the class. Very good attention to the teaching of writing means that pupils' writing is creative and imaginative. Sessions at the end of lessons are good and used to give as many pupils as possible the chance to extend what they have learnt and to share work. In a Year 2 lesson very good use is made of role play and in a Year 4 lesson, pupils are given the opportunity to express preferences in different texts and to highlight the difference between text on a web page and text in a book. Marking is also particularly good and most pieces of work are rewarded with well thought out comments by the teachers which identify targets for the pupils to work towards and give pupils positive feedback. Pupils are well motivated, interested and able to apply themselves independently for long periods of time. There are a few pupils in Year 2 who present challenging behaviour but good procedures are in place to improve this. In the lesson observed in this class these pupils presented most problems during the initial teaching session but were able to work with good concentration during writing activities. The very good and excellent lessons are characterised by a brisk pace and very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and standards. There is rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress. Because relationships and the management of pupils are so good, these expectations are fully repaid, and pupils work willingly and productively. Pupils are challenged and both they and the teacher show excitement and enthusiasm for the work. In a Year 6 lesson on using imaginative vocabulary when writing ghost stories, the teacher praises the pupils for contributing a good sentence but then issues further challenge by asking 'How can we make it a golden sentence?' Pupils then 'phone a friend' and the word 'big' is replaced with 'rusty'. Teachers make good use of the computer for word processing and are planning to ensure that pupils use the Internet and email to enrich the English curriculum once the new suite is on line. Drama is used well within lessons but there is no clear programme in the school.

75. The assessment procedures are very good and used well to plan the next stage of the curriculum. Teachers keep good records about how the pupils are progressing and evaluative comments are made. Each class receives one lesson a term for a group of the more able pupils to work on an extended topic and teaching in these sessions is carefully planned. Pupils maturely discuss their ideas with the teacher and plan their own work involving ideas to extend their skills in writing and presentation. Teaching assistants contribute very well to the quality of teaching and learning and are on hand to give support, particularly to pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language.

76. Subject leadership is very good and displays a very good understanding and knowledge of the subject. The headteacher has observed a range of lessons throughout the school and disseminated good practice among the staff. This year monitoring has been focussing on the structure of the literacy hour. Writing has been a focus and a sample of unaided writing from each pupil has been collected ready for comparison on progress at the end of the year with a new piece. Joined handwriting has also been identified for improvement in Year 2. Resources are very good. There is an attractive library that has an adequate number of books. An audit of the library is due to take place this year. The involvement of parents is very good and as a result of fundraising each class has been given £500 for books this year. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

77. Pupils attain standards that are well above the national average throughout the school. At the end of Year 2, standards are high. Standards are still well above average at the end of Year 6. Boys and girls make consistently good gains in their mathematical skills and understanding and there is little difference in their overall performance. Rates of progress are very good throughout the school for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, the gifted and talented and those who have English as an additional language. They are given good opportunities to extend their learning through challenging activities such as problem solving. The school is on course to maintain this high level of performance and it exceeded its targets for last year.

78. By the end of Year 2, all pupils attain the nationally expected levels and nearly half attain the higher level 3. They are particularly strong in using number facts and in responding quickly and accurately to mental arithmetic questions. Their understanding of mathematical vocabulary, signs and symbols is much better than that expected for pupils of this age. Pupils in Year 1 recognise odd and even numbers, and sort numbers to 100 into the correct sequence, while the more able can already solve addition and subtraction problems to 20. In Year 2, pupils can recognise sequences of numbers. The more able can use and interpret mathematical symbols and diagrams, discussing their work and beginning to explain their thinking.

79. By the end of Year 6, pupils' mathematical skills are very good, although in 2001 the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 5 was only in line with the national average. However, the inspection team agrees with the school's prediction that over 40 per cent will achieve the higher level in the 2002 tests. This is because of the effective action taken by the school on improving the attainment of the more able pupils and providing teachers with detailed guidance that lists expectations and strategies for these pupils. Pupils in Year 3 mentally recall number facts from the 2–5 times table, while Year 4 pupils use set squares to describe and compare the sizes of angles. Year 5 pupils explain which of a range of strategies they used to solve a mental maths problem. By the end of Year 6, pupils can find the perimeter and calculate the area of rectangles, while the more able can find the area of compound shapes. All understand and use the terms 'fair', 'certain' and 'likely' when considering probability. Pupils order decimals between 0 and 1, while the more able can predict the results of a coin-spinning investigation to test the theory of probability, and then carry out an experiment to test their hypothesis. They construct two-dimensional shapes in a quadrant using given co-ordinates, and explain what a block graph tells them about the favourite pets in their class. The more able calculate a number as a percentage of a total and describe it as a decimal fraction, construct a comparative graph of men's and women's responses regarding their favourite slimmer soup, and calculate the VAT on a new television set!

80. Pupils throughout the school enjoy mathematics. Pupils in all years compete keenly to be the first to answer questions, but they also display very good levels of co-operation and collaboration.

They support each other when appropriate, reasoning through problems and discussing any differences in their answers. For example, Year 6 pupils compare methodologies when seeking the most effective and accurate way to find the areas of tiles on the roof of a model house. Numeracy skills are used and applied well when problem solving. Pupils use their mathematics skills well in science to draw accurate bar charts of their favourite forms of exercise. In geography, pupils record by means of bar graphs and pie charts the results of a traffic survey in a local street.

81. Pupils have very positive attitudes, enjoying the regular homework and working hard and at a good pace in most lessons. Their behaviour is very good. They remain on task for long periods of time and are careful with equipment and resources. Pupils use their initiative well, often selecting appropriate resources to help them when doing calculations.

82. The qualities of teaching and learning are very good in all of the lessons observed. The teachers have a very good knowledge of mathematics, the programmes of study and the National Numeracy Strategy, and these strengths have had a major impact on standards. They make good use of the objectives in the numeracy strategy and use the school's published scheme alongside their own resources. The well-planned lessons begin with a time for recapping on previous learning and to test the pupils' mental agility. Introductions are clear, well paced and effective. Teachers apply their knowledge well to the preparation of lessons that include effective use of resources, careful match of work to the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the gifted and talented, and a wide variety of stimulating activities. As a result, pupils remain on task, work hard and produce a good quantity of work in each lesson. Much emphasis is given to promoting pupils' knowledge of mathematical vocabulary and signs and symbols. This is done extremely well. In most lessons, pupils are left in no doubt as to what is expected of them and how much time they have to complete tasks. Teachers move around the room giving good support, checking on any difficulties and providing additional guidance. The teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and exercise discipline in a friendly and firm way. Pupils respond well to this, having a clear understanding of expectations for performance and behaviour. They apply themselves well, making considerable effort. The very good teaching is often inspirational and the enthusiasm of the teachers is infectious. Pupils are given very clear instructions and demanding work, but this is in the context of thorough assessment and the teachers' understanding of the ability of each individual. For example, daily targets are displayed in many classrooms, such as 'to recall pairs of multiples of five with a total of 100' and 'to solve number puzzles', so that pupils know exactly what it is that they are learning. Detailed analysis of pupils' responses in assessments enables teachers to identify areas of relative weakness.

83. The leadership and management of mathematics are very good. The subject leader monitors the quality of teaching through observing lessons, and regularly reviews the pupils' work. Consequently, she has a very good overview of what is required for the further development and improvement of the subject. These include further integration of ICT activities within the subject and the spreading of good practice with regards to the use of the plenary session at the end of each lesson. The school is very well resourced for mathematics and there is a good range and quality of books to support the teaching.

SCIENCE

84. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average and by the end of Year 6 standards are well above average. There is no previous inspection report with which to compare standards. Teacher assessment of Year 2 pupils' attainment in 2001 was above the national average. All the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are making very good progress. Pupils have positive attitudes towards work. They enjoy their science lessons, particularly practical investigative work. Presentation of work is usually very good.

85. By the end of Year 2, the pupils are able to carry out practical investigations into topics such as the melting of ice and chocolate and the magnetic properties of different materials. They are beginning to understand the need to make a scientific test fair and to make sensible predictions as to outcomes. They have a good understanding of how a balanced diet and exercise are important for good health. They use their mathematics skills well to draw accurate bar charts of their favourite forms of exercise and their favourite foods. The pupils know that medicines are drugs and must be used safely. The pupils have a good understanding of how forces can quicken or slow movement and they use their mathematics skills to measure and to draw clear bar charts of the distance travelled by toy cars.

86. By the end of Year 6, pupils make good predictions based on their scientific knowledge and understanding and draw conclusions that are consistent with the evidence. They investigate reversible and irreversible changes in materials, how liquids solidify at different temperatures and the effects of friction on different footwear. They know how light travels in a straight line and how shadows and reflections are created. They know the major parts of the human eye. They have a good understanding of the causes of day and night and of the planets of the solar system. The pupils use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills to record animal classification effectively. At home, the pupils have researched information about Louis Pasteur. Younger pupils in Years 3 and 4 investigate the absorbency of different materials and the effects of insulators and conductors, recording their findings in accurate line graphs.

87. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good throughout the school. One third of teaching is very good. The teachers plan their lessons very well, with tasks well matched to varying needs. They ensure that all the pupils are fully included in learning. The teachers make clear what is to be learnt and also the importance of safety in handling equipment. They place a good emphasis on the development of pupils' skills of scientific enquiry and their acquisition of correct scientific vocabulary. Teachers encourage the pupils to make predictions and to make careful observations. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher introduces the pupils to relevant terminology and this helps in their learning of electricity and circuits. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher introduces terms such as 'bacteria, mould and salmonella'. Pupils show a good level of interest and concentrate well on their work about how microorganisms can cause food decay. In lessons that are very good the teacher uses questioning very well and prepares a wide range of resources to support further practical work on the topic. This has a very good impact on the pupils' learning. A parent helper works effectively as a scribe with groups of pupils with special educational needs and this helps them to make good progress. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, often suggesting useful ways to improve such as 'Rather than telling me that it will freeze, you need to describe the changes' (Year 2) and 'This would have been better presented as a larger table' (Year 6).

88. A clear policy meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Planning is very good and is firmly based on national guidance. The co-ordinator leads the subject well. She has monitored some teaching, so as to gain an overview of standards and to share good practice, and she offers help and advice to colleagues as necessary. She has developed a clear action plan to secure further improvement. There are good procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. The teachers make good use of information from national test results and from other assessments to plan subsequent work. There is a useful collection of samples of pupils' work at agreed levels of attainment, which helps the teachers in the accuracy and consistency of their assessments. There is a good range of resources to support teaching and learning, with plenty of science reference books in the school libraries. The teachers make good use of the locality, such as the River Wye, to enhance learning. A visiting theatre group recently enriched learning about separating mixtures. The subject makes a

positive contribution to the pupils' personal development, through encouraging concern for the environment and for living things and by fostering collaborative work in practical situations.

ART AND DESIGN

89. Pupils' standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are well above those expected nationally and the pupils make very good progress. No lessons were being taught in Years 3 to 6 during the inspection.

90. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop their creativity and imagination by exploring and trying out different techniques. They enjoy a wide range of experiences and use a variety of media. Year 1 pupils produce good real-life portraits of a travelling teddy bear, displayed around a wall map and postcards of places it has visited, together with a diary and photographs. They use a range of materials and processes in paper weaving techniques. Pupils make good use of ICT to explore shape, colour and pattern. In Year 2 pupils use their ICT skills well to create 'hot' or 'cold' pictures, using the straight-line tool and flood fills to make pictures in the style of Mondrian. They identify what they might change in their work and improve it.

91. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above those expected nationally. Year 4 pupils produce very good artwork on the theme of faces in a range of media, such as bas-relief ancient Egyptian masks in modelling clay, futuristic cyborg faces (half human, half machine) in colour pencils, fluorescent paint on black African-style masks and computer-generated representations of human features. By Year 6 pupils use their graphic skills in a wide variety of styles and colours to produce attractively decorated banners for an exhibition proclaiming 'Our class experts are...', displaying each name and the area in which he or she is an expert.

92. The qualities of teaching and learning are very good. The teachers use frequent stimulating questions to promote discussion, establishing a very good rapport with pupils that inspires them to do their best. There are very good relationships as a result of the teacher's expectations and encouragement. Pupils respond well to the teaching and activities, showing real enthusiasm. They are supportive of each other's efforts, are engrossed in lessons and are very well behaved.

93. The subject is led well by the co-ordinator who is aware of the need to develop more effective assessment procedures for monitoring pupils' progress, other than the sketch books currently used to record samples of pupils' work. She also intends to further develop the use of ICT by extending the range of experiences offered to pupils. The scheme of work in place is currently being modified to fit more closely with work in other subjects, with a strong emphasis on developing a good range of skills using a variety of media. The updated policy is undergoing staff consultation prior to consideration by the governing body. The subject is well equipped and resources are generally very good, although it would benefit from more books about famous artists, appropriate to the differing ages of the pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. By the end of Years 2 and 6, attainment is well above that expected nationally and pupils make very good progress.

95. By the end of Year 2, pupils produce a well-drawn plan for a puppet, with annotations about construction details. They can talk about three different ways of fastening materials, and explain their preferences in different situations. They make very good vehicles with axles and wheels from construction kits, knowing that a vehicle can have a fixed axle and moving wheels or fixed wheels and moving axles. The more able are also beginning to use perspective in their plans. Pupils in Year 1

carefully construct good pictures made from wood marquetry veneer, and the majority use tools, glue and split pins to assemble and join materials in a variety of ways. The more able make suggestions for improving a puppet and ways in which it could be modified so that a snake becomes a caterpillar.

96. Pupils in Year 3 know why triangulation is important for structures to be stable, can disassemble and evaluate familiar products and express preferences about which types of photo frame would be more suitable for a particular purpose. By the end of Year 6, pupils make a very good miniature replica of a Windsor chair, working from a design brief. They can screen-print their own designs for Victorian wallpaper. They apply their experience of materials and processes to carefully follow a brief that demands accurate interpretation, collaboration with others to complete a task and careful evaluation of the work completed. They suggest sequences of actions to speed up production in focussed practical task. They clarify design and construction ideas through discussion to produce a series of very good football rosettes, based on their understanding of the characteristics of this familiar product.

97. Teaching and learning are very good. In Year 6 there was an excellent lesson. Teachers plan well-paced lessons with lots of interesting activities linked to clearly established objectives that set out what the pupils will know, are able to do and understand by the time they have finished. Continuous reference to the design emphasises the purpose of the lesson. Good relationships enable pupils to join in question-and-answer sessions about the work. Pupils are well behaved and enthusiastic, sharing resources and taking turns. They are supportive of each other's efforts: for example, the first to finish their construction task in the Year 1 class helped those having greater difficulty in joining together the parts of their snake puppet. Pupils are highly motivated, and the older pupils exhibit sustained concentration over an extended period. Procedures for tidying up and clearing away are well established. Pupils enjoy the lessons and all, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress because of the effective use of support staff and the careful match between their abilities and what is required of them.

98. Co-ordination is very good and there is a detailed subject development plan in place, with the main aim of ensuring continuity by establishing a progression of skills throughout the years. The plan also recognises that the use of ICT is in the early stages of development and requires further expansion. The current scheme of work is undergoing modification so that it is better integrated with other foundation subjects, and the task will be finished before the end of the academic year. The policy document will then be updated to reflect the new practices. Resources are very good, following a recent audit with full staff involvement in decisions about the items to be purchased.

GEOGRAPHY

99. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainments are above the nationally expected standards. There is no previous inspection report with which to compare standards. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are progressing well. Pupils have positive attitudes towards work and are keen to learn. Presentation of work is generally good.

100. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of a map or plan as a view from above and they can draw simple plans of their route to school. They can name and locate the constituent countries of the United Kingdom. In work linked to the Katie Morag stories, the pupils compare life in Hazlemere with that on an imaginary Scottish island, talking about what they like or dislike about either. They record features seen at the coast and they make good use of their literacy skills in writing letters home from the seaside. The pupils are good at comparing life in Hazlemere with that in Nansoni, a village in Ghana. They compare schools here and there and they have a good

understanding of the problems of water supply in rural Ghana. Younger pupils talk with enthusiasm about features of the school grounds that they like or dislike. They make very good progress in finding out about the wider world by carrying out geographical enquiry inside the classroom. They decide how Barnaby Bear can plan his visit to Spain by using different routes and methods of transportation such as Eurostar and the Channel Tunnel. Higher attaining pupils talk about the index of an atlas and how to use it.

101. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have a good understanding of aspects of the geography of Buckinghamshire and of the Chiltern Hills. They make effective use of their literacy skills to write letters to the District Council about environmental problems in Wycombe's High Street. They are able to complete a land use map of the town centre. They use their mathematical skills well to record by means of bar graphs and pie charts the results of a traffic survey in Victoria Street and the findings of a questionnaire about people's recreational activities. The pupils have a good understanding of why settlements grow and develop and of how place names in southeast England give a clue to the origins of settlements. They know some basic facts about the geography of India. Pupils use a database and spreadsheet to sort, question and present information about different countries such as the temperatures in major areas of the world but have not used e-mail to exchange information with another school or searching the Internet for information about a different part of the world. Some pupils have used computers at home for this.

102. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. The teachers plan their lessons very well, matching tasks to varying needs. They place an appropriate emphasis on developing the pupils' mapping skills and their ability to undertake fieldwork. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher focussed on developing pupils' atlas skills and this helped them to name and locate some of the major geographical features of India. She used an overhead projector effectively to display statistics, which helped the pupils understand climatic differences between Britain and India. She asked questions such as 'How would you summarise the rainfall pattern in India?' which made the pupils use their numeracy skills to calculate differences in temperature and to make them think carefully. This helped the pupils appreciate the significance of the monsoon. In an excellent Year 1 lesson, the teacher spoke as Barnaby Bear, telling them where he had been at half term. The teacher led a very stimulating question and answer session, using a globe and atlas, which helped the pupils to plan for Barnaby to visit Spain. Teaching assistants work effectively with pupils with special educational needs and, as a result, they made good progress.

103. A clear policy meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Planning is well based on national guidelines, which have been adapted to meet the school's needs and resources. The newly appointed co-ordinator has made a good start in managing the subject. She has monitored some teaching, so as to gain an overview of standards and to share good practice. There are no formal, whole school procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress, though the co-ordinator maintains a collection of samples of pupils' work. There is a good range of resources to support teaching and learning, with a wide range of geography reference books in the school libraries. The curriculum is enhanced by local fieldwork and by environmental studies during a Year 5 residential visit to Woodrow High House. In encouraging collaborative work whenever necessary, in making the pupils aware of environmental issues and in giving them an insight into the cultures of India and Ghana, the subject makes a good contribution to their social and cultural development.

HISTORY

104. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainments are above the nationally expected standards. There is no previous inspection report with which to compare standards. Pupils, including those with

special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, progress well. Pupils are eager to learn and to find out information at home. Presentation of work is generally good.

105. By the end of Year 2, pupils are beginning to gain some understanding of chronology and of how things such as homes and toys have changed over time. They use common words and phrases relating to the passing of time. They know about some features of medieval castles, such as the motte and bailey and the great hall, and of how these castles were attacked and defended. Pupils know about some famous people and about some of the main events of English history, such as the Gunpowder Plot and the Great Fire of London. They are beginning to understand that there is a difference between fact and opinion. They talk about what makes someone famous and they make good use of their literacy skills to write about famous people of today whom they would like to meet.

106. By the end of Year 6, the pupils know about aspects of life for the rich and poor of Victorian Britain. They use their literacy skills well to write as a child seeking work and to produce effective newspaper reports of a workhouse. They are able to research information about women's suffrage and Wycombe in Victorian times. The pupils have a good understanding of town and country life in Tudor times and of the importance of the navy in repulsing the Spanish Armada. They use their literacy skills well to write effective accounts of life on board ship. They discuss whether sailors such as Drake were heroes or pirates. Younger pupils in Years 3 and 4 know about aspects of life in ancient Egypt and some of the reasons for the Roman invasion of Britain. They make good use of their literacy skills to write letters home from a soldier in Britain.

107. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. The teachers plan their lessons very well and they emphasise the need to find out evidence in order to come to conclusions about events in the past. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher begins with a useful question and answer session, which consolidates the pupils' knowledge of the conditions which Florence Nightingale found in the hospitals at Scutari : 'What changes did Florence bring to the hospitals?' This makes the pupils think about questions of food and hygiene and bureaucracy. The teacher ensures that the lesson makes a useful contribution to developing the pupils' speaking and listening skills.

108. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher introduces relevant terms, such as 'evacuation, identity tag, host family, billeting officer and phoney war', in order to enhance the pupils' understanding of the reasons why children were evacuated from urban areas during the Blitz. The teacher makes good use of pictures shown on overhead transparencies, in order to enhance learning of how evacuees left the cities and how they were allocated to families at their destinations. She encourages the pupils to reflect on the feelings of evacuees who were separated from parents and siblings. She makes effective use of an audio cassette story and calmly overcomes a problem when it malfunctions. Teaching makes learning more real by using a first hand account of life as an evacuee, written by a grandmother of a pupil in the class. There are effective links with literacy, and the pupils write good letters as an evacuee, a parent or a host family member. There are some good opportunities to use ICT such as programs on the Egyptians and explorers but overall this area is not sufficiently developed.

109. A clear policy meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The newly appointed co-ordinator has made a good start in managing the subject. She has attended a recent conference and has brought useful ideas back to school for colleagues. She has monitored some teaching, in order to gain an overview of standards and to share good practice. She also monitors samples of pupils' work. There are no formal, whole school procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress, but ongoing assessment in lessons is good. There is a good range of resources to support teaching and learning, with a very wide range of history reference books in the school libraries and stimulating displays of artefacts and photographs around the school. The curriculum is enhanced by visits to places such as

Windsor Castle, the Britain at War Experience, the Ashmolean Museum and Verulamium, and by the use of visitors, including actors and grandparents. The pupils have participated in special Roman, Tudor and Victorian days. In this way, the subject is making a good contribution to their social and cultural development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

110. Standards are typical for those expected at the age of seven and eleven. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are progressing well and some of the work in art is above the standards expected. Pupils use the word processor well to layout their work. The school has just put a new computer suite into operation and pupils have already had an awareness session in it. Very good plans for the use of this suite are ready to be put into action, which should have a very positive impact on standards. For the first time pupils will be able to use the Internet and email to enhance their skills and the quality of the curriculum.

111. By the end of Year 2, pupils recognise and use the letters and functions of the keyboard. They label the parts of the computer on a drawing and find out how the computer can be used to produce pictures, sounds and writing. Work associated with art and design is of a good standard. Pupils create imaginative pictures. They use a brush tool effectively to make animals and human faces and to draw the hair and eyes. They can change the thickness of the lines. They use the geometric shape tool to make patterns and then use the flood fill to good effect. They look at pictures by Mondrian and make their own version using a straight line tool. They choose colours carefully and also choose a name to save their work such as 'an icy day'. Teachers' planning shows that pupils have used programmable software and recently four new roamers have been purchased.

112. By the end of Year 6, pupils are making good use of the word processor to arrange their work in literacy and other subjects. Year 3 rewrite a calligram poem choosing how to use effects to the best advantage. They search the colours available to find one that is the closest to lilac. Year 4 write poems about 'The Storm Cat' using a border and Year 6 write a book of poems about 'A Favourite Place'. There is good attention to the choice of size and style of font. Pupils understand the need for care in framing questions when collecting, finding and interrogating information. Pupils in Year 3 answer questions about animals and then enter the information and print graphs. Pupils in Year 5 analyse data about planets and major cities of Britain. They use a spreadsheet to record the temperature in London and the Arctic throughout the year ready for comparison one with the other. In preparation for their work in the computer suite they discuss the use of a webpage to present information and plan what to put on their own web site. There was no evidence that pupils make multi-media presentations to develop and refine ideas by bringing together, organising and reorganising text, tables, images and sound as appropriate.

113. No teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2 but teaching and learning in Years 3-6 are good. The pupils are very motivated and responsive to new ideas. They apply themselves and concentrate well. They are excited and inspired by the new suite and cannot wait to be able to extend their skills and apply their ideas. At present the pupils show frustration at not being able to use the computers sufficiently and having to wait their turn, sometimes over a number of weeks, but this is all due to change with the new suite. Teachers show a good knowledge of the subject and training has been very good and is continuing. Lessons are very well planned and the teachers carefully instruct the pupils on how to use new software or to explain how they can discover the full range of what a program can do. Teaching is challenging. In a Year 5 lesson the pupils were tested on the position of the keyboard letters and encouraged not to use one finger and to look at the screen and not the keyboard. The pupils responded very well to the challenge and realised that their knowledge of touch-typing was still at a very early stage. There are some good assessment procedures in place which

have been well used to identify gaps in the pupils' knowledge and used to inform future planning. Good use is made of ICT in English and art and design and pupils represent and interpret data using graphs and diagrams in mathematics and science. The use of computers could be extended in design and technology, history, geography and religious education. There has been insufficient use of email to exchange information and opportunities to develop their research skills by using the Internet. Subject co-ordinators are aware that there is a need to extend the support given by ICT to their curriculum areas.

114. Co-ordination is very good and shows a good understanding of the standards across the school and what is needed to raise standards in the subject. There has been a thorough audit of software resources across all curriculum areas. Preparation for the use of the new suite has been thorough and a draft inclusion and Internet Access policy has been drawn up and with the new suite on line the pupils will be able to share and exchange information by e-mail and to use the Internet for research. The school is buying a digital camera and scanner and a smart board to ensure that all possibilities can be taken advantage of so that the curriculum is as broad as possible.

MUSIC

115. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are above average and pupils are achieving well. There is no previous inspection report with which to compare standards. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress. The pupils thoroughly enjoy their music lessons. The school is very fortunate to have the voluntary services of a parent who is a qualified teacher and has a good knowledge of the subject. She teaches in Years 1 and 2 alongside the class teachers. The quality of singing is very good throughout the school.

116. By the end of Year 2, pupils sing in tune with expression. They remember songs very well that they sang previously, such as 'Windy Weather'. They sing Mr Rabbit as a class and then divide and sing in rounds. They listen carefully and come in at the right time. They recognise and explore how sounds can be made and changed. They use untuned instruments to accompany their singing. Pupils accompany the song playing drums, tambourines and maracas. They hold their instruments correctly and practise shaking the maracas. They perform rhythmically simple parts that use a limited range of notes such as 'tick tock'. They improve their performance each time they repeat it.

117. By the end of Year 6, pupils sing songs and play instruments with increasing confidence, skill and expression. They perform and become actively involved in creating music. Pupils in Year 4 warm up their voices and then read the music and clap a rhythm singing 'I've got a lunch box' to the rhythm. They split into groups of eight and each group performs the rhythm with different pitched and non-pitched percussion instruments such as tambourines, cabaca and chime bars. They follow each other and improve their performance each time they do it, coming in on time. Pupils explore their thoughts and feelings through responding physically, intellectually and emotionally to a variety of music from different times. Pupils in Year 6 listen to Holtz's Planet Suite attentively. They identify all the planets and tap the rhythm from Mars. They choose instruments, such as drum for Mars, and pair them with a planet and compose a good piece of music that they then perform to the class. They make a CD on a residential visit relating to the tragedy of the Titanic. Singing is very good in all year groups. Years 3–6 sing a selection of hymns as a whole group and then split into classes to sing descant. When challenged by the teacher they improve their performance and sing 'Were you there' with more gusto.

118. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers are very careful in planning activities that all pupils can take part in. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 have been very well supported by

a parent who has the expertise and qualifications to teach the subject. The teachers take part as well and organise and manage the pupils. In doing this they are gaining the skills whereby, when the support is no longer available, they will be able to take over the main teaching. The school has also purchased a scheme to help these teachers to further improve their skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in their learning. They respond well by reacting quickly to the teacher's instructions, treating the instruments with care and respect, and concentrating hard on improving their performance. In Years 3 to 6 the subject is taught by the highly qualified co-ordinator and teaching and learning are very good. Pupils are challenged to sing songs more accurately and expressively and to hold the correct posture. They play instruments that are new to them and have a good range of performing opportunities to demonstrate their skills. The teacher has very good expertise and high expectations in the subject and challenges pupils throughout the lesson to think about and improve their performance. Lessons are conducted at a brisk and dynamic pace. In a Year 4 lesson on exploring rhythmic patterns the pupils make very good progress because of this very good teaching. They are very well motivated at the start of lessons by warming up voice exercises and they end the lesson with excitement when the teacher tells them they will record the composition for their classteacher next week. They also excitedly take part in challenging action songs such as 'Tall Straw Hat', which they know very well. Assessment takes place through observation of performances, many of which are to parents. Pupils also attend classes for flute, violin and clarinet and take the grade examinations for these.

119. Co-ordination is very good. The co-ordinator knows the standards reached across Years 3-6, as she is the teacher and plans well for pupils to acquire more complex skills over time. She is monitoring the provision in Years 1 and 2 and has made careful plans to ensure the quality of the curriculum and standards will not fall if the parent volunteer leaves. Resources are very good and include a selection of instruments used across the world. There is an action plan that has identified the need to include a greater range of music from world cultures to listen to and perform. The co-ordinator arranges good opportunities for pupils to perform in front of an audience, such as assemblies, end of term productions, concerts for the elderly and the school has also performed on local radio.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

120. Lessons were observed in gymnastics, dance and games. By the end of Year 2, standards in gymnastics and indoor games are average. By the end of Year 6, standards in dance and hockey are above average. Standards in swimming are good. By the time the pupils leave the school, virtually all of them can swim at least 25 metres unaided. There is no previous inspection report with which to compare standards. Throughout the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are making at least good progress. Boys and girls attain equally.

121. The teachers dress appropriately for physical education and they manage changing sessions very well. The pupils are a credit to the school in the way in which they dress for lessons, looking very smart in different coloured team tops. Most pupils have positive attitudes and pupils enjoy their physical education. They listen attentively to instructions, respond quickly and participate enthusiastically. Lessons are very well planned and the teachers recognise the importance of initial warm-up sessions.

122. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good awareness and knowledge of the importance of activity because the teacher draws attention to this aspect. In a Year 1 indoor games lesson pupils can travel whilst holding a ball in different ways and they can throw and catch the balls reasonably well. They begin to apply their ball skills to a team situation. In gymnastics in Year 2, pupils travel on the floor, using various body parts, exploring angular pathways and using varying speeds and levels.

They are able to incorporate small apparatus into a sequence of movements. They take a long stride at the end of their straight-line movement, so as to be ready to make a change of direction. Pupils evaluate their own performance and the performance of others and suggest ways to improve it. Standards could be better if the pupils were to link gymnastic movements into smooth sequences, focussing particularly on good starting and finishing positions. Pupils' ball skills in a team situation could also be better.

123. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve above average standards. Pupils show good levels of fitness and stamina and they sustain energetic activity well. Pupils create and perform imaginative dances using a range of movement patterns. In a Year 5 dance lesson, the pupils focus on the meaning of the word 'flight' and this helps in their dramatic interpretation of the movement of an animal. Pupils know the importance of good starting and finishing positions to the movement. This enhances their performance. Evaluation of the work of others is very good. Pupils comment on features of the dance they liked and give clear reasons why the movement was good. Pupils enjoy being active and using their creativity and imagination in physical activity. They learn new skills and find out how to use them in different ways. In a hockey lesson for Years 4 and 5, the pupils hold a hockey stick correctly and dribble the ball with very good close control. They stop at times and are in a position to touch the ball, so that they succeed in keeping the ball close to the stick.

124. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good. In a Year 2 gymnastics lesson, there is good teaching of specific skills. The teacher encourages the pupils to take a long stride at the end of their straight-line movement, so as to be ready to make a change of direction. The teacher manages the challenging behaviour of a few boys well and keeps the lesson moving along briskly. She emphasises the correct handling and positioning of apparatus: 'Why do we put the mats at an angle?' In a Year 1 indoor games lesson, the teacher makes useful links with science and literacy during a worthwhile warm-up: 'Give me some words to describe how you feel now' and 'What is exercise doing to our bodies?' This enables pupils to make good progress in their knowledge and understanding. The teachers pay due attention to safety in the hall and the need for careful listening to instructions. A good plenary allows the pupils to demonstrate some of the skills, which they have learnt during the lesson.

125. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3-6 is very good. Teachers make useful links with literacy, encouraging the pupils to describe the type of animal movement that was being emulated, and with science, relating movement to muscles and skeletal structure. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject and demonstrate correct techniques. In a hockey lesson this helped the pupils to hold a hockey stick correctly and to dribble the ball with very good close control. Teachers make tasks progressively more difficult, such as dribbling in and out of cones and through gateways, and this helped to develop skills. There is very good attention to the safe handling of the hockey stick. Pupils are interested and concentrate very well. In bitterly cold weather, the pupils showed commendable determination to get on with their tasks.

126. A clear policy meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The Headteacher leads the subject very well. He has modelled lessons for colleagues, worked alongside them and takes Year 6 for games himself. He recognises that areas for development include enhancing staff confidence in teaching dance and in assessing the levels of skills attained. There are currently no formal whole school procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. There is no evidence that ICT contributes to the subject. There is a good range of apparatus and equipment to support learning, though some mats are beginning to show signs of wear and tear. Internal and external accommodation is very good, particularly with the swimming pool. The curriculum is enhanced by football and netball clubs and by the opportunity for Year 6 pupils to participate in outdoor and adventurous activities

during a residential visit in Devon. In encouraging teamwork and a respect for rules, the subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' personal development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

127. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment in religious education is above the expected standards. The provision throughout the school is good. In each year group the pupils demonstrate a more mature understanding of religious ideas than is generally expected nationally. Their knowledge of the religions studied is never less than satisfactory, and in most cases it is good. All pupils, including the gifted and talented, those who have English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, are supported well and make good progress.

128. By the end of Year 2, pupils accurately describe what a mosque is for, how Muslims celebrate Ramadan, their favourite foods and special rules. More able pupils write at length about the celebration of Eid. All pupils think about and record 'things about myself' that make them unique. They can retell, in their own words, the Biblical story of the Five Loaves and Two Fishes. They write statements about important Old Testament characters, such as 'Joseph was very wise' and 'Joseph loves his family a lot', for inclusion in an attractive wall display about 'Joseph and his multicoloured coat'.

129. By the end of Year 6, pupils know about a wide range of religious symbols and the meaning they hold for believers: for example, they know about the types of decoration used by Muslims and the reason for the absence of representations of people or animals in Islamic art. They write about differences in the rites of marriage for Hindus and Jews, and discuss the significance of naming ceremonies and rites of passage. Pupils share experiences about places of worship, explaining why they are prominent within communities, how features of the buildings help their purposes to be fulfilled and what makes a place special to themselves and others. Pupils' learning and understanding are further enhanced by educational visits to places of worship such as a Hindu temple, mosque and a Church of England church.

130. Teaching and learning are good. The objectives of the lesson are clearly established and effectively communicated, helping pupils to explore their own ideas of friendship and to consider how their actions affect others. Pupils settle quickly to the set task, concentrating well and persevering with it. Sessions at the end of the lesson are used effectively to reinforce what pupils have learnt about, such as how their actions affect others, and the importance of 'sharing' as a positive human quality.

131. Throughout the school written work is carefully marked, spellings corrected and encouraging comments are recorded at the end of completed tasks. Very effective use is made of the retelling of biblical stories to improve narrative writing skills, and attractive displays of books, posters and artefacts encourage the further development of literacy skills. The development of clear assessment procedures for monitoring pupils' progress is in its early stages: the new system, based on the local authority guidelines, will be fully in place by the end of the academic year. A programme of classroom observations, together with sampling of pupils' work, is also under way.

132. Co-ordination of the subject is very good and a detailed subject development plan is in place. Resources are good, following a recent audit that involved all teachers and identified the spending priorities for this financial year. The co-ordinator has identified the increased use of ICT as an area for further development, particularly when the school is connected to the Internet. The curriculum for each year is divided into 2 or 3 units that follow the local authority recently revised programme of

study. Detailed lesson plans contain clear learning objectives for both 'learning about' and 'learning from' religion, the key skills and questions, concepts and vocabulary, and the opportunities for spiritual, social and cultural development. There is a strong positive link between religious education and the very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The subject plays a major role in achieving the school's aims, developing the pupils' self esteem and their understanding and acceptance of individual and group differences. It plays a significant role in the school's overall provision for an inclusive education.