

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CROWN WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bracknell

LEA area: Bracknell Forest

Unique reference number: 109928

Headteacher: Mr Howard Gillings

Reporting inspector: Mr Tom Shine  
24254

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> February 2002

Inspection number: 243407

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery, Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Opladen Way Bracknell Berkshire
Postcode:	RG12 0PE
Telephone number:	(01344) 485448
Fax number:	(01344) 360399
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Throssell
Date of previous inspection:	23 <sup>rd</sup> – 26 <sup>th</sup> June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
24254	Tom Shine	Registered inspector	Religious education Music	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
18919	John Kerr	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?
23056	Teresa Manzi	Team inspector	English Art and design Special educational needs	
13754	Judy Morris	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
21171	Sally Handford	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage History Equal opportunities English as an additional language	
23744	Peter Howlett	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography	

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd  
7 Hill Street  
Bristol  
BS1 5RW

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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**

Crown Wood has 219 pupils in the classes from the reception to Year 6, with 104 boys and 115 girls. In addition there are 41 children in the nursery, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. There are surplus places in the area and the roll has fallen considerably over recent years resulting in the school now being similar in size to other primary schools. The roll, including nursery children, is projected to rise to 258 in April when, following a change in the policy of the local education authority (LEA), children will be admitted to the reception in the term in which they are five. Pupil mobility is relatively high, with more pupils leaving the school than joining. When they enter the nursery children's attainment is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is below the national average and three pupils have a statement of special educational needs. In addition there is an LEA designated Language and Literacy Centre for sixty pupils with specific learning needs who attend part time on the school site. Only a few of these pupils are on the school roll. The area is a mixture of privately owned and council properties. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is small with the main groups drawn from the Indian and Chinese communities. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language (EAL) is slightly higher than in most schools, at four per cent, although most pupils are fluent in English. The main languages spoken are Cantonese, Punjabi and Hindi.

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

The standard of pupils' work is improving and is broadly in line with those expected, except in mathematics, in most subjects throughout the school. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Almost all of the teaching is satisfactory and a considerable amount is good or better, as systems to check on its quality have improved. The headteacher leads this increasingly effective school satisfactorily. Pupils with SEN and EAL, along with their peers, are included in all aspects of the life of the school, which provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Teaching and provision in the nursery are very good enabling children to learn well.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities provided through the curriculum are good.
- The school is successful in promoting pupils' self-esteem, producing highly positive attitudes to learning.
- The school is happy and harmonious and is highly valued by parents and the local community.
- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Provision for out-of-school activities is very good.

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

- Standards in mathematics throughout the school.
- Provision for children in the reception class.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) to support pupils' learning in other subjects of the curriculum.

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

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

Since the school was last inspected in June 1997, it has made satisfactory progress, overall. Teaching has improved considerably and as a result pupils are making better progress. Teachers have more effective systems to check on the quality of pupils' work and use this information in their planning. Their marking is also much better. The governing body is more involved in shaping the work of the school and

financial planning is now satisfactory. The senior management team's role is more developed and it is more involved in monitoring the work of the school. There is still work to be done on improving the strategic planning in the school. Most importantly inspection finds standards are better in most subjects but they have not improved enough in mathematics.

## 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	E	E*	D	D
Mathematics	E	E	E	E
Science	D	E	E	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

The above table shows that taking account of the performance of all pupils in the year group, standards in English were below both those in schools nationally and in similar schools at age 11 in 2001. Standards in mathematics and science were well below the national average and the average in similar schools. However these results, although not as good as they should be, mask the considerable improvement that has taken place over the past four years if the proportion reaching the expected standard (level 4) or above is taken into account. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading were in line with the national average and with those in similar schools. They were well below the national average in writing, below in mathematics and well below the standards in similar schools. When the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 3 is taken into account, pupils' standards are above average in reading and are in line with the national average in writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2, over a number of years, these results have been at a lower level than the national average, although improving in line with the national trend. In English the test results over the past four years have risen steadily by 33 per cent; in mathematics by 29 per cent and in science by 48 per cent.

Inspection findings show that children make a very good start to their education and by the time they are ready to leave the Foundation Stage most are broadly achieving the early learning goals in all of the areas of learning. However, children in the reception do not make the progress of which they are capable and above average children particularly tend to under-achieve. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly in line with expected levels, although slightly below in mathematics, and most pupils are achieving satisfactorily. They make satisfactory progress and, by the end of Year 6, standards in English and science are broadly in line with expected levels. They are below average in mathematics, although there are signs of considerable improvement in the subject compared to the recent National Curriculum test results with most pupils achieving satisfactorily. However, there is a considerable proportion of pupils achieving below average. In most other subjects, including religious education and ICT, standards are at expected levels except in art and design and design and technology for pupils in Year 6 where they are above average. In 2001, the school's targets for English and mathematics were comfortably exceeded and in the light of the progress the pupils are making, because of improved teaching, the targets for 2002 suggested by the LEA and ratified by the governors have been revised upwards. They are considered challenging but achievable.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	These are very good throughout the school and have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	This is good in and around the school, including lunchtimes and in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils have good relationships with each other and with all members of staff. They willingly accept responsibilities and these contribute effectively to their personal development.
Attendance	This is satisfactory overall, although below the national average.

Pupils' very good attitudes, personal development and good behaviour help them in their learning. They are sensitive to the needs of others.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall. In the Foundation Stage it is very good in the nursery. The teacher and support staff have a very good understanding of the curriculum and the needs of young children enabling them to make a flying start to their schooling. This high quality provision contrasts with that in the reception where teaching is unsatisfactory overall. In a minority of lessons some teaching is also unsatisfactory in Year 6. The teaching of English and literacy is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, good in Key Stage 2 and good overall. In mathematics and numeracy, teaching is satisfactory, overall. Teachers are generally confident using the national strategies and teach the basic skills well, particularly in Key Stage 2. Some teachers' expectations are not high enough. In one outstanding English lesson, the teacher gave a very confident, clear exposition of the text to be studied, based on her excellent subject knowledge, used probing open questions and monitored the progress of her pupils thoroughly. Most teachers plan their lessons well, although in a few unsatisfactory lessons planning was weak, and this led to a lack of pace and challenge for pupils, with the teachers failing to hold their pupils' interest and concentration. The school meets the needs of most pupils satisfactorily, including those with SEN and the small number with EAL. Pupils are making reasonable progress. Pupils from the school who attend sessions in the Language and Literacy Centre are very well supported and learn very well. The teaching of most of the other subjects is satisfactory overall, except in science and design and technology where it is good in Key Stage 2. Homework is set regularly, the tasks are appropriate and marking is generally good.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and reflects the school's targets to continue to raise standards in English and mathematics. It is very good in the nursery.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	These pupils are given satisfactory support in addition to the good quality of the curriculum that is available to all. Pupils from the school who attend the Centre are very well provided for.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	This is satisfactory. Pupils gain in competence and confidence as they progress through the school and achieve as well as their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall; provision for pupils' social development is very good whilst that for moral and cultural development is good and spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. Staff have due regard to their pupils' welfare and guidance. The school monitors behaviour well and procedures to monitor academic progress have improved.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements well. The school works very effectively with parents who support the good values the school promotes. The quality of information provided to parents is good, including reports on progress and information about national tests, to help parents support their children. The range of out-of-school activities is both impressive and effective.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher has done well to maintain staffing stability and morale. He is supported well by the acting deputy-head.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are supportive and committed and are more involved in the life of the school. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities satisfactorily.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. The quality of pupils' work and standards in teaching are regularly checked but more effective use could be made of this information.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall; computers in classrooms are under-used. Funds allocated for the support of pupils with SEN and for staff development are used appropriately.

Effective strategies to raise standards have been introduced successfully, but unsatisfactory teaching is not dealt with sufficiently rigorously. Staffing is satisfactory overall. Accommodation and resources are good, although the computer suite is too small to be fully effective. The school has good understanding of the principles of best value and applies them well.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children like school.</li><li>• They make good progress.</li><li>• Behaviour is good.</li><li>• Teaching is good.</li><li>• Pupils are expected to do well.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The right amount of homework.</li><li>• The information given about children's progress.</li></ul>

Inspectors found leadership and management and teaching to be satisfactory overall, otherwise they agree with parents' positive views. Inspectors found homework and pupils' reports to be good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Inspection findings show that standards in English and science when pupils are aged 11 are broadly in line with the national average but are below the national average in mathematics. These standards are better than the National Curriculum test results would suggest because of improved teaching. Teachers are increasingly confident using the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, they have higher expectations of what their pupils can achieve, particularly in Key Stage 2, and have more effective systems for monitoring and tracking pupils' attainment and progress. Similarly in Key Stage 1, teaching is better than at the last inspection and in Year 2 standards in reading are broadly average and similar to the test results. Standards in writing are considerably better than the test results indicate and in mathematics, although the majority are achieving at broadly average levels, there are still too many who are not. However, standards are marginally better than the results in the tests compared to the national picture indicate. The opening of the nursery unit since the previous inspection has had a positive impact on children's learning because of the very good provision. When children enter the nursery their attainment is generally below the average expected for children of this age. Most children, including those with SEN, make good progress and baseline assessment indicates that when they enter the reception their attainment is broadly average. Children with EAL, who are very well supported, benefit from very good provision, make very good progress and achieve well. Higher attaining children and many of average attainment in the nursery are already well on the way to achieving the early learning goals in most of the areas of learning. Many children in the nursery for example, are able to write their own names and are beginning to form letters correctly. Some children, especially those of average and above average attainment, are beginning to write simple words and use some correct letters in their writing. It is not surprising therefore that the majority of children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the time they leave the reception.
2. Based on their good progress made in the nursery, it might have been expected that many children, especially the above average, would be on course to be working well within Level 1 of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics, before leaving the reception. However, weak teaching and provision in the reception class prevents children continuing with the flying start begun in the nursery. Many children are not making the progress expected and some above average children are under-achieving in this class. Similarly, children of below average attainment do not get the same amount of support in the reception class to enable them to make good progress. Support for the one child with a statement of special educational need is good. Whilst most children are achieving the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1 they have not progressed at the same rate as they did in the nursery and are therefore not achieving to their full potential. However, great caution needs to be applied when judging standards in the reception as, at the time of the inspection, there were only 8 children of reception age in the class.
3. By the end of Year 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are appropriate for their age. Most pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, listen carefully to their teachers and, as a result, are reasonably confident when answering questions. They speak clearly when talking to the whole class and are able to identify the source of their information when, for example, they identify telling clues as to what might happen next in the text they are studying. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills have improved and are above the standards normally expected for pupils this age. They are enthusiastic when contributing to discussions in class. They discuss issues with each other effectively and give thoughtful answers, for instance *"I loved this poem because it is nonsense and you don't always want to be serious."* Pupils who attend the Language and Literacy Centre are confident in explaining what they have learned and how they have been able to identify new words.
4. By the end of Year 2, pupils' reading standards are average – better than those reported at the last

inspection. They read with appropriate expression and are able to give good reasons for why they prefer certain books with reasonable fluency and accuracy. They know the difference between 'fiction' and 'non-fiction' and are able to use the index and contents pages to locate information from non-fiction books confidently. By the end of Year 6 pupils' standards are broadly at average levels. They read a broad range of texts but have their favourite authors such as JK Rowling and are able to explain why they like the stories and characters. They are able to re-tell stories well and to give sensible predictions about what might happen next. All pupils, including those with SEN, are achieving at appropriate levels.

5. Throughout the school pupils' written work is well presented with evidence of clear progression in handwriting as pupils get older. In Year 2, the standards of pupils' work are broadly at expected levels, similar standards to those at the last inspection. Handwriting is neatly presented and consistently joined. Much of pupils' story writing is good and contains imaginative vocabulary, but punctuation is inconsistently applied, including the use of capital letters and full stops. All pupils in this year group are achieving satisfactorily, including those with SEN and EAL. In Year 6, all pupils benefit from the opportunities to read a broad range of texts, helping them write stories well, with good use of grammar and interesting vocabulary. The work covered is wide ranging and includes imaginative writing, poetry, analysis of texts and report writing. Literacy is used well in other subjects of the curriculum, such as religious education and history, but ICT is under-used to support learning. Throughout the school, standards in English are improving and are generally better than the National Curriculum test result would suggest. This is because teachers are becoming increasingly confident in using the National Literacy Strategy and the quality of teaching is improving. Although pupils who attend the Language and Literacy Centre for approximately one and a half hours per week have well below average English skills when they start, they make very good progress towards their specific learning targets. In the school, pupils with SEN make satisfactory progress in reaching the targets within their individual educational programmes in withdrawal sessions, which generally ensure that the pupils are included in the whole class start of the lesson and 'plenary' at the end. In class they are generally well supported, benefit from good teaching and progress at the same rate as their classmates.
6. In mathematics in Year 2, most pupils are achieving satisfactorily given their prior attainment. In much of their number work, pupils are reaching standards broadly appropriate for their age and developing their confidence in numeracy. However, they are less secure in mental mathematics generally and their skills in mental dexterity are below those normally found in Year 2. Attainment in other aspects of mathematics is broadly average. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress, as a result of better teaching, and standards are improving. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils' numeracy skills are satisfactory. For example, they have a sound knowledge of the 'four operations' and a secure knowledge of place value. In other aspects of mathematics pupils' standards are broadly average. However, there is a larger minority than usually found not achieving at this level; pupils in this below average group, many of whom are pupils with SEN, are not making satisfactory progress because the quality of teaching is inconsistent and this depletes the overall standard compared to the national picture.
7. Overall, standards in science are broadly typical for pupils both in Years 2 and 6 and are similar to the standards reported at the last inspection. Throughout the school, pupils with SEN and EAL make sound progress and are achieving satisfactorily compared to their previous attainment. These findings are not as inconsistent as the 2001 test results might suggest, when they were well below average because there were insufficient pupils achieving higher levels. Inspection finds most pupils are attaining average standards, but more pupils could be challenged to achieve higher standards. In Year 2, evidence from pupils' previous work shows pupils sort materials competently into appropriate groups according to given criteria. They undertake investigations into plant growth, making predictions and recording their findings effectively. By the time pupils are in Year 6 they have made satisfactory progress in developing their investigative skills and are able to make informed predictions, suggesting how these might be tested. They understand the concept of a 'fair test' and record their results clearly. ICT is insufficiently used to support their scientific work.
8. In ICT, at the last inspection, standards were judged to be above average. Standards nationally have risen overall since then and those achieved currently by pupils throughout the school are at

the levels normally expected. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily given their starting points and capabilities. In Year 2, pupils' mouse and keyboard skills are satisfactory. Pupils are able to open the correct program, find the correct file and save their work at the end of a session, although some pupils need support to complete these operations successfully. They have satisfactory word processing skills, overall. By Year 6, pupils are confident in designing and using basic spreadsheets, word processing and data handling and are able to use the technology to access information by the use of the Internet and CD Roms.

9. In religious education, standards in Years 2 and 6 are broadly satisfactory as the majority of pupils' work meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. In Year 6 much of their work is well presented. In most other subjects standards are generally at expected levels and pupils are achieving satisfactorily given their previous attainment and capabilities. In art and design and design and technology at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are attaining at levels that are above average, representing an improvement in standards since the last inspection.

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

10. When children enter the nursery they respond very well to their teacher's high expectations of behaviour and very quickly adapt to the classroom routines. Young children feel at home in the safe, very caring setting and respond well to a rich and stimulating learning environment and learn well. They are very happy to answer questions and make observations to adults; for example a child gave clear details to an inspector of what the nursery rabbit liked to eat. By the time they enter the reception class, all children, including those with SEN and EAL, have settled in well and show security and confidence in classroom routines. There is a busy purpose in much of what they do and they concentrate well and generally persevere to finish their tasks. In the reception children do not have the benefit of such a good adult-child ratio as in the nursery and although children are happy and enjoy learning, they are given too much responsibility too soon. In the activity area outside the classroom for example, too much is expected of children to organise themselves independently without the support of an adult and they do not learn at the same rate as in the nursery. Children's behaviour in the Foundation Stage is good, overall.
11. Throughout the rest of the school, pupils show very good attitudes to their work. Their positive approach helps them to learn effectively and is a strength of the school. They are very willing to take part and to learn, not only from their teachers, but also in working together in exploring learning opportunities. They are eager to suggest answers to questions and to offer ideas. At all ages, pupils are keen to tackle difficulties. In science, they plan investigations carefully and they work well together in pairs or groups in all subjects. Pupils from the school who attend the Language and Literacy Centre make very good progress and, as a result of their raised self esteem and confidence, they are able better to cope with class work. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils with EAL develop in confidence and are well motivated. They respond well to the support they get from teachers and support assistants.
12. Behaviour in the school is good. When children join Key Stage 1, they continue to develop a sense of self-discipline that helps them in their work and furthers their progress. It is only where teachers are not so skilful in managing their classes that pupils lose focus and interest in their work and become distracted. Behaviour in the playgrounds and about the school is good. As a result of the good relationships, there is very little oppressive behaviour. None was observed during the inspection. Parents report that when it occurs it is dealt with quickly and effectively. One pupil was permanently excluded from the school in the last year. This is considered to be an exceptional case.
13. Pupils have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. They have good standards of morality, supporting each other in class and in the playgrounds. For example, young pupils spontaneously help a child with very little English to understand what is required in a drama class. A pupil recently arrived from Somalia is very well looked after as she adjusts to a new life. From an early age, pupils are well able to show that they have a good understanding that there are two sides in an argument. In Year 2 for example, pupils use role-play effectively to solve problems

that involve two opposing ideas or needs.

14. As they mature, pupils use their initiative and can be relied upon to take responsibility. In the School Council, they make well-judged suggestions and represent their classes as they consider how best to spend the surplus from the tuck shop, run by pupils. The senior pupils, who become Peer Mediators to diffuse conflict, take their responsibilities very seriously. They listen well and consider matters in dispute in a very mature manner. As a result, pupils learn to resolve their own difficulties.
15. Pupils develop good relationships with each other and with their teachers and other adults in the school and these relationships foster a very good work ethic and make a significant impact on their personal development. They are courteous to adults and visitors to their class and are always keen to discuss aspects of their work. Pupils of all ages mix well in the playgrounds. There is a happy atmosphere in the school with no signs of tension.
16. In the last few years, attendance has been below the national average. In the last year it was almost two per cent below the average. The main reason for the decline is the increase in the number of holidays taken during term time, although medical reasons remain the most common cause for absence. The rate of unauthorised absence is below the national average. Parents are co-operative in reporting reasons for absence and as a result, almost all absences are accounted for. Punctuality at the start of the day is good.

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

17. Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection when, although it was described as satisfactory, 20 per cent was unsatisfactory and 7 per cent was very good or better. In this inspection, there is much less that is unsatisfactory - 7 per cent – and much more that is very good or better – 23 per cent. Twenty-one per cent of lessons were good, so a total of 44 per cent was therefore either good or better, 49 per cent being satisfactory. The teaching staff is substantially the same as at the last inspection. There is an acting deputy-head who is released from her teaching duties every afternoon for management responsibilities, including those for co-ordinating the needs of pupils with SEN. During this period she is replaced by a capable teacher on a full-time temporary contract; in the morning sessions this teacher also helps to teach groups in the setted arrangements in the upper school for English and mathematics and for booster classes.
18. The school attributes the improvement in teaching to a number of factors, including the following:
  - regular monitoring of teachers and feedback by the headteacher and attached adviser;
  - regular use of consultants from the LEA working alongside teachers to increase their confidence and skills in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies;
  - improved monitoring and assessment procedures of pupils' attainment and progress resulting in teachers' higher expectations in their planning; and
  - better use of data, including that from statutory and optional tests, enabling the setting of challenging but realistic targets for pupils.

The inspectors agree that these four elements have been crucial in improving standards in teaching.

19. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage varies considerably. In the nursery it is very good, but in the reception it is unsatisfactory. In the nursery, the teacher and nursery nurse plan and work very well together and have a very good understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The nursery teacher understands the learning needs of young children very well and ensures that her children are provided with a rich and stimulating learning environment. Children are challenged throughout the day and every opportunity is taken to extend their knowledge and understanding. Their confidence and independence is very well developed and all

staff ensure that children enjoy, and develop very good attitudes to, learning. In the nursery, teaching and provision is particularly good for personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. This exemplary provision contrasts with that in the reception where provision and teaching does not build on the outstanding start made in the nursery and children's learning is generally unsatisfactory. The weakest areas are in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. The teacher is at a disadvantage in that she has no regular adult support with whom to plan and work. Planning and general organisation are two of the main weaknesses and stem from unsatisfactory knowledge. Children in this class spend much of the day in the activity area outside the classroom with no adult support to guide or extend their learning. Within the classroom, the aims and learning objectives of lessons are not consistently made clear and much of the work provided for children is unstimulating and lacks challenge, especially for above average children. On the few occasions when there was support from an adult this was effective in helping children learn.

20. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on educational inclusion. Most teachers know their pupils very well and plan work to match their needs. The quality of teaching pupils with SEN is satisfactory overall, although good in some classes. These pupils are usually included in all classroom activities. When they are withdrawn for specialist help, teaching is very good and relates very well to pupils' targets within their individual educational plans. Very good relationships are established and the teacher's expertise is used well. There are very few pupils who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language in the school. Support for these pupils is good enabling them to make good progress in acquiring English.
21. In the Language and Literacy Centre, the good relationships with their teachers enable pupils to gain confidence and to be willing to attempt new assignments without the fear of failure. Overall, the quality of teaching in the centre is very good and pupils enjoy learning. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and they use this well to help their pupils overcome difficulties effectively. Lessons are interesting and varied and pupils are given good praise and encouragement to do well. These pupils take pride in their work and progress and are aware of what they have learned, marking it off on their target sheets.
22. In the rest of the school teaching is satisfactory overall. However this judgement masks considerable variations within subjects and key stages. The teaching of English and literacy, for example, is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, good in Key Stage 2 and good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection when nearly a third of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 2, some of the teaching is very good with one lesson being excellent. The Literacy Strategy is understood well by teachers. In the best lessons the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject is transmitted to and shared by their pupils. Teaching is purposeful and lessons move along at a brisk pace ensuring pupils' interest is maintained. The best teachers have good subject knowledge and the learning objectives of the lessons are made clear and are referred to periodically throughout the lessons. In a poetry lesson in the upper set Year 6, the class studied the text, 'The pin has a head' by Christina Rossetti. The teacher challenges the class to note that the poem tells a story and the pupils recognise that it has a particular structure and sets the scene well. The teacher uses her good subject knowledge effectively to extend her pupils' understanding that the poem creates an 'atmosphere'. Praise is used positively making pupils feel confident about their own abilities and giving them the confidence to express their views about the texts being studied with one pupil in Year 4 saying, "*I like it because it's more realistic,*" whilst another says, "*I like it better because it has a cliff-hanger!*" The arrangements for teaching English and literacy to pupils in Year 6 with SEN are not consistently effective. This is because whilst these pupils are taught in a very small setted group, the work is not always well matched to their needs and they do not have the example of more able pupils from whom to learn as role models.
23. In mathematics and numeracy, teaching is satisfactory, overall – an improvement since the last inspection when there were more unsatisfactory lessons. Teaching was satisfactory or better in most of the lessons observed: in one it was unsatisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is more secure following the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and lesson planning has improved. There is good emphasis on the teaching of basic number skills, including the

development of pupils' skills in mental dexterity, and the teaching of key vocabulary is good. Planning clearly identifies the learning intentions and specifies activities appropriate for different levels of attainment within the class. Some tasks do not consistently challenge the above average pupils. In one unsatisfactory lesson, on angles in the lowest set in Years 5 and 6, planning was weak, the pace of the oral starter at the beginning of the lesson was too slow and did not sufficiently attract nor maintain pupils' attention. The teacher spent too much time reinforcing the learning objective; 'to use a protractor to measure and draw acute and obtuse angles', without assessing whether this lower attaining set had fully grasped previously taught concepts. For example, she had not fully assessed that the class did not have a clear understanding that 'angles' are recorded as decimal notation and they made unsatisfactory progress in coming to the realisation that a straight line is the sum of both angles.

24. In science, teaching is good overall. In Years 5 and 6 it is very good and pupils learn very well. In Key Stage 1 it is satisfactory. Most teachers plan their lessons well and there is generally appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' investigative skills and scientific enquiry. In some less successful but otherwise satisfactory lessons, these aspects of the subject are under-emphasised because there is too much teacher-direction and pupils do not achieve as well as they might. In the best lessons the standard of questioning is very high and the teacher's clear explanations and very good use of time allowed for discussion motivates all pupils to make great strides in learning.
25. In ICT teaching is satisfactory overall, but most teachers do not have an awareness of the benefits of the technology for learning in other areas of the curriculum. In most other subjects, where there was sufficient evidence to make judgements, teaching is satisfactory. There were unsatisfactory lessons observed in both geography and religious education, although teaching in these subjects overall is satisfactory. In both lessons there were weaknesses in class management; the teacher failed to hold the full attention of the class and much of the work was insufficiently challenging leading to unsatisfactory learning. In design and technology, teaching is good in Key Stage 2. Teachers explain the lesson objectives very clearly and use resources very effectively particularly in giving demonstrations to their classes. They use effective open-ended questioning to challenge pupils to think for themselves and emphasise subject vocabulary well. In these lessons pupils increased their understanding and skills considerably.
26. At the meeting there was a mixed response to homework, with some parents expressing concern about its quality, especially in Year 6. Inspectors found that homework is appropriate and given regularly and is generally better than that given in similar schools. In subjects where written work is given, marking is generally good. Helpful comments are often given showing how pupils can improve, such as, "*Be careful with your letter shapes*". The quality of homework and teachers' marking has improved considerably since the last inspection.

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

27. There are marked variations in the quality of the curriculum in the Foundation Stage. In the nursery, the quality and range of learning opportunities provided is very good. Curriculum planning ensures that all elements of the Early Learning Goals are present and follows the recommendations from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), "Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage". Although the nursery and reception teachers plan together the organisation of the curriculum and activities in the reception are not implemented satisfactorily overall. This is particularly so in the areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development where provision is ineffective and some children, especially the more able, are under-achieving.
28. In both key stages the curriculum is good; it is broad, balanced and inclusive to meet the needs of its pupils, an improvement since the last inspection. It promotes the aims of the school well and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented successfully, resourced appropriately, and are having a positive impact in helping to raise standards throughout

the school. In order to raise standards further, a high proportion of time is spent teaching literacy and numeracy, particularly literacy. Whilst this is appropriate, given the attainment of pupils when they enter the school, it does mean that, with the exception of science, curricular time for other subjects veers towards the minimum required. The extra time has been spent effectively and the school is still able to offer its pupils a good range of opportunities, provide coverage of all the National Curriculum programmes of study and meet statutory requirements. The overall allocation of curriculum time is now under review and, after a trial period next term, it is anticipated that more time will be devoted to other subject areas. Appropriate policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and these continue to be adapted to suit the needs of the school. The setting arrangements in Years 5 and 6, for English and mathematics, would be even more effective if the quality of teaching was consistently good in all the groups.

29. Since last September all classes have been single-age. These arrangements have helped planning to be more effective in meeting the needs of the differing ability groups within each year and have improved continuity and progression of learning. Special booster classes, both for the above average and those needing particular help, are provided for literacy and numeracy to good effect. Long term and medium term planning is good. Weekly plans are detailed and generally focus on key objectives for groups of pupils to learn. On occasion, in some subjects, the work set for the above average pupils lacks challenge. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed well across a range of subjects, for example written work, spelling, presentation in science and foundation subjects, and the use of graphs to record data from science investigations and time lines in history.
30. The aims of the school show a strong commitment to equality of education and educational inclusion and, with the exception of disparity of provision in the Foundation Stage, there is equal access to the curriculum for all pupils. Some children enter Year 1 from the nursery without entering the reception and therefore without the benefit of a full Foundation Stage curriculum. However, the LEA is changing this policy from April. Those with SEN and EAL, along with their peers, have appropriate access to all aspects of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Most pupils with SEN are given effective support in class where teachers plan appropriately for their needs. Teacher assistants often make notes of their achievements and difficulties. Pupils with statements receive the support specified. A small number of pupils, with specific learning difficulties, attend the attached Language and Literacy Centre. This unit is managed by the LEA and is a good resource for several schools in the area, including Crown Wood. Most pupils visit the centre for a one and a half hour session per week when they receive very good support and are given effective strategies to improve their reading and writing.
31. For the very few pupils with EAL who are in the early stages of acquiring English, the school receives advice from a teacher funded through the local authority Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant. This teacher provides helpful guidance to teachers in the school and produces good quality resources for teachers in developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of English.
32. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good. Health, sex education, the use and misuse of medicines and drugs, and citizenship, are taught as part of PSHE and through the science curriculum, within the context of caring relationships. At the time of the last inspection, sex and drugs education was limited to pupils in Year 6 but this has been extended to include Year 5 and is an improvement. Pupils are provided with helpful information that promotes positive attitudes to a healthy lifestyle.
33. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and is one of the strengths of the school. Pupils are able to participate in a broad range of clubs during the lunch hour and after school. These include the recorder group, choir, creative clubs, drama, French, gardening, line dancing and computer skills. Pupils are also able to join clubs for Kwik cricket, rugby, netball and football as well as to take part in various sporting activities with other schools, where they are often very successful. The local vicar is also closely involved and coaches the rugby club. The school also provides booster classes for literacy and numeracy and after-school study support. The curriculum is further enriched through a good range of visits and visitors. Pupils visit different local places of interest such as Legoland, Beale Park, Hatfield House and the Imperial War Museum.

Provision in these areas makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Visiting artists and musicians such as those involved in the Brass Project enrich pupils' creative experience.

34. There are satisfactory links with the local community that makes a positive contribution to pupils' experience and learning. Members of the local community swell the audiences at school performances, such as the summer production by pupils in Year 6. The school has good links with local secondary schools that help to prepare pupils well for their transfer to their next stage of education. There are effective links with outside specialist services for pupils with SEN that give good support to the school, such as educational psychology and speech therapy. The school is also involved with an inclusion project with a special school where pupils from both schools work alongside each other well during some school sessions. The curriculum benefits from these links that enhance pupils' personal development.
35. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. It is enhanced through assemblies and religious education, where pupils learn about world religions. There are good relationships with the local Churches and visiting clergy take assemblies well on a regular basis. Pupils enter assembly to an atmosphere of calm created by well-chosen music and high expectations of behaviour by the teachers. The focus is mainly Christian and pupils sing hymns well, take part in prayers and have time for reflection. 'Achievement Assemblies' provide an opportunity to create a sense of occasion and celebrate pupils' sustained effort in various aspects of school life, giving a good boost to pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. Pupils are encouraged to develop an appreciation of, and to wonder at, the natural world during science and art lessons, while in PSHE pupils gain an understanding of the meaning of relationships and emotions.
36. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. All staff provide good role models for the pupils and most have a positive and consistent approach to the management of behaviour. The use of rewards, such as the collection of house points and high profile presentations in 'Achievement Assemblies', promote pupils' self esteem and respect for others effectively. Staff are effective in making pupils aware of what is acceptable and help them to develop an appropriate idea of what is right and wrong. Moral issues are taught well and pupils are well behaved in and around the school. Pupils discuss and decide on their own class rules, which are displayed in the classroom and which all pupils respect. The school is rightly proud of the success of its peer mediation group, which involves pupils from Years 5 and 6 who are trained to work with their peers to diffuse playground conflict.
37. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. It creates a strong sense of identity and is a very caring community in which there is respect for others' needs, interests and feelings and pupils are well supported. They work together well in pairs or groups during classroom activities, supporting each other, sharing resources and discussing their work sensibly. Pupils are democratically elected and are proud to represent their class, as members of the School Council where they propose and discuss a wide variety of issues. These include planning events such as an Easter disco, the provision of more resources for use during playtimes, which charities to support and how to improve the school environment. Minutes of the meetings are prepared and placed on display to inform pupils of planned proposals and to ask for further ideas. The School Council also runs a shop three times a week, staffed by volunteers from the upper school. The profits from sales are used to resource some of the agreed proposals that make school life even more enjoyable. Through their sporting activities, pupils are developing a healthy sense of competition, an awareness of rules and pride in their team's achievements.
38. There is good provision for pupils' cultural development. The quality of art and opportunities to enjoy music is good and these subjects enhance pupils' cultural awareness and knowledge. Through history, pupils are aware of their own culture from the past. There are opportunities through the curriculum to learn of the variety of faith traditions representing Britain's multicultural population through religious education and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Pupils' cultural awareness is extended by participation in musical festivals arranged by the LEA, visits to historical places of interest such as Hatfield House, the Imperial War Museum, and by visiting

musicians.

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

39. At the time of the last inspection the provision for the support and guidance of pupils was good. This remains the case. Teachers know their pupils well and are very mindful of their welfare and guidance. As a result of new initiatives, the behaviour of pupils has improved, as has the assessment and monitoring of their academic progress. The procedures for introducing children and their parents to the school are well planned and effectively ensure that new children settle quickly to classroom routines and their new surroundings. This smooth transition to the nursery is helped by a sensible involvement of parents at the start of the school day until the nursery staff gather the children to take part in the early routines.
40. Teachers take time for the consideration for each pupil in their care, particularly those who are thought to be making less progress than expected. Parents of these pupils are informed immediately. In Years 5 and 6, effective booster classes are provided for English and mathematics before school. In the nursery and infant departments, family literacy courses have an immense benefit on children's progress and personal development. There is a very good response by parents to these courses. This initiative has been extended by groups of parents who have clubbed together themselves to help their children through the National Curriculum tests.
41. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good. With the co-operation of parents, almost all absence is accounted for. The school reviews attendance records regularly and meets with parents whose child's progress is being impeded by poor attendance. Many of these parents take their children on holiday during term time. The school takes every opportunity to point out the effect this will have, particularly on those pupils who are achieving below their potential. The Education Welfare Officer visits the school regularly and works closely with families whose children have a poor record of attendance or punctuality.
42. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. Pupils help to formulate classroom rules and are well aware of what constitutes acceptable behaviour. Behaviour has improved since the last inspection, partly as a result of the peer mediation scheme, where older pupils help younger ones to resolve their differences. The scheme is well managed and is effective in reducing minor instances of oppressive and unfriendly behaviour. In more serious cases, including bullying, which both pupils and parents agree are rare, staff intervene quickly and effectively.
43. Procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' health and safety are good. The health and safety policy of the school is thorough. Staff and governors make regular checks of the premises and defects are quickly dealt with. All staff are familiar with their responsibilities for child protection. Accidents and injuries are treated promptly by the staff who are qualified in first aid. Accurate records are kept and parents are informed as soon as possible.
44. The programme for PSHE is well-developed. This has been brought up to date to include elements of education in citizenship. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to discuss issues concerning their health. Sex education and drugs awareness are also included. Some elements of the programme are very well taught through role-play and circle time, when pupils can explore problem solving and support of their peers together with their teachers. As a result, pupils were seen to learn with each other and from each other.
45. The provision for pupils with statements of SEN is good and meets fully the identified needs of these pupils. They are valued and expected to reach their full potential. Pupils in the Language and Literacy Centre are given appropriate praise and support for their efforts. Consequently their self-esteem is increased and they try hard to do their best. Very good records are kept of pupils' work and successes and this is sent home and copies are given to the school.
46. The school has made a good response to the concerns in the previous inspection report about a lack of strategies for assessing pupils' progress and making use of the information in teachers'

planning. Soon after children enter the nursery and reception they are assessed, using the appropriate local authority recommended screening tests designed for the relevant age range of the children. Procedures for observation and assessment are very good in the nursery and used well in the planning of work. They are satisfactory in the reception, but the information is not used well enough to guide the planning of work for individual children and groups of children. When children move into Year 1, they are assessed in English and mathematics and targets are set for the end of that year. In Year 2, information from assessment is used to predict the levels that individual pupils are likely to achieve in the national tests. In the intervening period between the national tests in Years 2 and 6 the school uses optional tests for Years 3, 4 and 5 for English and mathematics. Reading, spelling and mathematics tests are administered regularly. The results of these tests are monitored and used effectively to set targets for future learning and to forecast the level pupils are expected to achieve the following year. The school's targets for each year group are constructed from these individual pupils' targets. In addition, teachers track the progress of individual pupils in English and mathematics. In Year 6, pupils are also set targets for science and it is planned to extend this to the other years shortly.

47. The data collected is analysed to provide the school with helpful information. Recently, for example, it has enabled the school, in Year 6, to identify areas of weakness in pupils' knowledge and understanding and skills in science, which, as a consequence, are being addressed. It is anticipated that this will help to raise standards and results by the end of Year 6. To assist staff in tracking each individual pupil's progress all relevant information, such as test results, National Curriculum Records of Achievement and record sheets for literacy and mathematics, is passed to the next teacher. However the common agreed format for record keeping is not consistently applied throughout the school. Teachers also meet to examine and moderate samples of work in English and mathematics. Judgements are made about the standard each pupil is achieving and comments are made on them and kept alongside their Record of Achievement book. All pupils are involved in setting their own targets in English and mathematics and these are placed at the beginning of their exercise books for easy access. Teachers' use of these monitoring and assessment procedures play a significant part in raising standards in both teaching and pupils' attainment.

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

48. Parents think highly of the school. It works very effectively with parents who in turn support the good values it promotes. They say that their children feel secure, they like coming to school and are eager to learn. They are pleased with their children's progress and with the quality of the teaching. They are very happy to come into school to discuss their children's progress and they appreciate the concern that the staff and headteacher take if their child is experiencing difficulties. Parents of pupils with statements of SEN are invited to attend annual reviews of their children's progress. Most parents are very happy with the provision given. Other parents of pupils with SEN are given a record of their children's work and are invited to attend review meetings. Their consent is needed before their child attends the Language and Literacy Centre. A minority of parents is unhappy with the amount of homework set. The inspectors consider that homework is set correctly and regularly. There are review meetings to discuss pupils' progress which are well publicised. For working parents who may have been unable to attend, the school makes provision for special meetings to discuss their children's progress. In addition, annual reports to parents are well produced and informative.
49. The quality of information for parents is good. This has improved since the last inspection. The prospectus is well produced and is helpful to new parents. The governors' annual report contains a full range of information about the school. Annual reports to parents are well produced and are clearly presented so they can understand how their children have progressed and at what level they are working. They state what pupils know and can do and suggest suitable targets for improvement in the main subjects. Inspectors therefore do not agree with the minority of parents who feel that information on their children's progress is limited. Letters to parents are friendly. They are direct where necessary, especially those to encourage better attendance. The school keeps in close contact by letter or telephone if there is a concern about a pupil's work or personal development. In matters of attendance, a minority of parents does not support the school. They

fail to consider the effect that non-attendance, for whatever reason, has on their children's progress.

50. Parental support for children's learning at school and at home is very good. There is an active School Association and parent volunteers come into school to help and support its various activities. A parental workshop is run for mothers of younger children to help them to understand how children begin to recognise language and how they start to form written words. Mothers are given strategies to help their children in the home, by reading and television and in the wider world, in shops and the countryside. Parents have found this initiative so effective, they have formed their own groups to help their children in the preparation for the National Curriculum tests. The school has produced an imaginative pack to advise parents on how to help their children prepare for the tests – the 'Satpak'. This is an effective document that gives parents helpful hints in supporting their children in literacy and numeracy.

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

51. The school has a positive ethos that reflects its values and aims appropriately. It is committed to improvement and to ensuring that standards are raised so that it does its best by all of its pupils. It is also aware that it is not yet there, although the action taken since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
52. The quality of leadership and management of the headteacher, the senior management and the governing body has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Most of the issues identified then have been satisfactorily addressed. The middle management team has recently been formed and its role is still evolving. The monitoring of teaching and the support of specialists working alongside teachers in the classrooms has improved steadily but, over time, there has been considerable improvement. However, there is a lack of rigour in monitoring the performance of the few teachers whose teaching is unsatisfactory. Effective strategies to raise standards have begun to be introduced successfully, particularly in terms of teachers' improved awareness of the standards to which each individual pupil should aspire. This is because of the improved systems for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress. There is still work to be done to improve the system for assessing pupils' attainment still further. For example, they are not applied equally well throughout the school or in every subject, and the school's method of record keeping is inconsistently applied. The role of the senior management team in providing effective support in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school has been strengthened. Members of this team observe lessons and provide feedback to staff, helping to raise the quality of teaching.
53. The school is fully committed to educational inclusion in its aims: *"The school will expect the highest standards of achievement by all pupils, regardless of ability, ethnic origin or gender, within the guidelines of the LEA social inclusion policy"*. It is on its way to achieving these aims, but currently there is too much variation in the standard of provision between the nursery and reception, and between the sets for English and mathematics for older pupils in the school for all to achieve to their full potential. The school has a strong commitment towards its pupils with SEN. The SENCO, who is new to the role, has organised the assessment procedures and records for these pupils well. The school has decided to continue to retain an SEN register to ensure these pupils' progress is tracked accurately. Pupils' individual educational plans are specific and helpful to teachers.
54. Although the Language and Literacy Centre is managed by the LEA there are good relationships between the teacher-in-charge and the school benefits from her expertise. She has been able to give good support to the school by helping staff to write clear individual educational plans.
55. At the last inspection the governors were insufficiently involved in the work of the school and there were weaknesses in financial planning: the school improvement plan did not link funding effectively with educational priorities. Although it has difficulties attracting parents, the governing body is involved satisfactorily in the work of the school and it fulfils its statutory responsibilities appropriately. Its role, in providing a sense of direction for the school, in acting as a 'critical friend' and in calling the school to account for the standards and quality of education, is developing but there is still some way to go. There are appropriate committees for finance, the curriculum and

buildings and the environment. Performance management procedures are in place and appropriate targets set for the headteacher, including raising standards in mathematics and the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.

56. The management of the school's finances has improved since the last inspection and budget planning is satisfactory, overall. The governing body, through its finance committee, is appropriately involved in drafting and finalising the budget and is supported well by the headteacher and the school bursar. The school has good understanding of the principles of best value and applies these well. It carefully considers planned expenditure, comparing costs and seeking competitive value for money. For example, the millennium project has led to noticeable improvement in the quality of the school's accommodation for a relatively modest cost. Although key spending decisions are based appropriately on the school's priorities for development, the specific linking of planned expenditure to the school improvement plan is a recent development. However, this plan still contains weaknesses; for example it does not contain estimates of the costs of the developments. Elements of the budget are delegated appropriately to staff, based on a 'bidding system'. However, subject development plans are not fully costed. Funds allocated for the support of pupils with SEN and EAL are used appropriately. Funds for staff development are used effectively.
57. Systems for controlling and monitoring the budget are appropriate. The school bursar manages the day-to-day finances and procedures well. She provides regular financial reports to the governing body and the finance committee is kept clearly informed on financial matters. She also provides budget holders with up-to-date financial information. A recent audit found most issues to be in order and the school has attended to its minor recommendations. In the last full financial year expenditure exceeded income by approximately eight thousand pounds. This overspend was easily absorbed by a comfortable balance, leaving a small but prudent surplus to be carried forward to the next financial year.
58. The school makes satisfactory use of ICT, overall. The school office is managed and organised well and makes effective use of the technology for administrative purposes. The school's ICT suite is used well to support the development of pupils' skills, although it is too small to be fully effective; the computers in the classrooms are insufficiently used.
59. The experience and qualifications of the teaching staff provide a satisfactory match for the needs of the curriculum. In the upper school, where pupils are taught in groups organised according to their prior attainment for literacy and numeracy, teachers' skills are not consistently matched to the needs of the pupils and slow their rate of progress. In the Foundation Stage the reception class is inappropriately set up to meet the needs of the children.
60. The number and qualifications of support staff are satisfactory. Each individual is encouraged to develop their skills and expertise, which are used effectively. Most are fully involved in the class work, although some do not use their time efficiently during the introductory part of the literacy and numeracy lessons, representing an inefficient use of resources. The school makes effective use of support staff during ICT lessons and they make a valued contribution to the life of the school in breaks and at lunchtime.
61. The accommodation is good overall. Extensions and improvements in enlarging, for example, some classrooms, have been considered carefully and implemented effectively. These improvements have provided good value for money and have enhanced the learning opportunities for pupils. The school has very good facilities, such as a good-sized studio for music and drama, and there are impressive grounds and playing fields. The library is not appropriately set up for younger children. The catalogue system does not match their needs and many of the books are physically inaccessible. The school makes satisfactory use of its accommodation. The learning resources are good, overall, although in subjects such as mathematics, geography and physical education, teaching resources are satisfactory.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

62. To raise standards and improve the quality of education, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- i. **raise standards in mathematics throughout the school by:**
    - raising the expectations of teachers that all pupils will achieve their best (*paragraphs 23,98* );
    - monitoring the quality of teaching (*paragraphs 52, 102*).
  
  - ii. **improve the provision for children in the reception class by:**
    - improving the teacher's subject knowledge (*paragraphs 19, 68, 69, 78*);
    - challenging the above average children to reach their full potential (*paragraphs 19, 68, 72, 75* );
    - ensuring there are adequate staff to support children in the activity area (*paragraphs 19, 68, 78, 84*).

- iii. **extend the use of ICT to enable pupils to support their work in other subjects, including literacy, numeracy and science by:**
- improving teachers' knowledge and awareness of the benefits and potential of the technology in other areas of the curriculum (*paragraphs 5, 7, 25, 88, 98, 105, 112, 121, 132, 150*).

#### **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- Ensure that above average pupils are sufficiently and consistently challenged in science (*paragraph 107*);
- apply the system for record keeping consistently (*paragraph 47*);
- ensure the financial costs of developments are included in the school improvement plan (*paragraph 56*);
- reorganise the computer suite so that more pupils can use the technology at the same time (*paragraphs 58, 132*); and
- reorganise the library to make it more suitable for younger pupils (*paragraphs 61, 87, 92*).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	70
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	15	15	34	5	0	0
Percentage	1.5	21.5	21.5	48.5	7	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	19.5	219
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	28

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	46

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	32

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.8
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	17	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	13	16
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	30	27	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (76)	75 (78)	83 (90)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	14	15
	Girls	14	12	12
	Total	29	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (78)	72 (86)	75 (82)
	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	22	32	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	18	21
	Girls	29	18	27
	Total	41	36	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (51)	67 (44)	89 (65)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	19	21
	Girls	24	22	27
	Total	36	41	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (51)	76 (43)	89 (70)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	5
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	200
Any other minority ethnic group	7

*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)	10.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.8
Average class size	26.6

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	110

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	1
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	616798
Total expenditure	624564
Expenditure per pupil	2213
Balance brought forward from previous year	20660
Balance carried forward to next year	12894

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	258
Number of questionnaires returned	61

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	30	7	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	48	43	7	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	59	5	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	44	23	5	2
The teaching is good.	38	56	2	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	43	18	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	20	2	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	43	2	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	44	44	7	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	57	34	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	48	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	34	5	5	10

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

The inspection team generally supports the parents' positive views although they judged leadership and management and teaching to be satisfactory overall and homework and pupils' reports to be good.

## **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. Since the previous inspection, a nursery unit has been opened at the school which, because of the very good provision and teaching, has a positive impact on children's learning enabling them to make a flying start to their education. Children enter the nursery with attainment below the average expected for children of their age. They make good progress and enter the reception class with attainment broadly average for children aged five. A number of children make very good progress and achieve results in baseline assessment, undertaken on entry to the reception, which are above average. The majority of children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning<sup>1</sup> by the time they enter Key Stage 1.
64. Higher attaining children, and many of average attainment, in the nursery are already well on the way to achieving the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children with English as an additional language achieve well because they benefit from the very good level of adult support and provision in the nursery. However, children do not make the same rate of progress in the reception class because of weak teaching and provision. Support for the one child with a statement of SEN is good.
65. The majority of children who enter the school attend the nursery. Currently children enter the nursery in the second term after their third birthday. Younger children attend for afternoon sessions and older children, who have had their fourth birthday, attend in the mornings. Children enter at the beginning of each term and, as new children move into the nursery, older children transfer to the reception class. The outcome of this is that children spend different lengths of time in the nursery and in the reception, so that not all children who transfer to Key Stage 1 have had similar experiences in the Foundation Stage. The LEA policy is that children transfer to the reception in the term after which they reach their fifth birthday. So summer-born children go straight into Year 1 and have no reception experience, although they have attended the nursery. This policy is to change from April when 'rising fives' will be admitted to, and will have at least a term in, reception.
66. There are currently 41 children in the nursery, with 23 attending the morning session and 18 attending the afternoon session. Eight children in the reception class, who have been in the class since January, are working alongside four in Year 1, and the standards judged during the inspection in such a small cohort may not be typical of those found in the class at other times of the year.
67. Teaching in the nursery is very good and all adults have a very good understanding of the learning needs of young children and a very good knowledge of the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum so that children are provided with a rich and stimulating learning environment. Every opportunity is taken to extend children's knowledge and understanding. Children are supported well to develop their confidence and independence and to have good attitudes to learning. Provision is very good and the nursery provides a very caring supportive environment in which young children feel safe and learn well.
68. Teaching in the reception class is unsatisfactory overall. Children are not taught satisfactorily in the areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, so that the above average children are under-achieving. Procedures for observation and assessment are very

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<sup>1</sup> Personal, social and emotional development; Communication, language and literacy; Mathematical development; Knowledge and understanding of the world; Physical development; Creative development.

good in the nursery and used well in the planning of work. They are satisfactory in the reception, but the information is not used well enough in planning the work for individual children and groups as the teacher's subject knowledge is weak. In addition, the organisation of the curriculum and activities is unsatisfactory. There is a lack of direction and purpose in much that is provided so that children are not receiving good enough learning experiences. Where they leave the classroom and work in the outside activity area, too much is expected of children to organise themselves independently without the intervention of an adult, so that much of the time spent in this area is unproductive.

69. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has ensured that all elements of the Early Learning Goals are planned for and follows the recommendations of the new Guidance. The planned learning opportunities across the areas of learning for children of this age are broad and balanced. An up-to-date policy is in place that covers the whole of the Foundation Stage. In the reception class a shortened version of the literacy and numeracy strategy is planned for but, because the teacher has an imperfect understanding of what is required, this is unsatisfactory. Links between the nursery and reception are unsatisfactory and the very good provision in the nursery is not continued into the reception. When there is adult support in the reception this is successful in helping children to learn.

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

70. By the time they transfer to Year 1 most children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals, because of the very good start they make in the nursery.
71. Provision in the nursery is very good. Parents are encouraged to help settle their children when they bring them in for the morning or afternoon session. Many of the children are clear about routines and know what is expected of them. They behave very well and provide good role models for children recently arrived in the class. Relationships between children and with adults are good. Children happily choose from a range of activities, showing a good degree of independence. The teacher ensures that activities are provided which encourage children to co-operate and share, and younger children who are less confident to play with others are encouraged by the very good quality of adult intervention in their play. Children concentrate and persevere at tasks and work hard. Moments are taken after registration for children to talk about their feelings. Children learn about the beliefs of others, for example through sharing in the Diwali celebrations of one of their classmates. They participate in charitable activities, such as 'Children in Need'.
72. In the reception class children have a sound understanding of routines. They answer the register and smile at each other, saying "*Good morning everyone*". They understand the system of taking the register to the office and are confident and happy to do so. A number of children find it difficult to concentrate and listen for any length of time and soon become restless in whole class activities and group activities. This is often because they are not clear what is expected of them or the activities do not sustain or challenge them. Where instructions are clear and children know what to do, such as in lessons in physical development, they behave well and try hard to achieve the tasks. Generally, management of their behaviour is inconsistent and an unsatisfactory element of the teaching.

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

73. By the time children enter Year 1 the majority are likely to have achieved the Early Learning Goals. Children in the nursery make good progress. A small number of children, in the nursery and reception, of below average attainment are being monitored for SEN and are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals.
74. Children's speaking and listening skills in the nursery are good, as children respond well to the very good teaching. Children are provided with very good opportunities to develop their communication skills in whole class discussions, where the teacher uses very good questioning skills to encourage children to share their knowledge and experience. The nursery nurse and

voluntary parent helpers are skilled at encouraging children to talk and express their opinions and there is very good adult intervention in their play, for example, when they build on their imaginative play in the 'Queen of Heart's' kitchen. Because there is no regular additional adult support in the reception class, the good gains made in the nursery are not being built on satisfactorily. Whole class discussions are often unsatisfactory because the teacher does not ensure that all children are listening and there are not enough occasions where children can contribute and develop their ideas.

75. Many children in the nursery and reception are able to write their own names and are beginning to form letters correctly. The average and above average attaining children are beginning to write simple words and use some correct letters in their independent writing. There is a very good emphasis in the nursery on the development of narrative and children contribute their stories to class books, which are illustrated by drawings and photographs. Children also write for different purposes. They label and write captions to drawings of mini-beasts' homes and write an adventure story for a ladybird 'the ladybird met a fly and wanted to play with it'; they write a letter to Santa and an invitation to a friend. Writing skills are satisfactorily built on in the reception, however there is much less evidence of the rich range of writing experiences which are part of the nursery provision. Above average children are not guided or challenged enough to improve their skills.
76. Children in the nursery and reception develop their knowledge of letter sounds well. There are regular daily sessions in which children show that they can recognise and name initial letter sounds. In the nursery the teacher uses a selection of soft toys and puppets to encourage children to make up rhymes about the 'Queen of Hearts', such as "*she met a bear who wasn't there*". In the reception, children begin to identify rhyming words in the rhyme of 'Monday's child', but the planned activity for children to find their own rhymes is not accomplished. Children in the nursery and reception take books home and read regularly with their parents or carers. In the reception, children of average and above average attainment are keen to read and talk about their books and use a mixture of initial letter sounds and picture clues to help them.

### **Mathematical development**

77. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals. In the nursery there are many good opportunities for children to develop mathematical awareness through the provision of well thought out activities. Children thread pasta shapes to make repeating patterns, use game cards to make pairs and throw a dice to identify the number of hearts on cards. They solve problems to decide how many more or less they need to add to a number to make 5. Adult support is very good and very good questioning helps children learn well.
78. Teaching is unsatisfactory in the reception and is not building on the good knowledge and skills developed in the nursery. During the inspection the focus was on the ordering and counting of the days of the week. In whole class sessions this is barely satisfactory because the objectives of the activity are not made clear to children and most children are already confident in counting to 10. Group activities are not clearly explained and too much is expected of children to work independently. Children therefore do not make the progress expected.

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

79. Children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals because of the very high quality of provision in the nursery. Children make a good start in learning about nature and the environment. They observe mini-beasts and take great care of the class pet rabbit and know what food it needs – "*it likes carrots*". They carefully make prints of their hands and feet and record information effectively about the family and home. They are aware of what food is healthy for them. There are regular opportunities for cooking, which enhances their language and mathematical knowledge. They explore light and dark and make good shadow puppets. When they study the clothes and toys they had as babies, and the photographs of their mothers when they were young, they develop a good sense of time and the past. They talk enthusiastically about where Barnaby Bear is going on holiday.

80. During the inspection there were few opportunities observed of children developing their knowledge and understanding of the world, beyond learning the days of the week. Children in the nursery and reception class use the computer and operate the mouse satisfactorily to click on icons in order to play computer games. There is good support for this aspect and children were observed learning keyboarding skills with the help of an ICT specialist in the nursery.

## Physical development

81. The majority of children are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals. The nursery playground provides very good opportunities for children to move about and use space. In both the nursery and reception, children use wheeled vehicles; in the nursery they follow tracks and learn about road safety. There is adequate equipment in the Foundation Stage for children to climb and balance.
82. In sessions in the hall, children learn to move in a variety of ways and in the reception they move imaginatively across and over equipment. In a good lesson in the reception in the outside playground, children developed their skills well in using ropes and balls and throwing beanbags to land on a target. They hold pencils and paintbrushes correctly. In the reception they are able to cut, stick and join effectively and in the nursery they use recycled material confidently to make vehicles and houses and weave paper strips.

## Creative development

83. The majority of children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals. In the nursery the children experiment with colour and texture to decorate their 'Queen of Hearts' crowns. They cut out shapes effectively, using play dough, make paper collage and are introduced to a variety of paint effects, such as printing, bubble painting and marbling. They explore kitchen utensils confidently and compose their own songs. They play imaginatively in the role-play area, which is adapted so that children are given a wide range of creative and imaginative settings, such as a garage, a shop and a health centre.
84. Opportunities are more limited in the reception because many of the activities to promote creative development take place outside the classroom. Without adult supervision and intervention, activities such as role-play in the hospital role-play area, and imaginative play with construction material and toys, tends to be under-developed. On the few occasions when there was additional adult supervision children made good progress, such as when they were supported well to learn and sing nursery rhymes happily and confidently.

## ENGLISH

85. Overall inspection finds that standards in English are broadly in line with the national average when pupils are seven and eleven years old. Given their starting points when they entered the school, the achievements of all pupils, including those with SEN and the few pupils with EAL, are satisfactory. These standards are better than the recent National Curriculum tests would suggest in most respects. The results of the 2001 tests in reading for pupils aged seven showed that the standard was in line with the national average and the average for similar schools. But the standards in writing were well below both those achieved nationally and in similar schools. In both areas of English there was a large percentage of pupils just reaching the national level or who were working at well below this. However, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 3 in reading was above average and in writing it was close to the national average. In the most recent tests for eleven-year-olds for 2001, standards were below the national average and below those in similar schools. This was because although the proportion achieving the expected standard (level 4) was in line with the national average, there were fewer pupils than average achieving the higher level 5. The trend over time indicates that the results for eleven-year-olds broadly reflect the national trend, although at a slightly lower level. Standards in English have improved in both key stages since the last inspection because teaching is better.
86. Pupils have speaking and listening skills that are appropriate for their age by the time they are in Year 2. Most pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. In Year 2, pupils used their good vocabulary when they described 'tar' as 'black and sticky'. These pupils listen to their teacher well and extend their understanding by considering why things happen in stories. In one lesson they suggested that the main character in the story was 'lazy'. In groups, they listen attentively and are patient when waiting for their turn to give their point of view. By the time they

are in Year 6 pupils are enthusiastic when contributing to discussions in class and their speaking and listening skills are good. They respond to questions confidently and describe clearly the work they have done. In an after-school drama club, pupils, mainly from Years 5 and 6, were studying 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and rehearsed scenes confidently involving the main characters, 'Hermia', Lysander' and Demetrius'. Pupils were able to give critical but helpful and clear comments on the performance of pairs enacting two of the three characters. Pupils who attend the Language and Literacy Centre are given the opportunity to explain what they have learned and how they have worked out new words. They are aware of the progress they are making and grow in confidence.

87. By the end of Year 2 reading standards are average. Pupils with SEN make satisfactory progress. The few pupils with EAL are well supported and make good progress. Most pupils like to read both in school and at home. They read with expression and give good reasons as to why they like certain books. They understand how characters might feel in a certain situation and are able to express how they would feel. One child said, "*I would feel alone, scared and sad.*" They know how to find information from non-fiction books, by using the index and contents pages, but the library is designed for older pupils and is not suitable for pupils this age. By the end of Year 6 pupils have their preferred authors and give sensible reasons why they like certain books and why they have chosen their books: "*I had read the blurb and thought that it might be interesting.*" They re-tell the stories they have read well. Pupils with well above average skills are encouraged to use these skills by taking opportunities to read to a large audience. They know how to use dictionaries and thesauruses effectively. Pupils in Key Stage 2 become increasingly confident using the library and by Year 6 are fully able to use the classification system confidently to find information on specific topics. Pupils with SEN make good progress and are reading at an appropriate standard.
88. Pupils' writing across the school is neat and their work is well presented. The school's handwriting policy is followed by all teachers and is helping to raise standards. Throughout the school pupils write for a variety of different purposes, including poems and stories. Pupils in Year 2 use good vocabulary such as 'greedy' and 'selfish'. They have a good understanding of the feelings of characters in stories as they are given good opportunities to 'act' them out. They are able to write short sentences clearly and with good use of grammar. One child wrote, "*Yesterday I was late for school*" whilst another used vivid description, "*The forest was haunted with wolves*". In Year 5, pupils plan and improve their work. When they work on a text to explain 'Why the world is round' they examine carefully a layout of a page so that they learn how to give information clearly. They are given choices so that pupils use these skills to write other 'information texts', such as 'why it is better to live in a town'. Generally the oldest pupils, in Year 6, use the good range of reading texts given to them by their teachers to help them write stories well, for example 'The Railway Children' and 'A Christmas Carol'. They examine and improve their work, using good starts to their stories such as "*The dreadful change came quite suddenly*" and "*It was a long, hard day at school*". Pupils in Year 6 use increasingly imaginative language, "*The girls were fascinated by the vastness of the universe*". Pupils' spelling is often accurate and, when mistakes are made, pupils have often made reasonable stabs at spelling phonetically correctly, for example, 'mouldy' is written as 'moldy'. The amount of writing across the curriculum is good overall and pupils' literacy skills are used well to support learning in other subjects such as science, history, geography and religious education. Some pupils are achieving well, but the majority, including those with SEN, are achieving satisfactorily. ICT to word-process, redraft and edit is under-used and under-developed to support literacy throughout most of the school.
89. The teaching of English is satisfactory for pupils in Key Stage 1. It is good overall for the older pupils. Teaching has improved overall since the last inspection, when about a third of lessons was unsatisfactory. In this inspection there were no unsatisfactory lessons and many that were good or better. The improvement in the quality of teaching is the main reason why standards are rising. The 'Literacy Strategy' is understood well by teachers. Some teachers are so confident with this that they modify it to meet the classes' specific needs very well. The best teachers are enthusiastic for the subject and this enthusiasm rubs off on the pupils. They know what they are expected to learn and they focus upon the aim of the lesson, which is well planned. At the end of the lesson pupils report back enthusiastically on what they have learned. In these lessons the

teaching is clearly focused and often brisk, keeping the pupils alert and aware of what needs to be learnt. They are challenged by good, open questions. Individual pupils are targeted for questions so that all are attentive and ready to be asked. Teachers' questioning skills are well developed and they are generally sensitive about when to intervene and do not wait too long for an answer, to help pupils make progress. They are responsive to pupils' ideas and use their misunderstandings to develop the thinking of the class. Support assistants are generally used well so that they make assessments to help teachers plan future work. This good practice is not consistently applied however, and some assistants sit for too long and are inactive and ineffective. Most teachers mark pupils' work well, telling pupils where they have done well and how they can improve. Whilst all lessons observed were at least satisfactory, some lessons for the youngest pupils lack challenge and a sense of urgency and the attention and concentration of some pupils wavers. Appropriate targets have been set for all pupils in Year 6. The setting arrangements work reasonably well but would be more effective if teaching in all sets was up to the level of the best. In a small set for pupils who are below average, including those with SEN, the teacher is not the strongest; the work does not always match their needs and they do not have the example of more able pupils to spark ideas. For example, these pupils were asked to read a nonsense poem that was too hard for their limited reading skills.

90. In the Language and Literacy Centre teaching is very good and the pupils from Crown Wood make very good progress. Pupils are rewarded and given a great sense of achievement. Learning is made fun and pupils know what they have learned that day and mark it off on their target sheets. They photocopy their work to take home and to show their teacher. They are given very good strategies to help them remember words; for instance by associating them with pictures. Their self-esteem and confidence is improved and their determination to succeed is increased.
91. The management and co-ordination of English is satisfactory. As a result teachers have been well trained and have a good understanding of the Literacy Strategy. They find time to extend pupils' writing skills well. Good links are made with other subjects, such as art and history, so that time is used effectively. The co-ordinator is aware of the strengths and weaknesses within the school and has provided appropriate guidance and targets for each year group. She is particularly keen to challenge and increase the proportion of above average pupils who should be capable of achieving the higher level 5 in the national tests. She is very enthusiastic and runs an effective club for drama, outside of school time. She also runs a club for higher achievers in English. Pupils from other schools attend this club so that they will 'get even better at English'. Enthusiasm to raise standards is shared by many teachers, who last year helped with after-school clubs, which improved results markedly from the previous year when they dropped considerably. However, the co-ordinator has too little influence in raising standards in Key Stage 1 so that pupils may build upon the good start they make in the nursery.
92. Resources for teaching and learning are generally good but the library is not suited for the younger pupils for them to use it effectively. It is situated close to their classes, which is convenient, and every class visits the library weekly. The library catalogue system, however, does not meet the needs of the younger pupils and books are physically out of the reach of most of them.

## **MATHEMATICS**

93. Overall standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6 are below average. Whilst these findings might indicate that standards are lower than those reported at the last inspection, the overall standards in the subject both nationally and in the school have improved since then and pupils' progress and achievement remain satisfactory overall given their prior attainment.
94. Results in the national tests for pupils in Year 2 have improved steadily since the last inspection and the improvement trend has been better than that nationally. However, despite satisfactory improvement in the national tests, overall results in 2001 were below the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving or exceeding the expected level 2 was well below the national average whilst the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 3 was average.

95. The overall performances in the national tests of eleven-year-olds have fluctuated considerably since the last inspection. Although the 2001 National Curriculum test results were much better than those of the previous year, they were well below both national and similar schools' performances. However, the school has been successful in raising the proportion of pupils achieving at least the expected level 4 and the percentage of pupils achieving this level was close to the national picture in 2001. The improvements are the result of better teaching.
96. At the end of Key Stage 1, inspection evidence generally confirms a continuing trend of improvement in standards as reflected in the 2001 results. By the time pupils are in Year 2, although the majority reach expected levels in their number work, and some are in line to exceed these, the proportion not achieving the expected standard is higher than usual. However there are only 31 pupils in the cohort and small changes in the numbers achieving a particular standard can have disproportionate percentage changes overall. Most pupils are able to order and sequence numbers to 100, double single digit numbers and know that halving is the reverse of doubling. They know what each digit represents in two-digit numbers and are able to do simple addition and subtraction. Above average pupils can count up to numbers beyond one hundred and are beginning to develop a sound understanding of multiplication. Most can work with multiples of 2, 3 and 5 and the above average can count in 6, 7 and 8 from different starting points. Pupils' skills at mental recall are below those typically found nationally and they are not confident at explaining the strategies they use. Attainment in other aspects of mathematics is close to national standards. Pupils measure in a variety of non-standard units, and centimetres, and name and describe two- and three-dimensional shapes. They collect and sort data effectively and display this confidently in pictograms and block graphs.
97. In Year 6 inspection evidence confirms an improvement in standards achieved by pupils. The majority is in line to achieve the expected level, although the proportion of pupils achieving below this level is still larger than those typically found nationally. However, inspection finds that the proportion working at higher levels is also greater than the national test results of 2001 indicate. The majority of pupils in these classes are reasonably confident in using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and understanding of related number facts. They have a firm grasp of place value, are confident using large numbers and have a sound knowledge of fractions. They are able to work out solutions to simple calculations, involving fractions and percentages, and the majority of pupils' skills in handling data are sound. They use decimals competently, adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing effectively and multiply and divide numbers and decimals by 10 and 100. They reach sound standards in other aspects of mathematics. The standard of work currently undertaken in Year 6 in 'shape, space and measures' on angles and co-ordinates for example, is similar to that found nationally. Most pupils present their work neatly and handwriting is good. All pupils are achieving satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment, including pupils with SEN.
98. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection; it is satisfactory and more consistent than at the time of the last inspection. Teaching was good in half of the lessons observed. The improving quality of teaching has a direct bearing on the rising standards in the subject, compared to the National Curriculum test results. With the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and additional monitoring of teaching, teachers' subject knowledge is more secure and lesson planning has improved. Teachers emphasise the practise of basic number skills well and the teaching of key vocabulary is good. Planning identifies clearly the learning intentions and specifies activities appropriate for different levels of attainment within the class. Teachers generally provide appropriate work for pupils with different levels of attainment. The structure of lessons follows the suggestions included in the numeracy strategy. The management of group activities is satisfactory because teachers explain clearly to pupils what they are expected to do and most pupils settle quickly and sensibly to their tasks. In most lessons sound organisation and management of activities keep pupils on task throughout the lesson. A good feature of the school's approach to lesson planning is the expectation that teachers use their assessments of what pupils have achieved in planning the next steps in pupils' learning. However, teachers' expectations, in some instances, of what their pupils' are capable of achieving are still not high enough. The use of ICT to support pupils' learning is ineffectively planned for and consequently it is under-used.

99. The oral start to a minority of lessons is not always as effective as it should be. In some lessons the pace of questioning is too slow and does not sufficiently challenge pupils to work out their answers quickly. In these lessons there is insufficient focus on the development of quick mental recall and calculations and pupils are not always given sufficient opportunities to explain how they arrive at their answers. The best lessons start with a brisk whole class session focusing on developing pupils' skills in mental dexterity. Pupils respond well when activities offer good opportunities for quick responses. For example, pupils in Year 6 responded enthusiastically to quick-fire questions on the nine times tables. Although teachers share the lesson objectives with pupils they are not always stated in such a way that helps pupils to be clear on the purpose of lessons.
100. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are organised into teaching sets according to their levels of prior attainment. The school carefully allocates pupils into these sets. This approach works particularly well for pupils of average and above average ability, as the quality of teaching and learning is often good. There is a high proportion of direct teaching with clear explanations, instructions and demonstrations to engage the whole class. For example, in a good lesson in Year 6, on rotating shapes on a co-ordinate grid, not only was the pace of learning good, but the teacher's constant prompting and challenging of pupils, and their lively and eager responses, added to an exciting and productive learning session. Good questioning by the teacher followed up pupils' responses, building upon their prior learning and pushing their thinking further. When given such opportunities pupils clearly enjoy explaining their strategies to the whole class. This is not always the case for the lower attaining groups. For example, in one lesson with younger pupils, the pace of the mental starter was too slow and the teacher's questioning placed insufficient emphasis on helping pupils develop their mental strategies. There are shortcomings in the quality of learning for lower attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 because there are occasional weaknesses in the management of behaviour and the activities are not suitably adapted to pupils' needs. Nevertheless, the progress of pupils with SEN in relation to their prior attainment is satisfactory, overall. They receive additional support from teachers and support assistants, for example in booster groups, and generally work at appropriate levels.
101. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory. In lessons teachers assess and give regular feedback to their pupils and at the end of good lessons assess whether these objectives have been met. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, and it is generally good, although a minority of teachers do not consistently make sufficiently constructive comments to help pupils improve further. The progress of pupils is monitored regularly against National Curriculum attainment levels, although the expectations for pupils in Year 1 could be higher. Assessment includes optional National Curriculum tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. Pupils review their own achievements and write their own individual targets for improvement in their books.
102. Management of the subject is satisfactory and the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. It has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy, undertaken appropriate staff training and improved the quality of planning. Numeracy is used appropriately in other subjects of the curriculum, for example in science and history. The co-ordinator has a sound overview of standards and provision, through sound analysis of performance in the national and other tests. Teaching would benefit from more monitoring to bring it up to the level of the best. Pupils' responses in tests are analysed enabling the school to identify weaknesses and set appropriate curriculum targets for each cohort. Development planning is satisfactory with appropriate identified priorities. Resources are satisfactory.

## **SCIENCE**

103. Overall, standards in science are typical for those expected for pupils in Year 6. These standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection. Results in 2001 showed an improvement compared to those achieved in 2000 as the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level 4 in 2001, rose by 37 per cent and exceeded the national average. Inspection finds that the overall standard in Year 6 is broadly average with few pupils achieving above average standards. These findings are not as different as the results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests might suggest as they were well below average because there were too few pupils achieving the higher level 5. Over

the past four years, standards show a considerable variation from year to year, but with a rising trend in line with the national figure over the last four years when pupils are aged eleven. The pupils also achieved standards that were below average in the 2001 teacher assessments in Year 2, but inspection evidence and work scrutiny indicates attainment to be about average. Throughout the school, pupils with SEN and the few pupils with EAL make sound progress and achieve standards that are satisfactory compared with their prior attainment. This inspection finds no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls, both of whom achieve average standards. The main reason for the improvement in standards compared to the test results is the improvement in teaching, but teachers could do more to challenge above average pupils.

104. It was not possible to observe science lessons in Year 2 but work in pupils' books indicates that pupils have consolidated and extended their learning, developed their observational skills, are able to make predictions and carry out investigations with teacher assistance. These pupils are able to sort a variety of materials into groups according to given criteria such as rough, smooth and shiny. They undertake an investigation into discovering the conditions needed for plant growth. They make satisfactory predictions and record clearly the growth of cress seeds over a period of time. From their results they are able to identify that seeds need water and warmth for healthy growth. Since the beginning of the school year pupils have observed the similarities and differences between a variety of fruits and seeds. They have satisfactory understanding of the importance of keeping healthy and have a clear idea of which foods are good for them, which are harmful and the need for exercise.
105. In Year 6, most pupils have developed their investigative skills to a satisfactory level. A minority of pupils has good skills. They are able to make informed predictions and suggest how these might be tested. They have a reasonable understanding of the concept of a fair test and how to record their results clearly, sometimes using their initiative when deciding the best way of recording. Throughout the school their use of ICT, to support their recording of their findings and for data handling is limited and is a wasted resource. Pupils in Year 6 have satisfactory understanding of the functions of the heart, arteries and veins and they measure, confidently, the effect of exercise on their pulse-rate. They know that temperature is a measure of how hot or cold things are and carry out investigations about how temperature affects the rate sugar dissolves. They predict, carry out a fair test, use graphs to display their results and interpret these to formulate a conclusion. They construct complicated electrical circuits, which they draw using the correct symbols, use appropriate equipment to measure the amount of force in Newtons and are aware that the effect of gravity pulls objects down to the earth.
106. The improved quality of teaching contrasts with the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory overall, with some unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching in this inspection was good overall, although satisfactory in the very few lessons observed in Key Stage 1. Some very good teaching was observed at the end of Key Stage 2, indicating good progress made by pupils. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Most teachers are confident in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Lesson planning is good, with teachers planning interesting activities and placing an appropriate emphasis on learning through investigations. Some of these tend to be directed too much by the teacher and above average pupils are not provided with really challenging activities or given sufficient opportunities to design, carry out and record their own open-ended investigations. Consequently these pupils do not always achieve their full potential.
107. All pupils enjoy science and are inspired by the enthusiasm of their teachers. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 is particularly good. In one lesson in Year 6, where pupils were investigating whether light travels in a straight line and whether it can be reflected from an object, the standard of questioning was very high, "*How do we know it is spherical? How do we know the earth is round?*" asked the teacher. The teacher's clear explanations and very good use of time spent in discussion motivated all pupils. Pupils listened intently to the teacher and to each other's ideas without interruption; relationships within the classroom are very good. Scientific vocabulary was constantly reinforced as pupils carried out investigations and recorded their results, using appropriate symbols correctly. Pupils take a pride in their work, which is well presented with careful, neat handwriting and well drawn and labelled diagrams. The teacher keeps up the pace of the lesson, issuing a challenge to those who have completed their written work.

Higher-attaining pupils realise that the angle of light entering a mirror is exactly the same angle as the light reflected from it. This is quickly picked up by the teacher who indicates her very good subject knowledge by reinforcing learning and subject vocabulary while referring to the 'angle of incidence'. In these lessons, all pupils including those with SEN, made good progress. Over time they are making satisfactory progress and their achievement is satisfactory. Although above average pupils are achieving at a satisfactory level compared to their prior attainment, they could be challenged to do more.

108. Science is well supported by a policy and scheme of work that has been adapted to meet the needs of the school. It provides good coverage of all aspects of the subject and gives clear guidance for teachers. Assessment procedures are effective and are undertaken at the end of a unit of work. They enable teachers to check pupils' progress, and help in their planning, as well as writing good quality reports to parents, which clearly indicate what pupils know, what they are comfortable with and what they find difficult. Targets are set every term, but only for pupils in Year 6, and an opportunity to make a positive impact on the standards is lost. The quality and frequency of marking is variable but is particularly good at the end of Key Stage 2. The best practice tells pupils what they have done well, explains their mistakes and often includes thought-provoking questions to help them to improve.
109. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who has been responsible for the subject for just over a year. She has undertaken an audit and produced an action plan that includes areas for development, including monitoring of teaching and learning. The recent National Curriculum test papers have been analysed to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses. There are appropriate links with literacy and numeracy and the subject fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Resources are generally good.

## ART AND DESIGN

110. The standard of pupils' work is broadly average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection when, in Year 6, it was average. All pupils, including those with SEN, make at least satisfactory progress in this subject and the older pupils make good progress. The pupils are grouped for art activities. These groups include boys and girls, above average pupils and those with SEN. Pupils learn well from each other. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress. The pencil drawings of characters from the story of 'Cinderella' drawn by the youngest pupils are sometimes very detailed. In Year 2, pupils work well in groups to arrange natural objects and some drawings of shells are very realistic. Photographs of their arrangements are taken with a digital camera and printed on to the computer. Pupils experiment imaginatively with different shading techniques. In Year 6, pupils make good progress and much of their work is of a good standard. The pupils are confident at choosing suitable materials and are given scope to use their creative talents. This is clearly shown in a display where they have worked effectively with textiles to create large pictures to illustrate various Myths. Pupils worked in groups to create this work and allocated different tasks to members of the team. A good variety of materials was used and the plan for the work was carefully executed. Visiting artists make a valuable contribution towards teaching all pupils a wide range of techniques and the resulting work is interesting and very well displayed. Pupils, in Key Stage 2, have made imaginative 3D models of Egyptian storage bottles using papier-mâché.
111. During the inspection only three lessons were observed, two in Key Stage 1. There is insufficient evidence therefore to judge the quality of teaching overall, in Key Stage 2. The general quality of teaching is satisfactory for the pupils in Key Stage 1. The best features of the teaching are good emphasis on technical vocabulary, which set a good example to the pupils, clear questioning, good management of the class and good relationships with pupils. Good questioning extended pupils' learning effectively in a successful lesson in Year 3. Here the focus was a painting by Renoir, with the teacher insisting that her pupils concentrated very carefully. The teacher asked the class to describe what they saw. At first their descriptions were fairly bland such as, "*The people are staring. He is a farmer because he has a pitchfork.*" The teacher challenged the pupils to observe more closely, asking questions such as, "*In which direction is he staring?*" and

*“How has the artist let you know how they are feeling?”* The pupils observe the painting more closely and suggest words such as ‘frowning’, ‘severe’ and ‘unhappy’. They extend their understanding that the meaning of a painting depends on the knowledge and interpretation of the viewer. By the time they study a second painting, ‘Mary comforting the Baby’, their observational skills have improved and they are better at describing how feelings are shown saying: “Its eyes are blurry showing it has been crying” and, “Its mouth is turned down and is unhappy”. Generally the behaviour in most classes is good and the pupils are interested and know that they must concentrate and behave well. The teachers’ subject knowledge is sufficient to help them raise standards in this subject as the co-ordinator gives them good guidance. Some good curriculum links have been devised with English, history and geography. In history for example, good links are made with the topic of the Second World War through the many contemporary paintings of Henry Moore. By examining the work of other famous artists and work from other countries, such as Africa and India, the pupils’ drawing and printing skills are improved.

112. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, has very good subject knowledge and teaches this subject well. She has sought and been given good guidance for the staff from the LEA specialist. However, she does not have the opportunity to teach alongside her colleagues to help them improve standards further. Sketchbooks are used well to show the pupils’ developing skills and help the teachers assess their needs. The co-ordinator is aware that the school needs to develop the use of computers to increase the range of pupils’ skills. Currently this is underdeveloped. Good resources have been purchased and are generally used effectively. They are stored well and are easy to find. Good use is made of the local educational loan service to extend the school’s range of interesting paintings. Pupils’ work throughout the school is well displayed.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

113. It was possible to observe only two lessons, both in Year 6. Evidence is also drawn from pupils’ work in books, photographs, teachers’ planning and discussions with pupils and teachers. The majority of pupils are working at standards expected for their age in Year 2 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. This represents good improvement on the average standards in Year 6 at the last inspection.
114. There is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, it is good. In Year 2 pupils examine a variety of vehicle designs and compare the size of the wheels and the number of moving parts. They design their own vehicle and join wheels and axles satisfactorily to allow movement. They develop their basic sewing skills, using a template to cut out a puppet shape from felt. They use a running stitch confidently to attach the two parts together and design and add their choice of decoration to form the facial features either by stitching or the use of glue. They are able to identify the materials they have used, evaluate their work and make suggestions as to how they would change their product in the future.
115. The two lessons observed in Year 6 were introductory sessions to a new topic that teachers had planned together effectively. Teaching was good in both classes. Lesson objectives are made clear to pupils and there was good use of resources, demonstrating the action of a cam, using good technical vocabulary. The demonstration was made more interesting by the addition of a face and hat to the other side of the model. As the cam is rotated the action of the follower moves the hat up and down. Good use is made of open-ended questioning to challenge pupils to decide for themselves the best place to make a hole for the axle. Pupils listen carefully to the teacher and to each other, raising good questions and making sensible suggestions. The teacher demonstrates further by using a variety of different shaped cams to change the movement of the follower. Pupils are given an opportunity to evaluate these and decide which is best for the purpose. Pupils settle down into groups showing enthusiasm and a willingness to get on with the tasks set. They enjoy the lesson and many say design and technology is their favourite subject. Both teachers show very good subject knowledge and emphasise subject vocabulary well. Work is appropriately matched to the needs of all pupils and all produce well-presented written work, with neat handwriting, correct spelling and well-labelled and accurate diagrams. Good learning takes place during both lessons and most pupils are able to understand that a cam will change a rotary

motion into a linear motion and that different-shaped cams produce a variety of similar movements.

116. Pupils are given a broad range of experiences in designing and making that build effectively on their previous learning. For example younger pupils made a selection of Tudor houses at home to support a Tudor topic. These were of an extremely high standard and were indicative also of the amount of parental interest and involvement in pupils' learning. ICT is used appropriately in this subject, for example to produce a graph of results.
117. The co-ordinator provides good leadership in the subject and is aware of how it needs to be developed further to raise attainment throughout the school. The school's existing scheme of work is based on the QCA guidelines and the content has been reviewed and modified appropriately to suit its needs. Staff expertise is good and the scheme of work provides a helpful framework for staff, ensuring continuity and progression in pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has identified areas for development in the subject and also ensures that work is discussed and moderated with colleagues at staff meetings. Resources are good and enable the curriculum to be taught effectively. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, using each pupil's Record Books, which are completed termly.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

118. Standards achieved by pupils in Years 2 and 6 are typical of those found nationally. These findings are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. By the end of both key stages pupils' knowledge of places and location is average for their ages and they have a sound knowledge of the world around them. However their map and research skills are underdeveloped. All pupils, including those with SEN and the few with EAL, are achieving at satisfactory levels.
119. Pupils in Year 2 have a sound knowledge of the human and physical features of places and are able to make appropriate comparisons between contrasting environments. They identify satisfactorily the similarities and differences between the lifestyles of children in the island of Struay and Bracknell and discuss the best means of transport around the island. Pupils collect statistics on favourite foods and present the data obtained correctly on a chart. They are familiar with the countries of the United Kingdom and can show their relative positions accurately on a map. In Key Stage 1, the development of map skills is satisfactory. In Year 1, for example, pupils are able to draw simple plans of their bedroom and appropriate maps of their routes to school and identify familiar buildings of the local area on a large scale map. In Year 2, pupils locate human and physical features on a map of Struay and are able to point out Mexico and UK on a world map. However, there is little evidence of the development of other skills such as extracting information from pictures, photographs, information books or computer sources.
120. Work published In the 'Crown Wood News' shows pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a sound awareness of topical issues such as the need to take care of the environment. They make appropriate comparisons between their own town and a village in India and show sound ability to gather and present appropriate information on human and physical features of India. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have a sound knowledge of climate and the main features of different climatic zones. They have a satisfactory understanding of the reasons for the location of specific features in their local town centre and of different places and draw appropriate maps. Although pupils read maps and use atlases appropriately there is insufficient focus on the development of mapping and research skills across the key stage.
121. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Planning is satisfactory, but does not always take sufficient account of pupils' different learning needs. Lesson objectives are often too general. Teachers promote pupils' speaking and listening skills effectively. For example, in one lesson the teacher provides sound opportunities for pupils to work in groups to 'brainstorm' their ideas about the local town centre. Although teachers use sound questioning and collate contributions of the whole class effectively, some do not enthuse pupils and they restrict themselves to a narrow range of resources. Some pupils therefore fail to be fully engaged throughout the lesson, leading to some inattention. In one unsatisfactory lesson too much time was lost in managing pupils' behaviour and pupils made no gains in their learning. Pupils are given insufficient opportunities to use new technology, such as CD Roms or the Internet, to research for information and the use of ICT to support pupils' learning is unsatisfactory. Despite there being a good display of pupils' work in Year 4, teachers generally make insufficient use of displays to stimulate pupils' interest.
122. The subject is soundly managed. The range of learning opportunities is suitably broad and teaching plans are appropriately based on the national recommended guidance. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. The subject makes a sound contribution to the development of literacy skills, such as their reading and writing skills. Resources are satisfactory.

## **HISTORY**

123. Three lessons were observed during the inspection, all in Key Stage 2. Judgements about standards in Key Stage 1 are based on an analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with the co-ordinator. There was little work available in Key Stage 1 as the previous term's work had been in geography. There is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching in this key stage.

124. Standards are average at the end of both key stages, an improvement since the last inspection. All pupils, including those with SEN, and EAL in Key Stage 1, are achieving well given their prior capabilities and are making satisfactory progress.
125. By the time pupils are in Year 2, they are beginning to develop a sound understanding of the past by comparing kitchen equipment and toys with those of today. They observe and draw houses, as they were built in the past, and compare them with modern houses in their area. They learn effectively about notable figures from the past, such as Florence Nightingale.
126. In Key Stage 2 it is clear from pupils' work that they are stimulated and excited by what they learn about the past and that they enjoy history. There is good evidence of appropriate emphasis on investigation and problem solving. In Years 3 and 4 pupils have studied the Egyptians, have observed artefacts thoughtfully and considered what they suggest about life and customs in ancient Egypt. They have made their own museum displays of canopic jars, death masks, ankhs and Egyptian necklaces, linking this project well to work in art and design and design and technology. Currently pupils in Years 3 and 4 are studying World War II. This work is linked well with their literacy texts, such as 'Sid's War' and 'The Diary of Anne Frank'. Pupils show a good understanding of the effects of The Blitz, through viewing a video, have a sensitive empathy with the effects of the war on people's lives and are beginning to consider how evacuation affected children of their age. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have studied the Victorians and organised their work well so that they have recorded different aspects of Victorian life. They used the computer effectively to research work on census returns and accessed the web-site of the Church of Latter Day Saints to investigate their family backgrounds. There has been good improvement in Key Stage 2 in encouraging pupils' independent study and links with other areas of the curriculum are strong. Literacy skills and mathematical knowledge are particularly well developed through the subject.
127. In Key Stage 2, on limited evidence, teaching is mainly satisfactory and one lesson was very good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching observed and generally the quality of teaching is better than seen in the previous inspection. Teachers engage pupils' interest through well-chosen resources. Artefacts are used well to stimulate children to enquire and question the past. Questioning is generally good. In all lessons, pupils are involved and interested. In the very good lesson, the teacher demonstrated very good knowledge of the subject and used artefacts very effectively to stimulate pupils' interest.
128. The co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that teachers are confident to teach the new curriculum which is based on national guidance. A good scheme of work is in place. Resources are good and the school makes very good use of the museum loan service. The co-ordinator has produced a good action plan for the development of the subject that includes developing opportunities for ICT and for supporting above average pupils. She has ensured that all the weaknesses in the previous report have been addressed successfully. She is given some time for the monitoring of planning and pupils' work, but has not yet developed procedures for assessing pupils' work throughout the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

129. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be above average. They have risen considerably in most schools since then and the standards in the school have not kept pace with that rate of progress. However, by the end of both key stages pupils achieve standards that are average.
130. Throughout the school pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy using ICT. In Year 1, pupils are able to use the mouse appropriately. Pupils in Year 2 have satisfactory keyboard skills. With support, most of these pupils are able to open the correct program, find the appropriate file and, at the end of a session, save their work. They enter data to produce simple pictograms and their word processing skills are sound. Pupils work collaboratively to produce effective stories and attach pictures into text. When word processing, they are able to write a number of sentences and they

experiment with changing fonts, size and colour. They understand that a computer can be used to create pictures and can use various tools, such as pencil, paint brush and spray can competently to create their own pictures. They express opinions about their work and show a willingness to improve it.

131. Pupils in Year 3 insert pictures from a 'clip art' library into text, download pictures from the Internet and create graphs confidently. In Year 4, pupils have sound keyboard skills and knowledge of the different functions of the keyboard. They can use cut and paste to reorganise their work effectively and experiment with the layout of newspaper headlines by changing fonts, size, colour and type text with appropriate accuracy. By Year 5, pupils copy and paste data from the Internet to a word document, enter it into a database and use it to answer questions. Pupils in Year 6 can create their own spreadsheets, for example to plan a budget for a class party, and use a simple formula to calculate the value of cells. They are able to use the Internet to send emails and are confident in accessing web sites and using search engines to find information. These pupils also have a basic knowledge of control technology.
132. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but there are shortcomings in the school's approach to teaching ICT. Most of the direct teaching of skills is by learning support assistants and takes place in the ICT suite. This facility can only accommodate about eight pupils at a time and generally teachers work with the rest of the class in the attached library, usually on unrelated activities. Although most teachers introduce the learning objective of the lesson to the whole class, they do not, as a rule, check pupils' progress during the following session with the support staff. However, in an effective lesson in Year 2 the teacher linked the activities well, using an art program in the ICT suite with painting activities in the classroom. She explained clearly to the whole class the learning objectives, focusing on explaining the use of ICT tools, and subsequently checked on the progress of the group of pupils in the suite, encouraging them to improve their work. When they returned to the class the pupils compared their efforts at drawing fish using the paint program with those of the rest of the class. The sessions in the suite are soundly planned. The learning support staff are well trained and have good knowledge of the programs. They give clear instructions and demonstrations to pupils and provide effective support. Their relationships with the pupils are good and pupils enjoy these lessons and show appropriate levels of concentration. However, outside of these lessons pupils have few opportunities to practise their skills, for example in amending and redrafting their work, suggesting the need for further staff training. Similarly, data handling activities in mathematics or science show little evidence of the use of the technology. However, there are some examples of effective use of ICT linked to other subjects as in science in Year 1, where pupils are able to use the mouse to click, drag and label parts of the body. In Year 3, they use the computer to create sounds and music and, in history, there is evidence of pupils having researched the Internet and used CD Roms to find information to support their work.
133. The co-ordinator, who is the headteacher, has only recently taken over responsibility. He is very knowledgeable and has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to develop the subject and raise standards further. Following a review of provision, he has produced a suitable action plan. There are sound procedures in place to monitor and record pupils' progress. Learning support assistants make informal assessments of pupils' achievements in lessons against the key objectives for each unit of study and teachers record pupils' achievements in a consistent framework that provides a clear picture of what each pupil can do. The school is reasonably well equipped but the computer room has only eight computers, although there are computers in all classrooms, most with access to the Internet. There is a good range of other ICT resources, such as scanners, digital cameras, printers, tape and video recorders, CD players, keyboards and control technology equipment. There is also a good range of software to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

134. Only a limited amount of music was observed during the inspection, although music plays a significant part in the life of the school and is represented well in extra-curricular activities. Two lessons were observed - one in each key stage. There is insufficient evidence, therefore, to judge

the quality of teaching in the school overall. In addition, a session of the Brass Project, taken by a member of the local authority music service, was observed, as was a hymn practice, and assemblies, at which singing took place, were attended.

135. During the inspection the emphasis in lessons was on singing. Standards are in line with those expected for pupils' ages and are similar to those reported at the last inspection. All pupils are achieving satisfactorily and their progress is sound.
136. In Year 1, the objectives were to identify simple and repeated patterns. The pupils sat in a circle and enthusiastically sang, "*Heads and shoulders, knees and toes*". It was clear they enjoyed singing and sang in tune, "*The wheels on the bus go round and round*." As the lesson proceeded, the pupils appeared to tire and to lose their enthusiasm. When they sang "*Five little speckled frogs sat on the speckled log*" they began to sing out of tune and were not helped to return to the key because of the absence of accompaniment. The lesson concluded with exercises in which the class clapped, touching their heads, shoulders and knees in time to the lead given by the teacher. Overall, this was a satisfactory lesson in which all of the pupils consolidated their previous learning rather than learnt new skills. Their behaviour was good. Teaching was satisfactory. The teacher, the music co-ordinator, had good subject knowledge and had good relationships with the class. However, there was a lack of animation in her teaching and she was not able to sustain their enthusiasm throughout the whole of the lesson.
137. In Year 4, the lesson was linked to the history topic, 'The Second World War'. The lesson objectives were to sing and play a range of singing games from that period. The class selected a range of songs already learned such as 'Bumble Bee, Bumble Bee, make a sound' that the class sang satisfactorily. They sang tunefully and also clapped and skipped in time to the beat of the songs. The pupils responded well, enjoyed the lesson and displayed a reasonable sense of rhythm. The quality of learning and progress of all pupils was satisfactory. Teaching was satisfactory overall. The teacher managed the class well at the beginning of the lesson. During the lesson, the class worked in small groups to practise their clapping and skipping skills. The teacher tended to focus her monitoring on a few groups and some of the others, consisting mainly of boys, lost concentration for a period as they took advantage of the situation. However, the teacher was able to restore order very quickly as she had good class management skills and good relationships with her pupils. Her summing up at the end of the lesson was good.
138. During the inspection lessons for the Brass Project took place. This is a twenty-week project for pupils in Years 5 and 6 who are given expert tuition by staff from the local authority music service in playing the cornet, trombone or baritone horn. Pupils enjoy the experience and pleasure of making music. The instruments, of very good quality, are provided by the service but pupils do not have the opportunity to take them home to practise and reinforce their learning between lessons. However in the lesson observed in Year 5, the pupils made good progress in acquiring the rudimentary skills in playing these instruments. The teacher had very good subject knowledge, a patient manner and managed the class well. This project is very effective in enriching the curriculum and enhancing pupils' knowledge, interest and skills.
139. In assemblies the general standard of singing was good. The co-ordinator is aware that the musical expertise among the staff is variable and the timetable is arranged in such a way that some teachers take the classes of others. The school follows the QCA scheme to ensure that the curriculum is adequately covered and this is supplemented by a commercial scheme that runs alongside it. The amount of time for the subject is barely adequate to cover the whole programme, although there are a number of extra-curricular activities that include music, such as peripatetic music tuition, choir and recorder groups. Resources for music are good.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

140. A limited number of lessons was observed, one dance lesson in Year 2 and two games and one gym lessons were seen in Key Stage 2. Standards of attainment are in line with those expected for pupils' ages at the end of both key stages.

141. In Year 2, the quality of teaching and learning was good and all pupils made good progress. The lesson was well structured and the teacher showed good class management and control of the lesson. Her bright, lively and encouraging style, with very clear instructions, enabled pupils to develop their skills in country dancing well. Good use was made of praise to encourage the pupils and give them confidence in their own learning. Pupils were fully involved, moving in time to the music and keeping to the beat well, enjoying themselves in the process. They worked well together in pairs performing well, maintaining the rhythm and beat and changing direction when required. Pupils were provided with opportunities to evaluate their own and the performance of others.
142. In Key Stage 2, lessons were seen in Years 3, 4 and 6. The quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory overall with a good lesson observed in Year 3. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the majority of teaching in Key Stage 2 was unsatisfactory and standards were below average. In Years 3 and 4, pupils were able to consolidate and improve their existing co-ordination skills in games lessons. Pupils showed appropriate control in a variety of testing exercises, using large and small balls to practise bouncing and throwing. They worked on improving their catching and controlling skills and developing an awareness of each other's space. Pupils worked well with a partner bouncing a ball into a hoop which their partner caught confidently. Their skills improved during the lesson and the majority of pupils made good progress. All pupils were able to bounce a ball successfully while standing still, as well as catching the ball from a short distance. Almost half were able to throw accurately, but this skill was not so well developed by the rest of the pupils. In Year 6, pupils developed their ability to move around the hall in a variety of ways, responding well to commands to stop and analysed their synchronised movements thoughtfully. Most follow instructions well and freeze to a given shape when instructed by the teacher. Teaching was satisfactory but lacked some enthusiasm and dynamism, resulting in insufficient physical effort from some pupils. At other times, the teacher used positive reinforcement and praise to encourage pupils to perform well. Opportunities were provided for pupils to evaluate each other's performance, but some pupils were reluctant to demonstrate what they were able to do well because they were too self-conscious. All pupils, including those with SEN, made satisfactory progress. Swimming was not taught during the period of the inspection. Currently swimming is taught at the local pool to pupils in Years 3, 4, and 5 and almost all of the pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres safely and confidently by the time they leave the school.
143. The management of the subject is good and the co-ordinator has been able to help to improve staff training and confidence by providing demonstration lessons. She has also involved the LEA in providing support for teachers to improve their teaching skills. Assessments are undertaken at the end of each year to identify progress made by pupils and ongoing records are kept using the school-produced record books.
144. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities for sport. There are clubs for football, netball, rugby and Kwik cricket. School teams are often successful at winning prizes in local tournaments and championships. The school has a large field, adequate hard surfaced area and a hall, that support learning well. Although the subject is adequately resourced the range of large equipment for use in the hall is limited. The subject contributes well to pupils' personal development. It gives opportunities for pupils to develop team spirit and compete fairly within the understood rules of the games. It fulfils the National Curriculum requirements.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

145. Attainment broadly meets the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus in all year groups, including Years 2 and 6. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Most pupils, including those with SEN and the few in Key Stage 1 with EAL, achieve at acceptable levels, although in one class in Year 6 their achievement is unsatisfactory.
146. Pupils in Year 2 know the story of Noah and are aware that it forms part of the many stories in the Bible. They know why the animals were taken on to the Ark and that it rained for forty days and

forty nights. They consider carefully what would have happened if Noah had said he could not build the Ark. They have reasonable understanding that Noah set a good example for others to follow and of the consequences of behaviour. Pupils are able to give their own examples of the consequences of behaviour with one child saying, *"My Daddy didn't pay attention in school so he can't read well now"*. They are confident in expressing themselves, listen well to the story, behave well and are keen to know more.

147. In Year 4, in the parallel classes, pupils learn about the 'Pesach', the Jewish feast of Passover. Pupils are very interested in this topic and maintain their concentration throughout the lesson. They benefit from the teacher's emphasis on key vocabulary and are able to recognise words such as 'Seder plate', 'Charoset' and 'Matzo', and know that 'Matzo' is unleavened bread. They are very focused and involved and ask sensible questions of their teacher such as, *"Why do they (the Jewish people) make sure there is no unleavened bread in the house?"*
148. In Year 6 in both classes, pupils study the significance of 'light' in different faiths and the Hindu festival of Diwali in particular. In one class the pupils are very interested in the story of the homecoming of Rama and Sita and are able to give sensible answers to the teacher's questions. When the teacher asks *"So what is the theme of the story?"* one pupil replies, *"It's about good and bad"* whilst another responds, *"It's about the good prospering over evil"*. They have reasonable knowledge of the significance of light, *"It represents God"*, although their knowledge is based largely on their experiences of Christianity, *"It's used in Christenings"*. In the parallel class pupils listen well to their teacher at the beginning of her presentation but when the pace of the lesson slows, as there are gaps in it, she fails to hold their attention and their concentration begins to wander. The written work lacks challenge in this unsatisfactory lesson, the pupils are not achieving as well as they should and they are learning at an unacceptable level.
149. In the other lessons, pupils respond well to religious education and show interest in the work. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Most teachers have sound knowledge and often use good questions. However, in one otherwise satisfactory lesson, the teacher, although using good questioning, failed to take the opportunity to extend pupils' learning when her pupils' answers were monosyllabic. For example when, in response to her question, *"Is Ravana a good person in the story?"* a boy replied, *"No"* he was not asked to expound on his answer by giving reasons for it. In a good lesson in Year 3, the teacher had good subject knowledge, presented it well and in an interesting way and emphasised technical vocabulary well. She used appropriate resources effectively and managed her class very confidently. Pupils learned well and made good progress.
150. Religious education is reinforced in school assemblies and it makes an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual development. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the subject and monitors pupils' work every term, although this system is more to ensure the programme of the Agreed Syllabus is covered rather than to monitor pupils' standards and progress. There is very little monitoring of teaching. Resources for the subject such as books, artefacts and pictures are good and are used effectively, but ICT is insufficiently used to support learning.