

INSPECTION REPORT

BALDWIN'S GATE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newcastle, Staffordshire

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124290

Headteacher: Mr Richard Denly

Reporting inspector: Lynne Read
21199

Dates of inspection: 25 - 27 February 2002

Inspection number: 243906

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior
School category: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Tollgate Avenue
Baldwins Gate
Newcastle
Staffordshire

Postcode: ST5 5DF

Telephone number: 01782 680649

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Goodall

Date of previous inspection: 6 October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21199	Lynne Read	Registered inspector	Foundation stage English Music Religious education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19439	Doreen Shotton	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22990	Christopher Furniss	Team inspector	English as an additional language Art Design and technology Physical education Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
3930	Roy Pitcher	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special education Geography History Information and communication technology Mathematics	How well does the school care for its pupils

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Baldwin's Gate Primary school is situated in the rural village of the same name, close to Newcastle in Staffordshire. With 92 pupils on roll, it is smaller than most primary schools. Pupils travel from a wide area where housing is mainly private, ranging from terraced to large detached properties. Occupations are mostly in the professional, business and agricultural sectors. Overall, social and economic circumstances are above average. Children entering the Reception class have a range of learning experiences that are just above average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low, at one per cent. Four per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language. This is higher than the national average. Most pupils have a British background and a small number are of Asian or European heritage. Sixteen per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and this is below national averages. Of these, two per cent have Statements of Special Educational Need, which is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Baldwin's Gate school provides a sound education for its pupils and has many strengths. It provides a welcoming, supportive atmosphere for its pupils and there is very good provision for social and moral education. Achievement and attainment are above average in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2. They are satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is never less than satisfactory. It is good in the Reception and the Year 1 and 2 class. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children in the Reception class make good progress and attain above what is expected in all areas of learning. Pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 2.
- Teaching is good in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6 it is good in reading, geography, history, art and religious education.
- The school promotes high standards of personal development. As a result, pupils have very good attitudes to learning, are very well-behaved and enjoy very good relationships with adults and with their friends.
- Provision for pupils' social and moral education is very good and it is good for spiritual and cultural development. Work in these areas is supported effectively through links with the church.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are well supported, with additional adult help and well-planned work
- There are very effective links with parents, who support the school very well.

What could be improved

- The planning of work in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6 to meet the needs of pupils of different ages and levels of prior learning, and to challenge those capable of higher attainment.
- The setting of targets for pupils in Years 3 to 6 so that teachers have a clearer focus for their work and pupils know what they need to do to improve.
- The management and leadership of English, mathematics and science, so that teaching, learning, attainment and planning are checked regularly and issues are dealt with promptly when needed.
- The management of the curriculum and of the assessment of pupils' progress, to ensure that the results of tests are used more effectively to raise standards.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1997 and has made satisfactory progress in responding to the key issues which were identified for improvement. There have been good improvements in the provision of large play equipment for the Reception class and children's progress in physical development is now good. Better planning and teachers' improved knowledge has led to better progress in design and technology so that pupils' attainment matches national expectations for 11 year-olds. There have been

some good improvements in information and communication technology, but attainment at age 11 remains below average because there is not enough emphasis on computer simulations, monitoring and control. Pupils' attainment is now assessed regularly and records show the progress of individual pupils. The information from assessments is not used sufficiently to help the school to adapt the curriculum or show pupils how they can improve their work. The school met its attainment targets for English in 2001 but there was a shortfall of 10 per cent 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	C	C	B	C
Mathematics	A	C	B	C
Science	E	D	C	D

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

Results at the end of Year 6 in 2001 were not as high as might be expected, taking into account the good achievement by the end of Year 2. However, a significant number of pupils leave and join the school during the junior years and, therefore, comparison with the infants is not valid. Standards at the end of Year 6 are now in line with the average in English and mathematics and above average for science. There are particular strengths in reading where attainment is much better than in writing. Throughout the school, pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress. In the 2001 national tests and assessments at the end of Year 2, pupils' results were above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. Attainment has been consistently high over the last three years but there was a fall in 2001 because of the higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs, all of whom did well, taking into account their previous attainment. Standards at the end of Year 2 are now above national expectations in all three areas. By the end of Year 6 there are strengths in reading and religious education and in aspects of geography, history and art where good teaching leads to good progress. Children make good progress in the Reception class and exceed the levels expected in the six areas of learning. The good progress is a result of the teacher's clear understanding of the learning needs for children of this age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and have very good attitudes to their work. They are very well motivated in their learning and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good, both in lessons and during playtime. They work very well together and readily share ideas and equipment.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. This enables the school to function as a secure, well-ordered community. Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils have a high standard of self-discipline and confidence.
Attendance	Good. Attendance rates are above average when compared with schools

	nationally.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	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 in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2 is good and has a direct and positive impact on pupils' progress and attainment. An appropriate emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy starts from the first days in school and is continued effectively to the end of Year 2, ensuring that pupils develop the basic skills well. The teaching of literacy and numeracy varies in Years 3 to 6. During the inspection, teaching in these classes was often good but when the inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' work in writing, mathematics and science is taken into account, it is satisfactory, overall. This is because the pupils' books show uneven progress, with the older age group or the higher-attaining pupils in each class sometimes only achieving the same level as the rest of the class. Little attention has been given to the differing needs of pupils. There are many strengths in the teaching of other subjects throughout school, especially in reading, art, geography, history and religious education, where teachers use their expertise to enthuse the pupils in their learning. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good throughout school. Experienced teaching assistants support them well with carefully planned work. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported. Teachers sometimes plan challenging work for talented pupils but this is not done routinely.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school places a suitable emphasis on English, mathematics and science. The broad teaching programme encompasses all areas of learning for children in the Reception class and all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education for pupils in Years 1 to 6. Planning is unsatisfactory, as it does not meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes or those capable of higher attainment in Years 3 to 6.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils who have special educational needs are taught well. They have Individual Education Plans that ensure good rates of learning and are well supported by assistants in the classroom.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language is good and, by end of Year 6, they attain equally good standards in English, mathematics and science as their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for social and moral development is very good and leads to very good personal development. An established code promotes respect and consideration very successfully amongst the pupils. They have a clear sense of right and wrong. Spiritual and cultural education is good and enhanced through interesting assemblies, good teaching in religious education lessons, and through links with the church.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Assessment procedures for English, mathematics and science are in place but the information gathered is not fully used to set clear targets for pupils' learning in Years 3 to 6. Day-to-day routines are well established to provide a good standard of daily care for pupils and ensure their well-being. Staff know their pupils personally and cater for their individual

	needs very effectively.
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The school has very good relationships with parents and the high percentage who returned the questionnaires were very appreciative of the work done and of the school's 'open-door' policy.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides sound, committed leadership and management. He promotes good team work amongst the staff and is highly regarded by the parents. There is insufficient delegation of responsibilities to senior staff and subject co-ordinators. The curriculum is not monitored sufficiently.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors support the school's aims. Governors have a sound understanding of the school's current strengths but do not have a good view of trends in pupils' attainment over the last few years. Governors are becoming more involved in planning for school improvement and evaluation. A new committee is looking at ways to drive the school forward with more rigour.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher keeps an accurate overall view of pupils' performance and trends in the school's performance but this information is not shared sufficiently with subject managers and governors to improve standards in Years 3 to 6.
The strategic use of resources	Spending is linked appropriately to identified priorities. Budgeting is targeted sensibly and the maintenance of an appropriate reserve allows the school to cope well with a fluctuating number of pupils.

The staff in this small school bring a good range of specialisms to the curriculum. A good quality of classroom support for pupils is provided by the experienced nursery nurse and teaching assistants. Accommodation is good. Governors seek best value in their purchases and when arranging contracts. However, they do not evaluate expenditure routinely in terms of the benefits to teaching, learning and standards. Resources are generally satisfactory but there are not enough computers. Day-to-day administration is very efficient.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well led and managed • Behaviour is good and the school helps their children to become mature and responsible • Their children are well taught and they are expected to work hard • The school works closely with parents and they are welcomed at all times to discuss issues • They are well-informed about their children's progress • Children like coming to school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities provided outside of lessons • The variety of homework assignments set. • Teaching and learning in information and communication technology

The inspectors agree with the positive statements made by parents. In view of the small size of the school, the inspectors judge that the range of activities outside of lessons is appropriate. Many

homework assignments are based on printed worksheets and tend to be routine exercises. The governors have clear plans to further improve teaching and learning in information and communication technology.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the Reception class with varying levels of prior experience and learning. Overall, attainment is above average in language and literacy, mathematical understanding and personal and social skills. There is no nursery, and children are introduced on a part-time basis in the one or two terms before their fifth birthday. This is a useful strategy that provides a good level of support for them as they learn how to follow school routines and cope with a full working day. Children make good progress throughout the Reception class in all areas of learning because of the good teaching, which includes regular assessment. Lesson planning takes into account what children have already learnt and moves them on quickly. By the time they enter Year 1 most children have achieved the early learning goals for this age group and are working on National Curriculum Programmes of Study, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. Personal and social skills are very well-developed and set a secure foundation for future learning.
2. The results of National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2001 show an uncharacteristic dip in attainment from the usually high standards. Between the years 1998 to 2000, the school's achievement in reading, writing and mathematics has been consistently well above the national average. In 2001, the results in writing and mathematics were in line with the national average and for reading they were well above the national average. When compared with similar schools, results in reading were above average and for writing and mathematics were below average. Comparison with national averages should be judged with caution in this small school, because each pupil represents several percentage points for this statistical purpose. This was the case in 2001, where each pupil represented 8 per cent of the marks. There was a higher than average number of pupils in the group who had special educational needs and the teacher's assessments had predicted accurately the relatively low outcomes. During the inspection, attainment in reading for the current group of pupils was judged as well above average and for writing and mathematics it was above average. This indicates that results for 2002 will be considerably better than last year's and more closely matching the school's usual high standards. In science, the teacher assessments for 2001 were well above average and this is likely to be repeated this year. Lesson planning in Years 1 and 2 covers the learning aims for the range of ages and levels of prior learning, ensuring that good progress is made. The teacher checks learning regularly and uses the information gathered to target the next steps for pupils.
3. By the end of Year 2, pupils find information efficiently using the index, contents and glossary sections of the book. Many know how to locate the information they need by scanning the page for sub-headings and key words. Spelling is good and pupils punctuate their sentences accurately. In mathematics, pupils work confidently. They calculate answers using pen and paper methods and mental strategies. Pupils have good levels of understanding in all areas of the science curriculum and use their investigative skills effectively when carrying out experiments. They use the facilities of information and communication technology to present written accounts of their work. They are confident in handling information and produce detailed graphs and charts to show their findings.
4. Results of the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds are lower and vary more than those for seven-year-olds although, they are still above the national average for English and mathematics and in line with the national average for science. One reason for this may be the number of pupils who leave and enter the school during Years 3 to 6. In 2001, only 11 out of 19 pupils taking the tests had received all of their junior education at the school. Other reasons include the weak use of assessment information to guide planning, the lack of challenge in some pupils' work and the lack of specific targets to show what needs to be improved. When compared with similar schools, results in 2001 were average in English and mathematics and below average in science. The trends over the last five years show that attainment in English is rising at just below the national rate. Inspection findings conclude that attainment in reading is above average, but, for many

pupils in writing, it just meets national standards. In mathematics, the trend in attainment over the past five years varies substantially. Overall, it has risen at a rate just below the national one. During the inspection, pupils' attainment in lessons was average, overall. For science, attainment has seen a steady improvement since a dip in 1999. Some interesting achievements were noted during the inspection. Pupils now have better skills in scientific investigation and, as a result, their work has improved.

5. By the end of Year 6, skills in reading are well-developed. Pupils understand library classification systems and locate information efficiently. They have clear views about what they like to read and have experienced an interesting range of authors and writing styles. Their writing is logical, sequenced, and there is good attention to grammar. Few pupils are confident enough, however, to use more sophisticated sentences containing detail that will interest the reader. Their non-fiction writing is well organised and of a better standard than the narrative work. In mathematics, pupils work confidently with fractions, percentages and decimals in problem-solving situations. Their science work now includes a good emphasis on developing fair tests and experimentation. They have a good understanding of forces, living things and physical processes. Skills in information and communication technology are developing well in word processing and in handling data but there are fewer opportunities for pupils to learn about computer simulations, monitoring or controlling events.
6. Over the four years since the last inspection, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 has risen and progress remains good. In Years 3 to 6 there have been some substantial variations, and it is only this year that standards in mathematics have recovered to the 1997 level. In reading, attainment has remained good but there has been little progress in writing. In science skills, knowledge and understanding are improving well. There is a significant difference between the test results of boys and girls, with the latter achieving much better. In some year groups, there are very few boys, which may distort the figures and there are more boys on the register of special educational needs. The older girls are generally more mature and confident than the boys. Inspection findings cannot point to any factor within the teaching or provision that favours either gender. Teachers work hard to involve boys in lessons and find books and topics that will interest them. There are no differences in the attainment of pupils from different backgrounds and ethnicity.
7. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress, bearing in mind their prior learning and abilities. A programme of support is devised for each pupil and all the staff involved know the specific learning targets. All pupils are included in every aspect of the school's work, having access to extra-curricular activities and to school visits. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers. They benefit from the school's good systems for promoting speaking and listening and the good quality of oral work. Higher-attaining pupils are well challenged in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6 they are sometimes given challenging tasks but this is not always the case, due largely to flaws in the school's planning system. Some very high achievement was seen from talented pupils in the Reception class, and in writing and in music in Years 1 to 6, but these pupils are not formally identified.
8. In 2001, the school met targets set with the local education authority for attainment in English but did not do so in mathematics. This year's targets are very challenging and teachers are committed to raising standards. However, there is a lack of rigour in using assessment information, which means that teaching is not always focused in the right place.
9. Attainment in the other subjects of the National Curriculum at least matches expectations by the end of Year 6, except in information and communication technology. Pupils have well-developed skills in reading and in aspects of art, geography and history. For religious education, attainment is above the level expected according to the Agreed Syllabus of the local authority. Pupils have a good understanding of the different faiths and beliefs in our modern day society.
10. Generally good attendance at a range of extra-curricular activities enhances academic and personal development. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to practise their games skills and the

challenge of playing against teams from other schools. The recorder club extends pupils' creative interests and talents well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupil's attitudes are very good, overall, and have improved further since the previous inspection. Pupils are eager to come to school and are keen to work hard in lessons. They are very enthusiastic to answer questions and to get involved in discussions. Pupils respond well to the good teaching and interesting lessons and this has a good effect on the progress they make. They take pride in their work and strive to do well. In lessons where there is little challenge, however, pupils show less interest.
12. Behaviour in the classroom and in the playground is very good. Pupils know what is expected of them and understand the few school rules. They respond quickly and appropriately to prompts from adults. The calm and orderly atmosphere of the school is conducive to good learning and pupils take full advantage of the opportunities they are offered. They are polite and courteous. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents agreed unanimously that the school encourages and develops good behaviour. There have been no exclusions of pupils during the last year.
13. Pupils' personal development is very good. The school, together with five similar schools, has developed a scheme of personal health and social education. Two priorities for development have been identified and pupils have responded well to them. The first is to raise pupils' self esteem by involving them in school issues and the second is to encourage them to make healthy eating choices. In respect of the first priority, the school council has been established. This has been set up during the last year. Pupils from Years 3 to 6 represent their friends and give their opinions confidently at meetings. They talk about playground facilities and express views about what they would like. Pupils are proud to work on the council. Under the supervision of teachers, older pupils have developed a 'buddy' scheme to ensure that younger pupils are happy in the playground. This is proving very successful in supporting very good relationships, care for others and self-confidence. A healthy eating project has been introduced after consultation with the governors, teachers, kitchen staff, a dietician and the parents. As a result, more salads are being eaten at lunch-time and more healthy foods are being brought in packed lunches. The 'healthy eating week' finished with a picnic lunch, which was enjoyed by all.
14. Pupils show very good initiative and are very willing to take responsibility for jobs around school. From the earliest days, children are expected to tidy away equipment and take care of resources. Older pupils organise the music to be played before and after assemblies, and help with administrative jobs - these often provide an insight into the world of work. In the hall, at lunch-times, pupils collect and eat their meals very sensibly. The calm, friendly atmosphere creates a pleasant eating experience for all.
15. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils respect their teachers and other adults and they relate very well to each other. The inspectors saw no evidence of bullying or inappropriate behaviour. In the playground and classrooms, all pupils are included in all the activities and given equal opportunities to play and to learn. Boys and girls work well together. Although the girls are more vocal, teachers ensure that the boys have their say. The high level of co-operation contributes considerably to the quality of the learning. The attitudes of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are very good. They respond well to the support given by teachers and other pupils and develop happily within a healthy learning environment.
16. Attendance has remained good since the previous inspection. It is above the national average at over 95 per cent. Registers are marked promptly and accurately. The monitoring system for attendance ensures that the school responds appropriately to any prolonged or unusual absence. There has been no unauthorised absence. Pupils arrive punctually and lessons start and finish on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. During the inspection, most of the teaching seen was good and a significant proportion was very good. Teaching was judged on evidence from the observation of lessons, detailed scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's record of assessments. Teaching in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2 is good in all areas of learning. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good in art and design, history, geography and religious education and for pupils who have special educational needs. Teaching in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, information and communication technology, music and physical education is satisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection.
18. The Foundation Stage is for children who are aged four and five. It is more commonly referred to as the Reception class. Teaching is mostly good and is very good in four lessons out of ten. A notable strength of the teaching in this class is the interesting range of activities provided. Lessons very cleverly extend and consolidate children's developing skills, knowledge and understanding, especially in communication, language, literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development. For example, after enjoying a story about 'Mr Gumpy', the teacher used the same theme for writing, creative movement, role-play, scientific investigation and constructional activities. The teaching of early reading and writing skills is very good indeed and, as a result, high standards are achieved by some children. The teacher pays great attention to establishing routines and to developing children's confidence and independence. In whole-class discussions, the teacher is careful to ensure that all groups participate fully. She supports sensitively children who have special educational needs and poses challenging questions for those capable of higher attainment. As a result, learning is at least good and often very good.
19. Most of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good, with one quarter being very good. Good provision is made for pupils of different ages and those with differing levels of prior attainment. Literacy is taught with flair and imagination. Very good teaching of reading and writing skills results in high standards. In one lesson, the teacher captured pupils' imagination by reading the story of 'Handa's Surprise', and then used the text to extend skills of deduction and prediction. She used the characters and plot as a stimulus for writing, ensuring that pupils had lots of ideas and a range of vocabulary to produce some high quality work. They thoroughly enjoyed the lesson and worked very hard on essential skills for good reading, writing and spelling. The teaching of mathematics shows many strengths. There is good learning in mental arithmetic sessions. However, an over-reliance on commercially produced workbooks slows down the pace of achievement sometimes, especially for those capable of higher standards. The teacher has very good questioning skills and often sets tasks that allow pupils to explore and investigate. For example, in one science lesson, pupils had the opportunity to observe and draw parts of a plant and to pose questions of their own for further research.
20. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching seen during the inspection was mostly good and, in one in three lessons, it was very good. The best teaching was seen in reading, art and design, geography, history and religious education and for pupils who have special educational needs. Some good lessons were seen in English, mathematics and science but, overall, teaching in these subjects is satisfactory because the planning of lessons is not sufficiently tailored to meet the needs of all groups of pupils. This sometimes results in the younger pupils having good, challenging work but the older and higher-attaining ones repeating work so that their rate of progress slows down. In good lessons, teachers explain and demonstrate very well. They make good use of resources to bring life to their teaching. For example, in one lesson in religious education, the teacher brought in some Jewish artefacts, which promoted the pupils' interest and enabled them to discover things for themselves.
21. There are many strengths in the teaching throughout the school. Teachers establish very good relationships with the pupils. There is a purposeful atmosphere in the school that encourages very good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning. Teachers explain to pupils what they are going to study at the beginning of lessons. This engages pupils effectively in their learning. At the end of each lesson, especially in English, mathematics and science, teachers assess pupils' progress, tackle any misconceptions and congratulate individual pupils on their successes. This encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers' questioning techniques

are good and they treat pupils' replies sensitively. This creates stimulating discussions and encourages a free exchange of ideas. Teachers provide opportunities for collaborative work and private study, including the use of the Internet. Teachers manage classes very well. They organise carefully chosen resources and pupils' books are always ready for lessons. Classroom routines are well established. The result is that the maximum amount of time is used for learning and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' progress. In the Reception class, most home tasks are based on reading and this contributes well to pupils' good progress. In Years 1 to 6 photocopied sheets are used for homework. As a result, tasks are limited in scope and there are few examples of research or investigative work that could engage the pupils' interests over a longer time and in a more exciting way.

22. The quality of marking is satisfactory. Teachers often discuss pupils' work with them but there are insufficient written comments in pupils' books that can be referred to later. In Years 3 to 6, teachers make few comments on pupils' work to show them how to improve. Often, congratulatory comments do not detail exactly what is good, which limits the scope of feedback to motivate pupils.
23. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Throughout the school, they use a varied range of opportunities to consolidate and extend pupils' literacy and numeracy through work in other subjects. There are some good examples of pupils' non-fiction writing in geography and history. Teachers extend pupils' mathematical skills in science by getting them to take measurements and to analyse data. Pupils present information in graphs, tables and charts, making good use of information and communication technology. The nursery nurse and classroom assistants are knowledgeable and support pupils well. They are particularly effective in helping pupils to tackle problems and to find their own solutions.
24. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers use their skills appropriately and have useful support from the manager for special educational needs. Together, they write Individual Education Plans to meet the particular requirements of each pupil. Teachers use the Individual Education Plans to adapt their lessons appropriately. The school has not formally identified any gifted and talented pupils. Teachers are aware of pupils' particular strengths, for example, in music, and they sometimes make suitable provision for them. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported and attain as well as their peers. Teachers place great emphasis on the development of vocabulary and often check on the understanding of new words, which are specific to a subject. The school constantly receives pupils part-way through Years 3 to 6 and has good measures in place to secure specialist help for pupils who are in the early stages of learning English. These have been very successful in the past and pupils who have benefited from the support are now fluent in the language and accessing all lessons effectively. Teachers make every effort to engage boys in lessons and there are equal opportunities for both genders. Groups are usually mixed and staff make sure that boys and girls and all ethnic groups are fully represented in all activities.
25. Teachers make good use of the school grounds and local environment, especially in the teaching of science, geography, history and physical education. Questionnaires returned by parents show that 96 per cent of them believe that teaching is good and that the school expects pupils to work hard. Similar responses were made at the parents' meeting.

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

26. The school offers a broad curriculum. It provides equal opportunities for all pupils, including those who are learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs for whom provision is good. Planning includes guidance for the children in the Reception class, the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education

27. In Years 1 to 6, pupils study all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Statutory requirements are met. Learning is generally balanced across the Programmes of Study and there is a good emphasis on developing the basic skills in English and mathematics. The school has made good improvements in the planning for information and communication technology but elements of computer simulation and control technology are not sufficiently developed. Although there has been improvement in the curriculum for design and technology and all elements of the subject are now taught, there is still no scheme of work and no monitoring to ensure systematic development and consistent progression. The time allocated to subjects does not match identified school development areas. For example, science is a priority in the school development plan for this year but extra time has not been given to it. Each class covers a two-year age range. The present system of curricular planning does not ensure that the needs of pupils in both age groups and at different levels of previous learning are consistently met. This results in uneven rates of pupils' progress. There are no procedures for identifying the particular needs of gifted and talented pupils. However, teachers know their pupils well and successful informal methods are in place.
28. The curriculum for personal, social, health and citizenship education is established and reinforced through links with other schools. The recent project on 'healthy eating' and the development of the school council are just two examples of its success. Sensitive issues are discussed in class lessons where pupils have the opportunity to air their views or talk about their worries in a supportive atmosphere.
29. There is no shared overview of what is being planned or taught. The subject managers for English, mathematics and science do not check the termly or weekly planning of their colleagues regularly to make sure that the Programmes of Study are being covered effectively in a progressive way.
30. The school has adopted the national strategies for literacy and numeracy effectively, ensuring that the teaching of English and mathematics is securely based on the recommended framework. Planning allows for good consolidation of pupils' reading and writing in other subjects, especially in geography and history. There are some good examples of links between subjects, where skills and knowledge are extended. For example, teachers plan work in art and design to enhance pupils' study of the Egyptians in history. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is developing well and examples of good practice were seen during the inspection and in a review of pupils' earlier work. Careful planning ensures that pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all areas of the school's curriculum. Where appropriate, pupils are taught in small groups or individually, with the necessary support for them to make progress. Teachers are very careful to ensure that these pupils cover the subject matter of the lesson at a level appropriate to their prior learning. Support for pupils learning English as an additional language is good. They are taught well and the school's emphasis on speaking and listening contributes effectively to the progress made by them. Staff have access to specialist help for any pupil who is in the early stages of learning to speak English and this has proved very successful in the past. Bilingual pupils are fully integrated into all aspects of school life.
31. For a small school, there is a sufficiently wide range of extra-curricular activities. These include a games club, recorder groups and seasonal sports activities. There are opportunities for pupils to pay for extra tuition in music and those who take part achieve good standards. A professional dance teacher runs a popular weekly club. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 attend a five-day residential course and they are enthusiastic about the wide range of adventurous activities offered. Pupils' learning is enhanced through visits to the local church, theatres and museums. The annual sports day, held in conjunction with other schools, provides valuable opportunities for pupils to mix with others from different areas and backgrounds. This provides a good cultural and social experience. Links with a local college of further education provide an extra dimension to learning through the 'science days' that they arrange. This year, pupils were involved in an investigation of the design of bridges. This enriched their work in design and technology and science. The annual Christmas productions involve all pupils and parents speak very highly of the personal and social benefits to their children. A few parents expressed concern about the amount of time given to preparing for the production.

32. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. There have been improvements in the provision for social and moral development since the last inspection and the good standards reported for spiritual and cultural education have been maintained.
33. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. There is a variety of opportunities, such as daily assemblies, for pupils to reflect, contemplate and pray. In a lesson on personal, social and health education in Years 5 and 6, pupils showed empathy in examining the feelings of those who may suffer from discrimination. In a religious education lesson, pupils examined the spiritual significance of symbols in the Jewish faith, and this provoked some thoughtful comments. Pupils develop spiritual awareness through their studies of the natural world and through many discussions in their personal and social lessons where they consider the value of the less tangible things in life such as families and friendship. This is a happy school, where pupils enjoy coming to learn.
34. The school has very good systems in place to support pupils' moral development. Pupils are taught to know right from wrong and to understand the Christian principles that underpin the school's values. There is a successful, positive approach to behaviour management. Staff help pupils to appreciate the consequences of their actions on others. The caring and consistent conduct of adults is a good example to pupils who care for one another and take pride in their own good behaviour. In addition, moral issues are considered both in lessons and assemblies.
35. Pupil's social development is promoted very effectively. Pupils express their opinions openly and respect one another's feelings. In the school council, the views of others are considered and different values and beliefs are taken into account during discussions. In the playground, pupils share their games and equipment willingly and enjoy one another's company and conversation. In the classroom there is a willingness to collaborate in pairs or in groups so that pupils learn from one another. Pupils take the initiative and ensure that no one is 'left out'. Older boys and girls take part in the 'buddy system'. This operates in the playground and ensures that younger pupils are not left unhappy or alone. The school operates well as a community and parents describe the 'family' atmosphere as a strength. Pupils willingly keep the school tidy and clear classrooms after practical work. They are keen to volunteer as monitors for their class or to be involved with jobs around school, which gives them a feeling of self-worth. The school collects funds for charity. Pupils join in this enthusiastically and gain an appreciation of the needs of others who are less fortunate than themselves. Through residential visits, they begin to discover independence in caring for themselves.
36. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils have many opportunities to investigate local and national heritage through visits to sites and museums. They also study cultures and customs from around the world. There are some interesting and eye-catching displays around school that capture pupils' interest and raise their awareness of contemporary multicultural society. Pupils' work on the Chinese New Year is displayed alongside a traditional colourful dragon. Pupils study a range of religions, including Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. When these religions are discussed, pupils are encouraged to explore beliefs and customs and to investigate how they influence people's everyday lives. Pupils visit local art galleries and theatres and study the work of a wide range of classical and contemporary artists and musicians. They visit the three churches in the parish as a rich source of local history. At Easter, the pupils are actively involved in the Christian church service. The vicar comes into assembly each week to maintain a good link between school, church and community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school has made good progress in developing effective systems to assess and record pupils' progress since the last inspection. Further developments to the systems are detailed in the school improvement plan, but, at the time of the inspection, results were not being used to modify curricular weaknesses or to set new targets for pupils' learning.

38. The school uses a range of assessments to check on pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. More informal appraisals are carried out at the end of topics in science. Pupils' attainment and progress are assessed in the summer term from Years 2 to 6 using nationally recognised tests in English and mathematics. Their work is also assessed in the middle of the school year, using commercially produced tests. The school builds up a considerable amount of information about each pupil's progress that enables teachers to predict what the pupils are likely to achieve by the end of Year 6. The pattern of assessments provides reliable measurements of pupil's progress in English and mathematics. However, the information collected is not used to best advantage. It is not used by teachers to prepare challenging work for all pupils, nor to help the school evaluate the usefulness of the planning, the effectiveness of individual teacher's work or the strengths and weaknesses in each subject. On the basis of results in tests and assessments, teachers estimate the level that each pupil should reach by the end of the year. However, they are not sharing this information with pupils nor are they setting targets for them so that they know what they need to do to improve. As a consequence, pupils are not actively involved in evaluating their own progress and opportunities are missed to share targets with parents, so that they can support their children at home.
39. There are no clear, whole-school guidelines for the teachers' marking of pupils' work. Teachers mark the pupils' work regularly and often provide comments orally. There are very few written suggestions to reinforce pupils' learning and help them improve.
40. The school's procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good and have been well maintained since the last inspection. The policy and procedures for child protection follow the local authority's guidance and are well established. There is a designated teacher who has had adequate training and all staff are aware of their responsibilities. Pupils' welfare is a high priority for all adults in school. Parents appreciate the fact that teachers take good care of their children and recognise the efforts that are made. Health and safety procedures are effective. First aid is well organised, safety checks are carried out regularly and the school provides a secure environment for learning.
41. The monitoring and promotion of pupil's personal development is good for all ethnic groups within the school. Teachers know the pupils and their needs very well and respond to them promptly and appropriately on an individual basis. When pupils gain an achievement outside school, it is celebrated during assembly. There are many merit awards given for good behaviour, effort and attendance to reinforce good habits. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are successful. The headteacher reminds parents regularly in newsletters of the need to achieve a high attendance record in order to make the best use of the education offered and he constantly stresses the need to avoid taking time off during term-time, especially for holidays.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good. The successful partnership has been maintained since the last inspection. Almost 70 per cent of parents returned their questionnaires and this indicates a keen interest in the school. Results show that 97 per cent of parents agree that the school works closely with them and 95 per cent say that they are well-informed. This area is a strength of the school.
43. The information that the school provides for parents is good. They receive regular newsletters to keep them informed of school activities. The prospectus is clear and helpful and includes a behaviour policy, a homework policy and a home-school agreement, which all parents have signed. The annual report from governors is well-constructed and helpful. There is a regular newsletter from the school's Parent-Teacher Association, which outlines the events arranged for the community and for the pupils. Through their concerted efforts members of the association and their helpers raise considerable sums of money for the school. For example, in 2001 parents raised £4,500 to develop the outdoor play area for the Reception class, and children's physical education has improved because of the better facilities. The school is very grateful for these

efforts and pupils benefit through donated resources in many other areas. Organised events often involve the community and provide good opportunities for the social development of pupils.

44. Parents value the notice they receive each term about their children's Programmes of Study. They use the information well to supplement their children's learning, by helping them at home and taking them on visits to places of interest. Children's annual reports are well received. They describe what the children have done during the year, but they include little about their children's attainment and set few targets for the coming year. There are meetings each term for parents that are very well attended. In particular, parents appreciate the opportunity to share their children's work during 'open' afternoons. The school operates an 'open door' policy. This access to the school helps sustain very good relationships between home and school. Parents speak highly of the welcome they receive and of the teachers' commitment to resolving issues quickly. Returned questionnaires showed that 95 per cent of parents feel comfortable approaching the school. A few parents and another member of the community come into school to help in classrooms. Parishioners meet the pupils when they go to church. Parental and community links with the school contribute well to the breadth of pupils' learning experiences.
45. It is a great benefit to the school to have supportive parents who work successfully in partnership with teachers to ensure that pupils make best use of what the school has to offer. Parents make sure that their children arrive at the school on time and their support and encouragement enhances the very good attitudes that the children have to their learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The headteacher provides sound leadership and is instrumental in maintaining a supportive atmosphere in which pupils feel secure and valued. There is no deputy headteacher, no clear management structure and little delegation of responsibilities. Nevertheless, the staff work as a good team in promoting pupils' academic and personal development. They are very successful in maintaining an environment where all groups of pupils from different backgrounds and ethnic heritages work hard, enjoy very good relationships and show respect for their friends and for adults. An analysis of the large number of returns from the parents' questionnaires showed that all parents who replied were satisfied that the school was well led and managed, a view that was echoed at the parents' meeting. There have been positive improvements in the active role played by the governing body and in school development planning since the last inspection.
47. New arrangements for monitoring teachers' work have led to focused staff development and to the identification of whole-school issues, including improvements to the teaching of information and communication technology. Procedures for self-evaluation have been improved since the last inspection, but the school has yet to act on some of the information collected, especially with regard to attainment in Years 3 to 6.
48. There is little delegation of management duties and most of the work involved falls on the shoulders of the headteacher, who also has a substantial teaching commitment. The managers for English, mathematics and science do not have a thorough knowledge of pupil progress and do not track attainment closely enough. Their role has not been well-defined and is now a focus for development in the current school improvement plan. At present, they do not direct planning across age groups. The manager for English has completed lesson observations and so has the best overview but there are no systems in place for the regular scrutiny of planning or of pupils' work. The headteacher is the manager for assessment. He collates the results of a good range of tests, but the information is not fully analysed or used for monitoring pupils' progress or planning series of lessons. There is no-one responsible for the key role of curriculum management and, as a result, the effectiveness of planning systems are not checked and there is little support for the subject managers. In addition, there are no systems to use the results of pupil assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and make any necessary changes. As a result of these issues, the problems of continuity in the planning have not been recognised as a major factor in the relatively slower progress of pupils in Years 3 to 6. This is a serious management issue. The manager for special educational needs provides very good advice and

support for teachers. Details of Individual Education Plans demonstrate the effectiveness of her interventions. She diligently tracks the progress of every pupil on the register, builds up high quality records and involves parents fully.

49. Governors are supportive and are becoming increasingly active in shaping the direction for the school. They have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and of the areas requiring development. They do not have a clear view of attainment and are therefore not fully involved in monitoring pupils' progress. Nevertheless, they are committed to raising standards and have just appointed link governors to support specific areas of pupils' learning. There is a useful committee structure and well-organised, regular meetings. The newly convened 'strategic committee' is the main driving force in developing initiatives, and members of this group have a long-term view of developments. This year governors have been actively involved in school development planning. The relevant subject managers have worked with their 'link governors' to contribute to the school's action plan for improvements in the next year. The plan is detailed and illustrates clear educational purpose. Targets, implementation strategies, time-scales and success criteria are specified. Governors are committed to continuous improvement and consider their options carefully. For example, they have made considerable efforts to gather information and advice about siting and organising the computer hardware that they propose buying. There is good expertise and experience amongst members of the governing body and they are beginning to support the headteacher and staff in their work.
50. The school's finances are carefully monitored and controlled. There is a clear, delegated limit to spending. The reserve carried forward from last year was used successfully to retain enough teachers to cope with the fluctuating numbers of pupils on roll. The governors receive regular financial updates but the finance committee does not routinely evaluate the effect of spending on pupils' learning and attainment. Issues identified in the last audit report have been addressed satisfactorily. The governors, headteacher and staff are careful to ensure that 'best value' is obtained when making purchases and awarding contracts. There are systematic procedures in place for the ordering, receipt and payment of goods and services. Procedures for dealing with cash and private funds are safe and effective. Specific grant funding is allocated appropriately and money provided for pupils with special educational needs is used very effectively. Considering the overall standards of pupils' personal and academic attainment, the quality of teaching and the sound leadership and management, the school provides satisfactory value for money.
51. Baldwin's Gate is staffed by a suitable number of appropriately qualified and experienced teachers who are deployed effectively to meet the demands of the curriculum and to support pupils with special educational needs. All the teachers have high levels of professionalism, dedication and commitment. Staff work in a well-motivated team, readily sharing experience and expertise. There are good arrangements for staff training according to the needs identified in the school development plan. A system for monitoring teachers' work is established and targets for teachers' performance are set and reviewed regularly. The school is currently investing in substantial training for staff in information and communication technology. This has already led to much improved provision and learning in this subject since the last report. The school is very well served by appropriately skilled non-teaching staff, all of whom are committed to its aims and policies. An experienced nursery nurse and teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils' learning, especially for those who have special educational needs. Lunch-time supervisors provide a high standard of care at midday and know the pupils well. The janitor and cleaning staff ensure that the buildings and resources are well maintained and there is a very good standard of cleanliness. Administrative support is very effective and efficient. The school secretary makes an important contribution to the smooth running of the school, discharging a wide and diverse range of responsibilities and providing very good support for the headteacher.
52. The accommodation provides a good environment for learning. Improvements to the Reception classroom and outdoor areas are directly contributing to children's improved progress. Teachers have a suitable range of resources to teach the National Curriculum and to run a selection of extra-curricular activities. Areas for displays of work are well used to celebrate pupils' achievements. These are focal points for discussion and appreciation. The grounds provide good facilities for sport, physical education and leisure.

53. Overall, resources are at least adequate for teaching and learning, but there are variations between the subjects. There are not enough computers in school. Some of the fiction and non-fiction books in the library and in classrooms are old and will soon need replacing. There is only a basic selection of recorded music in school and teachers often bring in their own material to widen pupils' experiences. Teachers organise, store and label equipment very effectively. This allows pupils to have ready access to resources and encourages them to become increasingly independent.

54. The school is very well organised with established and efficient routines, making good use of information and communication technology for administrative purposes. All statutory requirements are met.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

(1) In order to improve planning and target-setting and to ensure that pupils in Years 3 to 6 make consistently good progress in English, mathematics and science, the governors, headteacher and staff should

- re-structure the planning for the subjects, making sure that knowledge, skills and understanding are taught systematically and that there is sufficient challenge to meet the learning needs for all ages and levels of previous attainment
(Paragraphs 20, 48, 73, 78, 86, 91)
- further analyse the assessment data to find out exactly what pupils know and can do and then set targets for future learning so that pupils know what they need to do to improve (Paragraphs 4, 37, 38, 48, 78, 79, 86, 91)

(2) In order to improve the management of individual subjects, the curriculum and assessment, the headteacher should

- review the allocation of time spent on the teaching and learning of each subject and delegate responsibilities more effectively to subject managers
(Paragraph 48)

Subject managers should

- ensure that there are clear schemes of work and overall curricular plans for their subjects, which will enable teachers to produce lesson plans that meet the needs of pupils they are teaching
- analyse assessment information to identify areas of weakness
- prioritise areas and plan for improved attainment, teaching and learning, with targets for each year group
- monitor teachers' planning, pupils' work and classroom teaching and learning to ensure that plans are implemented and standards are improving
- evaluate performance regularly, especially in terms of pupils' improved attainment
(Paragraphs 48, 80, 87, 94, 104, 109, 114, 129, 132)

In addition, when drawing up their action plan, the governors should give consideration to the following

- they should ensure that the developments for information and communication technology, as recorded in the school development plan, include an added emphasis on the areas of computer simulations, monitoring and controlling
(Paragraphs 5, 118, 121)
- they should produce a policy for identifying, supporting and challenging gifted and talented pupils
(Paragraphs 57, 77, 82)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	34
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	11	19	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	32	56	12	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents just less than 3 percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	92
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	7	6

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (84)	92 (92)	92 (92)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (84)	92 (80)	100 (88)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

The figures for boys and girls have been omitted because the number of each is less than 10. This is to ensure that individual pupils cannot be identified.

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	3	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls	13	11	14
	Total	15	14	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (79)	74 (64)	89 (86)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	14	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (71)	74 (71)	79 (79)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

The figures for boys have been omitted because the number of each is less than 10. This is to ensure that individual pupils cannot be identified.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	88
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	72

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	231,942
Total expenditure	219,372
Expenditure per pupil	2384
Balance brought forward from previous year	7500
Balance carried forward to next year	12,570

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	92
Number of questionnaires returned	64

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	38	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	58	34	5	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	45	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	42	8	5	0
The teaching is good.	62	34	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	50	3	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	17	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	34	2	2	5
The school works closely with parents.	55	42	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	66	34	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	33	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	39	23	8	6

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

55. This section of the report focuses on the children who are aged four and five in their Reception year, which is also known as the Foundation Stage. One child attends part-time prior to starting full-time education in September. The provision for these young children has considerably improved since the time of the last inspection. They are now taught in a separate class and have a stimulating outside area for physical activity. Most have had some pre-school experience in playgroups or nurseries. There is a very good system to help them settle into school life. Children visit with their parents for gradually increasing periods of time until they feel able to cope with a full session. During these visits, the class teacher talks to the parents about the learning programme in the class and gives them advice on how they can support their children at home.
56. When they enter the Reception class, children have varying experiences and levels of previous learning but, overall, attainment is above that expected at this age. The teacher makes an early assessment of the children's strengths and needs and plans the learning specifically for them. Consequently, the children progress well throughout the Foundation Stage. Most reach the expected early learning goals by the end of the year in all areas of learning and many go beyond this to begin working in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress in speaking and listening and in personal education is especially good and this provides a solid foundation for later learning. It also forms the basis for pupils' independence and self-confidence.
57. The programme of work follows the nationally recommended guidelines for children of this age. The teachers' planning covers a range of suitable topics that are interesting and there is a strong emphasis on exploration and investigation. The quality of teaching and learning for the children in the Reception classes is good, and in around one third of lessons, it is very good. The teacher, nursery nurse and teaching assistants are committed, skilful and hard-working. Language development is very well promoted. There is a very good balance between teacher-directed sessions, when specific skills are taught, and opportunities for children to select from a planned range of associated activities to consolidate and extend their new learning. A very good feature of sessions is the pace of work. The teacher monitors time spent on activities and encourages children to move on. In this way, children are constantly motivated and use their time to best advantage. Close and careful observations of the children enable accurate assessments to be made which help to guide the future planning of activities along the recommended 'stepping-stones' of progress. At present, the recording system is time-consuming because notes are duplicated. This system could be refined to save time. Children who have special educational needs are identified early and specific work and help is planned. This early intervention enables the school to give good, focused support within the classroom. Talented children are provided with suitable challenges but there is no formal system to provide for their needs. There are very good links with parents who are kept well-informed about their children's progress and welcomed into school at all times.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. In personal, social and emotional development, children are on course to exceed the early learning goals by the time they move into Year 1. Children make good progress in this area of their work because they receive patient, supportive teaching, combined with high expectations of behaviour. They quickly learn the class routines, listening carefully to the teacher, other adults and to one another. At around half-way through their Reception year, the children already know the conventions of taking turns and show consideration for one another. They usually share equipment readily and some follow the rules of games without supervision. They negotiate turns in the water tray and on the computer without fuss. Some vigilant children politely remind the others when they have forgotten to follow the rules, such as flushing the toilet or tidying away. In one lesson children discussed how they might feel if people were unfriendly to them. They expressed

their sentiments clearly and demonstrated a good sense of care for others. The children dress themselves for physical education within the time limit set by the sand-timer. They enjoy this challenge that is cleverly developing their skills of organisation and manipulation as well as their personal development. The class teacher and other adults encourage children to help themselves and to solve problems. They only intervene when absolutely necessary and this leads to confidence and self-reliance. The children walk to the hall for physical education lessons and school assemblies in a very calm and sensible manner and with a minimum of prompting by adults. This shows good levels of self-discipline developing at this tender age.

59. The teaching of personal and social education is especially good. The very good relationships ensure that children feel secure in their environment.

Communication, language and literacy

60. In communication, language and literacy the children make good progress and are on course to achieve the levels of the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. Many are already beginning to extend their work into National Curriculum levels in speaking and listening, reading and writing.
61. The children enjoy sharing a wide range of books. They eagerly peep to see what the story is about before the start of the lesson, showing a keen interest in reading. They know many words by sight and are confident in splitting new words into sounds and combining them to read. Through constant prompting by the teacher, children use the clues presented in the pictures to make sense of their reading and to identify unfamiliar words. They think about what will happen next in the plot and talk about the characters. They predicted accurately what would happen to 'Mr Gumpy's' boat if all the animals jumped on and thoroughly enjoyed the humour in story. Children know some letter sounds and letter names and use their knowledge to spell words. Their writing is of a good standard and, for some higher achieving children, it is well above expectations. These pupils rehearse a sentence out loud and write with a minimum amount of support from the teacher. One group wrote about 'Mr Gumpy's' boat, making a very good attempt to spell the words logically. Most children have good control when using a pencil and are beginning to make joined writing patterns. All speak with clarity and confidence, using a good range of vocabulary. In one session, they re-enacted a story they had read together. Each child became a character and improvised action and speech in the role. Very high standards were achieved with children engaging their imagination to the full.
62. The teaching of language and literacy is very good. Staff work hard to engage the children in discussion and conversation. This has a very high priority in all sessions. The teacher expects children to write for themselves and, as a result, their skills are emerging very well. In the post office, they 'write' a shopping list and in sessions when they can choose activities, they record what they have done on the class chart. Every opportunity is exploited to extend skills in reading and writing and this is a major factor behind the good progress.

Mathematical development

63. Children achieve well and are making good progress towards attaining the expected early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. The children are enabled to learn rapidly through the good, practically based teaching they receive. They use a computer game to count and order numbers to 30. In a clapping game some children were confident with numbers to 50. They recognise two-dimensional shapes and talk about their features. For example, one child correctly named a hexagon, recognising the six sides and the 'corners'. All make patterns using the shapes and explore which ones fit together. The children use water play to fill and empty a variety of different-sized containers. They increasingly use mathematical language as they describe the jug as full, half full, or when they need 'just a little bit more'.
64. The teaching of mathematical understanding is good because the teacher takes every opportunity to develop, consolidate and apply the children's understanding of number through practical

experience and play. For example, when children were using construction material, the teacher asked them to compare shape and size to judge which piece would fit best.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. In knowledge and understanding of the world, children are on course to achieve the early learning goals expected by the time they leave the Reception class. Good teaching, using a range of interesting and stimulating topics, ensures that the children make consistently good progress. The teacher provides a wide range of activities that are planned to extend early ideas in science, design and technology, history, geography and information technology. The children use the computer successfully, manipulating the mouse and handling the keyboard to control programs. They access the program at the desired level of difficulty and then increase the challenge as they complete the task successfully. They enjoy extending their reading skills by using an interactive book where they can manipulate the characters. In their science investigations children classify living and non-living things. In one lesson, they read a book about 'Mrs Mopple's Washing' and then experimented to see whether drying inside or outside was more efficient. They made some interesting predictions about the effects of the wind and sun on the drying process, showing a good level of understanding. Children have the opportunity to use a wide range of construction kits to create a variety of models of various sizes. They experiment with a range of materials, cutting, gluing and sticking to create a range of interesting pictures and three-dimensional models. In making their windmills, children experimented with different fastenings, for example, string or paper clips, to find out which works best.
66. The teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is good, largely because the children experience an extensive range of activities. The teacher makes very good use of the outdoor area to extend children's understanding of the natural world. This active involvement and investigation by the children is very good in promoting skills of enquiry and exploration.

Physical development

67. In physical development, children attain the standards expected by the end of the Reception year. Their skills develop well from when they start school. They roll out play-dough and use a range of tools to make patterns on the flat dough. They enjoy using different media, such as pencils, chalks and felt pens as they draw and make marks on paper. Children develop appropriate levels of dexterity; for example, when they make models from a variety of materials. They take great care when they paint or print their pictures. Their patterns showed careful attention to mixing the exact colour required and keeping the lines separate from each other. In outdoor play the children travel over, through and under an attractive range of adventure equipment, such as the tunnel or climbing-frame. They balance on some planks that they have placed imaginatively across tyres to create an obstacle course. The children especially enjoy steering the wheeled vehicles and toys around their 'make-believe' roadway. All show a good sense of safety and are well aware of each other's space, taking sensible avoiding action where necessary.
68. The teaching of physical development is good, providing many opportunities for the children to refine their skills. Children work hard during their sessions and enjoy running off their energy. All the adults encourage children to improve their work by demonstration of good techniques. They use a varied range of small and large equipment to develop co-ordination skills both indoors and outdoors.

Creative development

69. Children attain the expected level of the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1 in creative development. Their printing and painting supports effectively their numeracy development where they are looking at shape and pattern. In the imaginative role-play areas, the children develop their skills of co-operation and communication as they act out scenarios with one another and often become engrossed in their work. In one session, they were writing shopping lists, making sure to include the essentials. In a creative dance lesson, the children mimicked animal movements in a very perceptive way. Their marbling work created amazement as the colours merged and moved about. The teacher gave them plenty of time to enjoy this moment of wonder.

70. The teaching of creative development is good, with many opportunities to develop ideas through painting, drawing, role-play and music. The teacher stimulates the children's interest with lively lessons that generate a high level of excitement. Consequently, the children express their feelings and ideas enthusiastically.
71. The children make a very positive start to their education in the Reception class. They concentrate on the activities set for them and stay with the tasks, even if they find them hard. Most remain with their chosen task until it is completed, demonstrating perseverance and determination.

ENGLISH

72. The school's results in reading and writing for seven-year-olds have been consistently good and well above national averages. In 2001, the high standards in reading were maintained at well above average; but for writing, attainment was average. This dip was due to a high percentage of pupils in the group who had special educational needs and was predicted accurately in the teachers' assessments. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in both reading and writing was maintained at well above the national average, showing that those capable of higher attainment were sufficiently challenged.
73. For the 11-year-olds, the percentage gaining the expected level in English in 2001 was around the same as the national average, but the percentage gaining the higher Level 5 was above the national average. Attainment was slightly higher in 2001 compared with the previous two years. The school's performance over the last few years has not been as good in Year 6 as it has been in Year 2. However, a straight comparison between results is not statistically viable because there is a high turnover of pupils. For example, of the 19 who took the tests in 2001 only 11 had been at the school in Year 2. The eight pupils who transferred to the school after 1997 made sound progress in relation to their starting point. Other reasons for the discrepancy are associated with planning, target-setting and subject leadership. When the school's results in national tests and assessments are analysed, they show high standards in reading but relatively lower attainment in writing. The school has recognised this as a priority area and there are clear plans to improve standards further. Since the last inspection, the high standards in Years 1 and 2 have been maintained. In Years 3 to 6, reading has improved but attainment in writing is lower. The national guidance for literacy has been fully implemented but learning is sometimes out of sequence due to flaws in the planning.
74. Standards in speaking and listening throughout the school are very high. Pupils express their ideas clearly and listen well to others. All engage readily in conversation about their work. In a Year 1 and 2 reading lesson pupils talked about the setting and plot, organising their thoughts very well about what they wanted to say. They listened very carefully to other points of view, extended their ideas through sophisticated exchanges and gave clear reasons for their predictions. In Years 3 to 6, pupils talk at length about a range of topics and carefully consider their classmates' ideas. They speak with clarity and assurance. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson, for example, pupils talked about the features of a non-fiction text and discussed how useful each paragraph was for supporting the reader's understanding. Their ideas were relevant and contributed well to the overall level of understanding they achieved. Progress for all groups of pupils is very good.
75. Pupils' achievement in reading is often very good. Guided reading with the teacher is used effectively in Years 1 and 2 and there is a good match of texts to pupils' prior attainment and developing expertise. Skills such as the recognition and articulation of letter sounds are well-developed and help pupils to tackle new words. Pupils recognise the features of both fiction and non-fiction books with confidence and know how to use the contents, index and glossary sections to find information. Those capable of higher attainment scan the page to find sub-headings, specific topic words and captions that help their understanding. All take reading books home regularly and are very well supported by parents. This makes a good contribution to learning. By the end of Year 6, pupils read fluently and show very good levels of comprehension. The majority

of pupils recall in detail what they have read, and skills of inference and deduction are very well-developed. Pupils state their preferences for favourite books, styles and authors, justifying their views. They are very discriminating when choosing material to read, with some preferring non-fiction. Pupils understand library classification systems and can locate information effectively and efficiently. Pupils of all abilities make good progress, due to the good quality of teaching and the positive attitudes fostered by the school.

76. In Years 1 and 2, pupils practise writing in logically sequenced sentences, often rehearsing the work out loud to make sure that it makes sense. They apply their knowledge of letter sounds effectively when spelling simple words and know many common words by sight. By the end of Year 2, writing is interesting and well-structured. Capital letters and full stops are usually used to demarcate sentences. Higher-attaining pupils use speech, question and exclamation marks correctly. In one lesson, where pupils were writing about the animals' thoughts, some work of a very high standard was seen. Higher-attaining pupils used bold print and capital letters to provide emphasis. This group's writing also included some interesting connecting words and longer sentences containing detail. Handwriting is becoming well-formed and legible but there are wide variations between groups. The higher-attaining pupils form and position their letters accurately but some in the lower-attaining group have difficulty in maintaining a neat hand. In Years 3 to 6 pupils write imaginatively in different styles and experiment with writing poetry. In Years 3 and 4 pupils paid good attention to the layout and sequence of their work as they explained how the Egyptians made paper. By Year 6, pupils' writing is often lively and thoughtful. They have written poems about 'Our Headteacher' using metaphors that show good expression and use of vocabulary. However, in narrative work, there is little use of detailed sentences to add interest and imagery. The organisation of pupils' non-fiction work is better than that in narrative writing. Pupils examine a good range of work by significant authors and appraise successfully the techniques and strategies used to engage the reader. They do not, however, then try out these ideas in their work, and pupils' skills in writing are not progressing as well as those in reading. Most pupils spell accurately, using a range of appropriate strategies. They split words into roots, prefixes and suffixes so that they understand how the rules of language work. For example, some Year 3 and 4 pupils experiment with using the suffix 'ness' to make words such as 'softness'. However, there is little difference in the level of work completed by groups of different ages or prior learning in the class. Handwriting is of a good standard by the end of Year 6, with some pupils developing their own style and paying great attention to the presentation of their work.
77. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Individual programmes of learning are used to plan work and pupils have additional support to help them meet their targets. Pupils who speak English as an additional language attain standards in line with all pupils. Their rate of progress is at least equal to that of their peers and they show levels of competence expected for their ages. There are no gifted and talented pupils formally identified and this is an area for development. Differences in the attainment of boys and girls can be partly attributed to the fact that there are more boys on the register of special educational needs. In oral work, the girls are generally more confident and teachers often take positive steps to involve the boys more by inviting their contributions. Usually, the school seeks out material that will interest boys but this is not always the case in English. For example, in one literacy lesson, pupils were studying ballads. The two examples used were much more suited to girls and some of the boys found them uninteresting and were not as well-motivated.
78. The format of the literacy hour has been implemented successfully in the school but the planning guidance has not been adapted effectively to meet the needs of the different ages in the junior classes. The present system results in pupils studying work from either the younger or older year group planning schedule. As a consequence, skills, knowledge and understanding are not always taught in a logical sequence, and when the class is working from the younger age group planning the older pupils are repeating work already covered and there is little challenge. For example, some pupils will learn about adverbs before they have studied verbs fully. In practice, the teachers use their skill to underpin learning and fill in gaps when working from the older year group planning. In this case, pupils make good progress, especially the younger ones. However, progress in the following year is much slower when older pupils work from the planning aimed at the younger age group. Taking the same example as above, the pupils now study verbs and

tenses, which is work that has already been covered. Subsequently, the rate of learning varies considerably from year to year. The planning system requires re-structuring to provide good guidance for teachers and to ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding are taught in a progressive way.

79. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was mainly good, with very good practice observed in Years 1 and 2. The high quality of teaching affects pupils' learning positively. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use it effectively to make lessons interesting. There is a strong emphasis on the extension of vocabulary and in developing non-fiction writing skills in all subjects of the curriculum. Marking is broadly satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. There are few detailed comments, however, to point the way forward for pupils and congratulatory remarks are general and do not say exactly what is good about the work. The school carries out regular assessments and the results are well organised and recorded to track each individual's progress. Teachers set targets for learning but do not share these with the pupils in simple, clear language that helps them to understand what they need to do next in order to improve.
80. The subject manager has a basic overview of teaching and learning in the subject but her role does not include regular scrutiny of teachers' planning or pupils' completed work to check on standards. She has observed some literacy lessons and given advice to colleagues but monitoring is not a regular feature in the school. At present, she does not manage and guide planning throughout the school and this is partly the reason for the uneven progress made by pupils. Nevertheless, a recent evaluation of the subject has led to a well-targeted action plan to improve writing.
81. The use of information and communication technology to support learning is developing well, especially in the application of word processing and publishing. Resources for English are adequate, overall. There is a satisfactory selection of books with enlarged print for use in the literacy hour and sets of smaller books used by groups of pupils in guided reading sessions. All are carefully stored and easily accessed. There is a sound selection of non-fiction and reference material for pupils in the main library, which is well organised, but some of these books are worn or old and will soon need replacing. The quality and range of books in class reading areas in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory but, through constant use, some are becoming well worn. There are few playscripts in the selection of material. The range and quality of dictionaries and thesauruses, especially for the older pupils, are good. The co-ordinator is aware of the resourcing issues and has plans to supplement stocks when budget limits allow.

MATHEMATICS

82. At the end of Year 2 in 2001, a good proportion of pupils achieved the nationally expected level of attainment, and results, overall, were around the national average. Girls did much better than boys. The results were lower than the usual trend, which shows attainment at well above average over four years. This was due to a high number of pupils in the group who had special educational needs. At the end of Year 6, the school's performance in mathematics was just above the national average. It was average when compared with schools in similar circumstances. Again, the girls outperformed the boys. A feature of the results was that the Year 6 group had made relatively poor progress compared with the excellent results achieved in 1997. Results in small schools can fluctuate dramatically between years and many pupils leave and enter the school between Years 3 and 6. Each junior class consists of two distinct year groups and the work set does not always match the needs of pupils of the full age and ability range. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that 2001 results could well be exceeded by the current Year 6 pupils. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs or those who speak English as an additional language meet the expected standards, due to diligent care and teaching. Teachers use the guidance of published text books to plan work. However, pupils with different levels of prior learning are often set tasks from the books at a similar level. This leads to similar levels of progress and attainment, even though the older and higher-attaining pupils have the knowledge, skills and understanding to work at more challenging tasks. Pupils are particularly good in number skills, which are given a priority, overall. Work in shape, measurement, time and data-handling is satisfactory. Boys and girls have the same provision and the school is working

hard to eliminate the variation in attainment between the two groups. There are no gifted or talented pupils identified in this subject.

83. By the end of Year 2, pupils are generally secure in their understanding of place value up to at least 99. Pupils make good progress. For example, in September, one group was able to add three numbers to total 20, but by January it had progressed to adding three numbers up to 99. They add and subtract with good levels of dexterity and accuracy. Pupils handle multiplication and division sums well with numbers from two to ten. They apply their good skills in computation to solve problems dealing with money and measurement. Pupils identify and name a wide range of two- and three-dimensional shapes, recognising sides and angles. They find it difficult to make estimates of length but their competence and accuracy in using standard measures is good.
84. By the end of Year 6 pupils have followed all the appropriate Programmes of Study in the National Curriculum. They are competent in using the four rules of number and mental computation is good. They have a sound understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages, having the knowledge to convert between the three. Pupils use negative numbers appropriately and know about elementary algebra. Their dexterity in solving numerical calculations is particularly sharp and denotes a good level of understanding. Some interesting work was seen involving Year 5 and 6 pupils sharing mathematical problems with other local primary schools by using the e-mail facility. The project evoked some imaginative responses. The pupils' work shows that they are normally working well within their capacity and they could be taken to a fuller extent of their abilities and challenged more often.
85. Pupils have very good attitudes to work. This adds an extra dimension to both the teaching and learning. For example, there is a delightful vigour in their response to the mental work done at the beginning of a lesson. This is exploited imaginatively by teachers in every class. In particular, the pupils work hard when using arithmetical games to enhance their skills, showing good co-operation when collaborating in pairs or groups. They accept cheerfully the result of a competitive game or show that they can work together efficiently to produce an agreed strategy and result. For example, two girls worked well with number rods and a computer to examine the relationship between the perimeter and the area of a rectangle. They inserted the results in to a computer spreadsheet to share with the rest of the class. The ability to focus and sustain concentration was noted in every lesson.
86. The quality of teaching is generally satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers have a sound range of professional skills and knowledge and organise their classes well. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 lesson about tallies and bar graphs, the work had been carefully thought through and appropriate resources made available, so that learning could develop smoothly and no time was lost. In the Year 1 and 2 class, the teacher records every pupil's progress to aid her planning. However, it is evident from the scrutiny of pupils' completed work that there are aspects of the teaching which need to be reviewed. Attainment meets the level required nationally but, in Years 3 to 6, there is an over-reliance on using the material from the commercial scheme that does not always provide the best way of taking learning forward at a suitable pace. Lessons are not always planned and pitched to challenge both year groups and the different levels of prior attainment in each class. The teachers have ample information about each pupil's progress, which helps with the grouping of pupils in lessons, but this has not yet been converted into specific learning targets that pupils and parents can use to enhance expectations.
87. Staff work very well together in the teaching of mathematics throughout the school but the subject manager's role is not fully developed. He does not have a sound overview of planning, teaching and attainment throughout school and, therefore, is not in a good position to drive the necessary improvements in the subject. Most of the work derives from the commercial text books and there are few opportunities for the wider use of investigative mathematics, linked to other subjects. The use of information and communication technology is being developed but its use is not yet maximised as a force for learning across the years because it is not specified within the planning.

SCIENCE

88. Based on teacher assessments in 2001, all pupils aged seven attained at least the expected Level 2 in science. This was very high compared with similar schools and with schools nationally and follows the good trend in attainment over several years. The number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was also very high when compared with schools across the country. At the age of eleven, the number of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was close to the national average but, compared with similar schools, the number of pupils reaching this level and the higher Level 5 was below average. Progress for this group through their junior years appears slow but there are significant factors that need to be considered. Firstly, this is a small school where statistics can be adversely affected because one pupil represents a high number of percentage points. Secondly, a high number of pupils come and go during Years 3 to 6 and, therefore, the group of pupils that took the tests in 2001 was not the same as that which was assessed in Year 2. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected Levels 4 and 5 has risen since the last inspection in 1997, but at a slightly lower rate than that seen nationally. As a result, we see a lowering of the comparative grade with other schools, where attainment in science has improved considerably. During the inspection, progress was good with a better emphasis on investigative skills. If this pace of learning is maintained, results for the coming tests should be better than last year's.
89. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 display interest and enthusiasm as they talk about how plants provide homes and food for all kinds of creatures. In a spiritual moment, they reflect on the beauty of living things. They understand the importance of looking after the environment and one boy gave a very graphic description of how small animals can suffer if they crawl into plastic bags or cans. Pupils have a good knowledge of the different parts of plants and know the functions of petals, leaves, stem, roots and bulbs. They make good progress in learning because of the teacher's clear demonstrations and explanations.
90. In Years 3 and 4 pupils learn well as they examine the relative sizes of the earth, moon and sun and investigate the distances between them. They are able to follow some quite complicated ideas and all make a good attempt at finding ways of 'proving' that the earth is a sphere. In discussions, pupils describe various experiments they have carried out, for example, on electrical circuits, conductors of heat and electricity or on absorption of water. They show understanding of the principles of making a 'fair test' and, for example, some pupils are able to describe how their group's results were different from other groups because, '...we didn't use the same amount of water so it messed up the results'. It was not possible to see a Year 5 and 6 lesson but in a discussion with some boys and girls they showed an above average understanding of forces, gases, rocks and minerals. They were especially enthusiastic about a day spent with lecturers from a local college of further education where they tested the strength of different types of bridge structures.
91. The lessons seen, and the discussions held show that pupils have a good knowledge and understanding in science. However, a review of some of the work done throughout the school shows a less consistent picture. Work is not always targeted towards either the different age groups or the different levels of achievement in each class and there are too many worksheets, some of which have very little challenge. This means that some pupils are not always sufficiently extended. Pupils are not given clear targets so that they have specific goals to aim for. Thus, although learning in the lessons seen is good, overall progress is only satisfactory. There is some evidence of good scientific investigation now being developed and this is set to raise standards.
92. Pupils are very positive in their attitudes to science. They are keen to learn, listen well and take an active and interested part in discussions. They settle down to work sensibly, work independently and keep on task. Relationships are very good and pupils work well in groups, collaborating well. They show a good awareness of safety issues. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Those who speak English as an additional language benefit from the school's emphasis on speaking and listening. Teachers routinely check that pupils understand new or technical vocabulary and that they can use the words in the correct context.

93. Teaching in the lessons seen was good. Teachers know the pupils well and prepare for lessons well. They have a good relationship with pupils and use effective questions to keep them interested, challenge them and help them to assess their level of understanding. They have good subject knowledge, which enables them to give clear explanations. A brisk pace and a variety of activities keep pupils motivated. However, the school's scheme of planning is not plotted accurately and consistently for pupils of different ages and abilities within each class. Work is not always clearly targeted to their needs so that they can achieve their best.
94. The subject manager is knowledgeable and gives helpful advice to colleagues. However, her role is underdeveloped. Although she has the general overview of what goes on, she does not see all the planning for the subject and is therefore, not in a position to check whether skills are taught in a logical and progressive order. Staff regularly discuss the progress of pupils informally, but the manager does not review regularly samples of the work across the school. There is, therefore, no effective monitoring of planning, teaching or standards. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, with regular testing as well as the informal day-to-day assessment teachers make of the pupils. There is a thorough tracking system, which shows how pupils have progressed from year to year. However, the information is not used to set clear and measurable targets that pupils can use.
95. The outdoor accommodation is good and well used for practical investigations. The subject has a good firm place in the school's curriculum and there are some stimulating displays of pupils' scientific work. Resources are satisfactory and are well-labelled and used. The use of information and communication technology is developing well, especially in recording results using spreadsheets, charts and graphs.

ART AND DESIGN

96. By the ages of seven and 11, pupils reach standards that match those expected for their age and there are strengths in pupils' knowledge of materials and in their skills of combining visual and tactile elements to gain the desired effect. All pupils, including those with special needs and for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. There have been improvements in learning since the last inspection. Pupils now benefit from, and enjoy, a wide range of well-planned artistic experiences that develop their skills and understanding.
97. It was only possible to see two art and design lessons during the inspection week but judgements are also drawn from a range of good artwork around the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have looked at artists such as Van Gogh and Georgia O'Keefe, producing an effective collage display based on O'Keefe's 'Primroses'. A good display of paintings, mosaics and sketches has been produced by Years 5 and 6, based on Millais' 'Ophelia'.
98. The teacher in Years 3 and 4 links the artwork with history studies on ancient Egypt. This leads to good progress and much enthusiasm. Pupils talk proudly about an excellent display of paintings, three-dimensional card work, silhouettes, cartouches and model sarcophagi. The cartouches contain their own names, written in hieroglyphics. Pupils have also made a child-sized model of the Pharaoh Tutankhamen. During one lesson, pupils used grids effectively, as the Ancient Egyptians did, to enlarge examples of Egyptian symbols. In Years 5 and 6, pupils link their art and design to work in geography about rivers, through some imaginative planning by the teacher. A whole range of material of high quality was produced using weaving, marbling, wax resist crayon, collage work and computer art. Pupils show a sound awareness of the work and styles of artists from other cultures and times, such as Hokusai, Picasso, Constable and Monet.
99. Teaching is good. Teachers plan well and have good subject knowledge. They provide a range of stimulating activities, which allow pupils to develop skills in a range of activities and media. Pupils clearly enjoy their art and design and make good progress. They work well, showing a high degree of concentration, and are able to discuss the work they are doing with insight. Pupils collaborate in groups, discussing sensibly ways of improving their techniques. For example, some Year 5 and 6 pupils were working on marbling. They knew which effects they wanted to produce and talked knowledgeably about 'spotting' with various combinations of colour until they achieved

the result they were looking for. Pupils evaluate their own work critically and try out different ideas to improve.

100. Art and design makes a good contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of pupils. The high quality of displays around the school helps to stimulate pupils' imagination and creates an attractive learning environment. At the last inspection in 1997, the provision for the subject was satisfactory so improvement has been good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

101. By the ages of seven and 11, pupils reach standards matching those expected for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress in all areas of the subject. This shows good improvement in Years 3 to 6 since the last inspection.
102. It was not possible to observe any lessons in design and technology but planning shows that the full Programme of Study is being covered. Evidence from photographs, work around the school and from discussions with pupils shows that knowledge, skills and understanding in the subject are progressing well. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have made vehicles, moving pictures, designed Joseph's 'coat of many colours', and a circuit game. They quickly learn essential skills, such as safety awareness and the accurate use of tools. They make designs after collecting information on commercial products and are beginning to make evaluations of their finished article. The teaching of design and technology in Years 1 and 2 is thorough and systematic.
103. In Years 3 and 4 the teacher makes useful links with science and design and technology to enhance learning. Pupils make a circuit that lights an electrical bulb and then adapt it for a specific purpose. Their creative designs include a headband that lights up, clown faces with flashing eyes, and a lighthouse. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made an excellent display, which links with their history work on the Victorians. This provided extended opportunities to consolidate their work. A Victorian rag rug that they made is of particularly high quality. There are also samples of inventive pop-up poetry books.
104. The standard of work and pupils' good understanding show that teaching is at least satisfactory. There is no effective overall planning and assessment for Years 3 to 6 to guide teachers in their work. Nor is there any overall monitoring to ensure that teaching and learning is systematic.

GEOGRAPHY

105. From the observations of lessons, the scrutiny of pupils' work and displays, together with discussions, it is clear that the pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectations, and progress is good. There are particular strengths in the knowledge and understanding of places and in environmental issues. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 begin to understand the notion of places and identify some geographical features of their locality. They ask relevant questions and use basic geographical skills of observation and enquiry. This provides a good starting point for their studies in Years 3 to 6. Much of their work is based on practical experiences through visits, weather observation and map work. They have a good understanding of the similarities and differences in various regions of the world.
106. By the end of Year 6, pupils are competent in their use of geographical vocabulary and skills such as map reading. They record observations carefully, analysing and producing information in diagrammatic forms. They engage successfully in research, using computer and library resources. Pupils study an interesting range of topics. They investigate differences between their locality and the Indian village of Chembakolle, focusing on features of the developing world. Pupils learn about life in Bangladesh, contrasting culture, religion, dress and food with that in Britain. They have a good understanding of tropical forests, water and river systems. In lessons, there is a

good emphasis on the issue of the natural environment and man's responsibility as it is developed.

107. Pupils throughout the school enjoy the subject and their very good attitudes are reflected in both their keen oral work and the pride they take in their topic books. Lessons on rivers provided a wide range of both co-operative and individual work that developed over several weeks. The resulting displays show some high standards. Pupils are keen to help each other and all make consistently good progress.
108. Teaching is imaginative and good. Very careful preparation ensures that the content of lessons is accurate and related to the pupils' experiences sufficiently for it to be meaningful and interesting. Lessons draw on fieldwork and practical experiences wherever possible. Teachers cover a wide range of work, much of it recorded through competent pieces of extended writing by pupils. A good feature of the teaching is that pupils are encouraged to produce their own displays. These provide a sense of pride and ownership. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to make teaching aids, such as transparencies for use on the overhead projector. These add interest to lessons and help to vary the ways in which the subject is taught and learned.
109. The subject manager for geography has ensured that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met in the topics that each class covers over a two-year period. Planning is insufficiently detailed and does not take account of assessment outcomes to ensure that pupils are supported and challenged to build on prior learning.

HISTORY

110. It was not possible to observe any history lessons for Years 1 and 2. From the scrutiny of work and display, and through discussions with pupils, it is clear that the level of attainment for seven and 11 year-olds meets national expectations, with strengths in historical enquiry and investigation. In Years 1 and 2 pupils ask questions about the past and try to understand why things happened. They gain a sense of the passage of time by studying major historical events and putting them in chronological order. Pupils begin to appreciate the importance of people such as Christopher Columbus and Florence Nightingale and how they have influenced our present-day lives. Through their study of toys, they find out about technological changes over time.
111. During Years 3 to 6 pupils study life in ancient Egypt, the Viking era and Victorian times in considerable depth. Pupils pose searching questions and engage in extended research. They enjoy the wide range of practical activities that bring learning to life, such as adopting the role of a Victorian pupil or a Viking. Pupils work in groups to produce some very good results. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 produced a detailed display about ancient Egypt, which demonstrated their good knowledge of that part of the world thousands of years ago. Through their studies, pupils are able to compare various civilisations and appreciate the legacies they left which are apparent in the modern world.
112. The pupils thoroughly enjoy history and every year group enters into the spirit of the lessons. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, are fully involved in the lessons and so make good progress.
113. The teaching of history in Years 3 to 6 shows teachers' skills at their best and the quality is never less than good. They bring enthusiasm to their teaching. For example, a teacher had been on a visit to Egypt, which had inspired her and brought fresh insights that she used to motivate pupils. A very wide range of teaching strategies are used and pupils receive a rich education as a result. Drama, art, visits, extended writing, use of information and communication technology, reading and discussions are all well used to bring topics to life.

114. The subject is well-developed as a series of topics on a two-year Programme of Study for each class. The subject manager does not monitor planning, teaching or learning. The high level of teachers' skills ensures that learning progresses well in lessons. Even so, there is no clear whole-school plan that helps pupils to acquire historical skills, knowledge and understanding in a systematic way.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

115. The school has made good improvements in this subject since the last inspection. Attainment meets national expectations at the end of Year 2. However, Year 6 pupils are not sufficiently confident in problem-solving and using computer simulations and therefore attainment for this group is below expectations. They have little experience of monitoring scientific investigations by using electronic equipment, such as thermometers or microscopes. Their experience of control technology is limited and does not include, for example, the programming of a sequence of events. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is below national expectations for the age group. Nevertheless, the school has made good progress to rectify the previous weaknesses in the planning and teaching of the subject in Years 3 to 6. Training is resulting in the increased confidence and expertise of the staff. New planning is also beginning to pay dividends in providing a wider range of study for pupils. The subject features on the school development plan and further targets are set for improvement. The majority of pupils have experience of using computers at home and this supports their work in school.
116. By the time the pupils are seven, they display confident word processing skills and can save, retrieve and print their work. Skills in handling and presenting data are good. For example, pupils produce a pie-chart to analyse the different colours of pupils' hair in the class. They collect information about the cars passing by the school and present their findings as a block graph. Some interesting bar charts show the pupils' favourite crisps and which shops they like to visit. Pupils produced pictures and patterns using the graphics facility and some designed a Christmas card. They use the computers effectively to support their learning in other subjects. Pupils get information about weather from a CD-ROM and use a computerised dictionary and encyclopaedia effectively. They learn early command techniques as they give directions to make objects travel accurately towards a target.
117. In Years 3 to 6, pupils extend their skills in word processing and in handling information well. They access the Internet and send mail electronically. Some pupils in Years 5 and 6 researched their work on the Victorians and investigated myths and legends. As part of the 'small school cluster group' pupils swap mathematical problems and solutions by e-mail. They obtain information efficiently using CD-ROMs. Older pupils investigated the River Trent as part of their work in geography. Pupils talked enthusiastically about their research into famous painters and their subsequent use of a graphics program to reproduce some of their techniques. Some work of high quality was produced using the French Impressionists program as a stimulus. Pupils in Year 6 described a range of activities; these included word processing, importing pictures to make posters, and the use of spreadsheets in solving mathematical problems. Pupils have some experience of computer control; for example, when they programmed a floor robot to negotiate obstacles. They listen to music using CD-ROMs but have not used computer facilities to compose their own work.
118. No direct teaching of information and communication technology was seen during the inspection but pupils were observed working on computers. Teachers explore effectively opportunities for pupils to use their computer skills when recording work or when studying across a range of subjects. The main problem is the shortage of hardware, which restricts pupils' opportunities to learn and make progress. When a new skill is introduced, it could be some time before everyone in the class has had time to practise it. As a result, teachers have constantly to remind pupils of earlier work. The recently appointed subject manager is keen to develop the curriculum further. The scheme of planning is under review to ensure that it includes all aspects of study in a balanced way. Staff are currently undergoing nationally recognised training and are becoming increasingly imaginative in planning the application of computer skills into other subjects. At

present, there are too few computers in the school. Governors are aware of the situation. Together with the headteacher and staff, they are considering whether to finance a small suite of computers or to supplement existing resources in classrooms to provide pupils, especially the older ones, with more 'hands-on' experience. This is a matter of urgent concern.

MUSIC

119. No music lessons were seen during the inspection. Evidence was taken from video and audio recordings, listening to pupils' singing in assembly, attending the recorder club and visiting instrumental lessons taken by visiting specialist teachers. Discussions were also held with pupils and the subject manager. It is apparent that the school provides a good programme of work throughout the year. Inspection evidence shows that attainment meets expectations for pupils aged seven and 11 and there are strengths in pupils' performing skills. Standards seen at the last inspection have been maintained.
120. By the end of Year 2, pupils use their voices expressively when singing. They consider what they could do to improve their performance; for example, by pronouncing the words more clearly. Pupils learn to sing simple songs from memory and use their voices confidently in a variety of ways. When playing musical instruments, pupils modify the tempo to capture the mood of the music. In Years 3 to 6 pupils enjoy listening to a good range of music and express their likes and dislikes, using a developing vocabulary of musical terms. They develop a sound awareness of music from other cultures and speak with enthusiasm about the 'rap' songs which they sing. Pupils have experiences of classical music and identify the work of some composers, such as Tchaikovsky. They explore different ways to play percussion instruments. Some older pupils have used a variety of resources, including their own voices, to create sound effects for a recorded radio play. The standard of work is high and indicates a good understanding of how sounds can be arranged to create specific effects. Pupils sing with confidence and enjoyment. They make very good gains in understanding and know what is meant by pitch, dynamics and duration. They sing tunefully in assemblies, often adding to the spiritual dimension of collective worship. In school productions, some pupils sing solo or in a small group, performing confidently and to a good standard. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed a good aural memory and are confident in combining musical ideas to create mood and effect. The knowledge and understanding of some pupils who are involved in the optional instrumental tuition, or who attend the recorder groups, exceeds the expected level for their age. These pupils read conventional notation, work hard to improve their performance and maintain their playing parts in ensemble work skilfully.
121. The clear scheme of work supports non-specialist staff well and creates a suitable balance between listening, composing and performing. Good links are made with other subjects. Musical traditions are explored when pupils learn about the Vikings and the Victorians. Teachers often set tasks that allow pupils to express themselves imaginatively. For example, in history, pupils composed pieces of music to represent the Greek gods. Pupils with special educational needs do well in this subject, developing their creative talents and interests effectively. Varied opportunities are given for pupils to experience the works of traditional and modern musicians and music has a high profile in the school. It is played quietly as pupils enter the hall for assembly and used occasionally as a background in classrooms, creating a calm, thoughtful atmosphere. The curriculum for music supports pupils' spiritual and cultural development effectively. There is a satisfactory selection of instruments, but recorded tapes and discs are few in range and number. Staff overcome the shortage by bringing items in from home but the restricted range means that pupils have little opportunity to select new works to listen to. Older pupils use the computer to listen to different types of music but information and communication technology is not used enough for composition or for altering and combining sounds.
122. Visiting specialists provide additional expertise and tuition for those pupils who choose to take part. Some high standards of playing were seen. Lessons included a high level of intellectual demand and sustained concentration. The lunch-time recorder clubs provide valuable extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to enhance their skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. It was only possible to see two physical education lessons during the inspection. Because this is a practical subject, there was insufficient evidence on which to make a judgement on standards. There is sufficient evidence to show that pupils are developing appropriate skills of movement, balance and co-ordination.
124. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were observed during a dance lesson. They performed confidently a complicated sequence of movements and followed some quick changes in direction. Pupils concentrated well to learn this complex sequence and perform it in time to the rhythm. All of them, even the youngest, succeeded in mastering the work and some performed to a high standard, demonstrating control and rhythm that was well above expectations.
125. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learned skills of bouncing, passing, moving and dodging in a games lesson. They demonstrated the expected level of skill in bouncing, with three or four showing good control skills. They understood how to work together in moving and passing. Team work was good as they signalled effectively to a partner where to pass the ball and how to move quickly to evade a marker.
126. Pupils enjoy physical education. This is clear from observations of lessons and from discussions. They try hard and are keen to do well. They show good team spirit and a well-developed awareness of fair play.
127. In the lessons seen, teaching was good. Teachers pay good attention to health and safety issues; for example, by making sure pupils are appropriately dressed and removing obstacles in the area to be used. Lessons allow time for the vital warming-up and cooling-down activities. The pace of learning is brisk. A variety of activities keeps pupils motivated and provides good learning opportunities for a range of skills. There are high expectations both of behaviour and performance.
128. As well as the physical education lessons in school, there are swimming lessons for each class, taken on a rota basis. This extends experiences for all age groups. Extra-curricular netball and soccer activities provide opportunities for boys and girls to play in competitive games against other schools. Parents often support and help. One parent provides valuable football training. The annual sports days adds an extra dimension to learning and provides good opportunities for the development of pupils' social skills.
129. The manager for physical education is knowledgeable and leads the subject satisfactorily, but there is no formal monitoring of either planning or standards. Resources are satisfactory, with a reasonable supply of balls and small and large equipment. Accommodation is good, with a suitable hall, two outside hard-surface play areas and a large grassed playing-field, which is marked out for soccer and a running track. There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection in 1997.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. Throughout the school, pupils exceed the levels expected in the local education authority's Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Pupils show an interest in religious education and know many Bible stories. They develop a good understanding of the key ideas and celebrations from different faiths.
131. During Years 1 and 2, pupils study a wide variety of topics. They talk about 'ourselves' and consider their families, friends and things of special significance to them. They compare different religious beliefs. Pupils recite Bible stories, such as those about the birth of Jesus, the Calming of the Storm, Zaccheus and the wedding at Cana. They learn about the significance of religious

buildings, such as churches and mosques, and the special features they contain. Through the study of festivals, such as the Chinese New Year, they begin to recognise and respect religious and cultural differences.

132. During Years 3 to 6, pupils extend their studies. They grasp the notion of such complicated areas as symbolism, prayer, worship and the rites of passage. They study these in the context of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. In one lesson, the pupils used artefacts and music related to the Jewish Passover feast to guide them through the procedures of the Passover night. The work plays an important part in developing pupils' awareness of the contemporary British multicultural and multi-faith society. It encourages them to be sensitive to the beliefs and feelings of other people. This supports their social education effectively. Information and communication technology is little used in this subject and there is little exploration of web-sites as a source of information. This could be exploited further.
133. Pupils respond well to the teaching. For example, during celebrations for the Chinese New Year, pupils in Years 1 and 2 listened with great interest to the characteristics of the '12 Chinese years'. They then did some interesting investigations about the time when they were born and read about the supposed effect of birthdate on their personality. The whole process was one of involved and interested learning.
134. The teaching is consistently good. Teachers show imagination and work very hard. For example, when Year 3 and 4 pupils were introduced to the temptations Jesus had to face, learning was linked closely an earlier lesson in personal and social education which involved moral decision-making.
135. The recently appointed subject manager proposes to review the subject policy and scheme of planning. At the moment, links between the topics do not ensure clear progression in learning from year to year, although attainment by the end of Year 6 is good. Acquisition of some artefacts means that resources for teaching the subject are now satisfactory.