

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **BAMBER BRIDGE ST AIDAN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bamber Bridge, Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119380

Headteacher: Mrs S Oates

Reporting inspector: Mr R Robinson  
21024

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> February 2002

Inspection number: 243908

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

School category: Voluntary controlled

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Larch Grove  
Bamber Bridge  
Preston  
Lancashire

Postcode: PR5 6GX

Telephone number: 01772 337321

Fax number: 01772 620804

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Father G Piper

Date of previous inspection: October 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21024	Mr R Robinson Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9327	Mr S Vincent Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18344	Mr D Earley Team inspector	English Geography History Physical education Equal opportunities Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
8420	Mrs V Roberts Team inspector	Science Art Music Provision for children in the foundation stage. English as an additional language	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This small primary school for boys and girls aged four to 11 years is situated in Bamber Bridge on the outskirts of Preston. The school serves an area comprising a mixture of private housing and housing association accommodation. The school has 137 full-time pupils: 79 boys and 58 girls, including 19 children who are in the reception class. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and no pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Twenty-five pupils (18 per cent) are on the register of special educational needs, which is below average; most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. A below average proportion of pupils has statements of special educational needs. Children's attainment when they start in the reception class is now average, though in the previous year it was below average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is about 16 per cent, which is close to the national average. The governors and parents have opted for the teaching of denominational religious education in accordance with the diocesan syllabus. A new headteacher, having been the acting headteacher since the beginning of the academic year and previously the deputy headteacher, was appointed in January 2002.

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

St Aidan's Church of England Primary is a very good school. Pupils achieve very well and standards are high. Their attitudes to work, behaviour and personal development are very good. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Parents hold the school in high regard. The leadership and management of the headteacher are excellent and the governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- Standards by the end of Year 6 are well above the national average in English and mathematics.
- Pupils' attitudes to work, their behaviour and personal development are very good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school.
- The assessment of pupils' progress is of a very high standard.
- The school fosters spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are excellent.
- The staff and the governing body assist the headteacher very ably.

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

- The use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is insufficient.

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

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

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection in October 1997. Standards, by the end of Year 6, have risen above the national average trend. Pupils' attitudes to work, their behaviour and personal development are now very good. The quality of teaching has improved significantly, as there is no longer any unsatisfactory teaching. The leadership and management of the school have improved greatly. The following items represent responses to the areas for development identified in the last inspection:

- effective schemes of work have been introduced for all subjects;
- the planning of lessons has improved and is very good;

- the assessment procedures are now very good for all subjects;
- a curriculum for personal, social, health and citizenship education has been introduced successfully;
- arrangements for the appraisal of teachers' performance are better;
- pupils' spiritual and cultural development is more effective;

## 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	A	C	A	A
mathematics	A	A	B	A
science	A	A	C	A

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

- In 2001, pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science was well above the average of pupils in similar schools. Pupils' attainments overall were above the national average for all schools. The attainments of boys and girls were not significantly different
- The performance of this year's group of pupils in Year 6 in English and mathematics is well above the national average, and in science is above the national average. Pupils exceed the national expectations in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. Performance in information and communication technology is in line with national expectations. It was not possible to make a judgement on attainment in music as too few lessons were observed.
- The results of the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2001 showed that pupils' performance, compared with that of pupils in similar schools was above average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. Compared to the national average, standards were below average in reading, average in writing and above average in mathematics.
- The performance of this year's group of pupils in Year 2 is above average in the skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- The rate of improvement of eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science since the time of the last inspection is above the national trend.
- Children's attainment, by the end of the reception class is above expected standards in personal, social and emotional development and in line with those expected in communication, language and literacy, in mathematical development, in knowledge and understanding of the world, in physical development and in creative development.
- On balance, pupils achieve very well at the school. In the reception class the children have a good start to their education and in Years 1 to 6 pupils continue to build on their previous learning effectively.
- The school's targets for the proportion of pupils to reach the level expected nationally of eleven-year-olds in 2002 are realistic, although they are likely to be exceeded because of the high standard of teaching in Year 6.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils enjoy school and show high levels of interest and enthusiasm toward their work.



Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; pupils behave very well in the classrooms and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: pupils respond very well to the opportunities to take responsibilities. Pupils relate very well to each other and staff.
Attendance	Good; attendance has improved during this academic year and is now above the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and meets the needs of pupils well irrespective of their levels of attainment. Pupils make good progress in their learning at each stage of their education. The teaching of English and mathematics is good and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are very well developed resulting in pupils quickly gaining understanding of new work. The management of pupils is very good. This has a very positive impact on pupils' progress and engenders an eagerness and interest in learning. Classroom assistants, voluntary helpers and learning resources are used very well to assist pupils' learning. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects taught. The planning of lessons is very effective. Pupils are fully aware of what they are to learn and they work at a brisk pace. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work. The pupils' work is marked well and challenging targets are set for future learning. Homework is set effectively to assist pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs as well as gifted and talented pupils make good progress relative to their prior attainment.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good; the curriculum is very well planned and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal opportunity to succeed. Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are very effective. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good and the school uses the community very effectively to enrich children's learning. Not enough use is made of information and communication technology to aid pupils' learning in other subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; pupils receive effective help from teachers and capable classroom assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good; it is a strength of the school. Pupils have many opportunities to reflect on important issues within a very caring Christian ethos. Pupils are enabled to understand the differences between right and wrong. Pupils have very many opportunities for learning to live together and to care for the world in which they live and for others less fortunate than themselves. The planning of a wide range of occasions enables pupils to appreciate their own culture and the rich diversity of the society in which they live.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well; it is a happy and caring environment. Procedures for managing behaviour and relationships are very effective. The very good assessment systems across all subjects ensure that teachers know pupils' next step of learning and this affects positively their

	achievements.
Parents' view of the school	Very favourable; relationships between parents and staff are very positive.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent; the headteacher provides exceptional direction to the work of the school and, together with other members of staff and governors, ensures that the aims of the school are met fully. Subject co-ordinators are very effective and, increasingly, are developing their managerial roles.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well; governors are very mindful of their responsibilities and fulfil their duties very efficiently, providing a high level of support for the headteacher. Governors have a very good understanding of the strengths of the school and of areas for development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good; the governors and staff are determined to achieve further improvements through careful monitoring. Very appropriate objectives are set in the school development plan to continue to move the school forward. The monitoring of teaching and pupils' work is of a very high standard. Performance management is developed very well.
The strategic use of resources	Good; staff are very effectively deployed and senior management provide very good support for new teachers. The accommodation and resources are used extremely well. Additional funding is used well to assist pupils with special educational needs. Governors successfully apply the principles of obtaining best value, to the benefit of pupils.

The school has a sufficient number of staff, who are appropriately qualified. The accommodation is satisfactory, though the school lacks a suitable outdoor area for children in the reception class. Learning resources are plentiful and support the teaching well.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children enjoy school, behave well and make good progress because the teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school helps children to become more mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard and are given an appropriate amount of homework to assist their learning.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents, and parents find the staff approachable.</li> <li>• Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons is appropriate.</li> <li>• The school is led and managed well.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No significant concerns were expressed by parents.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the extremely positive views of parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 In the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001, standards in English, mathematics and science were very good and well above the average for pupils in similar schools. Standards, compared with the national average, were well above in English, above in mathematics and in line in science. Standards of the current Year 6 are similar in English. They have improved in mathematics to well above the national average and above average in science. This improvement results from a combination of factors but particularly from the strengths in the teaching of the subjects in Year 6 and the positive effect of the curriculum, which is based securely on national recommendations. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection, when pupils' attainment was in line with the national average in all three subjects.

2 Standards in the national tests in 2001 for seven-year-olds were below the national average in reading, though they were above the average achieved in similar schools. Standards were above the national average in writing and above average in mathematics. However, compared with that of pupils in similar schools, pupils' performance at St Aidan's was well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment of the present Year 2 is above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science; the improvement in reading reflects the increased emphasis the school has placed on developing reading this year. Standards of speaking and listening are above average.

3 Pupils' performance has risen above the national trend in English, mathematics and science from a low point in 1998. The performance of boys and girls by the age of 11 is not significantly different over time though quite variable by the age of seven, at which stage girls generally do better than boys. No significant differences in the performance of boys and girls were seen during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in lessons similar to that of other pupils, relative to their level of attainment, because of the good support they receive from teachers and classroom assistants. Pupils identified as being talented pupils achieve highly.

4 Overall, pupils' achievements are very good, from when they enter the school to reaching the end of Year 6; this is because of the good teaching at each stage of the school and the very good attitudes to work and high standard of behaviour of pupils. The very good planning of lessons and good quality of teaching ensure that pupils make similar progress, irrespective of their level of attainment.

5 The achievement of children of reception age is good. They make sound progress in their physical and creative development and good progress in all other areas. The children have few opportunities to develop their learning in a suitable outdoor environment, however, because of the lack of appropriate facilities. In Years 1 and 2 pupils build on their prior attainment well and make good progress as the teaching is effective. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching is good, overall, and pupils achieve well; the teaching of the oldest pupils is very good resulting in pupils making rapid progress.

6 Pupils' achievement in Years 1 to 6 is good in the development of the skills of speaking and listening, and in reading, writing, mathematics and science, as a result of good teaching and a very effectively planned curriculum. In English and mathematics, there are appropriate opportunities to practise skills in other subjects. The very good implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment in English and mathematics.

7 In information and communication technology, pupils are making brisk progress following the recent introduction of teaching in the computer suite. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with national expectations and their achievement is good; however, the subject is not used sufficiently to assist learning in other subjects. It was not possible to make a judgement

on pupils' attainment and achievement in music. In all other subjects, pupils achieve well and reach standards above national expectations.

8 The school has set targets for the proportion of pupils by the age of 11 expected to achieve the level expected of their age in English and mathematics. The targets are based on the school's very good records of pupils' attainment; however, because of the high proportion of very good teaching in Year 6, these appropriately challenging targets are likely to be exceeded.

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

9 Pupils' attitudes to work, their behaviour and their personal development are very good and make a significant contribution to the high standards across the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils come cheerfully to school, ready to greet their friends and teachers, and are very well prepared to take part in lessons. They apply themselves very well. Reception pupils choose their activities quickly and stay involved for lengthy periods of time; they persevere when making models or organising their shapes to make a picture, for example. Reception children also enjoy playground games and belonging to the after-school craft club. Infant pupils participate eagerly, and are keen to do their best, particularly in practical lessons such as art. They are sensible when organising; for instance, they tidy up carefully after planting seeds, and make clear records of their experiments. Junior pupils are attentive and listen very well. Pupils are enthusiastic about activities outside lessons and are keen to join in the wide range of clubs on offer.

10 Pupil's behaviour is very good and is a marked strength of the school. This is particularly noticeable in assemblies and in movement around the school. Pupils act sensibly and quietly and voluntarily open doors for others. In class, behaviour is usually very good and sets a good atmosphere in which pupils can learn easily. Overall, pupils behave well in the dining room and playgrounds. Although they are boisterous and lively at lunchtime in both playgrounds they exercise good self-control overall. Reception pupils appreciate how older pupils 'come and play with them' and pupils are well aware that this is one of the responsibilities they have within the school. Older boys remark jokingly that the only 'hard play' comes from the girls in the football team. In the last school year, there were rightly four exclusions for a fixed period; however, there have been no exclusions in this academic year.

11 Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good. Adults treat pupils with respect and provide very good role models for pupils. Pupils co-operate well and listen to each other's ideas. The effects of the lessons in personal, social, health and citizenship education can be seen in practice around the school. At wet playtimes and snack time in the hall, a very positive atmosphere of friendship and very good behaviour are apparent. Pupils work and play well with visiting pupils from a local special school.

12 Pupils' personal development is very good. Younger pupils do small jobs around their classroom. Older pupils carry out responsibilities such as collecting registers and assisting in setting up equipment for assemblies. They serve toast and biscuits during the morning snack time. Pupils accept their responsibilities very well and present a helpful and cheerful start to the morning break. They have a confident air of being reliable and trustworthy in the tasks they undertake.

13 Representatives from each class are voted on to the school council. As the council is a fairly new initiative, most members are learning about their responsibilities in this role. However, their initial discussions are concerned positively with encouraging all pupils to make friends with the more solitary pupils in the school, their first priority being to make the school a happy place for all.

14 Relationships are very good among pupils with special educational needs. These pupils co-operate well with teachers and peers and have the same opportunities for personal development as other pupils; for example, their achievements are recognised during assemblies, and they collaborate effectively in group work in physical education. Their behaviour is generally very good.

15 Pupils are punctual and come willingly to school. Attendance has improved this academic year and is now slightly above the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average.

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

16 The quality of teaching is good resulting in pupils making good progress in their learning in the reception, the infants and the juniors. The teaching in the reception class is effective and children quickly settle into the routines of the school and make good progress in all their areas of learning. The teaching of the Year 6 pupils is very good indeed and ensures that they achieve very well by the time they leave the school. A particular strength is the skilful way in which teachers, throughout the school, teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy; consequently, by the time they leave the school, pupils attain standards which are well above average in English and mathematics. Skills in literacy are practised very well in other subjects and skills in numeracy are developed satisfactorily throughout the curriculum.

17 The planning of lessons is of a high standard. In most lessons, the planning is linked to pupils' levels of attainment and builds very well on their previous learning. The planned learning objectives for the lesson are shared with pupils so that they know what they should learn. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach; for example, in an English lesson the teacher had a good understanding of fables which was passed on clearly to the pupils. The teacher challenged pupils to predict what might happen part way through reading the story; this engaged pupils' interest and extended their understanding.

18 Teachers encourage pupils to achieve well and to reflect on moral issues; for example, in a study of poetry about whales, the teacher had high expectations of pupils to read accurately and to interpret the meaning of a poem about a whale and to reflect on moral issues, such as the use of whale products for lipstick and polish.

19 Teachers employ a very good range of teaching approaches to promote learning. Whole-class lessons are used very well to introduce new learning and to review previous work. Small group work is used very effectively to enable pupils to practise new learning with other pupils of similar attainment. This occurred in an information and communication technology lesson. The teacher explained carefully to the whole class the activities to support the new learning. The pupils understood what they were to learn in activities which were organised very well in small groups of pupils of similar attainment. They quickly and enthusiastically set about their tasks and worked productively, gaining a deeper understanding of controlling programmable toys. In a history lesson, the teacher used role-play of a recent terrorist attack in a most convincing manner to enable pupils to understand that conflicts are going on today and that they affect the lives of children, as was the case in the Second World War. The presentation by the teacher was so dramatic and convincing that the pupils were totally engaged and gained a much better understanding of the causes and effects of conflicts.

20 Teachers use classroom assistants and learning resources very well; for example, in a mathematics lesson the teacher used small white boards to check pupils' speed and accuracy in mental calculations. Classroom assistants work alongside lower attaining pupils and help them to take a full part in lessons and make good progress. Most lessons move along at a brisk pace, though very occasionally the pace of lessons slows and some pupils, particularly higher attainers, lose interest.

21 The marking of pupils' work is good and indicates clearly to pupils how well they are doing. Teachers use the information to record pupils' attainments and to plan future lessons. Homework is regularly set and reinforces and extends classroom activities well.

22 The special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers and classroom support assistants co-operate very well in ensuring that individual education plans are closely related to pupils' needs. Work is prepared which is suited to pupils' levels of attainment. This enhances their learning and ensures that work is closely built on what has gone before. There is good liaison between classroom support assistants and class teachers. Classroom support assistants work well with special educational needs pupils and help them to make good progress.

23 It was not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching of information and communication technology as only two lessons were observed; however, the teaching in one of the lessons was excellent and the other was good. The recent development of a computer suite is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment; however, information and communication technology is used insufficiently to support learning in other subjects.

24 The quality of teaching and learning is good in art and design, design and technology, physical education and science and pupils learn well in these subjects in both the infants and the juniors. Insufficient lessons were seen to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning in history, geography and music.

25 Significant improvements are apparent in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection whereas at the last inspection one lesson in seven was unsatisfactory. The proportion of good and better teaching has increased very significantly. The improvements in teaching have resulted in much higher standards.

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

26 The school provides a very good range of learning opportunities which meet the needs, interests and aptitudes of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. The school now provides very effectively for pupils to build on their previous learning in order to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding because it has in place a very thorough system of planning which covers all the subjects of the National Curriculum. Planning is also enhanced by the very good use the school makes of the national guidance for schemes of work and guidance from the local education authority. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects and the school has in place a policy and scheme of work for health education. The school has achieved the Quality Mark Award for raising standards in basic skills.

27 The curriculum for children in the foundation stage is sound. It is based on the early learning goals for the areas of learning for children up to the time they leave reception class and the early stages of the National Curriculum. The school is very careful to ensure that all pupils have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and equal opportunity to succeed in them. The curriculum is enriched by the very good teaching of literacy and numeracy and this is helping to raise standards. The school makes very good use of literacy in other subjects of the curriculum. This helps to enhance pupils' skills in literacy and to increase their understanding of other subjects; for example, in a Year 4 physical education lesson, pupils made good use of their speaking and listening skills when they discussed how they might work together in groups. In Year 6, pupils wrote detailed descriptions of life during the blitz in their work in history. In scientific work, pupils in Year 2 wrote well presented accounts of their surveys of pets. Pupils in Year 5 showed clear labelling skills and evaluated work carefully when they made money containers in design and technology.

28 The school makes satisfactory use of pupils' mathematical skills in other subjects of the curriculum, although this is not as extensively developed as work in literacy; for example, pupils in Year 6 made accurate calculations in determining rates of evaporation in science, and measured their pulse rates after exercise. Pupils in Year 2 used time lines in history and coordinates in geography. They made accurate measurements when making axles for moving vehicles in design

and technology. Although information and communication technology is used in some other subjects of the curriculum, this is generally not yet sufficiently developed. Digital cameras are used on field trips; for example, in geographical work in Year 4, and these pupils also use computers to produce graphs of traffic surveys. Pupils in Year 2 learn about directions and angles when they learn to programme robot machines.

29 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good because the school makes good use of specific grants in order to provide support for these pupils; for example, in its provision of classroom assistants. The special educational needs co-ordinator supports colleagues, pupils and parents effectively. Individual education plans provide clear targets for pupils to improve and these are based on very thorough assessments and are very carefully prepared and reviewed. The comprehensive and detailed assessment and record keeping systems used by the school help to ensure that teachers and support staff know pupils well. Pupils are given work in class, which is suited to their levels of attainment, and receive good support from classroom assistants in class and when they are withdrawn for extra help. The school has identified a small number of gifted and talented pupils and is careful to ensure that their learning is enhanced. The school meets fully the requirements of the code of practice for special educational needs.

30 The school makes very good provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education. Pupils have opportunities to take part in elections and become members of the school council. Here they learn about discussion and compromise, and contribute to the life of the school; for example, improvements were made to playground provision following representations from the school council. They take positions of responsibility as team captains and learn to use their initiative when they are infant helpers. Older pupils take part in 'Operation Streetwise' as part of citizenship education. Sex education is taught throughout the school and, specifically, in Year 5/6 as part of a science topic. The school encourages pupils to adopt a healthy life style, including providing of healthy snacks at break times. It teaches pupils about the uses and misuses of drugs in its science and personal and social education lessons. In subjects, such as physical education and science, pupils learn about the benefits of a healthy diet and exercise.

31 The school provides a good range of out of school activities in order to enrich the curriculum; these include rounders, music club, story telling, craft club, playground games club, computer club, football training, netball club and gardening club. In a similar way, the curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits. The school also provides opportunities for pupils to take part in residential visits. These help to extend pupils' skills in information communication technology and provide opportunities for them to take part in outdoor adventurous activities and to learn to live together. In order to support work in the curriculum, the school welcomes visitors, such as artists, theatre groups and the fire service.

32 The school has very good links with the local community in order to enhance pupils' learning. They have very close links with the local Anglican church. Pupils visit regularly for celebrations and festivals and as part of their work in history. The vicar is a regular visitor to the school. Senior citizens come into school in order to talk about their experiences and to work with pupils. Pupils visit the local high street as part of their work in geography, where they look at land use and conduct traffic surveys. Representatives from the police and local health services come into school to talk to pupils, as do representatives from local businesses, such as banks.

33 The school has good overall links with partner institutions. It has very good inclusive links with a local special school. At appropriate times, pupils from both schools visit each other and work together. Adult learners from the local technical school help to support pupils in activities, such as those in design and technology. The school is a focus for local primary schools in the teaching of literacy. It uses the information communication technology facilities of a local secondary school, whose pupils also put on plays for the pupils in school. Sound links with the local secondary schools ensure that pupils' transfer to the next stage of their education is a smooth one.

34 Overall, provision for spiritual, social, moral and cultural education is very good. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection, when spiritual and cultural education was

found to be unsatisfactory.

35 Provision for spiritual education is now very good because opportunities to foster spiritual education are included in the planning. Time is given during lessons for pupils to reflect on their feelings and values and those of others; for example, before lunch pupils in Year 2 reflected on their good fortune to be looking forward to a good meal. The school has a very strong, caring Christian ethos, which is included in the school's mission statement and pervades all the work of the school; for example, displays include prayers and religious artefacts. Stained glass windows and the arms of St Aidan feature sensitively as part of the internal fabric of the school. Teachers take advantage of many opportunities to raise pupils' self-esteem and to help them to appreciate and value other children; for example, during assemblies, pupils' achievements are celebrated and in their writing they describe how they and all others are special. Regular opportunities are provided for prayer during the school day. There are very strong links with the local church and clergy take assemblies and celebrate Eucharist in school. Teachers provide opportunities for spiritual development in other subjects of the curriculum; for instance, in Year 6 children paused for reflection and prayer on the consequences of the September 11<sup>th</sup> tragedy, as part of their work on conflict and the Second World War.

36 Provision for moral education is very good. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. The school has a very clear behaviour policy which is used consistently throughout the school and reinforces the very good behaviour in school. This helps pupils to have a very clear understanding of the differences between right and wrong and of the ideas of honesty, fairness, truth and justice. Members of staff take time to consider any issues which might arise and they help pupils to consider alternative courses of action. Daily acts of worship contribute very well to pupils' personal development by considering moral themes, such as caring for others. Adults provide very good role models and good behaviour is considered to be very important.

37 Provision for social education is very good. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils are taught from the beginning the importance of sharing and taking turns. They are encouraged to be polite and courteous. Relationships within the school are very good and pupils learn to respect others. The school council allows pupils to take a positive role in the development of the school community; for example, the school council has suggested that the school should provide a friendship bench where pupils who may feel lonely or sad at playtime may sit and be joined by others. Pupils take part in fund raising activities for national charities, in order to contribute to those less fortunate than themselves. Older pupils have responsibilities for looking after younger children at play times, and Year 6 pupils read stories to pupils in the infants. Pupils are given opportunities for helping with the smooth running of the school, such as returning registers. Pupils generally get on very well together on such occasions as lunch breaks and morning snack times.

38 Provision for cultural development is now good because opportunities to promote cultural education are clearly included in the planning so that teachers ensure that pupils develop an awareness of their own culture and of the ethnic and cultural diversity of the wider society. Pupils visit places of interest locally for example the church and town centre. They learn about their own culture by taking part in festivals such as Christmas, Harvest Festival and Mothering Sunday. They produce their own pantomimes and learn traditional playground games. Pupils who belong to local Morris dance groups demonstrate their skills and costume to other pupils. In literacy they learn traditional stories and rhymes, and in music they sing traditional songs and hymns. In subjects, such as geography and history, pupils learn about cultures in different places and times, such as India and ancient Egypt. In music and art, they learn about the songs and techniques of people in Africa, China and North America. In literature pupils read and listen to stories from different cultures. The school receives visitors who are experts in cultural diversity and personal and social development in order to enhance pupils' understanding.

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



39 Relationships in the school are very good and this is a fundamental part of the very good care and support provided to all pupils. The school is a happy and secure place in which to learn and this view is shared by the parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting. All pupils are known well individually, and this results in very good support for both academic and personal development.

40 The procedures for child protection are very well organised and staff awareness is maintained through training. The health and safety policy is comprehensive and procedures are carried out very diligently. Responsibilities within the school are properly defined and all the routines of classroom safety, fire drills, first aid, medicines and general welfare are dealt with consistently. There is an after-school club where pupils can play or work until their parents arrive. The curriculum now contributes significantly to the welfare and social development of the pupils and has improved since the last inspection. It deals with sex education, drugs awareness, good health and the environment, as well as the immediately practical issues of safe cycling, road safety and awareness of dangers.

41 The systems for the monitoring and management of behaviour are very effective. Parents are very happy with the standards of behaviour achieved and the pupils confirm that the school is a friendly place to be. The rules are straightforward and displayed prominently. The high expectations are clearly understood by pupils and they respond accordingly. Teachers manage their classes very well and pupils enjoy the rewards that are given for good behaviour and effort. 'Celebration Assemblies' are very popular. Where it is necessary for individual pupils to improve their behaviour, this is done with the full involvement of parents in setting targets and rewards. Assemblies are used well to exemplify standards of behaviour and the care and consideration to be given to others. The very good behaviour contributes positively to the standards which pupils achieve.

42 The procedures for recording attendance are good. Registers are properly completed and absence is accurately analysed. All parents know that regular attendance is an important factor in achieving good standards and they respond accordingly.

43 The procedures for recording personal development are very good. Pupils' progress in the classes for personal, social and health education are evaluated; circle time (a time set aside for pupils to discuss feelings, emotions and relationships) is used well to encourage discussion of any matters of importance to the pupils. Records of good behaviour, as well as the occasional lapses, are monitored.

44 Procedures for assessing academic development are now very good and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Assessment data is gathered consistently in all classes and in all subjects, in appropriate levels of detail. The data is carefully and regularly analysed and produces a very clear picture of the rate at which pupils are learning. As a result, teachers are able to ensure that their lessons match the needs of pupils very well, individually, in groups or in whole classes. All pupils now have targets and teachers share these with the older pupils. The use of targets is an integral part of teaching and learning and, as a result, pupils know their strengths and where they need to improve. Teachers give timely help on very secure evidence to help all pupils to achieve their best. These much improved procedures are contributing positively to the good standards achieved.

45 Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs and the statement of special educational needs are well focused and meet statutory requirements. Members of staff are very caring in their support of pupils with special educational needs and ensure that these pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school. They know them very well and assess pupils' progress regularly and thoroughly. Records are very thorough and the school makes good use of assessments in order to provide targets for improvement. The school is very careful in its early and initial assessments of children. Teachers, parents, classroom assistants and the headteacher are appropriately involved. The school has very good inclusive links with pupils from a local special

school.

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

46 Parents are very pleased with what the school does for their children and the quality of education it provides. The questionnaires show that almost all are very happy with most aspects of the school. In particular, they are very pleased with the leadership and management, the way the school involves them as parents and the standards and progress achieved.

47 As their children join the school, there are introductory meetings with parents at which they receive a prospectus, guidance on helping with early learning and the home-school agreement. Each year the school consults parents about aspects of the school and tries to incorporate their views in school development planning. As a response to the questionnaires, there are now occasional 'information evenings' and workshops about how parents can help with behaviour, numeracy, literacy, drugs education and other aspects of the curriculum. A working party of parents has worked with the governors to review the sex education curriculum. These very positive links between the school and home ensure that parents make a very good contribution to the life of the school and what it achieves. The parents and friends association work with the school staff to organise social events and these efforts directly benefit their children. Recently, for example, funds have been used to buy sports kit, improve the library and help equip the computer suite. Parents are invited to attend class assemblies and there are numerous special performances for parents, for example at Harvest and Christmas, all of which are well attended. A good number of parents help directly in the classroom and many more help with visits.

48 Parents are given a very good range of information about the school and what their children are doing. Day-to-day matters are dealt with by individual letters and there are regular newsletters about forthcoming events as well as topics and curricular matters. There are opportunities for parents to talk to staff informally at the start and end of the day and parents confirm that they are confident to approach the school at any time. More formal consultation meetings are well attended by parents. The pupils' annual reports give a clear picture of progress showing strengths, as well as targets for development. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept fully informed about progress and are involved in discussing their targets.

49 Parents make a good contribution to their children's successes at school. Homework is supported by most parents. Almost all parents are keen to attend and discuss progress at consultation evenings, particularly where their children have special needs. Parents ensure that their children come to school regularly and this is reflected in the, now, slightly above average figures for attendance.

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

50 The leadership and management of the headteacher are excellent. Recently appointed, she has built extremely well upon her previous work as acting headteacher and deputy headteacher. She is extremely hardworking and supportive of the staff. A shared vision for high standards and responsiveness to change permeates the school. The aims of the school, 'to value each child's individuality, to provide a high quality of education, to nurture spiritual development within Christian faith and to foster links with the church and its community', are developed exceptionally well. Much staff development has taken place resulting in improvements in standards and the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Members of staff, at all levels, have a common zeal to improve provision for pupils and have the necessary skills to achieve further improvements in standards.

51 The roles and responsibilities of the subject co-ordinators have been developed very well since the last inspection. Each co-ordinator has implemented the policy for his or her subject and developed very effective guidance for teachers. They monitor standards in their subjects very well

through the high quality of assessment of pupils' attainments and very good procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning. The special needs co-ordinator supports colleagues, children and parents effectively. The organisation of assessment and record keeping is efficient and ensures that statutory requirements are met. The special needs co-ordinator liaises with outside agencies effectively and is well prepared to meet the requirements of the new code of practice. The school makes effective use of the specific grant and its own budget in order to provide well for children with statements and those on the special educational needs register.

52 The governing body is very effective and has been instrumental in the appointment of key members of staff of high quality. The governors work extremely well with staff and spend much time in discussion with, and working alongside, teachers, classroom assistants and pupils. The relationship with the headteacher is very effective and results in governors having a clear understanding of the school and of the standards achieved. The governing body has responded very well to the previous inspection. Governors have high expectations of all who work at the school; they are proud of the school's achievements and are aware of areas for development.

53 A major strength is the monitoring and evaluation and development of teaching. The systems for monitoring lesson plans, the quality of teaching and of pupils' work are firmly established and this impacts positively on the high levels of pupils' achievement. The headteacher has an active role in the day-to-day teaching in the classrooms and supports colleagues exceptionally well. The procedures for staff development place the school in a very good position to develop teachers' existing skills and to provide training for new teachers. The analysis of the national tests and other commercial tests is thorough and is used to set targets for improvement as well as to monitor pupils' performance throughout the school.

54 The school development plan is of high quality and includes clear priorities for improvement. Funding is allocated wisely and rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems ensure that the money is used to best effect for the benefit of pupils. The areas for improvement identified during the inspection are shown already in the school development plan. The financial adviser from the local education authority, the school administration staff and a very effective governors' finance committee ensure that finances are kept in good order. The strengths of financial administration were acknowledged in a recent audit by the local education authority. The school allocates funding effectively to obtain best value for the benefit of pupils. The standards the school achieves are analysed carefully and the financial adviser assists governors in the purchasing of services and with the comparison of costs with those of other schools. Much discussion takes place to set priorities for inclusion in the school development plan and the allocation of funding. Parents are consulted regularly through open evenings and parental questionnaires mainly.

55 The teachers provide a good range of expertise to meet the needs of the pupils. They are supported well by capable classroom assistants and other voluntary helpers. The accommodation is satisfactory and is used extremely well. The lack of provision of a suitable outdoor area for children of reception age restricts them from making further progress in their learning. Learning resources to support the teaching are good, on balance, though the range and quality of software to support the use of information and communication technology in other subjects are insufficient.

56 Parents rightly acknowledge in their responses to the parental questionnaire, that the school is led and managed well.

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

57 The headteacher, staff and governors should take the following action:

- increase planned opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology in other subjects. \*

In addition to the key issue above the following less important area for development should be included in the action plan:

- seek ways to provide a suitable outdoor environment for children of reception age to develop their learning further. \*

*\* These areas for improvement have been identified already by staff and governors.*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	4	20	9	0	0	0
Percentage	6	11	57	26	0	0	0

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

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	137
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	22

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

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

### Attendance

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.6

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	11	6	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	14	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (100)	82 (75)	88 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (100)	82 (100)	82 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

\*Details of the numbers of boys and girls achieving Level 2 have not been included because fewer than 11 boys or girls were in the year group. This is so that individuals 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	13	7	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	18	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (77)	90 (91)	90 (91)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	15	19	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (91)	95 (95)	90 (95)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

\*Details of the numbers of boys and girls achieving Level 4 have not been included because fewer than 11 boys or girls were in the year group. This is so individuals cannot be identified

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	134
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	4	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.7
Average class size	27.4

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	54

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	318,722
Total expenditure	314,783
Expenditure per pupil	2,018
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,100
Balance carried forward to next year	26,039

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	140
Number of questionnaires returned	42
Percentage return rate	30

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	19	0	7	0
My child is making good progress in school.	74	26	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	29	2	5	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	59	29	5	7	0
The teaching is good.	74	24	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	64	34	0	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	21	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	79	19	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	64	36	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	76	24	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	29	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	57	36	5	2	0



## **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**

58 Children of reception age are taught alongside some of the Year 1 pupils. This year, approximately two-thirds of the reception-aged pupils have been to a nursery or playgroup before they started school. Consequently, although attainment varies widely, the school's assessments show that most children on entry to the school are close to average. This is not always the case as in previous years a higher proportion of children had not had the benefit of pre-school education in a nursery or playgroup and entered the school with below average levels of attainment. By the time they leave the reception class, children are on course to exceed the level expected for their age in personal, social and emotional development and to meet the level expected for their age in communication, language and literacy, in mathematical development, in knowledge and understanding of the world, in physical development and in creative development.

59 The quality of teaching of reception-age children is good, and children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. The children are prepared well for the next stage of their education and their work within the National Curriculum.

60 The school continues, as at the time of the last inspection, to provide a sound curriculum for children of reception age, although it does not meet fully the recent national guidance for children of this age, particularly in the provision of learning in an outdoor environment. The lack of a suitable area adjacent to the classroom reduces teachers' opportunities to plan a broader range of learning activities out of doors. Good planning and recent initiatives have led to improvements in the children's personal, social and emotional development.

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

61 Children's personal, social and emotional development is provided for effectively and they achieve well to become more independent and socially confident. The quality of teaching is good and pupils make good progress. Children are encouraged to be independent and quickly learn to get ready for group work and discussions together. They help to tidy equipment away sensibly after they have completed their work. Children work well together, sharing resources such as construction kits good-naturedly. The children benefit from sharing some activities with Year 1 pupils who are very familiar with school routines and the school's code of conduct. It is not unusual for children of reception age to voluntarily hold the door open for visitors or play willingly with visiting children with special educational needs. As a result, children are confident and outgoing by the time they leave the reception class and exceed the standards expected of their age.

62 All staff in reception consistently encourage positive behaviour and friendly relationships with other children. Consequently, children move around the school sensibly on given tasks, respecting the working environments of other classes. Members of staff are patient and understanding; they explain instructions clearly so that children know exactly what is expected of them and, as a result, there is a busy working atmosphere. Teachers have high expectations of attentiveness, and children's concentration span increases at a good rate.

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

63 Children make good progress with their learning and are on course to achieve expected standards by the time they complete the reception year; this is because the teaching is good. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy is particularly effective. In most lessons, children listen attentively to what adults say and especially to stories. They can explain to each other what they

are making with construction kits and readily offer ideas about what may happen next in the stories read to them. Teachers ensure that there are suitable opportunities for children to read and write each day. This enables children to recognise a growing number of words and the majority of pupils have a satisfactory grasp of simple skills of reading. When reading their books, they work hard to use the sounds and vocabulary they know. They are beginning to understand vocabulary, such as 'title' and 'author'. Higher attaining children talk easily about the characters in their books and begin to write in sentences, making good attempts to use capital letters and full stops. Some can write their addresses recognisably when drawing pictures of their homes in their topic books. Average and lower attaining children confidently re-tell a story by referring to the pictures but continue to need support when reading simple text. Most of these make good progress, from writing over teachers' words or copying given sentences to writing their names with reasonable accuracy. Lower attainers are less secure in writing their names and when books are not well matched to their level of attainment they struggle to read known stories.

64 Teachers promote learning well. Good planning and good questioning encourage children to think more for themselves; when asking children to predict what will happen next in a story, for example, the teacher asked, 'Why do you think that?' which encouraged children's communication skills further. Other members of staff are also skilled in questioning children about their decisions in group work and when exploring the school or creating models. They encourage children to make clear observations about what they are doing and what they see. The high expectations of all staff encourage children to record their work clearly and present it well as they sequence their stories.

### **Mathematical development**

65 Daily opportunities to count and use mathematical language help children make good progress in understanding number so that by the time they start in Year 1 most children have reached the expected standards for their age. The teaching is good and pupils achieve well. Teachers make learning mathematics interesting and use good resources to encourage children to join in well-planned activities; for example, when learning about three-dimensional shapes, children were encouraged to be 'shape detectives' and feel in the shape bag for the clues such as the correct number of sides and corners. Higher attainers explored the environment of the school for recognisable shapes and drew them on their clipboards with confidence. In art lessons, they considered carefully the size of their shapes and frames and began to use mathematical language such as 'larger' and 'smaller' to create their pictures. Most of the activities are practical and their work shows a simple understanding of adding and taking away. They widen their use of mathematical language as they play in the 'garden centre shop' where several use pence and pounds as they charge their friends for goods.

66 Good resources and the organisation of support staff for group work are strengths in the teaching of mathematics to reception age children. In mental number work teachers challenge the children soundly; however, periodically the demand is too great and this strategy is not always successful. Nevertheless, as a result of well organised practical experiences children learn simple number skills at good rate, establishing their mathematical knowledge well and thus preparing effectively for work on numeracy at the next stage of their education.

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

67 Most children build well on their existing learning and are on course to achieve the expected standards by the time they complete the reception year. The teaching is good and children make good progress. Teachers place great emphasis on widening children's knowledge and understanding of the world. The strength of teaching in this area of learning lies in the way topics are used to bring together and extend early learning in science, geography, history, and some information and communication technology; for example, a topic about plants and seeds involved children using their senses to explore, smell and feel the green beans. Curiosity was aroused

successfully as children looked carefully for differences in the seeds of cut melon and apples. Another group handled dried peas and described effectively the differences between them and fresh peas or those soaked in water. Their work showed carefully labelled parts of plants and clear lists of favourite foods. They know what will make a healthy lunch from the foods. The teacher ensured that children used the computer where appropriate and several children could operate simple mathematical games successfully and use paintbrush tools on the computer. The children were keen to draw pictures and used the mouse competently to make things move on the screen. Good questions were asked by staff, such as, 'What makes the seeds grow?' and children took delight in predicting what would happen when they planted their 'crazy caterpillar cress' on cotton wool.

68 Teachers plan well to incorporate a variety of topics so that the children gain new knowledge and skills; consequently, children gain an understanding of the past through stories, such as the Gunpowder Plot, and can sequence successfully the events that took place. Through good links with literacy, children learn simple mapping skills through stories, such as Rosie's Walk, as well as learning more about the world about them.

### **Physical development**

69 Children's physical development is on course, overall, to reach the standards expected by the end of the reception year. The quality of teaching is good and children make satisfactory progress. However, the time given to physical development each day is restricted by the present limitations on outdoor play. Planned activities are mainly connected to indoor activities, such as dance, physical education and construction activities in the hall. Regular opportunities to use scissors, pens and pencils help children gain accuracy when drawing and cutting. Teachers plan plenty of opportunities for children to work with coloured dough, which they roll, squeeze, push and knead into shape when making shapes or flower pictures. Teachers make sure that children are taught the skills of throwing and catching indoors to assist pupils to play team games. Outdoor equipment, such as bicycles, is on occasions used to help children develop directional skills. Children share in outdoor play daily with other infant children and play is lively and games are played with gusto. Whilst children are satisfactorily agile and robust by the time they start in Year 1, their opportunities for reaching higher standards in this area of learning are limited by inadequate outdoor provision.

### **Creative development**

70 Children's attainment in creative development is on course to reach expected standards by the end of the reception class, and the development of children's creative learning is satisfactory. Teachers plan a wide range of interesting creative activities through which children can explore colour, texture, shape and music, linking these with literacy and numeracy work. They grasp the idea of diminishing size by placing coloured squares and frames skilfully in the right order and creatively practice their decorative skills by printing brightly coloured squares around them. As a result of sound opportunities to paint, make models and use musical instruments, they become confident not only in handling different materials satisfactorily, but also in using brush and scissors appropriately. Children enjoy being creative and are proud of their efforts, demonstrated obviously in the enthusiastic shaking of a musical instrument made from plastic cups, pasta and lentils. They enjoy singing familiar songs, listening carefully for the beat. The song of Aiken's Drum was accompanied joyfully with shakers, and higher attainers worked hard to flick their cup in the correct tempo. Children's work is valued and is displayed effectively in the reception class; the use of foils, cotton wool and coloured papers was used well in creating pictures of snowmen.

71 The teaching in this area is good overall. Lesson plans include elements of the reception curriculum and that of the Year 1 pupils in the class. To some extent, reception children benefit from this arrangement and their breadth of knowledge is extended and they begin to think and learn for themselves; however, there are some instances where some planned activities are too

demanding for reception children as the groundwork for their learning is insufficiently secure. This happened when the learning of a recorded song was not paced well and children's progress was slow. The management of children and the use of classroom assistants and parent helpers are good and, with a lot of help, children are productive and creative in most group activities.

## ENGLISH

72 By the end of Year 2 pupils' attainment in speaking and listening, reading and writing is above expectations for seven-year-olds. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. It is also an improvement on the results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests in reading and writing and the teacher assessments in speaking and listening. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in all aspects of English is well above expectations. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection and in line with the 2001 National Curriculum tests. The high achievement of pupils, as they move through the school, is closely linked with the good overall quality of teaching and the very good teaching of the oldest pupils. This, in turn, is enhanced by the very good use the school makes of its very comprehensive assessment procedures; for example, following an analysis of its assessments, it was decided that teachers needed to focus on pupils' spelling skills and to enrich their vocabularies in their writing, leading to improvements in standards of writing.

73 Teachers use the guidelines of the National Literacy Strategy very effectively in order to plan lessons and ensure that pupils build securely on what has gone before. This is one of the reasons why standards are very high by the time pupils leave the school. Teachers also give pupils many opportunities to use their literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum so that their English skills are improved along with their understanding of the other subjects; for example, in history, pupils in Year 2 produced detailed descriptions of their visit to an old school and compared it with their own. Pupils in Year 6 asked a range of searching questions when they interviewed their teacher, 'in role', during a history lesson about conflict. In Year 5 geographical work, pupils produced clearly explained descriptions of the water cycle.

74 A significant feature of the quality of teaching is the care taken by teachers to plan for opportunities to extend pupils' speaking and listening skills throughout all the subjects of the curriculum; for example, pupils in Year 4 improved their listening skills during a personal, social, citizenship and health education lesson when they took part in a "Chinese whisper" activity. They also learned about the difference between listening and hearing. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. This gives pupils the confidence to contribute to class and group discussions because they know that their efforts will be valued. This enhances their speaking and listening skills; for example, in Year 1 pupils referred confidently to details of the text when they discussed the feelings and emotions of characters in the story, *The Turtle Who Danced with a Crane*. Pupils' behaviour is very good, and noise levels are low enough to be conducive to good listening, resulting in pupils having many opportunities to increase their listening skills. This was apparent in Year 2; the pupils were generally very well behaved and sustained their concentration, listening carefully as pupils performed traditional story roles using a puppet theatre. They also extended their speaking skills because they were given opportunities to speak clearly and expressively 'in role'. Pupils, in Year 6, talked with assurance about conservation issues when they were discussing poetry about whales and are articulate and poised when they talk to visitors about their work in school.

75 Because the quality of teaching is good, pupils' achievements are higher than would be expected in their reading by the end of Year 2. Basic skills are taught very well, so that, by the end of the infant stage, most pupils use a well understood range of strategies, such as using the context and clues in the accompanying pictures, when meeting new or unfamiliar words. Teachers choose books which are suited to pupils' levels of attainment so that, although lower achieving pupils read more hesitantly, they understand the main ideas of their stories and make good progress. More able readers read accurately and fluently. They discuss plot and characters in detail and read with

expression. This is enhanced by the very careful records of pupils' progress kept by teachers and by their very systematic use of a wide and well organised range of books and schemes. As pupils move through the school, teachers ensure that they have opportunities to develop their research skills so that, by the end of the junior stage, most pupils are familiar with the library system and know how to use index, contents and glossary in order to obtain information. This was apparent when pupils extended their understanding of how working conditions affected people's lives in the Victorian period and when they increased their knowledge of the ancient Greeks by researching books in the library.

76 By the end of Year 6, most pupils are achieving well above expectations in reading. This is because teachers sustain the thorough and comprehensive focus given to pupils' early reading and because the very good level of support given to the newly qualified teacher in Years 5 and 6 helps to raise their achievement in the final two years. Because teachers generally have high expectations and present pupils with appropriately challenging texts, higher attainers read fluently and bring their stories to life by using appropriate expression and emphasis. They compare different authors and refer in detail to the text when explaining their views. In their guided reading sessions and when they share stories with pupils teachers ensure that reading is an enjoyable activity so that, for example, lower achieving pupils enjoy their reading and read mostly accurately and with some expression.

77 Teachers, usually, present their work in lively and interesting ways so that pupils are interested in their work and sustain their concentration. This helps them to make good progress; for example, Year 5 pupils' understanding of contracted sentences was improved when the teacher engaged their interest by using examples relating to life in school and to football matches. Pupils in Year 2 were interested in the traditional Chinese story because it was read expressively by the teacher. Teachers usually plan work so that pupils are challenged according to their levels of attainment; for example, in Year 6, higher achieving pupils were expected to discuss in their writing the effects of key words in the poems they had read. Lower achieving pupils designed a poster to illustrate the poet's message. Pupils of average attainment described in their writing how the poem's message was conveyed. This helped most pupils to make good progress.

78 Teachers generally have high expectations so that, as pupils move through the school, their handwriting and presentation are clear and accessible. In Year 2 pupils' handwriting is usually formed and positioned legibly and most pupils join their letters correctly. This is enhanced by the quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work, which is supportive and helps pupils to understand the next steps to be taken in order to improve; for example, in Year 2 the teacher sets useful targets in comments, such as 'Look carefully how to shape and write letters.' By the end of Year 6 handwriting is usually clear, joined and fluent. Teachers' thorough knowledge of how to teach literacy is evident in the good teaching of grammar and punctuation, as pupils move through the school. Pupils in Year 2 use capital letters and full stops accurately, although lower attaining pupils do not achieve the same levels of consistency. Higher attaining pupils begin to use complex sentences. By the end of Year 6, most pupils use commas, inverted commas and question marks accurately and use speech marks in their writing of dialogue. Higher attainers use semicolons accurately and, consistently, divide their work into paragraphs.

79 Teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain clearly and ensure that pupils know about different kinds of writing for different audiences and purposes. Pupils in Year 2 write their holiday news clearly, describe bonfire night enthusiastically and rewrite traditional stories well. Pupils in Year 6 summarise extracts from Dickens, write poetry and extend key points made in research notes into paragraphs to form biographical accounts of authors. Teachers provide good role models for pupils in their use of vocabulary so that, for example, a child in Year 2 writes about, 'the silky white snow'. Pupils in Year 3 are familiar with terms such as 'stereotype' and 'heroine' because the teacher uses them during lessons. Year 6 pupils write about 'the cold thundering night' in order to create successfully dramatic effect.

80 Accurate spelling is highly regarded throughout the school, so that pupils try hard to improve their spellings and generally reach a high standard. In Year 4, for example, pupils' spelling skills

were extended when the teacher prepared work for pupils of differing levels of attainment on the spelling patterns of consonants. Pupils' spelling skills are also enhanced by the regular homework and testing they receive on spelling. Teachers generally make very good use of classroom support assistants and support teachers so that pupils, particularly those pupils with special educational needs, are helped to make good progress; for example, in the very good teaching seen in Years 5 and 6 the classroom support assistant worked closely with pupils with special educational needs in order to extend their understanding of aspects of poetry, demonstrated in their writing. The additional teacher interacted very well with groups of pupils so that she could assess their levels of understanding of poetry and help pupils to improve their expressive writing.

81 The school makes very good use of its well organised and accessible resources so that books and support materials are used efficiently in order to help pupils to make good progress. A significant factor in the high levels of achievement throughout the school is the very good co-ordination of the subject. The co-ordinator works very effectively to support teachers and monitor teaching and learning. She is very knowledgeable about the teaching of literacy and organises the subject very well. She has very high expectations and a clear understanding of how the subject is to develop in order to improve standards further.

## **MATHEMATICS**

82 Standards in Year 2 are above average and, in Year 6, are now well above average; this represents a very good improvement since the last inspection when pupils' attainment was in line with the national average. Pupils' achievements are very good because of the good standard of teaching and pupils' very good attitudes to learning and their high standard of behaviour. In particular, the pupils make very good progress in Year 6. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented very well. The planning of lessons is very good and all pupils engage in a well-balanced range of learning experiences. Very good opportunities for learning exist for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with particular talents in mathematics make good progress because of the additional support they receive from teachers and classroom assistants. The subject makes a good contribution to the personal development of pupils and supports excellently the aims of the school.

83 The quality of teaching is good for both infants and juniors resulting in pupils learning well. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are very responsive to the teachers' effective questioning skills. The planning of lessons is clear and caters for the needs of pupils at different stages of learning. By the age of seven, higher attainers complete equations, such as  $70 - 30 = 20 + ( )$ , correctly. They know the change from £5 after spending £1.99. Most pupils calculate half of two-digit numbers correctly. They know that 10.15am is one hour 15 minutes after 9.00am. Lower attainers order numbers from largest to smallest accurately from 100. They identify, rightly, from a table of pupils' ages, who is the youngest and oldest. Talented pupils have individual education plans and are provided with good opportunities to work alongside older pupils to provide more challenging tasks in order to hasten their progress.

84 Teachers in Years 1 and 2 ensure that pupils have plenty of practice developing their understanding of number. Pupils are attentive and interested and behave very well when working as a class or in small groups. In one lesson, pupils counted money collected at break time to develop their mathematical skills as well as their sense of responsibility. They used till receipts from a local supermarket to find the most and least expensive items purchased. Teachers encouraged plenty of discussion to develop language unfamiliar to the pupils, such as 'sale'. On occasions, the pace of lessons dips and a few pupils become restless. Classroom assistants and other helpers take an active part in lessons and push on pupils' learning at a brisk pace, though sometimes at the start of lessons they are merely passive observers.

85 In Years 3 to 6, pupils' good progress is built upon effectively and they achieve well. In the best lessons, pupils work quickly and are very well motivated. Pupils with special educational

needs are helped by classroom assistants to take a full part in lessons. Lesson plans provide very clear details of work for pupils of each level of attainment and the learning objectives for the lesson are shared with pupils so they understand what they are to learn. Without being asked, pupils write down the objective of lessons in their books. Teachers use resources well to explain new learning to pupils; for example, an overhead projector was used to demonstrate how to use a protractor to measure angles and this was followed up by the teacher checking pupils' understanding by allowing them to measure angles themselves on the equipment. Pupils had more practice of measuring angles in small groups. Most pupils could make sensible estimates of the different angles by using their prior knowledge of acute, obtuse, reflex and right angles; they checked their estimates using a protractor to validate their estimates. Lower attainers, with help, measured angles they had identified correctly as acute or obtuse angles. The teacher took time to extend the understanding of higher attainers to help them to calculate angles between 180 and 360 degrees using a 180-degree protractor. Pupils worked very well together whether being directly supervised or working independently. Homework was set appropriately to consolidate the learning. Weaknesses in otherwise satisfactory teaching are apparent when the pace of the lesson slows and pupils lose interest and the level of challenge for higher attainers is insufficient in the initial part of the lesson to develop their skills of mental calculation.

86 Most pupils by the end of Year 6 can convert equivalent fractions into the lowest form. They are able to investigate the probability of an event, such as the proportion of 'heads' and 'tails' when tossing a coin. They calculate correctly percentages of numbers; for example, they worked out that 25 per cent of eight was two. Lower attainers order accurately a set of fractions including mixed numbers. They add decimals with few errors in calculations. Higher attainers are able to divide accurately three-digit numbers by a single digit and correctly show the remainder. They find the factors of numbers up to 100. They use brackets when working out equations using combinations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

87 The leadership and management of the subject are very good and this contributes significantly to the high standards in the subject. The procedures for monitoring the planning of lessons, pupils' work and the quality of teaching are very effective. Staffing, learning resources and accommodation are used very well. Mathematics supports learning in other subjects satisfactorily; for example, in science pupils draw block graphs to represent results of investigations, and, in design and technology pupils weigh out ingredients when making bread. Information and communication technology is not used enough to promote learning in mathematics.

## **SCIENCE**

88 Pupils attain above average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The results of the most recent tests for eleven-year-olds show a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Standards are high, particularly in Year 6, because of the good teaching pupils receive. Strengths lie in the improved opportunities for practical work and the early start pupils make in recording their investigations. Science is well taught through other subjects, such as literacy and personal, social, health and citizenship education, and geography. The very good attitudes and behaviour of pupils contribute significantly to the high standards pupils achieve.

89 The quality of teaching and learning is good for pupils in Years 1 and 2, including for those pupils with special educational needs. Teachers plan lessons which interest pupils and arouse their curiosity; for example, teachers prepared a variety of pots for pupils to explore how seeds grow and pupils recorded their investigation systematically. As a result, pupils know the effect of wet or dry conditions on the growth of seeds. Teachers have high expectations in recording, and pupils use a variety of methods to collect information. Survey data on 'Our Pets' was collected accurately and the sequences of animal and human growth were ordered correctly. Pupils solve problems and think for themselves; for example, after listing their favourite food, higher attainers were well aware of what was a healthy choice for a healthy body. Pupils' work is set out neatly and is informative; for example, their diagrams showed some very good labelling of parts of plants.

Lower attainers, with the assistance of a worksheet, gained similar knowledge to other pupils despite having some difficulties with writing.

90 The quality of teaching and learning of the juniors is good and enables pupils to achieve above average standards. Teachers develop pupils' scientific thinking and include a few opportunities for pupils to search for information from CD-ROMs and the Internet; for example, pupils in Year 4 gained more understanding of common gases through their research. Occasionally, pupils spend too long on a task and there is insufficient emphasis on pupils working at a brisk pace. In Year 6, pupils listen attentively whilst teachers check and consolidate effectively pupils' previous understanding before moving on to new learning, for example of solids, liquids and gases. The lessons are well planned and include the learning of new scientific language, such as 'validity'. Teachers have a good understanding of ways to develop pupils' skills in investigation and in the recording of results through well thought out demonstrations involving the use of several pupils; as a result pupils carry out investigations successfully and record their findings accurately. The marking of pupils' work is used effectively to ensure that pupils have a good understanding of how well they have done and of ways in which their work can be improved.

91 The good leadership and management of the subject and the consistency of approach throughout the school in planning and monitoring teaching and pupils' work have resulted in significant improvements in standards since the last inspection. Samples of work from each year group are monitored regularly by the co-ordinator. Results of national and other tests are analysed and this has revealed areas for improvement which the school has addressed successfully. As a result, pupils achieve highly.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

92 Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is above the national expectations and pupils achieve well. Standards have improved since the last inspection. The good topic links and strong connections with design and technology mean that all pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make positive progress in their artistic skills. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good.

92 Infant pupils maintain the sound creative start of the early years, increasing their understanding of colour and the use of line in their collage work. They develop their understanding appropriately in discussions, as in one on what a 'hot' or 'cold' colour is; this helps pupils make considered choices of coloured papers for their collage work. Their design skills improve gradually when they take time to work out how they will set out their picture before gluing and sticking.

94 Good attainment, perseverance and effort are often evident in the work of junior pupils. This showed particularly well in Year 6 in the good presentations of the work of the artist Clarice Cliff and in the use of sketchbooks. Pupils work with precision when trying to show texture of the bark of trees and the effects of light and shade. They transfer these images well to textural pictures using straws, string and newsprint. Although some of the materials were difficult to handle, pupils persevered in finding solutions to represent the trees they had drawn, producing some interesting eye-catching artwork. They clearly enjoy their work and are very keen to present their work well.

95 Teachers celebrate the work of pupils throughout the school by mounting good displays within the surrounding areas of their classrooms and the hall. Good progression shows clearly in the jolly 'special children' portraits of infant pupils against the carefully executed pencil portraits of Year 6 pupils. The standards of presentation indicate that teachers' expectations are high. The 'framing' of silhouettes and portraits in Year 3 enhances pupils' artwork well. A collection of work of good quality is maintained for all year groups. Clear planning shows that teachers make the best of the time and resources available, as well as assessing pupils' progress. Pupils not only learn new skills well but also handle a wide variety of materials. The cultural aspects of the subject are developed well and these are seen especially amongst a range of pupils' art celebrating Chinese,



Hindu, Islamic and African art. Examples of good quality of fabric prints, such as Chinese embroidery, Indian batik and African prints, are also on display. Teachers value the place of art in the curriculum. This shows well in the display of face painting across the world, completed in paint, pattern, foil and feather, below a celebratory sign, 'painting is a sign of beauty and strength'. Teachers give pupils a wide range of learning opportunities in art and, as a result, pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school.

96 Teachers have made a good start in monitoring and assessing art. The subject is managed successfully in line with the consistent procedures across the school. Visiting artists, who work with pupils, enrich the curriculum and good links are made with other subjects, such as history and geography.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

97 Pupils' attainments by the end of Year 6 are above the national expectations and their achievement is good. The quality of teaching is good and pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning.

98 Teachers plan lessons well and ensure that pupils understand what they should learn. Teachers' questioning skills are well developed and this encourages pupils' understanding of, for instance, good practice when designing. Teachers develop well technological language such as 'stable', 'folding' and 'layering'. Teachers have a good rapport with pupils, which raises pupils' confidence. Lesson planning is very good and the organisation of pupils is very effective resulting in a good pace of learning and very good behaviour. Classroom assistants and other adults support the teaching and learning very effectively, and provide increased opportunities for pupils to learn at a brisk pace.

99 By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to embroider well for their age because of the support they receive from voluntary helpers. They talk enthusiastically about their designs, such as the puppets they have made from textiles and recycled materials. They incorporate successfully different materials and fasteners to produce attractively decorated models of cars. They produce clearly labelled drawings of a roundabout they have made, using words such as 'base' and 'shaft' in their descriptions. Pupils use safely a range of tools including saws and bench hooks.

100 By the end of Year 6, pupils understand why bread is important and how it is made in the home and in the factory. They produced a neat matrix to record their investigations of the features of different types of bread. Higher attainers evaluated well the finished bread rolls they had made. Lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs complete similar work to other pupils, though their recording of investigations is limited. Most pupils can name and describe different fabrics correctly and, through careful examination, can suggest how materials have been reinforced to make a purse. Pupils produce good design briefs before making a product.

101 Leadership and management of design and technology are good. The rate of improvement since the last inspection has been good. Standards have risen and the guidance to teachers has improved, although information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to develop pupils' learning further. The systems for monitoring pupils' progress are very good and manageable. The monitoring of teaching and learning is effective.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

102 Insufficient teaching was seen to make overall judgements on the quality of teaching; however, evidence from discussions with teachers and pupils, scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work shows that attainment is above what would be expected. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. One reason for this high achievement is the well-planned

curriculum, which enables pupils to build securely on what has gone before.

103 By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of maps and places. This is enhanced by the good foundation provided in reception and the Year 1 class, where pupils use the outside area to follow routes on their tricycles, talk about holiday resorts and question and record what other pupils like to do on holiday. Teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure that pupils progress from working with simple maps of their routes to school to accurate work on more detailed maps of Bamber Bridge. Teachers have high expectations so that pupils can locate seaside resorts on maps of the British Isles and use simple co-ordinates, while higher achieving pupils can explain compass directions.

104 Teachers present their work in lively and interesting ways so that pupils enjoy their work and sustain their interest. This was seen in the fieldwork conducted by Year 2 pupils on the local high street. Pupils produced computer-generated graphs of their traffic census and used digital cameras to record locations in the town. They interviewed staff of the local supermarket in order to determine numbers of customers and recorded the location of different shops. This led to good levels of understanding of place and the development of geographical skills. Teachers generally have high expectations so that, for example, in Year 3 pupils are challenged to record temperatures in different parts of the school accurately and to identify the different strength of winds. By the time pupils reach Year 6 they have a good understanding of the water cycle and deepen their understanding of environmental issues connected with water. This is enhanced by their good writing skills and by the teachers' marking of their work, which is supportive and helps to lead them towards further understanding.

105 The school has a good range of resources which is well organised and accessible. The co-ordinator organises the subject well and helps to improve standards by the efficient monitoring of teaching and learning.

## **HISTORY**

106 During the inspection no lessons were seen in the infant stage and only one lesson was seen in the junior stage so it is not possible to give an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, from discussions with teachers and pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and from the one lesson seen, the evidence is that attainment is above what would be expected of pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.

107 By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of how schools were organised in earlier times and develop good skills in methods of historical enquiry. This is because teachers plan work which is both interesting and relevant. Pupils used surveys completed by parents and grandparents in order to compare schools at different times. Their understanding of historical sources was further deepened when they visited the site of an old school and made comparisons with their own. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which is used to help pupils to develop their use of evidence; for example, they understand how the writings of Pepys provide information on the Great Fire of London. They are encouraged to use their mapping skills to locate the site of the outbreak and to produce detailed pictures of houses and streets at the time of the fire. Teachers' high expectations are shown when pupils are challenged to describe how news of the fire was carried compared with how news concerning modern conflicts is spread.

108 As pupils move through the school, teachers continue to present work in lively and interesting ways so that pupils' interest is engaged; for example, pupils in Year 3 visited a museum as part of their work on ancient Egyptians. This enabled them to increase their historical knowledge of religious and burial customs and aspects of the everyday lives of ancient Egyptians. It also helped them to increase their understanding of the role of archaeology and the use of evidence. Pupils' understanding of the use of evidence was further deepened in Year 4 work on the

differences between primary and secondary sources as part of their work on evacuation during the Second World War. Because the teacher has good subject knowledge, he was able to help them to understand the passage of time during the Second World War by the use of time lines. The teaching helped to extend pupils' skills of enquiry when it was arranged for them to watch a video showing aspects of the war. This led to good progress.

109 In the excellent teaching in Year 6, the teacher made very good use of the support assistant so that lower achieving pupils made good progress in their understanding of the effects of conflict. She was very well supported by the another teacher, who helped to assess pupils' levels of understanding of the connections between conflict during the Second World War and conflict in later wars. The teacher showed excellent subject knowledge when she took on the role of an eyewitness involved in the September 11<sup>th</sup> tragedy. This was done very sensitively and prompted a very high standard of questioning from pupils. As a result of the teacher's very high expectations most pupils deepened their understanding of conditions during the Second World War and of the consequences of conflict.

110 The subject is co-ordinated well. Resources are accessible and organised well. The co-ordinator helps to raise standards through effective monitoring of teaching and learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

111 Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is at the national expectation. Since the last inspection, the school has developed the provision for the subject very well. Standards have improved and pupils are now making good progress in their learning following the recent introduction of a computer suite and clear guidance for teachers to assist in their planning of lessons. The checking of pupils' progress and the recording of pupils' attainment are very good and help teachers to plan the next step of learning for pupils. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is, however, unsatisfactory; very few examples were found in the examination of pupils' work.

112 It was not possible to observe sufficient lessons to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. Of the two lessons observed, the teaching was excellent in one and good in the other. In the best lesson in the Year 1 and 2 class, the teacher explained the new learning very well using most effectively an overhead monitor linked to a computer, resulting in pupils understanding clearly what they had to do. The lesson was organised extremely well so that all pupils had opportunities to practise and develop their skills in information and communication technology at an appropriate level. Most pupils gained skills rapidly of how to write a series of instructions on the computer to make a marker on the monitor form a rectangle. Lower attainers and younger pupils were able to follow the teacher's instructions to move forwards and backwards and to turn to the left or right. Higher attainers estimated the distance a floor robot would move, checked the estimations by programming it, compared the estimated and actual distances and recorded their findings precisely. The pupils were very motivated and behaved very well. At the end of the lesson, the teacher's very good questioning challenged all pupils, particularly higher attainers, extremely well.

113 In the good lesson in Year 3, the teacher demonstrated the work to be completed during the lesson. Good use was made of an instruction sheet to guide pupils. Most pupils could open the program on the computer and access previous work from their own floppy disks. They used a graphics program to 'draw' and 'paint' and incorporated text into their work. When pupils were working independently on computers, the capable classroom assistant kept the pace of learning brisk. Effective help for pupils with special educational needs enabled them to complete similar tasks to those of others. Pupils were very keen to fulfil the tasks set and sustained interest until the work was completed.

114 Discussions with Year 6 pupils showed that they had been taught all elements of the subject

at an appropriate level. They started up the computer efficiently and were able to demonstrate how to colour in cells on a spreadsheet. They wrote letters and added illustrations confidently from a bank of pictures on the computer. On a limited number of occasions, pupils have accessed the Internet to search for information to assist their studies in history and science. In science, pupils produced a block graph on the computer to show the time it had taken for potatoes to cool.

115 Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The school has achieved successfully its objective to create a good computer suite to teach effectively the skills of the subject so that pupils' progress is quickened. Staff are becoming more confident and skilled in using computers, though realise the need to use computers more effectively in supporting the learning in other subjects. Overall, the provision of learning resources is satisfactory, though suitable software to support learning in other subjects is limited. The school's action plan for the subject is appropriate and provides a very clear basis for improvement. The procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are very good, though they have not yet been fully implemented.

## **MUSIC**

116 As very few music lessons were observed, no judgements on attainment were made. However from the musical experiences seen, planning and the scrutiny of work samples, it is clear that there has been positive improvement since the last inspection and that the co-ordinator and staff have worked as a team to provide a consistent approach to the provision of music. This has been based on a useful scheme of work that can be assessed appropriately to provide good information on what pupils can do.

117 Pupils listen attentively to well-selected music as they enter the hall for assembly. In assemblies, pupils sing their hymns, such as Noah and his Ark, joyfully, especially where these have special expressions or actions; at these times they sing with appropriate pitch and good musical expression. A good feature during the first assembly was the brief description of the music played before assembly. The co-ordinator spoke interestingly about the composer Vaughan Williams and encouraged pupils to reflect on the playing of the string quartet and other aspects of the instrumental work. As the listening atmosphere in assembly is very positive, this is an area worthy of development.

118 Infant pupils are beginning to establish a satisfactory musical vocabulary. Having been caught by the sound of 'rainmaker' instruments, they were keen to perform with them. They listened carefully to the tempo the teacher used and were eager to show the contrast in moving to the beat of the different musical patterns. Their good learning attitude when moving to the beat indicated that they are familiar with appraising sounds and music.

119 Junior pupils join in rap rhythms well to practise the loudness and softness of the sounds they make. When listening to a musical quiz, they paid good attention to the different duration, pitch and tempo of sounds and selected the correct one satisfactorily. They accompanied the 'Junk' song well with the models of instruments that they have made.

120 The limited amount of teaching seen was good. Teachers used a lively scheme of work consistently, which offers clear worksheets to consolidate the musical knowledge of both infant and junior pupils. The worksheets often have songs attached and, for junior pupils, exercises in notation. This ensures that there is good development of the subject across the school. However the work within some of them was insufficiently challenging for higher attainers, and there were no planned extension activities for this group of pupils. Teachers broaden the opportunities for pupils by including music from around the world and music that is also close to the rhythm of the time. The rap introduction was well chosen for musical exercise and when the pupils explored the 'rainmaker' instruments; the teacher, successfully, included elements of other peoples' cultures when describing them and how they came to be made.

121 The good subject knowledge of the co-ordinator makes an effective contribution to the provision of the subject. Members of staff are supported well by the co-ordinator and work well together to provide a suitable range of musical opportunities for pupils. A good feature of a lesson seen was the inclusion of two pupils from a neighbouring school, who obviously enjoyed participating.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

122 As it was possible to see only one lesson of physical education at the infant stage, no overall judgement can be made of pupils' attainment or the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. In the two lessons of games and gymnastics observed at the junior stage attainment was above the expected level in view of pupils' ages, and the teaching was good. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report. However, discussions with teachers and scrutiny of teachers' planning indicate that the school meets the statutory requirements at both infant and junior stages.

123 In the one lesson seen at the infant stage, the very good quality of teaching helped pupils to throw and catch well. The teacher observed pupils very closely and analysed their movements very carefully so that she could advise clearly on how they might improve their catching and throwing. Because relationships were very good, pupils were confident enough to work in pairs and improve their collaborative skills.

124 In the junior stage, teachers' control is very good. This was particularly evident in pupils' very good behaviour in an outside games lesson on a cold and very windy day. In spite of the conditions, pupils were very attentive and worked very hard to improve their ball control and passing. Teachers have good subject knowledge and help pupils to understand the relationships between a healthy lifestyle and exercise. They ensure that pupils warm up thoroughly so that they are ready for vigorous exercise. Teachers make good use of pupils' demonstrations in order to encourage pupils to reflect on how they might improve; for example, pupils in Year 6 improved their control and co-ordination after the teacher asked them to watch others who were receiving and passing skilfully. Teachers generally make good use of the appropriate vocabulary so that pupils understand more clearly how they might improve. This proved to be effective in a Year 4 gymnastics lesson in which the teacher's use of words, such as 'spiral' and 'synchronise' helped pupils to work together in pairs and improved their co-ordination and balance. Teachers set challenging tasks so that, for example, pupils are helped to change the angle of their shooting and extend their collaborative and discussion skills when they are asked to work together in larger groups.

125 The school has a good supply of accessible equipment, which it uses well. The subject is co-ordinated well. The co-ordinator monitors teaching, learning and planning and organises the subject effectively.