

INSPECTION REPORT

MOUNTBATTEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kingston-Upon-Hull

LEA area: City of Kingston-Upon-Hull

Unique reference number: 117931

Headteacher: Mrs Sara Shaw

Reporting inspector: Mr David Twist
1492

Dates of inspection: 25th – 28th February 2002

Inspection number: 243941

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	County
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wivern Road Kingston-upon-Hull
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs B. Hewitt
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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11084	J. Hughes	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
30724	D. Hiscock	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Special educational needs	
2810	C. Mc Bride	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Equal opportunities Art and design Religious education	
1065	J. Hagan	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education	Teaching and learning
22421	V. McGrath	Team inspector	Geography History Music	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	5
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	8
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	11
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	15
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	16
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	24

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Mountbatten Primary is bigger than most schools with 136 boys and 128 girls on roll between the ages of 3 and 11 years. Of these, 63 attend part time in the nursery. The schools population is all white and all pupils have English as their first language. Most pupils come from the Bilton Grange housing estate in the east of the city, consisting in the main of local authority and rented accommodation. The area has high levels of social and economic need. Fifty three per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs at 33 per cent is above the national average. Most experience some difficulties in their learning but some are related to behavioural problems. Six pupils have statements, which is broadly average for the size of school. The number of families that move in and out of the area is much higher than usual. A small number of children are looked after by the local authority. Children's attainment on entry to Nursery is well below that expected for their age. The present headteacher took up post just under a year ago. The school has experienced some difficulties in recruiting staff, which has led to a higher proportion of temporary staff than usual.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school that is moving forward at a good rate after a period of standing still. In some areas the school had slipped back under the previous headteacher, but under new and very effective leadership it has turned the corner and is rapidly becoming more effective. However, there is much still to do. Standards are well below average in English and mathematics. Pupils' performance at 7 is better. Almost all teaching is satisfactory or better, but given the challenges that some children face, not all is strong enough to promote really effective learning. The school is giving satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children get off to a good start in the nursery.
- Children make good progress to become confident writers who can express their ideas well.
- Strong leadership is bringing about improvement at a fast rate.
- The school offers a high standard of care
- Children are taught to value the school community and all its members

What could be improved

- Standards at 11 are not high enough.
- The more able pupils do not achieve enough.
- Some teaching needs to be even stronger to overcome the challenge of raising attainment further.
- There needs to be more opportunity in the curriculum for pupils to investigate, solve problems and apply the skills they learn.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural development need more emphasis.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1997. At that time a new headteacher had just taken up post. In the period immediately following this, up to the appointment of the new head, results fluctuated in English, mathematics and science. They dipped sharply at both key stages then climbed steadily at 7 but remained inconsistent at 11, where improvement overall has not been good enough when peaks and troughs have been levelled out. Because of the dips, the overall improvement trend has been below the national average. A number of aspects of the school declined in this period, including the behaviour of older pupils. Attendance was poor and many parents became disillusioned with the school. In the last twelve months these aspects have been dramatically improved. Action has been taken to address all the main issues from the last inspection. Attainment has been raised in information and communication technology (ICT) and music. The work of subject coordinators is improving and there are better schemes of work in place for English and mathematics. The school has gained the basic skills quality mark for its

provision in reading, writing and number, and gaps in the curriculum such as personal, social and health education have now been filled. Procedures for tracking pupils' attainment are improved. The school environment is now much better, leading to raised self-esteem and more pride in the school on the part of adults and children. The most dramatic improvement has been in leadership. The headteacher has set out a clear agenda for change and governors are more involved. A lot remains to be done, but the last year has seen much improvement.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	E	C	E	D	well above average A above average B
mathematics	D	C	D	B	average C below average D
science	D	C	D	B	well below average E

The school's results show some fluctuation at Year 6, with pupils doing well in 2000 when they met the national average, but falling below that in the years on either side, particularly in English. In the most recent tests they were still below average in this subject when compared to similar schools, but they were above average in mathematics and science. For Year 2 pupils over the same period, reading has been below and mathematics well below the national average. In writing, pupils achieved the national average in 2001. Compared to similar schools, reading and writing were well above average and mathematics was average.

When they join the nursery, children's achievements are well behind what is normally expected at 3 but they make good progress in all areas of learning. Provision is now satisfactory in Reception but it has not been as strong for the last two terms with the result that not enough progress has been made overall in most areas. Few are on course to achieve the expected goals, except in the areas of personal and physical development. Inspection findings show that for pupils at Year 2 the above results are reflected in what they are currently achieving. The current Year 6 is not an able group. Those who were in the school 4 years ago, performed poorly at Year 2 and many of the group have joined during Key Stage 2 which has had the effect of disrupting their education. This performance has not improved and these pupils are not on course to do well in this year's tests, particularly in English and mathematics where standards are well below average. Pupils in the year groups coming up are achieving at a better rate and the long-term picture is more promising. Across the school, however, more could be expected of higher attainers to achieve more.

In Key Stage 1, most pupils achieve well but by Year 2, the attainment of the majority is still below average in speaking and listening, mathematics, and ICT. It is close to average in reading and science and average in other subjects. At Key Stage 2 achievement is generally better in Years 3 and 4 than for older pupils. Overall it is unsatisfactory in mathematics and science, satisfactory in other subjects, and good in music. Fewer pupils are online to reach national averages in English, mathematics and science than in most schools. Standards in design and technology, physical education and music are average but they are below in other subjects. Not enough children learn to swim. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in withdrawal groups and satisfactorily when taught in their classes. Pupils who are looked after by the local authority are very closely monitored to ensure that they are making as much progress as other groups.

The school sets realistic annual targets in English and mathematics. Although these are not high, they are challenging for the current Year 6 who will struggle to meet them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes to work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils are polite and friendly and there is a calm and welcoming atmosphere.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships in the school are good and pupils get on well with their teachers and other adults. Personal development is satisfactory. Pupils carry out all duties sensibly but need more scope to take responsibility.
Attendance	Much improved of late and now close to average. All but a small minority arrive on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Of the lessons seen, the vast majority were satisfactory or good in equal measure. One in eight lessons were very good. Some good teaching was seen in all classes and there were no significant variations in quality between year groups or key stages. Lessons taught by the deputy headteacher were of very high quality. The school has had some difficulty recruiting staff in the recent past. Whilst temporary staff seen during the inspection are doing a sound job, the effect of having a series of teachers has been to limit overall progress for some groups, notably Years 5 and 6 and to a lesser extent, reception. Teaching in the nursery is getting children off to a good start and they learn at a fast pace.

Most classes feature a mixture of good and more ordinary teaching. This meets most pupils' needs but middle and lower attainers do better than more able pupils because the work they are given is better matched to their levels. Common features of the best lessons include sharp introductions that set lessons off at a good pace, and enthusiastic approaches by teachers who use interesting resources to get their points across. Pupils are motivated and respond well in these lessons. The ordinary teaching, whilst allowing pupils to make steady progress, does not fire them with enthusiasm for learning. Typical features include over-long introductions to lessons followed by worksheets that pupils sometimes find dull. In English, writing is taught better than reading because teachers know from assessments which small steps pupils need to take next. However, teachers need to expect higher standards of handwriting. In mathematics, number work is taught satisfactorily. There are good mental arithmetic sessions involving all pupils to start lessons off. Good specialist teaching by staff who are expert in ICT and music is helping most pupils to improve quickly in these subjects. All lessons are characterised by good relationships between staff and their classes but two common drawbacks are that teachers do not expect enough of the more able pupils and do not give enough guidance in their marking of work. Teaching of pupils with special needs is good in small withdrawal groups, where activities are very well matched to pupils' next steps in learning. In classes it is more varied according to the support available and the skills of the teacher in organising enough time to offer regular help when it is needed.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment+
The quality and range of the	Meets most requirements but there are some weaknesses. There need to be more opportunities to solve problems in mathematics or carry out

curriculum	investigations at a higher level. Swimming provision is unsatisfactory.
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Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Mostly good. Provision is best when pupils are withdrawn in small groups where they are well taught. It is not as consistent in class where the amount of help available from teachers and other staff varies.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall satisfactory. Social and moral development are strengths of the school. It is good at teaching pupils to relate well to each other and understand right from wrong. Opportunities for spiritual and cultural development are not frequent enough and more needs to be done.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Great care is taken in ensuring pupils' health safety and welfare. Staff know the pupils' circumstances well and child protection arrangements are very good. Assessment information is not always used well to steer future learning.

The school has established a satisfactory partnership with parents and works hard at building their confidence and support. All their contributions are valued and the school is now held in good regard.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher gives a strong lead to the work of the school and key staff are supportive in bringing about improvements. Teachers' leadership of their subjects is satisfactory overall and improving, but still needs further development .
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors support the work of the headteacher and key staff well. They are well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses, but are not as strong in their role of critical friend.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher has led major improvements in the evaluation of performance. There is now a clear understanding of what is working well and what needs to be improved.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial planning is thorough, funding is being spent wisely and resources are mostly adequate. The school is good at ensuring that it gets best value from the money it spends.

The school has an adequate number of staff although some are temporary. Resources are sufficient to support its work and accommodation is used 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"> Children like school School is well managed Feel comfortable approaching school Teaching is good and children make progress Children are expected to work hard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of homework Information on children's progress The range of after school activities

Inspection findings support most of the parents' positive views, though teaching is judged as satisfactory overall rather than good. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily but higher attainers could be better

challenged in some lessons. Provision for homework and after school activities is typical but information on pupils' progress could be better in subjects other than English and mathematics.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school's results for its oldest pupils have fluctuated considerably over the last few years. 1997 was a very good year when English was in line with the national average and mathematics and science above. Since then results have dipped sharply, risen steadily for two years in line with the national trend and then dropped sharply off again. The last dip in 2001 caused the school's overall trend of improvement to be below that of most schools. English has been the weakest link at Key Stage 2 with the last results well below average compared with all schools and below those of similar schools. Mathematics and science fared better and were above average compared with schools in similar circumstances despite being below the national picture. This year, results are on course to be well below average, particularly in English and mathematics.
2. The picture at Key Stage 1 has been brighter. After a severe dip in 1998 when the pupils now in Year 6 took their tests, results have climbed steadily. Although never exceeding well below average in mathematics, below average in reading and average in writing, scores have improved year on year. When compared to results in similar schools, mathematics and science results are in line, but reading and writing are well above average. Most pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and science and satisfactory progress in mathematics.
3. Inspection findings show that 7 year olds have maintained their overall performance from last year. They still perform best in writing, thanks to some skilful teaching, with reading performance being close to the national average. In their speaking skills, most are progressing quickly in Years 1 and 2, but not quickly enough to catch up to the average from their low level on entry to school. Mathematics is still the weakest area, for although most pupils manage to attain the expected level (2), many only just reach it and very few reach the higher level. Pupils acquire reasonable skills in number work and shape and space, but have trouble applying those skills because they don't get enough practice.
4. Standards at 11 are too low in English and mathematics where they are well behind national averages. In science they are also behind, but not by as much. However, considering pupils' starting points in English, overall achievement for most groups is satisfactory across the key stage. In mathematics and science on the other hand, it is unsatisfactory. There are significant factors that affect the school's performance. The area the school serves is one of long standing economic deprivation and the school has faced an uphill struggle to raise aspirations of parents and children. More pupils than in most schools, currently about a third, have special educational needs and some of these, mainly older boys, have also experienced behavioural problems. The school is good at identifying the needs of these pupils and supporting them. They are now making satisfactory progress overall, which is an improvement, but many will still not reach national averages by the end of year 6. Progress is good however, in the small withdrawal groups where very good teaching drives up basic reading and writing skills. High absence figures have worked against pupils' achievement in recent years. This problem has been sorted out in the last twelve months, but the impact has not yet had time to show through in results. More pupils than usual in primary schools join or leave the school and this interrupts their education as they have to adjust to different arrangements, expectations and schemes of work.

5. A major problem for the school over the past two years has been the difficulty of recruiting teachers to permanent posts. As staff leave or gain promotion elsewhere, it has often only been able to replace them with a series of temporary teachers, despite its best efforts. Some classes have inevitably suffered from a lack of continuity as a result. This situation now appears to be turning round, with two recent appointments made. The main effect has recently been felt in Years 5 / 6 and reception where some pupils have at times received weak teaching in the past. The current Year 6 cohort has a long record of low achievement going back at least four years. Despite recent efforts to target this group for improvement, the cumulative effects of some of the above problems will not be overcome in time to raise standards sufficiently at 11. Overall progress for the younger pupils in the key stage, who have had more favourable circumstances, particularly in Years 3 and 4, is looking stronger. The long-term targets for these pupils reflect the school's confidence that most will achieve well by the time they reach 11. Overall, there is no substantial difference between the achievements of boys and girls.
6. The majority of children arrive in the nursery with very low achievement, particularly in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, language and communication, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. With good teaching and a strong curriculum, they make good progress in their learning. Provision in reception has not been as good this year and children have not made enough progress, given the ground they had already made up in the nursery. Except in the areas of personal, social and emotional and physical development, most are not on course to reach expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage.
7. Across the school in most subjects, the more able pupils are not achieving enough. Although there is not a large proportion who show high levels of capability, those who do are not being challenged at a high enough level. Often they are given the same level of tasks as the lower and middle ability pupils and this does not stretch them enough.
8. The rate of achievement of many pupils, particularly the lower attainers at the top of Key Stage 2, is hindered by weak literacy skills. Many find it hard to record their ideas well and standards of presentation are not high enough, which affects the overall standard of work in subjects such as history and geography. A brighter aspect of literacy is that pupils' imaginative writing lower down the school is improving fast. All pupils however, would benefit from more practice in writing for a wider range of purposes, such as recording their own science experiments, in order to develop wider writing skills.
9. In mathematics, although achievement by Year 6 has been unsatisfactory, number work is the strongest area with pupils benefiting from good teaching of mental arithmetic strategies. Achievement in shape space and measure is weaker because it is not taught in enough depth. Pupils need more practice in applying the skills they learn in solving problems. In science, achievement has improved of late but is still not satisfactory over time for the oldest pupils. A key factor is the need for teachers to go into more depth in the study of topics and to give pupils more opportunities to research information and work out their own investigations.
10. Pupils do not achieve as well in religious education at Key Stage 2 as they do in the infant classes, where standards are close to average. Older pupils have significant gaps in their knowledge because the curriculum has not been exciting enough and they have forgotten much of what has been taught.
11. Good use of specialist teaching expertise in ICT and music has helped all pupils to make much better progress over the last year. They still need more opportunities to

reinforce their computer skills by using them in other subjects but new resources and plenty of good teaching are helping to raise standards quickly. Older pupils however, still have some catching up to do.

12. In art and design pupils make satisfactory progress up to Years 5 and 6 where the teaching is less adventurous. The pace of achievement drops here and standards are below average. This picture of progress is repeated in history and geography where older pupils have experienced gaps in their curriculum. The main gaps in their experience are in developing skills of research and practical fieldwork. These have not had enough emphasis. Design and technology standards are typical of most schools. Pupils make satisfactory progress because they have a good range of experiences across the school. Although the physical education standards are average, the provision for the third of pupils who do not reach the expected standard in swimming is unsatisfactory. They only swim in Year 4 and need further opportunities to make the grade in this important skill.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils have good attitudes to school and their behaviour is equally good. Almost all the parents who returned the questionnaires agreed that their children like school and most felt that standards of behaviour were good. These positive aspects are reflected in the calm and purposeful atmosphere found in the school. The youngest children show very good attitudes and behaviour in all aspects of their work and play.
14. Children in the nursery and reception classes greet their teachers with excitement each day. They leave their parents quite happily and enjoy the activities prepared by staff. Most are very sensible as seen for example during the inspection week, when parents and grandparents accompanied children throughout a morning 'Building Bricks' session. Children coped very well with the adults staying and showed maturity and pride as they chose activities to share with their guests. They take care of most of their personal needs and ask for help with zips on coats before going outside. They are good at hanging up their aprons after messy activities and are already familiar with the high expectations of staff about what is acceptable behaviour.
15. Pupils in the infant and junior classes are interested in the tasks set by teachers, particularly when they are encouraged to take an active role. For example, during a Year 3/4 numeracy lesson, pupils were particularly enthusiastic during the mental starter section. They competed to attract the teacher's attention because they want to answer the questions. They responded very well to his relaxed yet well-directed approach. He kept their interest by moving the lesson on at a fast pace and intriguing them with lines such as 'Aah, excellent! You counted back. Hmm – I feel a challenge coming on!' Pupils participate to a satisfactory degree in all lessons and most produce a fair volume of work. They do not give up easily and are not afraid of volunteering answers to adults' questions, safe in the knowledge that their contributions will be valued. Many pupils join the school with low levels of self-esteem; the nurturing and carefully targeted support from adults greatly increases children's self-confidence.
16. The vast majority of pupils behave well in school. They have a very good understanding of the codes of conduct and know what will happen if their behaviour falls short of the desired standard. As a result of consistent treatment on the part of teachers and other adults, this is a happy school community. It buzzes with the noise of pupils getting on with their work but is never dominated by the sound of raised adult voices. Pupils respond well to the system of class rewards and they know what their targets are, both personal and academic. Children's behaviour is much better than in previous years and this has a positive impact on their capacity to learn. Very little time

is wasted and pupils concentrate well. No instances of unacceptable behaviour were seen during the inspection. The number of exclusions from school has dropped substantially since the last inspection.

17. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. They undertake an increasing range of responsibilities and prove themselves willing and trustworthy. They deliver registers, help with information technology during lessons, undertake dining hall duties and, as a special reward from the site supervisor, can form part of the daily 'litter picking' team. Pupils are very keen to be involved in taking on additional roles in school and the headteacher encourages all staff to support these positive attitudes. Lunchtime supervisors stimulate more positive play with new outdoor and wet play equipment and the site supervisor provides a very good role model for pupils in all his dealings with pupils. Parents agree that the school is helping their children to become more mature.
18. Much of the recent progress made in improving pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development is directly attributable to the good relationships found in the school. Adults and pupils work well together and staff are very caring of the children. Mutual respect is often seen as teachers and children chat about ideas and activities. This, too, helps to improve pupils' self-esteem.
19. The latest published rates of attendance were well below the national average and instances of unauthorised absence were twice the national average. However, unpublished figures that relate to the current academic year are encouraging and show a better level of attendance for the autumn term 2001. Similarly, the rate of unauthorised absence was halved during the same period. This is undoubtedly due to the much improved monitoring procedures now in place. Most pupils arrive at school on time although a small, but stubborn, minority is often late.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. Good teaching in the nursery ensures that children's pace of learning is good in all areas of learning. In the reception class, where there has been a recent succession of teachers, there is a higher proportion of satisfactory teaching and as a result children do not learn as quickly as they do in the nursery. Overall, in the Foundation Stage, children make the best gains in their personal, social and emotional development. This area is consistently taught well. A weakness in the teaching in reception occurs because there is at times a lack of challenge for the higher attaining children. For example, children who are confident in ordering numbers to ten need to be given more opportunities to work with larger numbers.
21. Whilst teaching throughout the rest of the school is satisfactory overall, good teaching was seen in each year group and in most subjects. Given the challenges the school faces in raising standards and improving pupils' progress there is a need to raise the level and improve the quality of some of the more ordinary teaching. Approximately one out of every two lessons is satisfactory. The overall quality of the teaching is not as high as described in the last inspection. There is a smaller proportion of good and very good teaching, but there are also less unsatisfactory lessons. Several of the staff have changed since the last inspection and a number of temporary teachers have been recently used because of difficulties in recruiting full time staff.
22. There is some very good teaching in ICT and music. This is particularly so when the teachers who are specialists in these areas teach these subjects. For example, in a music lesson in Year 3 / 4 the teacher used her own secure knowledge of the subject to help children develop and learn correct musical terms. She taught them about

musical structure and demonstrated the idea of phrase through using hand actions. This enabled the children to quickly understand phrase as a unit of music as well as making good gains in their knowledge and understanding of musical terms.

23. Teachers' assessment of children's writing and its use in setting targets for children and planning lessons is very good. The overall effectiveness and impact of this process is seen in the teaching of writing, which is a strength of the school. In the infant classes the teachers are very good at teaching children phonic skills and getting them to use these skills when they are constructing their sentences. Another very positive feature is the way children are taught frameworks and processes to support their writing. For example, in a Year 3/ 4 lesson the teacher helped children to understand the features that are present in an explanatory text. He drew the information from them and by the end of this part of the lesson they had established a list of the features that might be seen in this form of writing. The teacher skilfully demonstrated to the children how to use this as he produced an explanatory script for 'how a letter gets to their home.' This helped them to clearly understand what was required of them and set about the task with great confidence. Furthermore at the end of the lesson he returned to their work and checked how closely their efforts matched the prompt list they had originally drawn up.
24. Teaching of writing is often most successful when teachers base the writing task around the children's own experiences such as the feelings they have encountered in different situations. They find it more difficult to write about topics that have less relevance to their lives.
25. Whilst the staff are doing a really good job and helping pupils to develop and improve some aspects of their writing, the same attention is not given to helping them improve their handwriting or presentational skills. As a result children's standards in handwriting and presentation of work are below what is expected for their age.
26. The school has a very effective system for assessing writing and ICT, but this is not the case in other subjects. Until recently there has been little assessment of children's progress in the non-core subjects. In mathematics whilst they know the broad level a child has reached, teachers are not always sure what small steps are needed for children to develop their knowledge and understanding. As a result, some of the work planned is too similar for the higher and middle achievers. It therefore becomes too easy for some or too hard for others. This is one of the reasons why the pace of learning is not fast enough in some lessons. The school has recognised the need to build on its successful systems for assessing writing and ICT to ensure that assessments in other subjects can accurately pinpoint where each child is at and what small steps they need to take next.
27. Another reason why the rate of learning is slowed is because children do not always know how well they have done or how they might improve their work. Much of teachers' marking is little more than a tick or a cross, which does not help pupils to understand fully what they have done well nor how to make their work better. Whilst there are some good examples of thorough marking they are few and far between.
28. The very best teaching is characterised by the following features:
 - There is a really quick start to the lesson and a fast pace maintained throughout it.
 - The teacher has high expectations of the children.
 - There is a very enthusiastic approach by the teacher, which is infectious and captures children's imagination and really motivates them.
 - Some teachers are good at gaining pupils' interest and attention. They use clever but simple strategies. For example, 'switch your ears on to full power' or 'get your

detective's eyes on' immediately gets a positive response from the children because they become excited waiting for what is to follow.

29. Some of the teaching does not motivate or interest pupils well enough. This often occurs when teachers spend too much time telling the pupils information and then giving them a worksheet to complete. There are times when resources are not well used to support learning. For example, a history lesson was judged to be poor because the children spent far too long sitting listening. When given a task, the worksheet was too difficult for them to read and it was not well designed to enable them to complete the task they had been set.
30. During the introductions to mathematics lessons teachers are very good at ensuring all the children fully participate in the activities. They make good use of resources such as 'show me cards' and white boards so that every child has the opportunity to respond to the teachers' questions. For example in a Year 5/6 lesson all the children had two cards with the words obtuse and acute on. When the teacher showed them a drawing of an angle using the overhead projector they had to hold up the correct card. This is a good example of involving all the children in the activity as well as establishing an effective way of checking their understanding. However more opportunities for children to participate in role-play and practical activities need to be built into lessons to arouse pupil's interest and get them more actively involved in the learning process.
31. In most lessons teachers make good use of questioning techniques to support children's learning and understanding. In an English lesson in a Year 3 / 4 lower ability set the teacher was reading a poem called, 'Schoolitis.' She asked the children, 'Who is saying this poem and who is the person who does not want to go to school?' This got them thinking as they tried to predict who the speaker might be. Initially they thought the character who didn't want to go to school was a little boy. One boy suggested, 'The boss of the school is saying the poem.' As the lesson progressed and through skilled questioning they began to realise that it was the teacher's wife talking to her husband. They also saw the funny side of this and this added to their overall enjoyment of the lesson.
32. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory and teaching of mental arithmetic skills is much better than it was at the time of the last inspection. Good use is made of resources to support pupils' learning and ensure they are actively involved. In a lower ability set in Year 3/ 4 the teacher made good use of a card game to maintain pupils' interest as well giving them plenty of opportunities to practise skills of counting on and back in ones, tens and hundreds. As a result of this very positive approach there was a real buzz of excitement. Teachers are skilled at teaching the children a range of strategies for working out an answer. They reinforce the learning well when they ask children to explain to the rest of the class how they have done it. This helps children to learn from another as well as improving their confidence to have a go at working out answers in their head. Other aspects of mathematics such as the teaching of shape, space and measures are not as strong because teachers are not as confident in these areas and tend not to build sufficiently well on what pupils already know and can do. As a result children are consolidating rather than learning new skills.
33. All of the teachers have good relationships with their classes. They are very patient when they are working with the children. They praise their efforts and make them feel that their contributions are valued. This helps to build pupils' confidence and as a result they are prepared to have a go and share their thoughts with one another.
34. The teaching of children with special educational needs is best when they are withdrawn from class and taught in small groups. The work is very well planned to

meet their needs and enables these children to make good progress towards meeting their targets, which are set out on their individual education plans. In class the quality of the support is satisfactory overall but the same level of support is not always available and some teachers are better than others at using their classroom assistants to support these children with their work.

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

35. There is a rich curriculum in the nursery where activities are suited to children's needs and they achieve well. However, weaknesses in the curriculum and in the teaching they have received combine to limit children's progress in reception. Current teaching of this class has gone some way to improve the situation but overall there has been insufficient opportunity since September for children to engage in play-based learning, role play and exploration.
36. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. The allocation of time to individual subjects is appropriate and ensures the children have access all subjects. However, the range of opportunities within some subjects needs to be wider to offer for example, enough enquiry and investigative work in geography and science.
37. The school places appropriate emphasis on the teaching of literacy, and teachers have worked hard to implement the Literacy Strategy. As a result children are achieving well in writing and satisfactorily in reading. However, in mathematics, where children are well supported in the development of their ability to calculate mentally, they are not experiencing sufficient problem-solving activities. Pupils also need more opportunities to learn about space, shape and measures and to practise using their mathematical knowledge in other subjects. Consequently standards in mathematics are below average by seven and well below average by eleven.
38. There are a number of weaknesses in the quality and range of learning opportunities in both key stages. In several subjects it is those aspects of the curriculum which require pupils to work independently, which are underdeveloped. For example, there are insufficient opportunities for children to improve their investigative and enquiry skills and to develop their own ideas. When carrying out science investigations the work seldom stretches children, particularly high attainers. The children's skills, as researchers and writers are not developed in the teaching of history, geography and religious education. In art and design the children's creativity is not well enough developed. In music and English, however, where the curriculum provision has improved since the last inspection, opportunities for children to create their own music and writing, are well balanced with the teaching of specific knowledge.
39. The provision for children with special educational needs is good overall in both key stages and the school is offering booster classes to help raise achievement at the end of Key Stage 2. The school has moved well down the path of implementing the revised Code of Practice. Pupils have individual plans written so that their work is clearly staged over a period of weeks. These plans set realistic targets and spell out how they will be achieved over a half term. At the end of each term pupils' progress is checked to see how much they have achieved. Overall, there is a pattern of curriculum provision, which is geared better to the needs of children displaying average and below average attainment, rather than the needs of higher attaining pupils who are not stretched enough.
40. The school has implemented planning guidance for the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies and more recently has started using national guidance for

planning other subjects. This is steadily helping to ensure the curriculum becomes increasingly challenging as pupils pass through the school. Teachers now assess what children have achieved at the end of each half term, on completion of a unit of work. In writing, ICT and music, the assessment of children's understanding during lessons, combined with good teacher knowledge of how the subjects becomes increasingly demanding, leads to good planning. As a result, the teaching of new skills and knowledge builds well on previous work. However, there is evidence that the level of challenge in some lessons does not always match the capabilities of the children. Opportunities for increasing the relevance of experiences by exploiting links between subjects are not used sufficiently and pupils do not get enough chances to apply skills, such as data handling, measuring, writing and using ICT across the curriculum.

41. The school offers a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities to pupils. These extend pupils' expertise mainly in physical education, music and aspects of English, such as story telling in the library club and story sacks.
42. Links with the community are not providing enough benefit. Educational visits by pupils and visitors into school for example, are not used regularly enough to add interest and relevance to pupils' learning. Where visitors are invited in, pupils' learning is enriched. For example, a local bakery is used to extend pupils' knowledge of different types of bread and the technology behind the processes used.
43. There are satisfactory links established with other local schools and colleges of further education. Students come on work placements and staff ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for pupils' transfer to secondary school. Staff meet from time to time to exchange knowledge and expertise. Most recently, staff with responsibility for literacy skills throughout the school have met with secondary school colleagues to share their experience and expertise. Plans have been made to extend these links in the coming months and these show the promise of having a more direct impact on pupils' learning, such as through the use of the new Cyber Café at the secondary school.
44. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced a timetabled programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE). Although this is a fairly new initiative, good progress has already been made in extending pupils' personal development in these areas. In particular, the introduction of regular times when pupils can sit together in a circle and talk about how they feel is proving beneficial. These sessions help to improve pupils' listening skills and strengthen relationships between their peers and with teachers. As teachers have now received some training in how to deliver these 'circle times', they are more confident about using this technique to improve pupils' personal and social development. The newly appointed PSHE co-ordinator has wisely focused attention on working towards a 'Positive Health in School Award'. This provides a sharp focus for her work and is already having an impact on different areas of school life. For example, discussions with children have led to plans for water fountains to be installed around the school. The school cook has introduced a novel 'Food Council' and pupils are awarded stickers when they try new, nutritious foods such as vegetables. There is a planned programme of sex and drugs education, led by the school nurse. Various other health professionals visit the school to improve children's understanding of health-related issues.
45. There is sound provision for pupils' personal development overall. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good and is at the heart of what the school does well, whereas there is not enough time devoted to the development of pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory largely because there is no overview of what is to be offered across the whole school and opportunities are missed. Although there is some evidence that

pupils study faiths and their associated beliefs, there are too few opportunities to explore these in any depth and pupils do not remember much of what they are taught. Collective worship explores some meaningful moral dilemmas but does not contain any strongly spiritual elements. Pupils are encouraged to sing enthusiastically and to learn the school's Creed. Music does not play a strong role in assemblies and they lack an 'uplifting' quality as a result. Moments full of wonder are fleeting for pupils and tend to occur accidentally. They are better planned in the nursery where, for example, children were able to marvel in the garden at colourful streamers attached to the trees by staff. They were whipped about by the very strong winds and captured the youngsters' imaginations. Monitoring of the initial few months of the PSHE programme has correctly prioritised 'time for pupils' personal reflection' as the first area for future work.

46. Good provision for pupils' moral and social development is a strength of this school. Provision is effective because the headteacher and all adults give these areas a very high priority. Good behaviour is consistently promoted by staff. Parents are asked to support the school's efforts by endorsing the home school agreement and most of them do so. Teachers ask pupils to draw up class rules at the start of the year; these supplement the whole school code of conduct. There is a clear system of rewards and sanctions to which pupils respond well. The new programme of PSHE is helping pupils to think about others and to be aware of the effects of their actions. Staff are good role models for pupils; they treat everyone with respect and they ask no more of pupils than they do of themselves. Non-teaching staff play an important role in this and the headteacher encourages them to interact with pupils at every opportunity. The site supervisor, for instance, acts as a sympathetic ear for some children with worries and he also offers incentives for pupils who behave well, helping with tasks around the school for the benefit of the whole school family.
47. New initiatives help to strengthen the school's provision for social development. The personal, social and health education programme strengthens pupils' awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Extra-curricular provision supports pupils' personal and social development; many can experience competitive team sports or play musical instruments regularly for the first time. The school has just completed the election of the first school council and this will convene for its inaugural meeting shortly. This was the first occasion for pupils to experience the democratic process in action and helped them to understand how the wider world functions. Opportunities exist for pupils to work in pairs or groups during lessons and they respond well. At lunchtimes, supervisors oversee game playing using new playground equipment and they help pupils to learn traditional games using the new playground markings. This offers worthwhile activity during lunchtimes and cements good relationships between pupils and the lunchtime staff. Older pupils are offered the opportunity to help dinner staff in the dining hall and they do this conscientiously, learning to be responsible members of society.
48. Provision for pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory. A rather sparse programme of educational visits does not do enough to extend the narrow point of reference many children have when they join the school. They need to experience a far greater variety of drama, art, poetry and music in their daily lives and this needs to be planned for. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about what it means to live in a culturally diverse society. Such experiences are particularly important for children growing up in this predominantly monocultural area of Britain. When the school does embrace a topic, such as Diwali or Chinese New Year, it does so with an enthusiasm that captures the imagination of parents and children and provides a good talking point. Unfortunately, these are irregular features and such provision needs to be built into a sustained and co-ordinated programme of experiences for pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. Standards of pastoral care are high and have strengthened since the last inspection. Parents appreciate the efforts made by staff and inspectors confirm parents' positive views; the headteacher and staff create a very warm and secure environment in which children learn and grow increasingly confident and mature.
50. Highly effective systems are in place to ensure pupils' health, safety and general well being. The site supervisor is fairly new in post but has made a huge impact on safety procedures around the school. For example, new protocols are in place and are known to all staff. All the relevant documentation has been drawn up and a rolling programme of renewal and redecoration is underway. Kitchen staff make a good contribution at lunchtimes – they are aware of pupils' specific dietary needs and also encourage pupils to pick healthier options at lunchtimes. Regular 'Pop-In' sessions have started each month, run by the school nurse and parents are encouraged to drop by and discuss any concerns they may have.
51. Very secure child protection procedures are in place; these are monitored by the headteacher who is designated responsible for this area. Children who are looked after by the local authority are monitored very closely by staff. Great efforts are made to ensure the best possible outcomes for these and other vulnerable children and the school is to be commended for the effectiveness of its work in this area. For example, all staff are given general training in child protection procedures. Very effective liaison takes place with outside support agencies; the headteacher has established a particularly effective working partnership with the local education welfare officer who provides weekly assistance.
52. All members of staff work well together to apply pastoral systems within the school and this is why they are so effective. Teaching and non-teaching staff reinforce good behaviour through the consistent implementation of the school's behaviour policies. Any instances of bullying are quickly dealt with and the school is very orderly as a result. This has not been the case in the past. The current headteacher is extremely diligent about incorporating fairness and consistency into the school's systems and pupils have a very clear understanding of what is expected of them.
53. High quality procedures are also in place to promote good attendance among pupils. The very efficient, office-based administrative staff work closely with the headteacher and visiting education welfare officer to ensure all avenues are explored in an attempt to improve pupils' rates of attendance. This close monitoring is having a measurable impact on unauthorised absence rates and there are early signs that attendance levels will be better this year. Improvement has been slow so far because the school has concentrated on the most resistant absentees but now attention is turning to those with less complicated reasons for absence and the success rate is swifter. Incentives such as certificates and class rewards encourage pupils to attend more regularly.
54. The school makes good provision overall for pupils with special educational needs. Particularly effective support is offered in withdrawal groups where support staff are very aware of the needs of pupils and ensure they make good progress. All staff are very sensitive to the personal needs of these pupils and as a result they enjoy school.
55. Good monitoring of pupils' personal development ensures that staff are well equipped to deal with problems brought to them by children. Teachers know their pupils well and offer a range of very useful comments to parents in their written reports about

relative strengths and weaknesses in their personal development. Parents are contacted quickly about any concerns.

56. Procedures to assess pupils' academic progress are not effective enough except in ICT, where they are good and in writing where they are very good. This is because the learning is broken down into measurable steps and assessment provides a clear analysis of what pupils can do, using precise targets and measurements. This is particularly the case in writing where standards are improving as a result. In other areas such as science or mathematics, this systematic approach is not in place. Staff have a broad overview of what pupils can do and detailed analysis of where they need to go next is not taking place. In recent years, pupils have been allowed to drift, with no specific measures of progress being collected. As a result, some pupils made little significant progress, for example, in mathematics. The school has identified this as a development area and data collection in mathematics has now improved.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

57. Parents have positive views of the school. They feel that the headteacher and staff are more accessible than before and that any concerns they have are promptly resolved. Questionnaire responses show that parents believe teaching is good and that the school is well led and managed.
58. The school establishes a satisfactory partnership with parents overall and, within this, there are some good features. Considerable effort has been made to make parents feel welcome in school and to provide them with good quality information about school routines and expectations. Colourful brochures on starting nursery and school are provided for children as they join; these are eye-catching and encourage children's participation. In addition to the detailed prospectus issued to parents, there is also a much more accessible, well-produced book with concise pointers about what pupils do in school and how parents can help them. These are quickly read and provide all parents with all the basic information they need before their children start school. Newsletters are now sent to parents on a variety of topics. Recently, the school canvassed parental opinion on a number of issues regarding communication and staff are now considering new strategies to take these replies into account. The headteacher and deputy make successful personal links with parents, chatting to them at every opportunity and putting them at their ease.
59. Written reports are sent to parents each year, giving details of children's individual progress. The quality of comment is variable but is always good in English and mathematics and often in science as well. These comments are very detailed and evaluative and paint a clear picture for parents of what their children can do in these subjects. They also contain targets for what pupils need to do next to improve. In all the other subjects of the curriculum, comments are usually blanket statements that describe what pupils have studied. Few tell parents what their children can do and the progress they have made. The school invites parents to attend termly meetings to discuss pupils' progress and these are usually well attended.
60. Parents receive very little information about the different areas of the curriculum and do not have a clear idea of what their children are learning in school. Policy documents are on display in the main reception area but little day-to-day information is produced for parents on half-termly topics, for example. This makes it difficult for some to support their children's learning at home. Booklets are produced that give parents information about the standard assessment tests pupils are required to take in Years 2 and 6 and staff organise a meeting to talk about the tests with parents. In the most recent school evaluation exercise, parents asked for more information on homework, spelling and mathematics.

61. The most significant impact of parents' contributions to their children's progress comes from the support they offer the school when new initiatives are introduced. Most parents have returned the home school agreement and are supportive of the new behaviour policy. More are insisting that their children attend school regularly. They appreciate the 'Good News' notes sent home by teachers when their children have made good progress or tried very hard in lessons and the school is quick to highlight these positive aspects of children's behaviour. A small number of parents help in school on a regular basis. Many more accompany pupils on educational visits and a significant number of nursery and reception parents attend the regular 'Building Bricks' sessions held during school time. At these, parents are able to meet with the headteacher and staff in the two classes and participate, alongside their children, in everyday activities in all the areas of learning. This is a very good introduction to the way children learn and provides parents with a good insight into what their children do at school.
62. A number of parents help to raise funds for the school and these help to supplement learning resources for the children. 'Bun Ladies' bake buns to sell each week in school and, recently, the money raised was used to buy book bags for each pupil. Significant sums of money are also raised through sponsored school events.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

63. The headteacher has been in post for two and a half terms. Since her appointment the school has been very well led and the partnership she has established with the deputy headteacher is very effective. This is in stark contrast to the preceding period of some four years since the last inspection during which the school was not well led and little development took place. The new management team works closely together and a great deal has been achieved in a short time.
64. The headteacher and deputy lead by example and give a strong steer to the work of the school. The headteacher has set out a clear vision for school improvement. This has been very effectively shared with governors, staff and parents with the result that all are committed to the improvement strategies set out in the well-organised school improvement plan. Governors, for example, express the view that 'the school is now moving forwards fast and we know where we're going,' and parents hold the view that 'things are now happening much more than they used to'. Staff are motivated to improve their curriculum leadership skills. The need to improve curriculum leadership was a key issue in the last inspection and not enough was done until the arrival of the current headteacher. Expectations have now been raised and staff are being empowered to take more responsibility. Although some still have skills to be developed, the system of their having to bid for funding for their area on the basis of their analysis of performance and planning for development, is helping to improve their skills and their understanding of what is or isn't working well. For example, much better resources in design and technology have been purchased as a result of identifying gaps in the materials available to support the scheme of work. As well as supporting these developments and setting an example of curriculum leadership, the deputy is an exemplary teacher and a ready source of good practice for others to follow.
65. Management is now very effective in laying the foundations for improvement in performance. A key has been to put systems in place through which the school can tell how well it is doing. A process of regular self-evaluation has been introduced which provides a systematic cycle in which each area of the school's work is monitored and evaluated. This is helping the senior management, governors and teachers to see exactly where the school's strengths and weaknesses lie and to

decide what needs to be improved. Already the headteacher has tackled the major area of pupil behaviour, which had deteriorated under the previous regime. A system of clear rewards and sanctions is now in place and is being applied by all staff across the school. This has led to a significant improvement in behaviour, which is now judged to be good and a corresponding reduction in the number of pupil exclusions. Similar work has been done to improve attendance and the strategies put in place have had a strong impact with considerable reductions in both authorised and unauthorised absence.

66. Teaching is being improved by the monitoring of lessons and the scrutiny of planning and pupils' work, leading to feedback to teachers. Again this is an area that had not been given sufficient attention in the past. Written evaluations are analytical and pick out features such as the need to cater for a wider ability range in lesson plans or to share lesson objectives more clearly. The next stage for monitoring of teaching is to link the analysis more closely to how effectively pupils are learning as a result of what teachers are doing.
67. The governing body are keen and supportive and meet their main statutory responsibilities. The new committee structure enables all governors to get involved with aspects such as staffing, premises and the curriculum. A good range of expertise and a strong knowledge of the local community enable the governors to contribute from a number of perspectives whilst keeping the needs of the pupils foremost. Detailed and regular reports from the headteacher keep them well informed about the school's progress and they are aware of its performance against schools nationally and in a similar context. They are actively involved in the decision making process and debate major spending implications carefully, always checking the value they get from services bought or investment made. Decisions such as those to refurbish the library and ICT suite and to redecorate the school on a rolling programme have been carefully costed and criteria have been set to measure the impact of these improvements. The governors have a strong say in the direction the school is taking and have clear views on what they would like to see improved. However, they are less effective in the role of critical friend. As yet the governing body relies heavily on the views and evaluations provided by the senior management.
68. Whilst the school has an adequate number of qualified teachers it has faced a major problem in recruiting staff. Despite extensive advertising, a lack of applicants has proved problematic and at the time of the inspection four posts were filled on a temporary basis. The problem has recently been most acute in the Foundation Stage, where the reception class had three teachers covering the week for the last half term prior to the inspection. This has been disruptive for the pupils who have had to get used to different teaching styles and approaches to their learning. The staffing situation in which a number of posts are filled on a temporary basis has slowed the development of the subject coordinators' role in some areas. Although plans are in place for an eventual solution to this problem, permanent staff sometimes have too many areas to look after to be able to develop them all at the same rate. For example the headteacher has three areas to look after and the Year 3 / 4 co-ordinator has two significant subjects to lead.
69. Arrangements for performance management are developing well and objectives set for staff to achieve reflect the priorities set out in the school improvement plan. There are good arrangements to help staff who are new to the school to settle in. The system whereby staff with parallel age groups work together on their planning helps to guide them in preparing lessons.
70. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed overall. It is best when pupils are given small group teaching specifically matched to

their difficulties. Stimulating tasks and much encouragement enables them to make good progress here whilst also raising their self-esteem and their confidence to succeed. Where support staff are available in class, pupils receive good attention such as help with recording their ideas. On the odd occasion however, pupils struggled with work for too long before teachers spotted their difficulties and intervened to help. The school has begun to implement the revised national guidelines known as the Code of Practice for special needs and this is well organised with all pupils having appropriately detailed individual plans. Training for all staff is planned on the new arrangements following the guidance of the Local Education Authority and the school continues to encourage parents to be appropriately involved in the process.

71. The office staff manage the day-to-day administration tasks very efficiently and the school runs smoothly. This enables teachers to concentrate on their main role without undue interruptions.
72. The school budget is now being well managed and the unnecessarily large contingency fund inherited by the headteacher is being used to good effect for example to improve the school environment and improve resources for ICT. Specific grants are well used for their purpose and the school is good at raising funds to support particular initiatives. For example it hired a bouncy castle, organised matched funding from local industry for a 'sponsored bounce' and raised £2000 towards improvements to playground amenities.
73. Mountbatten is improving rapidly from a period of very limited development and this is due in large part to determined leadership and effective management. Although the school has turned the corner it still has a long way to go but all staff are motivated to succeed and the school's capacity for continued improvement is good. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

74. Although much improvement has taken place, there is still much to be done. The headteacher governors and staff should now address the following issues:
 - a) **Raise standards at 11 in English, mathematics and science, particularly for more able pupils, by:**
 - pinpointing more precisely what pupils can and can't;
 - using this information to plan the next stages in their learning so that there is a good match between their ability and what they are asked to do;
 - ensuring that teachers have consistently high expectations of handwriting and challenge pupils to set out and present their work more neatly.
- (paragraphs 1, 4, 25, 26, 56, 102, 112, 116, 127, 130)

b) Raise standards in religious education, geography, art and design, and ICT across the school, and history and swimming at Key Stage 2, by:

- ensuring that all aspects of these subjects are taught in enough depth for pupils to develop the necessary knowledge and skills.
- providing more opportunities for pupils to reach the standard expected in swimming by the age of 11.

(paragraphs 9, 11, 38, 132, 137, 147, 148, 153, 157, 160, 163, 174, 178, 179)

c) Further raise the quality of teaching by:

- making lessons more interesting through the use of a wider range of teaching methods.
- allowing pupils to take a more active part in lessons and to use their initiative
- expecting more of the more able pupils
- making marking more helpful to pupils
- drawing more effectively on the high quality examples of teaching available

(paragraphs 7, 20, 21, 26, 27, 29, 30, 83, 105, 110, 121, 129, 150, 158, 184)

d) Improve the quality and range of the curriculum by:

- introducing more opportunities to apply mathematical knowledge and undertake problem solving
- providing more challenging investigative activity in science and more work on enquiry skills in geography.
- finding more opportunities to use skills in literacy, mathematics and ICT in other subjects.

(paragraphs 9, 36, 37, 38, 40, 103, 119, 124)

e) Improve provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development by:

- increasing the opportunities for spiritual reflection in collective worship, discussion times and in other lessons.
- increasing pupils' awareness and understanding of the diversity of British society and the values and traditions of other cultures.

(paragraphs 45, 48, 184)

The following issue, whilst not as important, should also be considered by governors for inclusion in the post inspection action plan

- Share information with parents about what their children are currently learning. (paragraph 59, 60)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	61
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	26	25	0	1	0
Percentage	2	12	43	42	0	2	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	32	296
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		147

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	56

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	56

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.1
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	24	21	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	23	24
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	41	42	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (82)	93 (84)	96 (88)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	24	23
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	42	43	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (84)	96 (90)	93 (88)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	32	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	14	15
	Girls	15	19	26
	Total	25	33	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	49 (67)	65 (67)	80(86)
	National	75(75)	71 (72)	87(85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	13	12
	Girls	19	17	24
	Total	29	30	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (67)	59 (65)	71(74)
	National	72(70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	362
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	47	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	322

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	32
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	95
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000 / 2001
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	£
Total income	777500
Total expenditure	762513
Expenditure per pupil	2311
Balance brought forward from previous year	73402
Balance carried forward to next year	88389

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	4
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	327
Number of questionnaires returned	62

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	27	8	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	52	34	8	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	32	6	3	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	31	13	6	8
The teaching is good.	58	35	2	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	29	11	5	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	33	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	35	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	47	37	9	2	5
The school is well led and managed.	56	36	0	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	42	3	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	24	17	2	13

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

75. The quality of provision has slipped since the last inspection. It is satisfactory overall but it is much better in the nursery than in the reception class, where there are weaknesses. Although the school has recognised the weaknesses in its provision, it has had difficulties in securing improvement because of staff shortages. At the time of the inspection, both the nursery and reception classes were staffed by temporary teachers. The school has now appointed new permanent staff to take up post from September 2002.
76. Children are admitted into the nursery in the term after their third birthday, and into the reception class at the start of the term in which they are five. This means that there are three intakes each year into the nursery and reception classes, and that children spend at most five terms in the nursery, but sometimes less.
77. There is a mixed range of attainment among children entering the nursery, but generally they show attainment that is well below average for their age, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development, their skills in language, communication and literacy, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.
78. A rich curriculum and good teaching in the nursery help children to achieve well. Nursery staff keep a close eye on children's progress and plan activities which are suited to their needs and which help them to learn at a good rate. By time they transfer to the reception class, most have made up enough ground to set them on course for reaching the goals expected at the end of the Foundation Stage in most areas of learning. Their skills in language, communication and literacy, and their knowledge and understanding of the world are however, still weak.
79. Given their previous achievements in the nursery, children in the reception class do not make enough progress in most areas of learning. Higher attainers in particular are not achieving as well as they should. Too few average attainers are in line to meet expected goals in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. With the current class, some of this is attributable to the disruption caused by staff changes. However, weaknesses in the curriculum and in the teaching they have received until recently have also been significant factors. In personal, social and emotional development and in physical development, most children are on course to reach the expected goals. In creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, most pupils are not achieving well enough to reach the goals.
80. Under the management of a temporary teacher, the quality of provision for reception children was good during the period of the inspection. Much has been achieved in a short space of time, to ensure that the class are receiving access to a much better range of activities and good quality teaching.
81. The nursery staff develop very good relationships with parents and encourage them to play an active role in their child's education. Some of this is done informally, as staff make time to chat to parents on a daily basis and to listen to their concerns. Aside from home visits, which take place before children come to the nursery, parents are also involved in a termly 'Building Bricks' day. They are invited to spend a morning or afternoon session with their child in the nursery, taking part in several activities. During the session seen in the week of the inspection, both parents and children thoroughly enjoyed themselves. There was much positive comment from the parents

about how useful they found the sessions in helping them to understand both the nursery curriculum and how to play with their children.

Personal, social and emotional development

82. Most children are in line to achieve the outcomes expected at the end of the reception year. The nursery staff provide them with many opportunities to become independent by choosing activities or equipment for themselves. Children learn to share and co-operate with each other and show a reasonable regard for each other's feelings. Adults in the nursery set an excellent example in treating children with fairness and care and in expecting them to do the same with other children. Relationships are also excellent and this gives children the confidence to try things out for themselves and to use their initiative. Nursery staff make very good use of role-play to help children develop social skills and to come to terms with feelings such as anger or sadness. In the 'Three Bears House' for instance, an adult involved herself as part of the play session. By taking on the role of one of the bears, she showed the children a good example of how the bears might have experienced anger and frustration at the damage to their house.
83. Children carry the good grounding they have from the nursery into the reception class. Much of their earlier learning about routines and behaviour stands them in good stead as they continue to co-operate well and play sensibly. Most can take care of themselves and change their clothes for movement lessons in the hall. Teaching methods in the reception class have meant however, that children's initiative and ability to make decisions for themselves is not fostered as well. They are used to being taught in a large group, with the teacher directing their work too closely. As a result, they seek reassurance from adults and find it difficult to develop ideas for themselves.

Communication, language and literacy

84. Most children have poor language skills on entry to nursery and many either give single word answers to questions or use short phrases. The nursery provides a rich environment of conversation, listening, reading and writing in which the children make good progress. Staff place much importance on developing children's communication skills and there is a continuous flow of conversation between adults and children. As a result, most start to extend their speech well and to engage others in conversation. They start to recognise initial word sounds and match them to letters. They develop their early reading skills well and by the time they leave the nursery, most know how to turn the pages of a book and that words have a meaning. The nursery staff take every opportunity to develop children's knowledge and skills, for example in being able to recognise and retell familiar stories. This was aptly illustrated when having played in the 'Three Bears House', the children shared a book about the fairy tale with an adult. Together they retold the story, pointing at the pictures and repeating phrases. A small number of higher attainers were able to point to one or two words that they recognised in books. Children enjoy the writing table and with little adult help, they choose papers and pens and set about making marks and drawing independently. One or two children who are ready to transfer to the reception class are able to write their own name and talk about what they are writing. One girl folded her paper carefully and after drawing and writing in it, explained that it was a birthday card for her friend.
85. These developing skills are not nurtured well enough in the reception class. Here there has been too much emphasis on children learning the mechanics of letter formation and handwriting rather than the use of word games or conversation to build confidence or interest and enjoyment. Few children show an interest in books or opt

to go into the book area to look at them. Far fewer reception class children know the number of words that most children of this age would be expected to recognise. Despite getting off to a good start in the nursery, in the current class, even higher attainers are lagging behind. Although it is not reflective of previous teaching, that seen during the week of the inspection was good. The short story sessions gripped the children's attention and helped them to develop skills such as predicting what might happen next.

Mathematical development

86. Children in the nursery are developing a sound understanding of number and shape and a reasonable range of mathematical vocabulary. This is due, for the most part, to the way in which the staff provide them with many practical activities. These encourage the use of counting, matching, sorting and recognising shapes. When decorating biscuits for example, the children are required to estimate the amounts of icing sugar and water needed, to count the number of decorations and to choose the sweets by shape. In one session seen at the play dough table, the adult discussed the snakes the children were making and prompted the children's thinking well with questions such as 'Which snake is the longest?' and 'Can you make a shorter snake this time?' Similar encouragement is also given when the children use the water tray, where they can develop their understanding of larger and smaller capacities. Every opportunity is taken to develop children's counting skills, with the result that, most average attainers can count to 5. One or two higher attainers can count past 20, but their skills are not always extended far enough when the whole class sits together and does a counting activity; for example when the register is taken.
87. Although this is the children's strongest area of achievement on entry to the reception class, these early skills are not extended well enough. A small group of about half a dozen higher attainers are in line to meet the standards expected at the end of reception as they can recognise and order objects and numbers up to 10, and can count beyond this. This is not taken further and they have too few opportunities to consolidate or apply these skills by using them in games or enjoyable, practical activities.
88. Nearly two thirds of the current class were assessed as having average or better skills in mathematics when they entered the reception year. This is not reflected in their current standard of work, and only one third are in line to meet expected standards by the end of the year.
89. Assessment in this area of learning is too weak in the reception class. Teachers have not kept a close enough eye on the progress made by each child in number work, or in their ability to sort and match shapes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

90. When they enter the nursery, children have a very limited knowledge of the world around them, although they are curious and keen to take part in new experiences. They make up a lot of ground in the nursery class, but they are still a little behind in their knowledge when they enter the reception class.
91. Nursery staff are good at drawing on everyday experiences and events to help children gain an understanding of, for example, the power of the weather. On one day when the wind was particularly strong, they used this as a talking point with the children and encouraged them to observe how the wind bent the trees outside. Later in the day when the wind had subsided a little, the children were given hand-held windmills, and experienced the power of the wind for themselves in the play area.

92. Children have plenty of opportunities to select their own materials and build structures in large wooden bricks, or smaller plastic apparatus. With a little support they make models and masks and also simple food recipes, such as sandwiches. Most children are confident in using the computer and can operate simple programmes and control what is on the screen by using the mouse.
93. In the nursery children begin to gain an understanding that other people have different cultures and customs to their own. They learn, for example, about the Hindu feast of Diwali and the way in which this is celebrated.
94. Despite good teaching and a rich range of experiences, most children in the nursery class still have a more limited understanding of time and a sense of place than others of this age.
95. Some progress is made in the reception class, but the curriculum here is not rich enough to stimulate pupils' interest or provide many opportunities for exploration and investigation. Children develop a greater appreciation of the natural world through their work in topics such as that on 'Wild Animals', but many still do not know the days of the week and have difficulty in ordering events in a sequence of time. Although there are opportunities for children to use building and construction toys in the reception class, many of these experiences are similar to those in the nursery and teachers do not introduce a harder level of challenge or make tasks more sophisticated to extend children's skills much further.

Physical development

96. In this area of learning, pupils' skills are more typical of children their age when they enter the nursery. They are confident when using the outside play equipment and are keen to climb and balance on the large blocks or to swing from suspended car tyres. Most show good spatial awareness when steering and controlling the wheeled vehicles.
97. When using scissors and pencils or undertaking tasks which require finer hand movements, children are developing a reasonable dexterity and an increasing control over their work. In each session of the nursery, they undertake at least one activity that requires them to use these skills. Most children for example, use the play dough table or the small construction apparatus during a session and show growing patience in manipulating smaller objects.
98. The reception children have a more limited access to outdoor play facilities but take part in movement lessons in the hall. As a result, their skills in working with larger apparatus and developing balance and body control progress at a steady rather than a good pace. Most pupils show a good awareness of how to use tools and equipment safely and by the end of the reception year, they reach the goals for this area of learning.

Creative development

99. When they first come to school, most children are not used to using their imagination in role play or story making and they also lack confidence in expressing their ideas and feelings. They achieve well in this area in the nursery because there are many activities which encourage them to enter imaginary situations and to put themselves in the place of a different person or story character. Children playing with the plastic model animals, for example, mimic the noises they make or they use the masks and dressing up clothes to act out an animal's behaviour. They readily go to the painting

area and experiment with mixing colours. Some paint distinguishable body shapes and features.

100. Children enjoy singing familiar songs, especially when they involve using hand actions and most join in with real enthusiasm. Aside from this they also have ready access to musical instruments, including more unusual ones from other cultures. During one session, two boys spent a long time making sounds with the hanging chimes and the rain sticks. They talked to each other about the different noises.
101. The children's growing confidence to explore, experiment and use their imagination is not developed well enough in the reception class. Although there have been more opportunities recently for them to take part in imaginative play, some of the momentum of their progress in creative development is lost between the nursery and reception class. This is because too much of the work in the reception class is directed by the adults and children have too few opportunities to try things out for themselves.

ENGLISH

102. There has been a recent improvement in English. The previous inspection reported that standards were in line with the average at Year 6 but below at Year 2. There followed a period during which time standards at Year 6 dipped significantly. This was because pupils' achievement in the junior classes was inconsistent and often poor. This led to well below average standards at Year 6 in reading, writing and speaking and listening. However the school made the development of English a priority in 2001 and 2002. It is still in the early stages of this development but rising standards are now evident in Years 1 to 4. However, in Years 5 and 6 standards of attainment are still well below average. Pupils at Year 2 reach average standards of attainment in writing. In reading standards are close to average, though slightly below. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. At age 7 pupils are below average in speaking and listening but make sound progress given their starting points. In comparison to similar schools, pupils age 7 attain better standards.
103. Much of the improvements of the past year are a result of good subject leadership. There is better use of the National Literacy Strategy and improved measurement of pupils' attainment particularly in writing. There has been better checking of pupils' progress and action taken to target improvements for individuals and groups. This has led to lessons being well planned and a common way of working amongst the teachers. In particular, the majority of pupils in the infant classes achieve well in reading and writing because everyone has worked together to tackle underachievement step by step. It is a split picture in the junior classes. Years 3 and 4 make good progress in reading and writing. Years 5 and 6 only make satisfactory progress, because they have inadequate basic skills on which to build and this restricts their reading, writing and speaking activity. It can be seen, for example, in the proportion of Year 6 pupils who do not punctuate sentences correctly. This is added to by the few opportunities pupils have to use and extend their literacy skills through work in other subjects. As well as this, teachers do not always plan to challenge pupils who are capable of learning more because these pupils are not clearly enough identified.
104. The school has provided extra help for pupils who need additional literacy support by making more accurate checks on their progress in Years 1 and 3. Pupils who have statements of their special educational needs are catered for in well planned additional sessions to address their specific literacy needs. Some of this support is outstanding because of the high quality of the teaching by an assistant. When taught in a whole class support for these pupils is satisfactory overall. With classroom

assistant's support, pupils usually make good progress but when less help is available, pupils sometimes find it more difficult to work independently. This results in more modest progress in lessons.

105. The school recognises that further progress needs to be made to improve speaking and listening skills. This has begun in the infant classes. For instance, pupils sit and take turns to talk as they sit in a circle. They take part in acting out a role in a version of the traditional tale 'The Three Little Pigs,' to encourage their vocabulary. However, it is too soon to judge the impact of this work. Where pupils are given imaginative and creative teaching and are inspired to talk about the stories they read, they achieve more. For example in one Year 3 and 4 class, pupils were so inspired by shared poetry reading that learning about the rhymes and punctuation became infectious. They made excellent progress in the lesson and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. In a different set of Years 3 and 4, pupils wrote poems on the computer, using the editing, spelling checker and Thesaurus tools with great ease and fluency. This extended their skills and gave opportunities to change and refine their thoughts and words, save and print out their poems. It also allowed high quality presentation of their work. However, this level of interest is not always carried through into pupils' usual written work, which is often poorly presented, particularly in the junior classes. This is partly due to an inconsistent approach to the teaching of letter formation and joined handwriting across the school. Also, teachers do not provide a good enough model of presentation for many aspects of pupils' writing.
106. In junior classes, many pupils still find it difficult to concentrate for long periods. In the most effective lessons, teachers have a brisk, lively and imaginative approach and draw pupils along through carefully stepped questions that target and extend their ideas. This is also helped by the value teachers give to pupils' ideas, however small their contributions. This acceptance and use of pupils' thoughts is one of the prime reasons that pupils achieve well in reading and writing from Year 1 to Year 4. This is evidence of very effective training and staff teamwork. However, pupils in Years 5 and 6 still have many gaps in their reading and writing skills despite the good pace of achievement seen during the inspection. They still find it difficult to express their opinions because of a previous lack of enough good quality learning experiences and it is taking time to supplement these shortcomings. Overall teachers work hard to increase pupils' understanding of new words and terms and help them to handle challenging reading material.
107. Teachers are successful at teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and spelling for the majority of pupils because the school has recognised underachievement and tackled it. For example, it has identified the need for additional support for pupils in Year 5. Teachers regularly check that pupils are achieving as well as they can by measuring their progress precisely in reading, writing, and spelling of frequently used words. Termly goals are then set for each pupil or group of pupils. The impact of this can be seen in the pupils' writing portfolios and it is accelerating the pace of achievement in this area.
108. Most children enter school with language skills that are below average and the majority make good progress in their reading as they move through the infant classes. Most pupils use an increasing range of clues including pictures to help them to make sense of new words. The well-planned programme for teaching letter sounds provides pupils with skills that they can use well in their own reading. The key words from the National Literacy Strategy are taught and the success of this is seen in the number of words that pupils increasingly read and write for themselves. However, the best readers are not given enough opportunities to widen their knowledge and skills by using reference books. Since few of the pupils said that they use the local library, this lack of opportunity is all the more significant.

109. From Year 2 onwards, pupils are set by ability into different classes for the daily Literacy lesson. This arrangement allows teachers to plan precisely for a narrower range of ability within each year group. Pupils share similar reading materials and teachers plan activities that are tailored to the needs of each group. Where teachers capture the spirit of stories and poems, pupils are excited and achieve more. Most teachers are good at introducing pupils to the features of non-fiction material. In a particularly effective Year 6 lesson, the teacher linked reading and writing very well. Pupils could see the link between the key points at the end of a discussion on the kind of language used. Most pupils used these features in their own writing later. Instead of writing 'I think that.....' one boy wrote: 'People might think.....' making it less personal. This illustrates the recent improvements in the quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6.
110. The quality of teaching in English is mostly good because the whole school works together in using sensible strategies in the same way. This makes the best use of agreed teaching approaches and provides firm guidance for teachers to build on. Although teachers use these basic approaches, this can sometimes lead to strong teaching of basic skills at the expense of an imaginative experience of stories. As a result, some pupils are not as involved in learning as they might be. The school has not yet developed effective practice in marking pupils' work and much of the written feedback to pupils is cursory. It does not tell pupils clearly enough what they have done well or what they can do to improve, even though teachers do give useful and positive verbal feedback and guidance to pupils. Teachers set clear targets with pupils as a result of their work and in this respect pupils are encouraged to become aware of what they need to learn next.
111. The subject leader is effective. She is involved with other schools in developing and sharing improvements in the subject and has supported other colleagues well. She has a good view of what next big steps are needed to develop standards further and plans to add to resources. This includes further renewal of the reading books in the school and on-going development of both libraries.

MATHEMATICS

112. Standards are below average for children at the end of Year 2 and well below for those at the end of Year 6. Over the past few years children have not achieved as well as they could have done. There are a number of reasons for this. They include weak leadership, poor discipline and ineffective systems for checking how pupils are progressing. Problems with staffing have also resulted in some classes having a lot of different teachers and a lot of children leave or join the school at different times in the year. All of these factors affect the children's rate of learning. The present situation is much better because the school has now identified the most significant issues it needs to deal with. Procedures and systems to bring about improvement and raise pupils' rate of progress are now in place. Whilst the overall impact of these will not be seen for a little while yet, there are encouraging signs; for example in the rate of progress seen in the present Year 3 / 4 classes.
113. The targets set for the current Year 6 are very low, but they are challenging given the prior attainment of these pupils. Indications are that the school will not fully meet these targets in the national tests in June 2002 and that performance will be well below average.
114. The progress made by the current Year 6 over time has been very poor. When they were in Year 2 their national test results placed them in the lowest 5 per cent nationally when compared with all schools. These pupils have completed tests each

year. However, the results have not been used effectively to check how well they were doing or to set targets for them to achieve in the future. As a result, most of these pupils have just drifted along making little progress from one year to the next. The recently appointed headteacher has made sure that test results are used to set targets. Strategies for improving pupils' progress, for example setting children in ability groups from Years 2 to 6 and tracking pupils' progress, have been put into place.

115. Whilst these systems and methods are too late to have a significant impact upon the overall standards for the Year 6 group, there is evidence that they are beginning to have an impact upon pupils' achievements in all the other year groups. Teachers are keeping a careful eye on each child's progress against their targets. As a result children are now achieving at a more satisfactory rate than was the case previously.
116. However, there is still a lot more to be done to raise standards and improve the overall rate of progress. For example, there is a need to ensure that the individual targets are sufficiently challenging for all pupils and that greater emphasis is given to ensuring children progress at a more than satisfactory rate, so that the school can get more pupils achieving the higher Level 3 at the end of Year 2 and Level 5 at the end of Year 6.
117. Throughout the school, pupils' achievements are much better in their number work than in their understanding of shape, space and measures. The school has made good use of the National Numeracy Strategy to improve children's recall of their multiplication tables as well as helping them to develop their skills of mental calculation. In most lessons children are confident when asked to explain the how they have worked out an answer. For example in a Year 5 / 6 lesson the children were asked to explain how they had worked out 15×6 . One child described how he had partitioned the number and worked out first, 10×6 then 5×6 and added the two answers together. The teacher asked, 'Did anyone do it another way?' Another child explained, 'I knew what 15×3 was and doubled the answer.'
118. Work in the area of shape, space and measure is not covered in sufficient depth for children to reach the higher levels in this aspect of mathematics. Much of the work covered is helping children to consolidate what they know rather than helping them to develop new knowledge and skills. As a result pupils do not achieve as well as they might in these aspects of mathematics. The school has clearly identified these gaps and has drawn up a detailed plan for improvement. Already there are signs that things are getting better.
119. Another reason why standards and achievement are not as high as they might be is because too little emphasis is given to problem solving or investigative work. The staff recognise the need for children to do more of this type of work. Some of the work seen in Years 1, 3 and 4 clearly shows that the staff are trying to bring about the necessary improvement. For example, in the Year 3/ 4 work, children are doing really well in using their knowledge and understanding of area to solve problems. They can calculate the perimeter and area of a compound shape and apply this knowledge to calculate how much it would cost to carpet the area of a room.
120. In the top ability set in the same year groups some very challenging work was set during the inspection. It involved pupils working in all four quadrants to plot coordinates and work out the position of both the positive and negative numbers. The teacher taught them how to calculate the difference between for example, -15 and 10 . Once they had grasped this he got them to use their knowledge and understanding to read and interpret temperature graphs. By the end of the lesson they could confidently calculate differences in temperature that involved them using both negative and

positive numbers. In a lesson in Year 1 the teacher had high expectations because she set most of the class the task of calculating answers to problems that required two steps. They had to work out the cost of two items from the shop and then calculate their change from 20pence. This was a very demanding task and some of the higher attainers completed it successfully. This type of challenge is essential if the school is to get more of its pupils to reach the higher levels in the national tests at age 11 and raise standards.

121. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. There is some really effective teaching and some that is much more ordinary. It is satisfactory overall. The school needs to iron out some of the inconsistencies that are evident. Some teachers, when they mark children's work do little more than put a tick or a cross. This does not tell the child how well they have done or how they might make their work better. Some staff mark work very thoroughly.
122. Good teaching is seen at the start of mathematics lessons (in the mental and oral starter) because the staff are effective in teaching children strategies to improve their mental arithmetic skills and ensuring they are all actively involved in these sessions. Some of the best teaching was seen in the Year 3 / 4 ability sets. As a result most of these children are achieving well. Some of the teaching in the other year groups is more ordinary, and as a result the rate of progress is satisfactory rather than good. A significant challenge the school now faces is to raise the quality of the more ordinary teaching. Teachers now have a good understanding of what level each child is at in their classes. However, some are not as confident in knowing what small steps each child needs to make to improve in some aspects of their work. For example, in a Year 5 / 6 class the children were learning how to measure angles to one degree using protractors. Whilst this was appropriate for some it was too difficult for others because they did not know how to measure accurately to 5 degrees. They needed to be able to this before moving to the next step. Whilst the learning objective, 'to measure angles accurately using a protractor' was clear it needed to be broken down to show what each of the different ability groups would learn by the end of the lesson. This weakness with the learning objectives occurs in a number of lessons. As a result, work is too hard for some or too easy for others because the activities given are the same for both the higher and middle achievers. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson where most of the class were working on reading and ordering two and three digit numbers. Some found this very difficult and became confused.
123. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls throughout the school.
124. Whilst there are some good examples, not enough use is made of ICT or the application of mathematics across other subjects. The school has some good resources to support the teaching and use of ICT in mathematics but some teachers are not confident in the use of these.
125. The school has gone through a difficult time since its last inspection. There is little evidence to indicate that it was improving in the years immediately after the inspection. However this is no longer the case. There are now some clear signs of improvement. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The teachers in the infant classes now have a clear scheme of work to support their planning of lessons. Children's skills in mental calculation are getting better and children's attitudes and behaviour have improved. Whilst the rate of improvement is satisfactory more needs to be done to raise standards and increase the rate of children's achievements. The capacity for improvement is now much better than it has been for some time because there is strong leadership from both the recently appointed headteacher and her deputy.

126. The two teachers with responsibility for this subject are already beginning to have a very positive impact upon the subject. The work of children in Years 2 and 6 has been carefully evaluated and the test papers analysed to identify gaps and weaknesses in children's knowledge and understanding. Lessons have been observed and teachers have been told what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve. Through all of these activities the subject leaders have gained a very clear understanding of what is going well and what needs to be done to raise standards and increase pupils' rate of achievement. For example, they have established a system for tracking children's progress over time which is also supporting and helping teachers to identify the small steps children need to make to improve in different aspects of the subject. However the procedures and systems are relatively new and are not yet fully impacting on the raising of standards and pupils' achievements.

SCIENCE

127. Standards in science are close to average at the end of Year 2 and below average at the end of Year 6. This is similar to last year, which saw a drop after two years of improvement. It needs to be remembered that the current Year 6 cohort has more pupils than usual who find learning difficult and who did not perform well in the infant classes. Nevertheless, progress for all pupils over the last four years has been too slow. It is looking better of late and lower juniors are progressing more quickly, but this improvement has come too late to boost Year 6 performance. Infant pupils are making good progress in building their knowledge. Boys and girls perform to similar standards. Those pupils with special needs progress at the same rate as most other pupils but across the school the more able pupils are not challenged enough. They do not do as well as they should with few on line to reach beyond the expected level. When compared with the standards reported by the last inspection, the infant pupils have improved but the juniors have not done as well. This is partly because there are more pupils with special educational needs than in most schools but another factor is the proportion of pupils who have left or joined the school during Key Stage 2. Of the current Year 6 group, this accounts for about half the number on roll.
128. Although only one infant lesson was seen, teaching was satisfactory. It enabled pupils to understand the relationship between light and dark as they followed up a simple but exciting activity from the previous week in which they looked for objects in a very dark stock cupboard. The best part of the lesson that was seen involved trying to identify an object in a dark box through a small hole, first without artificial light and then with the aid of a torch shone through another hole. The game-like nature of the activity excited the pupils and this helped them concentrate and learn. However, the other activity involving the completion of a worksheet was less successful as it was more of a holding activity in which pupils gained little new knowledge. Pupils' awareness of different light sources such as streetlights and the sun is average and they correctly predicted that candles would appear brighter with the curtains drawn. One boy even pointed out that light was still seeping through the drawn curtains and that this would affect the result slightly. It is this higher level of insight that is not always built upon, with the result that pupils do not reach higher than average levels of attainment by the end of Year 2. Other areas of the curriculum such as the nature of materials, and life processes and living things, are covered well by the teachers' planning and good quality displays show that all the key concepts have been addressed.
129. Lessons seen at the top of the junior Key Stage were well taught. Recent lessons have used some successful approaches to learning in teaching about the earth, moon and sun. For example, teachers have used resources such as beach balls, tennis balls and 'blue tac' to represent the relative sizes of the three bodies, illustrating how the earth spins on its axis as it orbits the sun. This practical demonstration

caught the pupils' imagination and they were able to recall all the significant facts as they moved on to link this information with the occurrence of day and night. Using such exciting resources as a web site that enabled them to check real time satellite images of the earth really helped them to grasp the concepts of how day and night are brought about. Scrutiny of past work however, shows that there has not been enough of this type of activity. In the lessons seen, written tasks were well organised to cater for most levels of ability, and enabled pupils with special needs to complete the same activities as others but with less recording to tackle. The group that was least well challenged was the most able, who could have gone on to undertake further research to deepen their understanding. In testing pupils' knowledge at 11, this lack of extending understanding comes through. Pupils are able to answer most questions equally well across the different strands of the subject, but few are able to show above average insight into topics such as sound or plant life. They show a good understanding of the need for fair testing in investigations, but many of these have been closely directed by the teacher and demonstrate what the pupils have already learned. There is a need for pupils to design and carry out their own investigations in order to break new ground with their knowledge.

130. Issues that still need to be resolved include those of marking and presentation of work. Whilst some pupils present work neatly, many do not and the quality of handwriting and diagrams is not as good as it needs to be to instil pride in pupils' work. Teachers' marking sometimes compounds this as poor quality work is praised. Teachers need to expect more in this aspect of work. Also, whilst some marking helps pupils to understand how well they have done and what they need to do to get better, this is not the general rule and more regular guidance is needed in this area.
131. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. No issues were identified at the last inspection but a number of improvements have been made. The curriculum is better laid out after adopting the national guidelines, resources are better and the coordinator is now introducing a system for assessing what pupils can do at the end of each unit of work. This is helping to check how well pupils are coping with the work, but the results need to be more actively used to pitch the level of work correctly in the next unit. This is particularly the case with more able pupils whose work in investigations needs to stretch them more. Useful analysis of national test results is showing where there have been weaknesses in pupils' knowledge. The actions agreed to put these right, such as concentrating more on specific topics, now need monitoring by the coordinator to ensure that all staff are playing their part in developing the subject. The coordinator currently looks after two major subjects which makes it difficult to spend enough time developing both.

ART AND DESIGN

132. At Key Stage 1, pupils achieve average standards and make satisfactory progress. They continue to do as well as can be expected in the younger junior classes (Years 3 and 4), but their progress falters in Years 5 and 6. By the time they leave the school, most therefore do not reach average standards. This is a weaker picture than it was at the time of the last inspection.
133. In the infant classes, pupils have a better range of opportunities to explore new media and to try out the ideas of other artists and craftspeople. Their work is strongest in working with different materials to create collages or when working with textiles to create different effects. Year 1 pupils for example, have tried out a variety of weaving techniques. In a lesson observed, they demonstrated their confidence, perseverance and the progress that they had made in using the skill over a period of weeks. They are used to working with larger scales and recently made costumes and scenery for a play production.

134. Teachers in this key stage are much more adventurous than elsewhere in the school and pupils have more chance to respond to and collect ideas as a starting point for their work. Pupils in a mixed age Year 1 / 2 class recently used the school's digital camera to take photographs of patterns in buildings. They also took rubbings of different bricks and fixtures in preparation for making a large-scale collage.
135. Infant pupils show sound achievement in their observational drawing work and are beginning to develop a fairly good understanding of how to use pattern and tone to add effect in their work.
136. The younger junior pupils continue to develop their skills and knowledge at an acceptable rate. Their use of colour, form and space improve and they show a good understanding of the different effects created for example, by mixing paint or using pastels. They undertake an adequate range of experiences and maintain an enjoyment and interest in the subject.
137. Teachers throughout the rest of the junior classes have too low an expectation of what pupils should be achieving. The quality of work in pupils' art folders is well below average for this age group. Much of it shows little evidence that they are evaluating and developing their ideas or undertaking a wide enough range of experiences to improve their skills.
138. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. The teacher with responsibility sets a good example and leads from the front in providing a lively and interesting art curriculum for the younger pupils. She supports other staff well by offering ideas and showing them how to teach different techniques. Through monitoring she has identified weaknesses in the school's provision. As a result, she has agreed action with staff; for example, in re-establishing the purpose of sketchbooks. In other respects however, her influence has not had a great enough impact in the older junior classes.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

139. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection and are average overall at the end of both key stages. All pupils make satisfactory progress and those with special educational needs cover as much ground as the others. Both junior and infant pupils are given a fair range of experiences in this area, covering modelling, food technology, study of products and practise in designing and making skills.
140. In Key Stage 1, Year 1 pupils have designed and made effective model playgrounds using simple construction kits together with basic materials such as tape and string. They are building their experience of joining materials in different ways, and are proud of their swings, slides and roundabouts. Year 2 pupils have built further on what they learned last year through making simple mechanisms with card. They graduate to using glue guns and simple tools such as bench hooks and hacksaws with safety as they construct simple lifts with winding mechanisms to hoist 'Plop' the owl in and out of his tree. This work is set in the context of their current book 'The Owl who was afraid of the Dark' which adds interest and relevance for the pupils. Working in small groups with a good level of adult support, they came up with a number of different solutions to the problem they were set. They enjoyed their tasks and the opportunity to develop their own approach to a task was valuable.
141. In the junior classes, Year 3 / 4 pupils have made use of outside expertise as a visitor from a local bakery helped to teach them about food hygiene and preparation of bread in their baking activities. Their work on packaging has taught them about how

cardboard boxes are constructed and they have considered the importance of advertising as they have made their own packages for a range of products. Older pupils also have useful experience of studying the design that has gone into mass produced products. They have looked at the features of different containers, for example, to learn about such aspects as the suitability of the materials used and the importance of appearance when an object is to be used for display. Their current work on making slippers is extending their understanding of fitness for purpose as they consider how to meet the two requirements of comfort and durability when selecting materials to use. They can explain the importance of a pattern or template in being able to produce a run of products, and experiences such as trying to fit their feet into a paper pattern without an adequate 'seam allowance' taught some how accuracy of design and construction is central to good design.

142. In the two lessons seen, the teaching was satisfactory. Teachers' knowledge was good and resources were well prepared. There was plenty of opportunity to practise skills and instructions on techniques to use were well presented. In the infant lesson, pupils would have benefited from the chance to design their products more carefully before making them. In the junior lesson improvements could be made in the pace of activity, which was slowed down because the teacher took pupils through the task one stage at a time at the pace of the slowest group.
143. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. Although the subject has suffered from less attention during the recent push on English and mathematics, its importance in the curriculum has been restored of late. This is due to a better curriculum being introduced, based on national guidelines and better resources being provided for pupils to use. The system of coordinators having to bid for funding for their area has introduced the need for more detailed planning of future development.
144. Issues that still need attention are the presentation of work in books and files, which is not good enough because more care needs to be taken with diagrams and accounts. Also, work samples show that some design drawings and evaluations by older children too often concentrate on appearance and less on constructional details or suitability for purpose.

GEOGRAPHY

145. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are lower than in most schools. At the end of Key Stage 1, they are typical. This is consistent with the findings of the last inspection for Key Stage 1, but shows a decline in standards in key Stage 2. During the inspection, lessons were only observed in Key Stage 2 because there is a focus on history during in key Stage 1 during this current half term.
146. In Years 1 and 2 children draw and use simple maps and symbols, they express their views of features in the local environment and discuss change. Opportunities to undertake fieldwork in the school grounds and neighbourhood are not fully exploited.
147. In Key Stage 2 there are adequate opportunities for children to learn the features of rivers and mountains and to identify map symbols. Weaker aspects of geography include fieldwork, studying contrasting localities, and developing the skills of the young researcher by using books, computers, maps and photographs. The children's knowledge of the location of their own neighbourhood, city, local river, seas, capital cities and countries is insufficient because pupils do not make regular use of maps, globes and atlases. The pupils' awareness of how life goes on in other countries and cultures is also currently very limited.

148. For most pupils in both key stages, the rate at which they learn is satisfactory in the aspects of geography covered. However, progress is constrained by a lack of opportunity to find and use information for themselves. Pupils with special educational needs progress well when working in small groups with the support of a classroom assistant. When a substantial proportion of the lesson is used for whole class teaching, however, children with special educational or behavioural needs find it difficult to remain interested and motivated, and their rate of learning slows down.
149. There are good opportunities for children to use numeracy in geography when pupils interpret charts and graphs on temperature, rainfall and mountain height. Unfortunately however, some geography worksheets, used in upper Key Stage 2, demand levels of numeracy beyond the capabilities of most children. They also limit the pupils' capacity to communicate their findings in different ways. All pupils would benefit from greater challenge and higher expectations of the quality of their writing. The range, quality and presentation of written work in geography is below average.
150. Overall the standard of teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, with some good teaching. Where teaching is good, learning resources are used well and geographical knowledge about the locality is taught alongside the teaching of physical features. For example, in their work on rivers, the teacher talked about the estuary of the River Humber and showed good quality photographs of river features. A regular aspect of good teaching was the use of prompt intervention when children became distracted. Pupils respond well when teachers deal with problems briskly and direct their attention to interesting activities. Good teaching was observed where teachers built on the children's previous learning. For example, in their work on settlements children could recall what makes an area attractive to settlers before using maps to find positive features for settlements. Children used their newly acquired vocabulary for river features as they studied photographs and discussed them with their teacher. In the process the pupils applied their knowledge, experienced a sense of success and responded with a mature and enthusiastic attitude. Where teaching is not so good the level of work is not challenging enough and tends to be repetitive. Consequently pupils become bored. For example pupils' interest waned when they were asked to repeat very similar tasks as a whole class, individually and on the computer. A lack of stimuli through the use of books, maps, photographs or video also contributes to mundane teaching on occasions.
151. Since the last inspection the role of the co-ordinator has been more clearly defined and after a period of little development things are starting to move. The provision for the subject has been reviewed by undertaking a scrutiny of children's work and resources. New books, atlases and globes have been purchased. There is still a need to create packs of resources, which illustrate specific places. For example, the locality of the school, Hull, another locality in the UK, as well as a locality in a less economically developed country. Resources, which communicate positive images of other cultures, are also thin on the ground. The co-ordinator has promoted a scheme of work based on national guidelines, but these plans are at an early stage of implementation. Having gained a good overview of the current standards, the co-ordinator is keen to undertake in-service training and to monitor teaching. Neither of these strategies has yet happened. They will need to be implemented in order to support colleagues in the process of improving the range and challenge of learning experiences offered to pupils, particularly as they progress through Key Stage 2.

HISTORY

152. Standards in history in Key Stage 1 are similar to most schools, as at the time of the previous inspection. In Key Stage 2 standards are not as good as in most schools, which is lower than described at the last inspection.

153. Throughout the school children are now making steady progress as they acquire their knowledge of history. The disappointing standards demonstrated by children in upper Key Stage 2 indicates that this picture of steady progress has not been the case in the past. As a result of a lack of clear curriculum guidance in previous years, and too little teaching, the pupils in upper Key Stage 2 have gaps in their history knowledge and skills.
154. In infant classes, children have a growing awareness of the passing of time. They use simple time lines and often refer to 'the past' and 'a long time ago'. They are curious when observing and handling artefacts and are keen to ask, as well as respond to questions about how household items were used in the past. Good opportunities to involve parents in the children's learning are offered when children are encouraged to ask parents and grandparents if they have any old household artefacts.
155. In lessons in junior classes, pupils are encouraged to record main events in their own lives, and the lives of famous people, on time lines. They record facts about famous people's lives and are beginning to consider why changes occurred. For example, in their study of the 1960s the children recorded the early successes of the Beatles and the main events in their individual lives. They also considered the reasons for people emigrating and immigrating, and identified features of fashions at that time. However, the work did not give children opportunities to undertake historical enquiry at the level which ten and eleven year olds would normally be expected to undertake. For example, pupils were not becoming aware that the past is represented in different ways, or how to discover about events and people in the past by using a range of information sources.
156. Teaching overall in history is satisfactory, but in lessons seen ranged from poor to good. In Key Stage 1 teachers bring enthusiasm to the subject. When this good teaching is coupled with the very good relationships established with the children, there is a high level of response from them. This is demonstrated when pupils offer their own ideas, raise questions, show curiosity and surprise in discussions. The planned activities build on the children's previous learning. This was seen when pupils were asked to recall vocabulary taught in the previous lesson. Children remembered how the building materials used in old and new houses differed, before moving on to think about how the materials used in household artefacts have changed. Teachers have high expectations relating to the recording of work in Year 2. This is reflected in the quality of children's work on London at the time of the 'Great Fire', which is well organised and presented.
157. The written work in Key Stage 2, however, is of low quality in relation to what is normally found. Teaching of history for older pupils does not offer sufficient opportunities for pupils to communicate their findings in different ways. For example there was little evidence of pupils applying their writing skills or ICT to communicate. The use of artefacts to teach skills and knowledge, is not as effective when the teaching does not allow the children to share their own views and ideas. The choice of photocopied text and worksheets does not always match the children's level of reading or understanding of history. Where teaching is good, teachers regularly assess what pupils can do during lessons. They then build on this understanding and make activities more challenging and motivating.
158. The special needs of children are well supported in Key Stage 1 where classroom assistants are managed effectively, offering appropriate and stimulating support. In Key Stage 2 support for children with special needs is less effective when too much time is used for whole class teaching. This presents difficulties for some children with special needs in terms of holding their interest, and because it constrains their

opportunities to respond. Higher attainers are not always challenged at a level that is high enough to fully stretch them.

159. The subject is being satisfactorily managed on a temporary basis by the headteacher. The resources for teaching are good, including a wide range of reference books, photographs and artefacts, which are made easily accessible to teachers. The resources available to children for research and enquiry, however, still need to be further enriched, despite recent investment. The recently introduced scheme of work is a helpful step in promoting a relevant and increasingly challenging curriculum. Assessment of children's competencies at the end of each history unit, has been introduced, although the use made of assessments needs to be developed further. This is necessary to ensure that the work set consistently builds, with increasing pace, on previous learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

160. Standards in information and communication technology are below average at Year 2 and Year 6. Although this matches the findings of the previous inspection report, standards have risen since then in line with improvements nationally and a number of significant gains have been made. A satisfactory curriculum is in place for most areas of the subject. There are now one or two computers in every classroom and a newly refurbished computer suite, which has improved access for Key Stage 1. All the computers are networked and linked to the Internet to enable a greater range and use of resources to be accessed by the pupils.
161. Teaching skills have been improved and training is helping them rise further. As yet computers are not used well enough across subjects because not all teachers are confident or skilled enough to plan activities using appropriate computer resources. However, lessons designed to teach pupils how to use computer tools are rapidly improving their achievement. Pupils have a growing understanding of the range of applications in which computers can be used. Pupils with special educational needs use computers and achieve at a similar rate alongside others when learning new skills. Classroom assistants support these pupils as with all others to learn new skills then keep a distance to encourage them to try these skills for themselves.
162. Pupils' level of achievement in the infants is building from a limited base but it is improving rapidly as a result of the computer suite. On entry to Key Stage 1, children's experiences of computers are low compared to children in most schools. They achieve soundly in Year 1, learning for example, that picture icons, such as the printer, give information. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are getting reasonable access to computers and are beginning to master more challenging keyboard skills. For example, pupils were delighted to learn how to use the space bar to make spaces in their sentences, then save their work. Although pupils' skills are below average, they are achieving more quickly now that they have access to the suite.
163. The level of achievement makes a substantial leap in Year 3 and 4 where pupils are introduced to the Internet and show increasing ease and fluency when logging on and accessing their own files. For example, they produce poems and explore layout, colour and typeface to present their work. However, opportunities to use the Internet are too few in the upper classes because Internet access has not always been available in the past and they have not had enough time to practise the necessary skills. Pupils achieve soundly over the long term in Year 5 and 6 but there are instances where they make quicker progress. For their regular session in the computer suite, each pupil has a personal file containing their work. This helps their achievement as each pupil is able to open, edit, save and print their on-going work. In Year 6, pupils retrieve information by interrogating a database. They then print graphs

to find patterns and draw conclusions. This caused great excitement as they located answers to simple questions so easily. A small group of pupils were further challenged to write questions to match the answers provided in the electronically stored information. This pushed their learning along very effectively and typifies the increasing examples of good teaching in the subject. Overall, the standards of older pupils are still below average because of a lack of past experience, but they are improving at a good rate.

164. The standards of teaching are satisfactory overall and good in some classes, particularly where the teacher has good knowledge and skills in the subject. Since the last inspection, teachers have had to develop many new skills to take advantage of new hardware and software now available to pupils. For example, the school now has access to electronic mailing facilities for pupils and Year 3 and 4 pupils learn to send and receive e-mails. This caused great delight as they read poems and messages sent from another class. Skills are taught in a planned sequence, but they are not yet applied as fully as they might be across pupils' work in other subjects. This puts a brake on the rate of learning because pupils are not developing the ability to use their new skills in different situations.
165. The subject leader manages the subject well. He demonstrates a good model of practice in the computer suite and pupils enjoy their newly gained skills as a result. He is aware of the level of teacher confidence and this gives him a clear picture of the next development steps. Good practice is shared between staff. The school has rightly identified this subject as an area for further development, particularly across the full range of subjects.

MUSIC

166. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in music was found to be unsatisfactory at Years 2 and 6. There has been good improvement and standards are now in line with those of most schools at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The recently appointed music co-ordinator teaches most of the music in the school and this means musical skills are now consistently developed throughout the school.
167. In both key stages the rate at which children learn is good, but because of a history of less effective teaching there remains a legacy of gaps in children's knowledge and skills. This means that although children are currently making good progress in performing, composing and appraising their work, their present level of attainment is still average.
168. In Years 1 and 2 pupils sing in tune and with gusto, showing enthusiasm and expression. They are developing their skills as they change the volume, pitch and voice clarity in their singing. In Key Stage 2 pupils have a secure understanding of pitch and rhythm and have made a good start at composing their own music. Good use is made of ICT to broaden their learning as pupils use notation and begin to create and combine melodies. In upper Key Stage 2 good links have been made between history and music in the Beatles topic. Opportunities for children to enjoy and appraise recorded music, however, are not yet fully exploited in the daily routine.
169. The quality of teaching and learning in music overall is good, with some very good teaching being seen. Lessons are carefully prepared and offer a balance of whole class teaching, for introducing musical terms, and opportunities for children to work collaboratively to compose their own music. The subject knowledge of the co-ordinator, who teaches all music in Years 2 to 6, is very good. Enthusiasm for the subject is communicated well to the children, and good musical competences are effectively modelled through singing and playing. The lively pace, as fresh activities

are introduced, and the encouragement offered to children as they respond, leads to high levels of enthusiasm and effort in the children. Again, clever use of the computer suite was seen when in one short lesson children learned new skills as they explored musical effects on the computer. In the process the pupils' enjoyed a high sense of achievement and were quite animated by the outcomes of their work. Pupils' literacy skills are supported to an extent as they learn and use new musical vocabulary, which is clearly displayed in the music classroom. Numeracy skills are also applied as children explore rhythm and repeating patterns. Pupils co-operate well in large group singing sessions and work together constructively on compositions in small group activities. Children behave well in music sessions and respond well to the stimulating activities they are given.

170. The music co-ordinator offers strong and enthusiastic leadership based on good subject knowledge. This is put into effect both in direct teaching and support for other staff. National guidance, which has been recently introduced to help teachers' planning is used well to design a curriculum in which activities become increasingly challenging. This has been supplemented by the co-ordinator giving helpful guidance to colleagues on the use of activities and resources. A useful stock of recorded music is made accessible to staff through a recently catalogued system. The co-ordinator is having a strong influence on the subject and is bringing about improvement. This is based on a clear understanding of the pupils' current abilities, and identification of where improvement is needed in order to raise standards.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

171. The only lessons observed were in dance. Standards in this aspect are typical of those seen in most schools. All children make satisfactory progress.
172. The teaching of dance is satisfactory. Teachers make sure the children do a warm up. This helps them to realise the importance of preparing themselves before taking part in exercise. Children are encouraged to evaluate each other's performance. This is an improvement since the last inspection when children were not given these opportunities. They do this well because they pick out parts they like as well as parts they think could be done better. For example, in a mixed age Year 3 / 4 class, the teacher drew well on one child's comments to encourage all of them to think about working at different levels. In some lessons teachers spend too much time talking to the pupils whilst they sit and listen. As a result, children do not always have enough time to practise and improve their movements. Good use is made of resources to support the teaching of dance. For example, in a Year 3 / 4 lesson the teacher used the music very effectively to encourage the children to consider and share their responses to it. He used their comments to get over to them that people's interpretations can be very different, and it is good if their dance movements are different from one another.
173. During lessons, pupils' attitudes are positive and they enjoy the sessions. Children are given opportunities to work with a partner or as a member of a small group. When required to do this they behave sensibly and work well together. However, there are some children who do not always bring their kit. The school is good at making sure they do not miss their lessons because it provides them with kit from an emergency stock.
174. Pupils only undertake swimming lessons in Year 4 as that is the available time supplied through local authority arrangements. Approximately two thirds of the pupils in the present Year 5 have made good progress because they have already achieved the national expectation of being able to swim 25 metres. However, the overall provision for those who have not reached this standard is unsatisfactory. This is

because there are no further opportunities for them, once they leave Year 4, to participate in swimming lessons at school. The effect of this can be seen in the present Year 6 where standards are below average. There are 14 pupils out of a total of 36 who cannot swim the minimum required distance.

175. There is a satisfactory range of out of school sports activities. Whilst the activities help develop and improve children's skills, the number that benefit is rather small. This is because the take up of these activities varies considerably. For example, whilst the rugby club is well attended, only 4 children regularly attend the netball club.
176. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Resources have been improved. Children's behaviour during lessons is better. Whilst teachers now have a clear scheme to support their planning of lessons, there is still no overview of the quality of teaching or its impact on children's learning and the standards they achieve.
177. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader checks teachers' planning and gives them advice and support. She has developed a system for assessing children's progress at the end of each topic. It has not yet been in place long enough to check how useful it is in helping teachers to plan the next sequence of lessons.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

178. Standards have slipped since the time of the last inspection. In the intervening years, religious education has had a relatively low profile within the curriculum causing a resultant dip in pupils' achievements. Although the subject is now on a firmer footing, the years of weak provision are apparent in the low standards of work in the older junior classes.
179. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards are close to those outlined as average in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils are making acceptable gains in their knowledge and understanding and in reflecting and responding to religious ideas. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have significant gaps in their recollection of key facts and fall short of what is expected of pupils of this age. Presentation of work is unsatisfactory and literacy skills are not developed well by most pupils through use in religious education.
180. Pupils achieve more in the infant classes because teaching is livelier and more suited to their experiences and understanding of the world. Lessons tend to leave more of an impression upon them because they are based around things that the children like and enjoy. A good example of this was seen in a Year 1 lesson where the teacher was trying to develop children's understanding of the miracles of Jesus and how they surprised his friends. She first told a story about surprises, which engaged the children's interest and required their active involvement. She also used a series of artefacts such as small eggs, revealing surprising contents within them. After she had told the class the story about Jesus' miracle with the loaves and fishes, they were able to relate well to the surprise of his followers.
181. By the end of the infant key stage, pupils have a reasonable understanding of some of the major religious festivals and celebrations of different faiths and about simple features of the lives of key figures such as Mohammed and Jesus.
182. The successful teaching approach in the infant classes is also continued to some extent with the younger juniors. Pupils' progress here is adequate and they show an interest, particularly in the different traditions associated with celebration. Again, this is because teachers try to ensure that pupils can draw upon practical experiences,

which both helps them to remember facts and encourages them to reflect and respond to religious ideas. The teacher of a Year 3/ 4 class for example, invited a representative of the Jewish faith to talk to the class about the feasting and fasting rituals associated with the celebration of Yom Kippur. The questions prepared by the class gave a good insight into their interest and involvement. They also had the opportunity to taste traditional food eaten at the feast of Rosh Hashanah, and when questioned about it they remembered that it symbolised the wish for a sweet and happy new year.

183. Many pupils have very little experience of religion or the traditions of other faiths and cultures to draw upon. The school's curriculum is not rich enough at present to compensate for this shortfall. Too many lessons, particularly at Key Stage 2 are reliant on the teacher talking to the class, rather than involving them in practical or relevant experiences. Teachers and pupils manage to supply some artefacts, which add colour and interest to lessons. For example, the topic followed by Years 5 and 6 on Earth, Water and Fire was enlivened when baptismal artefacts were used. However, the school is generally short of resources in this subject and too little use is made of visiting speakers, video material, role play or educational visits to make lessons interesting or memorable. Many discussions during lessons are flat because pupils find it difficult to respond or relate to the subject matter.
184. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. Monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher has already revealed that teachers' own subject knowledge is sometimes too weak to get to the heart of different topics, and provide for the most important learning experiences. Positive steps have been taken to revive the subject's profile. She has for example, ensured that the required syllabus is now being covered and that teachers know what they should be teaching.