

INSPECTION REPORT

OXHEY FIRST SCHOOL

Biddulph

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124149

Head teacher: Mrs S Hyland

Reporting inspector: Mr M H Whitaker
1424

Dates of inspection: 25th – 27th February 2002

Inspection number: 243992

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pennine Way Biddulph Stoke on Trent Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST8 7EB
Telephone number:	01782 513000
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Brown
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1424	M H Whitaker	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
			History	The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Physical education	How well are pupils taught?
			Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?
			English as an additional language	What should the school do to improve further?
9561	H Akhtar	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20645	R Webber	Team inspector	Science	
			Art and design	
			Geography	
			Religious education	
			The Foundation Stage	
20326	P Clark	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Information and communication technology	
			Design and technology	
			Music	

			Equal opportunities	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Oxhey First School is a school for boys and girls aged four to nine. There are currently 209 pupils: 100 boys and 109 girls. All pupils are of white United Kingdom origin, reflecting the local community, although about 25 per cent of the pupils come from outside the immediate locality. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average, and the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. The attainment of children when they enter the school is below what is expected for their age in all areas of learning.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. The standards achieved by pupils in the national tests at the end of Year 2 are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. By the age of nine, pupils are achieving high standards for their age and are well-placed to exceed national standards by the age of 11. They achieve well and make good progress throughout the school. This is the result of good teaching and good leadership and management. Costs are relatively low and the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Achieves high standards in reading, writing and mathematics in national tests at the age of seven, and in English, mathematics and science by the time pupils leave the school.
- Has good leadership and management, which monitors standards and sets challenging targets leading to improvements in standards.
- Has good teaching. Teamwork and the management of pupils are strengths. Teachers assess pupils' academic and personal development well and share the targets for pupils with them so that they are aware of what they need to do to improve.
- Promotes positive attitudes and relationships, and good behaviour and attendance through good provision for the moral, social and cultural development of pupils, good teaching and the rich curriculum provided.
- The foundation stage (reception) prepares children very well for starting the infants.

What could be improved

- Handwriting could be more consistent throughout the school.
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning across the curriculum.
- Pupils could be more effectively prepared for life in a multi-cultural, ethnically diverse society.
- The role of governors in more formally monitoring the standards achieved.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvements since it was last inspected in September 1997. All of the key issues have been tackled successfully. Provision and standards have improved in design and technology. Comprehensive assessment procedures are now in place ensuring that the needs and achievements of all pupils are identified. This information is used very well in planning to set targets that are shared with pupils and parents and lead to higher standards. Provision for children in the

foundation stage of education is good and they make good progress as a result. Teamwork is a strength of the staff and teachers work together very effectively to plan the curriculum. In addition to these improvements, the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has helped to improve standards and teachers are far more confident about teaching physical education.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
Reading	C	A	A	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	C	A	A	B	
Mathematics	C	B	A	A	

Pupils attained standards well above the national averages in the national tests for seven year olds in 2001. This was very good achievement and progress when compared to their attainment when they joined the school. Compared with the standards achieved by pupils in schools with a similar level of free school meals, mathematics was well above average, writing was above average and reading was average. The present Year 2 pupils are achieving high standards in mathematics, science and speaking and listening. Standards are average in reading and writing. This represents good achievement since the attainment of this group of pupils was below average at the age of five.

By the age of nine, pupils are achieving high standards for their age, again making good progress. Pupils of all ages and of all levels of ability make good progress and achieve well in literacy and numeracy. The school has improved standards progressively in recent years and this has been recognised by a national School Achievement Award. The school sets challenging targets, which have helped to raise attainment. Standards achieved in the other subjects, including religious education and ICT are at least satisfactory throughout the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and contribute well in lessons. They generally work hard and are keen to succeed.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The majority of pupils behave well throughout the school. Some pupils behave inappropriately but they are generally managed effectively and do not have a detrimental effect on the learning of others.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils develop very good relationships and their personal development is promoted through 'circle time' and an effective personal

	and social education programme.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is higher than the national average and there is no unauthorised absence.

The school has an effective personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme which enhances pupils' personal development enabling them to develop very good relationships. Although some pupils, particularly some boys in Year 2, can behave inappropriately they are usually managed well.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching is good throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In the foundation stage, lessons are well prepared and tasks are matched well to the assessed needs of the children. They are very well managed and relationships are very good. As a result, a positive climate for learning is established and children are very well prepared for moving into the infants. They achieve well and make good progress in all the areas of learning.

Good teaching in the infants builds on pupils' learning. Again lessons are well prepared and pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn. As a result, they can evaluate their own learning and they know what they need to do next. The behaviour of some pupils can be challenging but effective management by teachers, using a range of teaching methods, ensures that all pupils are able to learn.

In Years 3 and 4, pupils' learning continues to develop as a result of the good teaching. Teamwork and planning are again key features. Assessment is effective and is used to ensure that tasks are matched to pupils' achievements so that they are able to build on their earlier learning.

Teaching of literacy and numeracy is good throughout the school. English and mathematics are taught well resulting in high standards and effective learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a rich learning experience for pupils. Good planning is a strong feature of the curriculum. The school has effective links with the community, which add to the quality of the provision.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The curriculum is well planned to meet the needs of these pupils. They receive good support, which enables them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school makes good provision for these aspects of pupils' development. This results in positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour. Provision for preparing pupils for life in a culturally diverse society, although satisfactory, is less well developed.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school cares well for each pupil. Monitoring and assessment procedures are good. They have improved since the last inspection and are now effectively used to plan teaching and support learning. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved.
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The curriculum is well planned and includes a thorough PSHE programme, which helps pupils to mature as they move through the school. Parents regard the school highly. There is a good partnership with parents and they make an effective contribution to the life and work of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Very good. The head teacher and deputy head teacher have developed a clear focus on raising standards. They have succeeded in this. Teamwork, involving all staff, has been a key factor in this development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors support the school well and understand the progress the school has made. However, they are not as fully involved as they could be in monitoring the standards achieved, in a formal way.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The head teacher and deputy head teacher have developed effective systems for evaluating its performance and they use the information well to improve.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources, including staffing, are used well to promote learning. Grants available to the school are used well to improve standards.

The head teacher, very well supported by the deputy head teacher, has provided very good leadership and management in improving the standards and quality of education provided. Staffing, resources and accommodation are good. Principles of best value are applied effectively. The school monitors its expenditure and compares its performance against other schools to ensure that it provides good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The behaviour of children. • The quality of teaching. • The expectations the school has. • The leadership and management of the school. • The way the children become more mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of out of school activities. • The information they receive. • The working relationship with them.

The inspectors agree with the positive views of the parents but disagree with their criticisms. Children

behave well, the quality of teaching is good and children become more mature and responsible. The school is well led and managed and children are expected to work hard. Inspectors felt that the range of out of school activities is satisfactory. The amount and quality of information parents receive is also satisfactory and the school has good working relationships with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 The standards achieved by pupils in the national tests for seven year olds were well above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics in 2001. The upward trend in the school's results in recent years is an improvement since the last inspection and is the result of consistently good teaching and very good leadership and management, particularly by the head teacher and deputy head teacher. There has been a determined and concerted effort to raise standards and this has been successful.

2 When the school's 2001 test results are compared with other schools with a similar level of free school meals, standards are average in reading, above average in writing and well above average in mathematics. However the attainment of this group of pupils when they joined the school, three years earlier, was below that expected for their age. Their results in the tests therefore represent very good progress and achievement. School records and assessment data show that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs achieved very well.

3 The present Year 2 pupils are achieving high standards in mathematics, science and speaking and listening and average standards in reading and writing. They are making good progress and these standards again, represent good achievement. This year group contains a higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs and their overall attainment when they entered the school was lower than that usually expected. Following a detailed analysis of results, the school rightly focused on raising standards in writing. It has been successful in this and is now turning its attention to reading standards.

4 The present Year 3 and 4 pupils are attaining good standards, building on their success in the infants. If the rate of progress continues they are on line to achieve high standards by the age of 11 when they next undertake national tests.

5 When pupils enter the school they lack confidence in speaking and listening skills. However, despite their initial lack of confidence, pupils achieve well and by the age of seven, their speaking and listening are above national expectations. They express themselves clearly and confidently, for example during literacy lessons where they listen carefully before expressing their own ideas. In a lesson concerned with traditional stories they expressed their ideas about the treatment of Cinderella with great sensitivity. Skills are developed further in Years 3 and 4 where pupils are given, and take, opportunities to explain their opinions and ideas about poetry. Pupils join in enthusiastically and listen to one another's ideas.

6 The present Year 2 pupils are achieving well in reading to reach average standards given their low level of skill when they entered the school. Average and below average pupils have a good understanding of basic letter sounds and this helps them when they tackle words unknown to them. More able pupils have developed a love of books. They improve their fluency and accuracy, and nine year olds appreciate a range of books, talking confidently about their likes and dislikes of certain stories.

7 Writing for the present Year 2 pupils is average. This again represents good progress and achievement in relation to their standards when they joined the school. By the age of nine pupils are able to write for a variety of purposes. Topic work is used well to provide opportunities to write at

length, for instance when writing about famous people in history. The school's recent focus on raising standards in writing has been successful and pupils are now making more progress. The emphasis on writing throughout the curriculum has been a significant factor in this. However, standards in handwriting are inconsistent throughout the school because of the different expectations of teachers. The school is aware of the need to develop a more consistent approach in order to raise standards in handwriting.

8 Standards in mathematics by the age of seven are higher than both the national average and those achieved by pupils in similar schools. For example, in 2001 the school's results in the national tests were well above average in both cases. Despite low achievement when they entered the school, the present Year 2 are achieving high standards in mathematics. By the age of nine, pupils are also achieving well and reaching higher standards than expected for their age. This is the result of consistently good teaching. Year 2 pupils count confidently and recognise numbers up to 100. They are confident adding pairs of numbers to create 100, for example 30 and 70, and can double and halve small numbers such as 18 to make 9. They work confidently with coins up to £1.00 and can tell the time in quarter-hour intervals. They know the properties of common two and three-dimensional shapes. By the age of nine, pupils work comfortably with numbers up to 1000. They are confident in describing different types of triangles and use both digital and analogue time. Pupils use data to plot graphs and work with co-ordinates effectively. There is clear progress for pupils of all abilities as they move through the school so that they build systematically on their learning.

9 In the other subjects of the curriculum standards have been at least maintained since the last inspection and in some areas they have improved. By the ages of seven and nine, pupils' standards in science and art and design are above those expected for their ages. In the other subjects of the curriculum, including religious education and information and communication technology (ICT), standards broadly match what is expected for pupils' ages. Given the low attainment of pupils when they enter the school this represents good achievement and progress.

10 Children in the foundation stage (reception) make good progress and achieve well in all areas of learning. Despite attaining levels below those normally expected for their age when joining the school, by the time they move into Year 1 the standards they are achieving are similar to those achieved nationally. This is a result of the good provision and teaching they receive.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11 Pupils have good attitudes to learning and this helps them to attain good educational standards. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have a real interest in their work and their friends. Even the youngest children come to school prepared to work and learn, and approach all their tasks conscientiously. Pupils work with an air of purpose and become absorbed in their activities, like in a geography lesson in Years 3 and 4 where pupils were learning how to interpret a map. Another example is pupils' obvious joy of singing, either as a class or in assemblies, where they listen and learn quickly. Pupils participate well in lesson and other activities, particularly in art and sports. They enjoy investigation. For instance in a Year 1 and 2 science lesson, pupils enjoyed planting seeds and learning about what plants need to grow. Pupils who have special educational needs are keen to learn and respond well to the support that they receive.

12 Parents' positive views about behaviour are confirmed by the inspection. Pupils mostly behave well in class and in the play areas. They respond quickly to staff and teachers, and are well mannered to visitors. There is occasional boisterousness and pockets of challenging behaviour in lessons but this is managed quickly and effectively by staff. Bullying is not an issue and there have been no exclusions in the past year. Pupils treat school property with care and respect.

13 The personal development of the pupils is good. Children in the foundation stage settle quickly and organise themselves well. For example, they are quite happy to leave their parents and carers at the start of the school day. They have a well-established sense of routine, take turns and share equipment fairly. As a result, by the time children are ready to move into Year 1 they achieve good standards in their personal and social development, including behaviour. As they grow older, pupils are prepared to take initiative, work independently and are confident in choosing their activities. Pupils choose and share materials and equipment, and settle to group work quickly. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 art and design lesson, pupils worked productively and co-operatively to explore textures and shapes. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously including, taking attendance registers to the office, helping younger pupils and tidying the hall and their classrooms. Pupils who take part in extra-curricular activities organise themselves well.

14 Relationships throughout the school are good. Good quality discussions are achieved as a result of good relations between pupils and teachers. Even the younger pupils are encouraged to express their views and to ask questions. A good example of this was seen in a Year 1 and 2 English lesson where pupils were encouraged to air their views and ideas about traditional story characters. All pupils mix very well. They work and play together happily. In a Year 3 and 4 physical education lesson, pupils acted sensibly and valued others' efforts in using apparatus. In line with the care and respect ethos of the school, pupils listen with interest and respect others' views and feelings.

15 Attendance is good and this has been maintained since the last inspection. Rates of attendance are above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. Pupils arrive on time in the morning and the school day starts promptly.

16 All the positive features identified by the last inspection are still evident. Well-established discipline, good relationships and good teaching have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17 The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection and has had a positive impact on the standards achieved by all pupils. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all but one of the lessons seen and was predominately good, and occasionally very good. There were no significant differences in the quality of teaching for pupils of different ages.

18 Teaching in the foundation stage has improved since the last inspection. It is now at least good and sometimes very good. This enables children to make good progress in all areas of learning so that, despite low attainment when they join the school, by the time they move into Year 1 they are achieving standards expected for their age. Teachers have a clear understanding of the needs of the children. They plan activities very carefully so that children's skills develop. Everyday activities are effectively used to promote social development. For example, during break times good manners are encouraged when children select drinks, and their independence is promoted when they are expected to collect up the cups and tidy up after themselves. Mathematical development is enhanced through the careful choice of activities for children that stimulate, interest and motivate them. As a result, learning is fun. Information and communication technology is used well to support children's learning and teachers plan these opportunities carefully into the structure of the day.

19 Teaching in the infants and in Years 3 and 4 is good. Lessons are well prepared. Teachers are very clear about what they expect pupils to learn and this is shared with pupils. As a result pupils are able to evaluate their own learning and can see what they need to do next to improve further. This

helps to develop their positive attitudes to learning and an enthusiasm to improve. It also enables pupils to take some responsibility for their own learning. Work is well matched to the ability of different groups of pupils and, as a result, all can learn effectively. In an English lesson in Years 1 and 2, for example, thoroughly prepared resources enabled all pupils to be involved in shared reading and when the teacher's direct time was devoted to a group, others could continue independently with their work.

20 The good relationships in the school are a strong feature that support the quality of teaching, leading pupils to be keen to join in discussions and share ideas. Occasionally the focus of a lesson is lost when the teacher spends too much time talking to the whole class and, when this happens, pupils become impatient and lose interest. However, once the teacher recognises this and moves into group work activities, pupils' interest is regained. The effect of this is that insufficient learning sometimes takes place for some more able pupils because of the lack of challenge in whole class work. This is very rare however and tends to occur with a particular group (mainly boys) who can be very demanding of attention. The management of pupils is very good overall and is a significant strength of the teaching.

21 Teachers use a range of strategies to motivate pupils and lessons move at a good pace to maintain enthusiasm and interest. In a Year 3 and 4 art and design lesson, where pupils were making sculptures found in the environment, effective management by the teacher allowed pupils to work effectively in groups while she spent her time moving between the different groups providing advice and support. As a result, effective learning took place and pupils produced good sculptures. In another Year 3 and 4 class, similar management strategies during a science lesson enabled groups of pupils to learn effectively when investigating the time taken for different substances to dissolve with changing variables.

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

22 The school is socially inclusive, and provides a broad, balanced and well-planned curriculum to which all pupils have equal access. Since the previous inspection there have been good improvements to the curriculum. For example, provision for design and technology is now satisfactory, and well-planned opportunities now exist in the foundation stage to develop children's personal, social and emotional needs. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects. The curriculum provides a range of rich opportunities for learning that meets the interests and particular needs of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are successfully integrated into groups within the class and are appropriately included in any additional activities provided by the school.

23 The school has correctly given literacy and numeracy a high priority. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented successfully throughout the school. Planning for literacy and numeracy is very good, identifying tasks for pupils of different abilities and establishing how pupils' learning and achievements will be assessed. Both strategies are contributing very effectively to the continued rise in standards in English and mathematics, by giving effective support to teachers' termly planning. There are now detailed schemes of work for all other subjects, which take account of national guidelines and help to ensure that pupils build successfully on their previous learning.

24 The school offers a good PSHE programme to pupils, which effectively supports their personal development. Classes have a weekly lesson where relevant topics, such as feelings and attitudes, are discussed. Some aspects are covered in other subject areas. For example, the need for regular exercise to raise heart rate to aid better circulation and energy levels is taught in physical

education. There is an agreed policy for sex education and drug awareness; these are dealt with sensitively by staff and the school nurse as pupils progress through the school.

25 Parents showed some concern over the lack of opportunities for pupils outside lessons. However, the provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. A good range of visits enriches the curriculum. For example, pupils make planned visits to different museums, the local church and shops linking to work in history, geography and religious education. Visitors also make a good contribution to the experiences offered to pupils. For instance, a local clergy attends the Harvest Service and the city football club supports extra sports activities.

26 Links with other schools and the community are productive and support pupils' learning and personal development. Good liaison with other local schools ensures a smooth transfer of pupils and information at the time when pupils change schools. Students spend valuable work experience time at the school and make a good contribution through their help with the group work in lessons.

27 The provision the school makes for pupils' moral and social development is good and the provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. This is the same as the last inspection.

28 The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Although assemblies do provide pupils with an opportunity to pray and to think about the theme of the day, there are insufficient opportunities for them to explore and consider their personal feelings in more depth. Part of this is because a sense of calm and quiet is not sufficiently promoted and maintained as pupils enter and exit the hall. The curriculum makes an adequate contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Through religious education pupils are given opportunities to gain an insight into the values and beliefs of major world faiths. In music, and art and design, pupils are given appropriate opportunities to appreciate and consider the feelings and emotions that particular pieces of music and works of art can provoke. As part of the school's PSHE programme, 'circle time' is used well to encourage pupils to think about their personal experiences and feelings about everyday life within a caring and supportive environment. Visits by the vicar and other local clergy to take assemblies and lead collective acts of worship contribute effectively to pupils' spiritual development.

29 The provision for pupils' moral development is good. In consultation with parents the school has devised and implemented a good behaviour and anti-bullying policy. This is consistently applied by all adults throughout the school and contributes significantly to the good behaviour of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to respect themselves and others, and to think about the consequences of their own behaviour on others. 'Circle time' is used particularly well by teachers to encourage pupils to discuss moral issues and to allow them to explore ways of handling different situations that might lead to conflict. Through the school's reward system pupils are encouraged to strive for special certificates that reward good work, effort and behaviour and this contributes significantly to pupils' moral development.

30 The provision for pupils' social development is good. From a very young age pupils are encouraged to take on jobs of responsibility in order to develop their social skills. For to build up the confidence to interact with, and speak to different adults, reception children are expected to go on errands and are encouraged to give out and collect up the cups after drinking juice. Pupils of all ages take their class register to the office and older pupils prepare the hall for assemblies, collect and take dinner numbers to the office, and befriend and help younger pupils during lunch and break times. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to work co-operatively in pairs and groups in order to develop their social skills. For example, in science, Year 3 and 4 pupils worked very well in groups to plan and carry out a scientific investigation, effectively delegating each other specific tasks to carry out. Social

skills, such as listening carefully to and considering the needs of others, are effectively developed through 'circle time'. Visits to many places of local interest also contribute significantly to pupils' social development.

31 The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Although the school makes good provision to develop pupils' awareness of their own indigenous culture the opportunities to develop awareness of other cultures is weaker. The school provides plenty of opportunities for pupils to learn about their own cultural heritage through many well-planned visits to local places of interest. For example, in history, pupils experience what life must have been like for local people living in Victorian times as they experience a Victorian activities day at a local Hall and visit other Victorian venues. Similarly, pupils gain an insight into Tudor life as they visit Ford Green Hall. In geography, pupils make a detailed study of their local area. Visits to local museums and visits from artists and musicians also contribute effectively to pupils' cultural development. Although the school does recognise other cultures in its work, particularly in religious education, there are too few planned opportunities in other subjects for pupils to develop an awareness of other world cultures and help them to prepare for life in a multi-cultural society. For example, the appreciation of non-western art and music is under represented within the art and design and music curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32 The school's care and support for pupils are good and have been maintained since the last inspection.

33 The school offers its pupils a positive and welcoming learning environment, which supports their confidence and independence. Staff know the children well and are sensitive to their specific needs, which are promptly identified and effectively met. The procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development as they progress through the school were less satisfactory at the time of the last inspection, but are now good. Pupils' personal records are well maintained and rewards and concerns are monitored effectively. The school promotes a calm and well-disciplined atmosphere and encourages a sense of pride in the pupils' efforts, which has a positive effect on their learning.

34 The school has satisfactory procedures for child protection. The school is vigilant about health and safety matters. Risks are assessed, equipment is regularly checked, and there are regular fire drills. Several staff are trained in first aid and accident procedures are clear.

35 External agencies, including the school nurse and the educational psychologist, give good support to the school. Pupils are guided on matters relating to their welfare and development through a well-planned programme of personal, social and health education, including the use of 'circle time'. Specific provision such as the extra-curricular activities and visits effectively support pupils' personal development.

36 There are effective procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour. The behaviour policy clearly outlines rewards and sanctions, and parents and pupils are in no doubt about the school's high expectations of good performance. There are many rewards, including public acknowledgement of good performance at the Friday assemblies. Pupils have ample opportunities to discuss any concerns in 'circle time', for example older pupils worked to develop an anti-bullying code. Pupils are supervised well and staff ensure that standards of behaviour meet their expectations.

37 The school's procedures for promoting good attendance are effective. Registration requirements are met and absences are appropriately identified and promptly followed up.

38 There are good, effective assessment systems in place to monitor pupils' learning and academic achievements. These enable the school to give feedback and encouragement to individual pupils that includes clear information to pupils on how to improve their own learning. This is an area that was identified as a weakness in the previous inspection and has undergone sustained improvement since then. In English, pupils have individual targets clearly displayed inside the front cover of their workbooks, whilst in mathematics, they have separate target sheets. They refer to them frequently and teachers pay good attention to them when marking pupils' work. The school is successfully developing its own tracking system that is allowing teachers to target pupils' learning more effectively and to pay good attention to those pupils who require additional support. The school is aware of the need to identify those pupils with special gifts or talents, for example in sport or music, and to provide appropriate support for them to achieve their full potential.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39 The school has a good partnership with parents and the overall picture is as positive as it was at the time of the last inspection. The school can rely on parents to support its work and parents make a good contribution to the life of the school. Most parents take good interest in their children's work. For example, consultation meetings are well attended and school events are well supported. There is a productive school association, which raises considerable funds for the school's resources. All this has a good impact on pupils' learning.

40 The vast majority of parents who answered the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed favourable views about the school and its achievements. For example, parents are well satisfied with the teaching, which is good, and pleased with the school's expectations, which are high. They are happy with the progress that their children make and the support for their children's personal development, both of which are good. Some parents are less satisfied with the after school clubs and activities and the way the school works with them. However, inspectors found that the school makes satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activities. The school does well in reaching out to parents and works closely with them. For example, parents recently had the opportunity to air their views about its work through a well-organised questionnaire.

41 The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. The prospectus and governors' reports are informative. There are frequent consultation and curriculum information meetings for parents and these are well attended. Some parents felt that they are not well informed about how their children are getting on, but inspectors found that the annual reports written by teachers are satisfactory, providing adequate information.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42 The school is well led and managed. At the time of the last inspection the head teacher was relatively newly appointed and leadership and management has continued to improve since that time. She is well supported by the deputy head teacher and together they provide very good leadership and management for the school. This has led to improved standards and more effective teaching. They have been very successful in developing a strong team feeling amongst the staff where everyone's contribution is highly valued. Amongst the staff and governors there is a clear commitment to continually improve standards and this positive attitude is also shared by parents and pupils. As a result the school is very well placed to succeed further.

43 Since the last inspection, the head teacher and deputy head teacher have been very successful in raising standards. Good progress has been made in relation to the issues raised at the time and, in addition, national initiatives have been successfully introduced. The success is attributable

to the hard work of all staff resulting in a very positive ethos. All staff contribute fully to the identification of priorities for development, which are clearly identified in the school development plan and linked to the budget. Test results are very carefully analysed so that relative weaknesses can be identified and adjusted. They are compared with the results of other schools and targets are set to raise standards, for example, writing has been a priority and improvements have resulted. Reading is now going to be tackled to raise standards further.

44 The school's financial procedures are good and all monies available are used effectively to promote learning. The school has a good level of teaching and support staff to meet the needs of the National Curriculum and all staff have benefited from investments in training. For instance, grants have been used to fund training to improve teachers' knowledge and confidence and raise standards, especially in the key subjects of English, mathematics and ICT. Good opportunities have also been provided for staff to develop their own professional needs. The range and quality of resources are good in all subjects and they are used very effectively to support pupils' learning across all areas of the curriculum. Accommodation is good and allows staff to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum effectively. The corridors and classrooms are well organised and attractively decorated with displays of pupils' work to support the curriculum. The site's presentation is well supported by the cleanliness and care provided by the caretaker and cleaning staff. Outside areas, including ample green areas, are well developed and make a valuable contribution to pupils' experiences. For example, young pupils in an art and design lesson were able to use the outside area as a primary source for pattern, texture and shapes.

45 The governing body is very supportive of the school. It meets its statutory responsibilities and a number of individual governors are very actively involved in school. Their approach to monitoring and evaluating the standards achieved and the quality of education provided is satisfactory but is not as consistent or systematic as it could be. Although governors are kept well informed and are all clear about the strengths of the school and priorities identified in the development plan, they do not have a formal or systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the work of the school or its performance in national tests. A number of governors are very well informed through their active involvement in the school but this does not extend to all governors. Nevertheless, through the work of the head teacher and staff, the school evaluates its performance well and looks carefully at the impact of its expenditure on the standards achieved. Principles of best values are applied soundly. The costs of running the school are relatively low and the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46 In order to improve further, the head teacher, staff, and governors should:

- (a) Improve the quality of handwriting throughout the school by ensuring a consistent approach to its teaching.
(Paragraphs 7 and 60)
- (b) Develop the role of the governing body by introducing a more consistent and systematic approach to monitoring the standards achieved and the quality of education provided.
(Paragraph 45)
- (c) Improve the use of information and communication technology in supporting learning by extending its use throughout the curriculum.
(Paragraphs 86 and 95)
- (d) Prepare pupils more thoroughly for life in a culturally diverse, multi-ethnic society by identifying opportunities to promote this throughout the curriculum.
(Paragraph 31)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	25	12	1	0	0
Percentage	-	10	60	29	2	-	-

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	209
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	51

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	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	18	22	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	18
	Girls	22	21	21
	Total	40	38	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100% (98%)	95% (98%)	98% (100%)
	National	84% (83%)	86% (84%)	91% (90%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	18
	Girls	22	22	22
	Total	40	40	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100% (98%)	100% (100%)	100% (100%)
	National	85% (84%)	89% (88%)	89% (88%)

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	209
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	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	148

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000 – 2001
	£
Total income	420,863
Total expenditure	419,686
Expenditure per pupil	18,517
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,070
Balance carried forward to next year	27,248

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	209
Number of questionnaires returned	70

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	23	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	32	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	49	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	50	3	0	1
The teaching is good.	61	36	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	43	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	33	3	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	39	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	46	40	10	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	59	34	1	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	41	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	34	17	1	21

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

47 Children enter the school working at levels below those normally associated with their age. Because of the good teaching, they make good progress in all areas of learning and, by the time they move into Year 1, they are achieving the standards expected for their age.

Personal, social and emotional development

48 Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development because of the good teaching in this area of learning. Teachers understand the needs of young children well and activities and tasks are well planned to develop children's skills. For example, teachers use everyday activities, such as break time, very well to develop independence and social skills. Children develop good manners, as they are encouraged to make a choice between different flavoured juices, ask politely for the drink of their choice, and then take on the responsibility for collecting up the cups when finished. Teachers effectively encourage children to undress and dress themselves independently, before and after physical activity. Children's behaviour is good. This is because all adults effectively promote the school's code of conduct and children soon begin to understand what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Children show good levels of sustained concentration for their age when engaged in tasks. They interact well with each other and are able to play and work co-operatively in groups. They know how to take turns when playing games and can share and handle equipment with respect. For example, in an outdoor physical activity session one child was very carefully putting her scooter against a bench so that it would not fall onto the ground when she had finished with it. Teachers effectively encourage children to take responsibility for tidying away after activities and this supports personal, social and emotional development effectively. By the age of five, children have reached satisfactory standards in this area of learning.

Communication, language and literacy

49 Children make good progress and achieve well in communication, language and literacy because of good teaching. Children listen very attentively to their teachers and other adults and they respond promptly to instructions. They speak confidently in front of others and are able to express their ideas and thoughts well for their age. Theme corners, such as 'The Post Office' and elements of the National Literacy Strategy are used well by teachers to develop early reading and writing skills. By the age of five, most children know their initial letter sounds and can read simple sentences. In writing many of the children form most letters of the alphabet reasonably well and begin to write simple sentences. By the age of five, children have reached satisfactory standards in this area of learning.

Mathematical development

50 Children make good progress in mathematical development because of good teaching and, by the age of five, they reach satisfactory standards in this area of learning. Children learn to find missing numbers on a number line to 10 and begin to count confidently to 10 and beyond. They acquire a sound knowledge and understanding of basic mathematical vocabulary, such as 'more than', 'less than', 'longest' and 'shortest'. Teachers are careful to use and promote practical aspects of mathematics not only in mathematical lessons but also in routine daily activities, such as counting the number of pupils on the register. Elements of the National Numeracy Strategy, such as whole class and group work are used effectively by teachers to develop early mathematical skills. Children make

good progress because teachers are skilful in planning activities that stimulate children's interest and make learning fun for them. For example, in order to develop their recognition and understanding of the number 12, the teacher had hidden 12 number cards around the classroom. Children were encouraged not only to find all the cards, but to keep counting how many they had found and how many more they needed to find to make the total of 12.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

51 Children make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world around them and, by the age of five, reach satisfactory standards in this area of learning. This is because of the good teaching they receive. Children find out about past and present events in their own lives as they sequence events during a typical school day. They learn about seasonal changes and features of the weather as they change the weather chart each day. Teachers encourage children to observe closely how things, such as plants, change as they grow. In their topic 'All About Me', children learn more about growth and recognise that they have changed since they were born. Teachers provide children with plenty of opportunity to investigate objects and materials and to work with a range of tools, for instance as they use construction kits and junk materials to build and construct a range of models. Teachers use information and communication technology effectively to support children's learning and most children can manipulate a mouse well enough to be able to click onto icons in order to play simple number and word games on the computer.

Physical development

52 The quality of teaching is good and, by the age of five, children reach satisfactory standards in this area of learning. Good improvement in the use and development of the outdoor area since the last inspection has contributed significantly to the good progress children make in this area of learning. For example, the outside play area is effectively marked out to represent a road and some road features such as a zebra crossing. When children are riding on a range of wheeled toys, teachers use this resource effectively to develop not only children's awareness of road safety rules but also their physical skills of co-ordination, balance and control. Soft play equipment activities are well managed by teachers to develop both imaginative play and gross motor skills. Well-planned tasks that involve children in manipulating a range of tools such as scissors, glue spreaders, paint brushes and pencils all contribute effectively to the development of children's fine motor skills. For example, a group of children were able to use scissors and glue sticks quite skilfully for their age in order to cut out individual pictures of food from a magazine and stick them onto paper to represent a plate of food.

Creative development

53 The quality of teaching is good and this enables children to make good progress. As a result, children reach satisfactory standards in this area of learning by the age of five. Teachers provide plenty of opportunities for children to experience a range of materials through well-planned activities and tasks. For example, in painting, children explore what happens when they mix colours together and, through model making, children begin to understand how things can be joined together in different ways such as the use of glue and sellotape. Teachers effectively provide children with opportunities to work creatively on a large and small scale and they experience a range of media and techniques. For example, children blow through a straw in order to create an impression of branches on a tree, make chalk pictures of snowmen and show that they are able to use large brushes and brush strokes in order to create Chinese writing. In music' children sing a range of familiar songs, follow a simple rhythm well and begin to explore the sounds of different instruments.

54 Provision for children in the foundation stage has improved since the last inspection and it is now a strength of the school. As a result of the effective teaching, children are well prepared to begin their infant education.

ENGLISH

55 Standards in English have continued to improve. The school's performance in the 2001 tests for seven year olds was well above the national averages in reading and writing. By the age of nine, pupils are achieving high standards and they are well placed to exceed national standards by the age of 11. These good standards are due to well-planned, careful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, which is organised effectively to meet the needs of all pupils. This means that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well supported and make good progress against their prior levels of learning.

56 The school previously identified relative weaknesses in writing and, consequently, time has been given to help pupils to improve their creative writing skills. This has been successful. There are now many opportunities provided by other subjects, such as history, geography and science that successfully promote writing for a range of audiences. The school has now turned its attention to raising standards still higher in reading, and has identified the need to introduce pupils to a greater range of non-fiction reading books during shared reading sessions. Good improvement has taken place since the previous inspection when standards were average and teaching was generally satisfactory. New assessment procedures have been successfully introduced, enabling staff to build upon pupils' previous learning, with clear individual pupil targets that assist learning. Overall, the quality of teaching is good with some examples of very effective teaching seen.

57 When pupils enter school, they lack confidence in speaking and listening. Despite this, by the age of seven, pupils' skills in this area are above what is expected for their age. This is both a strength of the school and an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils express themselves clearly and confidently. Most pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to each other, and contribute maturely in group and class discussions. In the literacy hour, pupils listen intently to stories and poems. They are very willing to ask and answer questions and are very enthusiastic about contributing their own ideas. In Years 1 and 2, many opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. For example, in a lesson involving the sharing of traditional stories, pupils listened and responded sensitively to Cinderella's feelings when ill-treated by her sisters and shared her happiness when she attended the ball. Pupils' skills are further developed in Years 3 and 4, for example when they responded well to a strong rhythm of rap linked to a range of well known poems such as "My Mama Told Me". Pupils confidently explained their opinions and ideas about various poems. All pupils enthusiastically joined in and listened to one another's ideas, carefully and confidently expressing opinions about events and characters. These skills are particularly enhanced when appropriate links are made with other subjects, for example younger pupils discussed families, including grandparents, and the wearing of boater-type hats by women in the early nineteenth century. A good level of subject specific language is displayed in many areas of the curriculum, for example in numeracy where language and mathematical symbols figure prominently in all classroom displays. There is good use of drama to support the development of speaking and listening skills as portrayed in class assemblies.

58 Given the limitation of pupils' skills on entry into school, they do well to attain satisfactory standards in reading by the age of seven. Average and below average pupils have a good grasp of basic letter sounds and this assists in tackling new words unknown to them. Higher attaining pupils enjoy reading and are often completely unaware of happenings around them, remaining totally engrossed. All pupils know what authors and illustrators do and most pupils are comfortable in predicting what is likely to come next in a story, and do so with confidence. Pupils read with improving fluency and accuracy, and nine-year-olds develop an appreciation of a range of books and confidently talk about their likes and dislikes of certain stories. Pupils can locate information about different topics in the school library. They are confident readers of fiction, displaying a wonderful enthusiasm towards the sharing of poetry, reading accurately, fluently and with a good standard of expression. The school

has good procedures for monitoring pupils' progress. Teachers have a good record of the books that pupils read, and most pupils are listened to regularly at home and at school. Since the previous inspection there has been a significant improvement in the range and quality of books that pupils are exposed to. This has had the effect of sustaining and positively encouraging pupils' appetites for reading throughout the school. Regular homework positively supports pupils' reading to parents and the learning of spellings enhances pupils' vocabulary.

59 Writing for seven-year-olds is mainly sound, signifying good achievement for most pupils. The most able nine-year-old pupils write well. Their writing of stories with a moral theme demonstrates a high degree of planning and sequencing of events. The work produced by pupils in Years 3 and 4 is exciting, for example, *In every garden I see beautiful treats, the butterflies fluttering beneath the clear blue sky*'. These pupils write for a range of audiences and use topic work to provide opportunities for extended writing, for example about famous people in history. Pupils make good use of word books and dictionaries to support their spellings. Pupils write in a range of styles, pay good attention to punctuation and employ specific techniques using adjectives and adverbs to enhance the quality of their writing. Pupils have produced their own newspaper, and associated articles of interest and news make interesting reading. Pupils use their written language through other subjects which is good, for example a conversation in a play script, or the making of a sandwich in design and technology. Some of the work on display is of a high standard, clearly reflecting the emphasis the school has recently placed upon this aspect in English to good effect. Throughout the school, pupils make purposeful use of information and communication technology to support a range of work in literacy.

60 Standards of handwriting vary in quality throughout the school. Pupils regularly practise forming their letters correctly. However, teachers do not expect the same satisfactory standard in all pupils' workbooks in all classes in other subjects. The school is aware of the need to develop a more consistent approach to handwriting in order to enhance levels of presentation and the construction of joined up letters to aid the flow of writing.

61 Teaching is good across the school. Teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing and, as a result, the implementation of the literacy hour is good. Teaching is very good where teachers make sure pupils know what they are expected to learn, and this is linked to what they have previously learned. This has led to pupils having very positive attitudes towards their work and having an obvious enthusiasm for English. For example, in a lesson in Years 1 and 2, the use of thoroughly prepared resources captivated pupils' interest and motivated them to work hard, enabling them to concentrate for long periods without directly involving the teacher. The use of rich and wide vocabulary promoted pupils' interest in new words. Such high expectations encourage pupils to express their ideas accurately. Teachers encourage pupils to 'read between the lines' of a poem to help them understand the characters and their feelings by asking such questions as, 'How do you think the boy felt when his grandfather died?' The end of the literacy lessons are used well to encourage pupils to share what they have learned and to think about what they need to learn next. There are good relationships between teachers and pupils and, as a result, pupils are more than eager to participate in class discussions. Most teachers have high expectations of behaviour and learning. They give supportive feedback verbally and by written comments in pupils' workbooks, and set clear targets for pupils to help them make progress. Most lessons have a good balance of class, group and individual work, and whole class lessons are enhanced by sensitive questioning, which encourages pupils to focus on the subject, extending their thinking and knowledge.

62 On the few occasions where teaching is not as effective, yet still satisfactory, it is not sufficiently challenging for all groups. Pupils spend too long listening whilst sitting on the carpet before starting group tasks and, as a result, they become restless and lose interest. Nevertheless, in most

lessons, pupils work well both collaboratively and independently, and this leads to good relationships with each other. Support staff are generally used effectively and they support pupils with special educational needs particularly well.

63 Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator is well qualified, highly committed and dedicated with a thorough overview of the subject, and is clearly aware of its present strengths and areas for development. She has established clear priorities for the future. Pupils' books are scrutinised with a specific focus, which helps her to monitor the teaching, learning and standards in English.

64 Resources are good overall and there are sufficient books to support literacy well. The newly created computer suite, adjacent to the school library, provides good opportunities to support pupils' independent research skills. The quality and range of books currently available in the library is good.

MATHEMATICS

65 Standards in mathematics are above the levels expected for seven and nine year olds. This is not quite as high as the Year 2 pupils achieved in national tests in 2001. This is because the present Year 2 pupils had low levels of attainment when they entered the school and there is a higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs in this year group. In Years 3 and 4, pupils build well on their earlier learning and, by the age of nine, they continue to achieve well. They are well placed to reach high standards by the age of 11.

66 Standards in mathematics are high because of the consistently good teaching throughout the school. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a positive effect. Pupils use their numeracy skills effectively in other subjects and teachers use opportunities to reinforce this, for example in science and physical education.

67 In Years 1 and 2 pupils confidently count in 5s, forward and backwards to 100. They can sequence given numbers up to 200 and explain that the numbers follow a pattern. Pupils knew that, when using a number square, counting in 10s was helpful whichever column they were looking at. They are confident working with two and three-dimensional shapes and can describe their properties. Lower attaining pupils need more help and do not have the same degree of confidence in their answers, but teachers provide much encouragement so that pupils are willing to 'have a go'. Often they are pleased with the result and recognise that it is alright to make a mistake, they can learn from that. As a result they develop a sense of pride in their work.

68 In Years 3 and 4, effective teaching leads to good progress and high standards. Pupils develop their mental agility through quick fire questioning. Number facts are used effectively to check pupils' understanding of rounding up and down to the nearest 10. They progress well to apply their knowledge and understanding to bigger, three-digit numbers, rounding them up and down to the nearest 100. The pace of lessons is good. This adds an air of excitement and enthusiasm, and contributes to pupils' learning. As a result, pupils enjoy mathematics. They see it as fun and have very positive attitudes. They can use their knowledge of numbers to develop through the creation of number sentences, for example they know that $8 \times 9 = 72$, so 72 divided by 8 = 9 and $9 \times 8 = 72$. They can apply this principle to a wide range of numbers. Older pupils understand that brackets can help them to solve problems. They develop their knowledge of time and, by the age of nine, can use both digital and analogue time effectively.

69 Resources for mathematics are good and are well chosen to support learning in lessons. Support staff are used very effectively to support the learning of different groups or individuals. In a lesson in Years 1 and 2, for example, a pupil with behavioural problems was very well managed by the support assistant and in a very short time was persuaded to return to his work where effective learning took place.

SCIENCE

70 Standards in science have improved since the last inspection and are now above the levels expected for seven and nine year olds. Teachers' assessments of pupils at the end of Year 2 last year show that the school's performance was very high in comparison with the national average. Good curriculum planning ensures that there is a good balance between all aspects of the subject and good teaching ensures that pupils make good progress, including those pupils with special educational needs.

71 Teachers promote scientific enquiry very effectively, which enables pupils to gain a good knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. Pupils make particularly good progress in acquiring investigation skills because teachers give them good opportunities for them to carry out their own experiments. Pupils are able to plan their investigations, predict the outcome, make a series of observations, and record their results in a variety of ways such as tables and charts. By the age of nine, pupils have a good understanding of the principles of fair testing and the need to change and control variables to keep their investigations fair and valid.

72 From an early age pupils gain a sound knowledge and understanding of life processes. For example, Year 2 pupils know that a seed needs water and light in order to grow. Year 3 and 4 pupils successfully carry out investigations to find out how well plants grow in different conditions and, by the age of nine, pupils know the different names and functions of different parts of a plant. Pupils make good progress in understanding materials and their properties. For example, through a well planned investigation in Years 3 and 4, pupils discovered that when a substance such as sugar is put into a liquid under different conditions this will effect the rate in which it dissolves. In Years 1 and 2, pupils test materials to see which are waterproof and discover that plastic is a waterproof material while paper and cotton are not. Pupils make good progress in understanding physical processes. By the age of seven, pupils can make a simple electrical circuit and know that when the switch is open the light bulb will go off. Older pupils begin to understand the cause and effect of physical phenomena such as how the position of the sun can effect the length of a shadow.

73 Teaching is good and, as a result, pupils make good gains in their learning. Teachers have a secure knowledge of science and this enables them to effectively plan and organise a range of investigations and tasks that effectively develop pupils' scientific skills of enquiry. Teachers use and promote proper scientific terms and they give clear explanations and instructions to pupils. Skilful questioning extends pupils' knowledge, understanding and thinking. Good assessment procedures are in place in order for teachers to effectively monitor pupils' progress in science and they use the information gained from such assessments effectively to plan future work. Resources are well prepared and are used effectively to support learning. When teaching is at its best, previous learning is effectively consolidated and skills are taught progressively. However, teachers sometimes over-direct learning and talk to the pupils for too long which can at times slow the pace of learning. The subject is led well by a knowledgeable co-ordinator.

ART AND DESIGN

74 Standards in art and design have improved since the last inspection and are now above what is expected for seven and nine year olds.

75 Teaching is good. This, and pupils' good attitudes to learning, enables pupils to make good progress in the subject. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and they effectively develop pupils' skills and techniques. Activities and tasks are well planned to interest and motivate pupils. For example, teachers provide pupils with plenty of opportunities to work in the style of famous artists,

which helps them to develop a good knowledge and understanding of a range of techniques and artist styles. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils produced some very good self-portraits in the style of Vincent Van Gogh, showing good attention to the use of colour, shape and form. In their paintings of waterlilies, in the style of Claude Monet, pupils showed that they were able to mix paints successfully to obtain the appropriate shades of blue and use small brush stroke techniques effectively to create the image of tranquil water.

76 Teachers use resources well to support learning in art and design. This means that pupils experience and work with a range of media, such as paint, pencils, chalks, pastels, clay, textiles and inks to work not only in two but also in three-dimensions. For example, in Years 3 and 4, pupils use chicken wire to make a frame for their sculptures of everyday school objects, such as a pencil and dice, and then skilfully cover it in plaster to create their sculptures. Pupils use the work of other artists effectively to inform their own learning. For example, in the same project on sculpture, pupils had first looked at photographic evidence of how sculptures have been used to improve the environment and used this visual stimulus well to inform their own work.

77 Although teachers do recognise and use art from different cultures, such as rangoli patterns from India, the use of art from non-western cultures is under-represented. Teachers make good use of the local environment to enhance pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 successfully gained a good knowledge and understanding of pattern, texture and shape as they made a range of crayon rubbings of objects within their immediate outside environment. All pupils have sketch books that they keep with them as they grow older and move throughout the school. Pupils use these effectively to develop and refine ideas for their art projects, and their observational drawings show an increasing awareness of how shading can be used to create depth and shadow and also show good attention to detail, shape and form. The art club contributes significantly to the good progress and attainment that pupils achieve.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

78 Standards are satisfactory by the ages of seven and nine. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged as unsatisfactory. Issues raised then of improving the teaching of design and technology, accurately assessing pupils' work, building upon previously acquired skills and broadening the quality and range of accessible resources have all been addressed. In recent years the school's thrust has been rightfully to improve literacy and numeracy, but the enthusiastic co-ordinator has identified an appropriate action plan to ensure a more secure place for design and technology in the curriculum.

79 Teaching is satisfactory. In a lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils confidently created a simple design involving the weaving of strips of paper in alternate colours. All pupils gained from such investigation, and higher attaining pupils were challenged to undertake their own measuring and cutting in straight lines in readiness for accommodating the strips of paper used in weaving. Skilfully guided by the class teacher, they suggested ways in which paper could be placed to create the desired pattern. Pupils' satisfactory cutting skills were evident in the subsequent well-planned group work. Pupils really enjoyed their work, remaining on task throughout. At the end of the lesson, well established routines for clearing away were effective and efficient, with all pupils demonstrating high levels of independence as they collected papers and completed work with the minimum of disruption.

80 In a lesson In Years 3 and 4, pupils were working on the use of pneumatics to create a simple pop-up card using two plastic syringes connected with a piece of plastic tubing. The effective management by the class teacher challenged pupils to make decisions about the quality of their designs, the suitability of the materials they had chosen and the points they had identified that would let

them know whether their design was a success. This encouraged them to think for themselves and to use initiative.

81 Good links are made between design and technology and other subjects, for example with art and design and science when studying levers and precise mathematical measurement during the manufacture of model chairs. Pupils' work is displayed well to celebrate the achievements of all pupils, regardless of ability and needs. Careful consideration is given to pupils with special educational needs in selecting appropriate materials and resources to assist them.

82 There is good leadership by the co-ordinator who has been influential in raising standards. Resources are good and of suitable quality, another improvement since the previous inspection. However, insufficient opportunities are provided in design and technology for pupils to use computers to assist their work.

GEOGRAPHY

83 Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and match what is expected for pupils by the ages of seven and nine.

84 Teachers use resources such as maps and plans well to support learning in geography and this helps pupils to make particularly good progress in acquiring mapping skills. By the age of seven, pupils can name the four countries that make up the United Kingdom and can identify where they live on a map. By the age of nine, pupils begin to interpret maps of different scales and can find many geographical features such as main roads and schools on a map of the local area.

85 Pupils gain a sound knowledge and understanding of a range of places as they study and compare the human and physical features of different localities. They begin to recognise that places may have both similar and different characteristics. For example, in their study of India, pupils in Years 1 and 2 realise that features of a small settlement in India are different to that of a village in England. They realise that the type of houses built, the weather and the clothes worn are different, but know that both places have some geographical features, such as rivers. Older pupils successfully make comparative studies of climates around the world, can identify many climatic features of desert, equatorial and polar regions, and can describe ways in which the climate can effect the lives of people.

86 No lessons were observed in the infants during the inspection but there was sufficient evidence from other sources to confirm that teaching in geography is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They promote key geographical skills through relevant and effective questioning. Lessons have precise learning objectives, which ensures that skills are taught progressively through well-planned tasks. Curriculum planning is good and ensures that all aspects of the subject are effectively taught. Teachers use the local environment very well to support learning, particularly the development of pupils' fieldwork skills. However, information and communication technology is not used to the extent it could be to support geography.

HISTORY

87 Standards in history match what is expected by the ages of seven and nine, although higher attaining pupils often go beyond what is expected for their age. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is the result of good planning and good teaching.

88 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about chronology and how things have changed over the years by exploring family issues. They develop their understanding through considering life during the time

of their grandparents. They learn that many of their grandparents did not have televisions and those who did have had black and white sets. They learn that children played a wide range of games in the street and they are able explain that children now do not do so as often because of increases in the volume of traffic. A very broad range of historical objects aids pupils' understanding of changes. They have opportunities to look at dolly tubs, old flat irons, record players and tape recorders and are able to compare them with their modern day equivalents, washing machines, steam irons and CD players. Skills of enquiry develop through the use of questionnaires with their grandparents.

89 In Years 3 and 4, pupils learn about different periods in history such as Tudor Times and the life of Henry VIII. They further develop their enquiry and research skills through investigative work by exploring the reasons behind Henry's marriages and researching the outcome. Pupils of different abilities achieve very well, developing their understanding of research and investigation, making very good progress.

90 During the inspection it was possible to see only one history lesson in Years 1 and 2. Junior pupils had worked on history during the previous half-term. However, discussions with teachers and pupils, scrutiny of planning and an analysis of pupils' work indicated that the teaching of history is at least good. Teachers are very confident about the units of work covered and are very clear about the skills they are promoting. Planning is thorough and a good range of resources is available to bring history alive for pupils. A good range of teaching methods is evident from planning and pupils' work including, visits, the use of video, and drawing on local resources such as families through discussion and questionnaires.

91 History is soundly led and managed. Planning is monitored effectively to ensure coverage of the visits and teachers work well together, and co-operatively with staff from the local middle school, to make sure that topics are complementary to the work that pupils will do when they move on. History is resourced well and this has a positive effect on pupils' interest and learning. When talking to them about history they were very keen and expressed real enjoyment about the work they were covering.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

92 Standards are satisfactory by the ages of seven and nine, and are similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils are well on track to achieve nationally expected standards by the age of 11.

93 Teaching is satisfactory. In a lesson In Years 3 and 4, pupils benefited from a high number of adults supporting their practical work. Pupils were shown the basic skills they needed to learn and were then encouraged to work independently. Pupils confidently used the mouse and cursor to move quickly around word processed text, adding letters at the beginning of sentences and inserting letters where necessary. When editing a story, higher attaining pupils understood the need to 'highlight' sections clearly before moving text to its rightful position in the document. The pupils concentrated hard and worked well in pairs. Less confident pupils learned quickly because they had been partnered thoughtfully with other more confident ones.

94 There were no lessons seen in Years 1 and 2. However, from discussions, pupils talked knowledgeably about the work they had undertaken last year. They could suggest a series of commands to make a programmable floor robot travel in various directions, and most knew that a sequence of commands could be repeated four times to make the robot travel in a square. They recalled using the computer to make simple block graphs, and talked about the collection of data in a variety of forms. By the age of nine, most pupils know how to search for information using CD-ROMs. Displays clearly indicate that pupils can copy text and pictures from these sources, and insert

them into documents, changing the position and some of the pictures to suit the publication, for example illustrated covers for reading books. Pupils have a good understanding of how to present text and modify its appearance for different effects and purposes, and good use has been made of a digital camera to combine text and graphics effectively.

95 The school's recent investment, including considerable expenditure on new computers and staff training, has been effective in maintaining standards. The purchase of good quality equipment for a computer suite has had a positive effect on pupils' learning. However, some equipment in classrooms is dated and under-used. This is having a limiting effect on the use of information and communication technology in other subjects of the curriculum. For example art and design, history and geography would benefit from greater usage, although planning does identify where ICT is used in these subjects.

96 Leadership and management of information and communication technology are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the way forward in the subject, and this is evident in the action plan that has been drawn up. With the completion of the new computer suite, increased levels of teacher confidence and planned expenditure on new computers for classrooms, the school is now well placed to continue its improvements.

MUSIC

97 Due to timetable arrangements, there were few opportunities to observe musical activities. However, there was sufficient evidence to judge that satisfactory standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy music and sing enthusiastically in lessons and assemblies.

98 Teaching is satisfactory overall. However, a good lesson was seen in Years 1 and 2. In this lesson, pupils listened and responded to a selection of short and long notes and played on a good range of musical instruments. Because of the teacher's relaxed, calm manner and very good pupil management, pupils were given positive encouragement to perform and then listen sensibly to each other's contribution. The combination of the teacher's expressive approach, her warm relationships with pupils and high expectations, clearly reflecting that all efforts were valued, resulted in a good experience for the pupils. In another lesson in Years 3 and 4, the teacher, although not a music specialist, enabled pupils to develop their musical knowledge and skills at a reasonable rate. Pupils made a good attempt at following a rhythm pattern, changing the emphasis on the different beats.

99 Pupils have good quality opportunities to listen to, and appraise, a range of music and this contributes to their personal development. For example, when listening to selected musical arrangements, pupils were successfully challenged by the teacher to identify, *'that music reminds me of a waterfall'*. Pupils responded with enjoyment as well as considering the different moods it created. Nevertheless, opportunities are missed to expose pupils to music from a wide range of cultures and to discuss the life and work of famous composers.

100 Music is presently managed by the head teacher. There have been recent improvements in the number and quality of resources, and these are now sufficient to teach the subject. Suitable opportunities are planned in the scheme of work to include information and communication technology, and there are plans to develop this aspect further. There are good links with other local schools, which enable pupils to have access to a good range of live musical performances that further enhance their learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

101 During the inspection it was possible to see only a limited range of physical education activity. In the infants this was restricted to gymnastics whilst in the juniors it was dance and gymnastics. It is not possible to form an overall judgement about the standards achieved or the quality of teaching in physical education.

102 In the lessons seen in Years 1 and 2, pupils were achieving levels normally seen for pupils of their age. They were able to explore ways of travelling across the floor and across apparatus, and could link two or three movements together to form sequences. Language was promoted well using terms such as 'under', 'over', 'through' and 'around'. Pupils can set out the apparatus and have a clear understanding of the need for safety. In Years 3 and 4, pupils progress to more complex sequences using a wider range of apparatus. In dance, they are able to respond to music appropriately and follow instructions carefully to produce recognisable dance steps.

103 Pupils of all ages generally have good attitudes to physical education and respond well to the good teaching. The staff have worked hard to develop their confidence and expertise in physical education. They have benefited from a varied programme of staff development to enhance their skills and this is reflected in the quality of their planning. They have fully reviewed the planning and very good quality resources have been purchased to improve the quality of provision and enhance the standards being achieved. The subject is well led and managed and is now stronger than at the time of the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

104 Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and match what is expected for seven and nine year olds. Pupils gain a sound knowledge and understanding into the key beliefs and traditions of a range of world faiths, including Christianity. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils learn about the story of Creation. They select relevant pictures and sequence the main events, as depicted in the Bible. They also retell the Hindu story of Rama and Sita.

105 Teaching is good. Teachers use a good range of resources to support pupils' learning and, as a result, pupils have good knowledge of some of the important artefacts used in acts of worship from a range of faiths. This enables pupils to gain a good insight into how people worship within different religions, and they are able to recognise that different faiths have many similarities. For example, by the age of nine pupils know that the symbolism of light is important in most religions and can explain the significance of the seven branched candle used at the Jewish festival of Hannukah and the significance of the candles on an Advent ring at Christmas. The school makes good use of the local church in order to support learning in religious education. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have visited the church as part of their study of special places.

106 Religious education makes a strong contribution to pupils' moral development. Through effective questioning and whole class discussions about what is important in life, teachers effectively encourage pupils to discuss issues and to explore moral values and principles. This was evident in a Year 1 and 2 lesson, where pupils were asked to consider whether a smile or a helping hand is as good a gift to give someone as a present. Teachers also use stories from the Bible such as the parable of the prodigal son in order to promote pupils' moral development.