

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Colton, Rugeley

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124335

Headteacher: Mrs A. Lavender

Reporting inspector: Mrs F.D.Gander
21265

Dates of inspection: 8th –10th May 2002

Inspection number: 245198

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Bellamour Way
Colton
Rugeley
Staffordshire

Postcode: WS15 3LN

Telephone number: 01889 256170

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs P. Barnett

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21265	F Gander	Registered inspector	Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Science Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology Physical education Provision for pupils with special educational needs Equal opportunities	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19693	S Hall	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?
19709	J Fisher	Team inspector	English Mathematics History Geography Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's is a Church of England voluntary aided school in the village of Colton, on the outskirts of the town of Rugeley. There are currently 87 pupils on roll between the ages of 4 and 11, which makes it much smaller than average. There are 19 children in the reception class. Pupils come mainly from Colton and the surrounding rural villages, but some pupils travel from Rugeley. Although the percentage of pupils who take free school meals is lower than the national average, the overall socio-economic background of pupils is below average. The number of pupils who apply for a place in the school fluctuates greatly from year to year, and as result the school has to re-organise its classes each year. Due to the large intake last year, it has been necessary to split the Year 2 pupils between two classes. Attainment levels of the majority of children when they enter the school are overall below that expected for children of a similar age. There are 15 per cent of the pupils on the special educational needs register but there are many more pupils who have difficulties in literacy and have been identified as requiring additional support or intervention. Currently 50 per cent of pupils in Year 2 have special educational needs. Some, but not all children have attended a pre-school. A significant number of higher attaining pupils move to different schools, such as middle or independent schools before they reach Year 5. The number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is very low. English is the first language of all pupils, and there are no gifted and talented pupils in the school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school, where very good leadership and management have started to raise standards in English, mathematics and science. The good ethos for learning is apparent in the school and all pupils have very good attitudes to learning and to each other. The good teaching, including the high quality team work, and the extensive monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the school, have resulted in pupils making good progress and more are achieving the higher levels in the end of key stage tests. This quality of teaching and learning also extends to those pupils with special educational needs who, as a result of the improved teaching arrangements and support, make good progress. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- There is very good leadership and management provided by the headteacher.
- There is a very positive ethos in the school, and the spiritual, moral and social provision plays a part in ensuring that the pupils have very good attitudes, behaviour, relationships and their personal development is very good.
- The planning and organisation of the learning activities for children in the reception class and Years 1 and 2 are very good and ensure that all children are actively engaged in working at appropriate levels.
- The school identifies and supports pupils with special educational needs very well and ensures that planning and teaching meets their individual needs.
- There is excellent teamwork in the school. This includes the parents and volunteers who provide regular support for teachers and pupils.

What could be improved

- The standards achieved across the school, by having a more consistent approach in the quality of marking, the expectations for written work, the teaching of library skills and the emphasis on investigation work in mathematics and science.
- The confidence and competence of teachers to plan and use information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning in all subjects, and raise standards.
- The standards achieved in music through the improvement to the overall provision and the consistency of instrumental tuition.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1998. Since then good improvements have been made, especially over the last year. The monitoring of pupils' academic and personal performance has improved significantly, as have assessment procedures. The new headteacher has thoroughly analysed and evaluated the assessment results, and acted upon the conclusions of the last report so that the quality of teaching has been improved. As a result, standards of attainment are beginning to improve. Procedures for school development planning and the linking of the amount of money available in the budget to fund them have been established. Very good improvements have been made to the identification of pupils with special educational needs, which ensure that they have full access to learning. The building has been extended so that the hall is larger and another classroom has been created. Although, it was initially intended to become a resource room, the increased number of pupils in the school has meant that it has to be used as a classroom. As a result, the school is still very short of space for storage.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	B	E	E*
Mathematics	D	C	E*	E*
Science	D	A	D	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The school's results, as seen in the above table, fluctuate each year due to the small number of pupils who take the tests, the varying percentage of pupils who have special educational needs, and the number of higher attaining pupils who transfer to different educational provision before taking them. The attainment levels of pupils when they enter the school vary and in most years it is below average. In the year 2001, the school's performance at the end of Year 2 when compared with other schools was well below average in reading, below average in writing, and average in science. Currently in Year 2, there are more pupils reaching higher levels than in previous years but the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in this year group has a significant impact on the overall performance of the school. The school's performance at the end of Year 6 for the year 2001 in English and science were well below the national average. In mathematics, the school's performance

was in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally. The results did not compare favourably with schools that had a similar percentage of pupils who take free school meals, because very few pupils last year reached the higher level in the tests. The predicted results for the end of Year 6 tests this year show improvement on the previous year. The targets set by the school have increased considerably over the last two years and have been achieved or come close to being achieved. The work seen during the inspection shows that assessment is accurate, and that standards in literacy and numeracy have improved this year. Achievement in relation to prior attainment is satisfactory, and for an increasing number of pupils who are reaching the higher levels it is good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress in most subjects. However, the progress pupils make in music and in ICT, are adversely affected by the lack of expertise in the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	These are very good. Pupils show enthusiasm for school, and are very motivated and interested in the work in which they are engaged.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	This is very good. Pupils are polite and show respect for other pupils and adults at all times.
Personal development and relationships	These are very good, and pupils have many opportunities to take responsibilities around the school. Relationships are extremely good.
Attendance	This is satisfactory and matches the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and its impact on learning has improved since the last inspection. It is overall good across the school, and there are examples of very good teaching in all classes.

In the class for pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2 the lessons are very well planned and organised. The teaching ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, are learning at an appropriate level.

In the classes for Years 3 to 6 the teaching is good overall. In the better lessons the teachers know their subjects well and show expertise in teaching them. However, some teachers do not have a high level of competence in teaching music, or in using ICT to support pupils' learning in subjects. The planning is precise so that all adults know in advance of the lesson their individual roles. Instructions given to pupils are clear so that they are aware of what they will be learning.

The amount of voluntary support that comes into the school is high. It is used very well in all classes to support small groups of pupils, and especially pupils with special educational

needs. This makes a very positive impact on the quality of learning. Teaching of English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, is good, as it is in science and art and design. There are too many inconsistencies in the expectations teachers have for the presentation of work and marking.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is good. The coverage of the National Curriculum is good, except for music where it is satisfactory. All pupils have equal access to learning opportunities, including personal and social and health education. The range of extra curricular activities is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is very good and is a priority for the school. The needs of pupils are identified very well, and the learning opportunities are modified so pupils achieve. Pupils are given very good support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is good overall. There is good provision for spiritual moral and social development; that for cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Overall this is good. The school is a secure and caring community. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment and personal development are very good.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The links that the school has with parents are particularly effective. These have a very good impact on pupils' attitudes, behaviour and learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and staff and governors are encouraged towards a clear vision of how to improve the school and raise the standards. There is good long term planning. Staff are a supportive team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors provide good support to the school and carry out their responsibilities well. They are fully aware of the standards of the school and its strengths and weaknesses. However, the governors are not always actively involved in curriculum developments.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is very good. There is a systemic review of the progress of developments and how they are having an impact on standards. Analysis and evaluation of the school's results and pupils' individual progress are very good.
The strategic use of resources	Resources, including space, time, funds and staff are used very well. However, the resources for ICT are under used due to a lack of staff expertise. The principles of best value for purchasing resources are applied well. The staffing and resources are satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school ensures that that their children are making progress• The school has high expectations for good behaviour and it helps pupils to become more mature and responsible.• That the quality of the teaching is good.• That the school has a positive relationship with parents and respond positively to their questions or problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An increase in the amount of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team endorses the positive views of the parents but judges that the school provides a very good range of activities outside lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school's performance in national tests over the last three years has varied between years. This is because the groups of pupils taking the tests are small, and the number of pupils with special educational needs, or who miss the nationally expected level, makes up a considerable percentage of the year groups. The impact of this has been identified by the school and recognised by the Local Education Authority. The school's overall results do not compare well with other schools and falls below the national average. This is because the number of pupils who attain levels higher in the tests is low, as it is the custom for higher attaining pupils to leave the school and transfer to other types of educational provision, such as middle schools, independent schools, or schools which are located in the catchment area of a preferred high school.

2. The attainment levels of pupils when they enter the school vary from year to year, but the overall attainment levels are below average for pupils of a similar age. In each year group there are a significant number of pupils who have special educational needs, or who need Early Learning Support (ELS). A high percentage of children who came into the school over the last three years had attainment levels below those normally expected. These pupils are now in Years 1 and 2, where the percentage of pupils, who have been identified through baseline tests, as requiring intervention or support because of special educational needs is high. For example, it is 50 per cent of the pupils in Year 2, and 80 per cent of pupils in Year 1. A similar situation exists in Year 4 and in last year's Year 6.

3. Children in the Foundation Stage are making good progress and the higher attaining children achieve the national Early Learning Goals by the end of the year. However, there are a few children who have not yet reached the goals due to their learning or the behavioural difficulties. The arrangements and organisation of the class in which these children are taught is very good, with the teaching assistant taking an active role in planning and teaching these children. This is further enhanced by the good teamwork that is evident in the class, and support the parents give to this group.

4. The school's results in the tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 were below the national average in reading and writing, and well below it in mathematics and science when compared with other schools. This was because there were no pupils who attained the higher level in reading, writing and science, but three pupils did reach it in mathematics. In comparison with the results of similar schools, these results were well below the average for reading and writing and in line with the average for mathematics. Since attainment is below average when children enter the school, and that over eighty per cent reach the expected Level 2 or above, this demonstrates that pupils make good progress during Years 1 and 2. The predicted results of the tests for this year are considerably better. Assessment shows that almost half of the pupils reach the higher level, but the fact that there are 50 per cent of pupils with special educational needs means that the overall results for the class will once again vary. The school's decision to divide the pupils in Year 2 by ability and place them in two different classes has had a positive impact on attainment. The work seen during the inspection shows that these pupils are making good progress, with the higher attaining pupils who have been taught with older pupils reaching the higher levels. It has also enabled the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs to work in small groups and at appropriate levels, and achieve levels appropriate for their ability.

5. The school's results of the end of Year 6 tests in the year 2001, when compared with other schools nationally, were well below average in English, very low in mathematics and below in science. These results did not compare well with schools who have a similar number of pupils taking free school meals. These standards were very different from the previous year, when there were fewer pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 and there were more pupils in the group who were capable of reaching the higher levels. However, the teacher assessment in the Year 2001 was inaccurate and indicated that more pupils would reach the expected Level 4. It had been the practice in the school for Year 6 to be taught and assessed by a total of three teachers during each week. This practice leads to an inconsistency in teaching and assessment that can have a negative impact on standards. The organisation of teaching responsibilities has been a focus for school development and, in order to provide a more consistent approach, it was decided that the class would be taught by one teacher for the majority of time. This has had a positive impact on raising standards, as the predicted results for this year are better and almost a third of pupils are accurately expected to reach the higher levels in English and science, with a smaller percentage attaining this in mathematics.

6. The improvement in standards in the work seen during the week of the inspection in Years 2 and 6, with more pupils reaching higher levels has been due to the school's analysis of data, the setting of targets for improved standards, and the improved assessment procedures which have provided staff with an ongoing profile of pupils' progress and areas which need extra attention. Pupils are benefiting from the effective setting arrangements for literacy and numeracy, 'booster' classes and additional support from volunteers who work in the classes in both key stages.

7. In the English tests in 2001 for pupils aged seven, the proportion attaining the expected level in reading was below the national average and the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level was very low compared with the national average. In writing, the proportion that attained the expected level was below the national average and no pupils attained the higher level. In the National Curriculum tests in 2001 for pupils aged eleven, the proportion attaining the expected level was well below the national average and below the national average at the higher level. Inspection evidence shows little significant variation in attainment across the different strands of English. Most pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. Standards in reading of pupils currently in Year 2 are below nationally expected levels and in Year 6 are broadly in line. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress with some higher attaining pupils making good progress. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' writing skills are close to those expected nationally and overall satisfactory progress is made. Pupils with special educational needs and the very few pupils with English as a second language make good progress towards their individual targets.

8. An area of English in which pupils do not achieve well is in library skills of research and retrieval. These are not taught effectively. The library accommodation is inadequate for teaching groups of pupils and although there are plans to relocate it, the present provision limits its use and the range of books that can be made available to pupils.

9. The overall standards in mathematics for Year 2 pupils in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 were in line with the national average and those found in similar schools. In the tests for Year 6 pupils, standards were very low when compared with the national average and with similar schools. At the higher level, standards were below the national average. The school has become more self-evaluative and analytical about its work under its new leadership and has taken significant action to raise standards in mathematics. Pupils' projected assessments are now based on careful analysis of pupils' prior progress and targets set are realistic and challenging. The attainment of the ten pupils currently in Year 2 varies considerably, ranging from above national expectations to almost 50 per cent of pupils

being well below average or very low. Five of these pupils have special educational needs. In the present Year 6 class, most of the pupils are on course to attain the nationally expected level, with a few pupils expected to attain the higher level. Pupils are benefiting from improved teaching and better implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, such as in mental mathematics, as shown in their increasing ability to recall facts quickly and accurately. Regular attendance at 'Booster' classes is helping to raise attainment, as is the work set more closely to meet each pupil's ability and individual targets.

10. For the year 2001, teacher assessment indicated that the school's performance at the end of Year 2 in science was well below the national average, but that 82 per cent of pupils attained the expected Level 2. However, there were no pupils who reached Level 3. Teacher assessment of current Year 2 pupils indicates a significant improvement in the number reaching the expected and higher levels, but that almost half of the pupils who are lower attaining will attain below it. Standards are therefore likely to be the same as last year and below the national average. However, evidence from the inspection shows that all pupils in this year make good progress. At Year 6, the 2001 tests results showed a similar picture. The results predicted for this year's test results are an improvement from last year and this is reflected in the work seen during the inspection. There are fewer pupils with special educational needs in this year's group of Year 6 pupils than last year, and the improved procedures for assessment and the tracking of pupils' progress has provided a more accurate picture of pupils' achievements and areas which need additional support. However, there are fewer pupils reaching the higher levels than in English and mathematics, where the literacy and numeracy teaching strategies have had a positive impact.

11. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 for the majority of pupils in ICT, but they could make better progress and reach higher levels if more use was made of their skills and knowledge in this subject when studying other areas of the curriculum. Due to the timetable arrangements, not all subjects were observed during the inspection. However, samples of work and teacher's records indicate that standards achieved in other subjects are satisfactory at both key stages. There is an appropriate amount of recorded evidence of pupils' work in history and geography at both key stages, which indicates that pupils gain a good understanding of the historical and geographical concepts and knowledge. This is also the situation in art and design and in design and technology. The progress that pupils make in these subjects in both Years 2 and 6 is good, and is the result of these two subjects being taught by one teacher to all classes. In physical education, individual pupils' attainment is satisfactory in the few lessons seen, but evidence in the school shows that overall the school achieves well.

12. In music, while standards attained in the lessons observed are satisfactory, the small sample of work and lessons observed do not provide secure evidence on which to make judgements about overall standards. Until recently pupils have made satisfactory progress, but the school now does not have a teacher with expertise in this area. Although, there is musical tuition provided by the music service, it is at present erratic. These two factors are undermining the progress that pupils could make if they received regular, specialist music provision.

13. There are no differences in the progress that pupils of differing abilities, gender or ethnic origin make. Due to the school's increased emphasis on identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs they are making good progress. The amount of support provided for them in lessons is also having a positive effect on the progress of higher attaining pupils, as the extra support in the class enables the teacher to spend more time challenging these pupils. The school has not been able to identify any pupils who are gifted and talented.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The very good attitudes of children in the foundation stage and pupils in both key stages reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. The children and pupils are enthusiastic learners and parents say that their children like coming to school. The youngest children settle very well into school, know the routines, cooperate with all adults and are very eager to take part in activities. In class assemblies pupils took a great pride in their performance of a dance routine and the rest of the pupils who appreciated the effort and creativity of the performance showed very positive attitudes. Additionally, in a personal and social educational lesson in the form of circle time (whole class discussion) for Years 5 and 6, the pupils listened carefully to their teacher and were keen to answer her questions. They clearly enjoyed the activity and their speaking skills become more confident as the lesson progressed. They waited patiently for their turn and, with sustained concentration, listened carefully to each other's answers. The inspection was conducted in the week before the Year 6 pupils were taking their statutory tests. During a stressful time, the very positive attitudes and good humour built up a feeling of team spirit and increased confidence.

15. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils' behaviour is very good. The parents are impressed by it and like the 'family' atmosphere of the school. The school operates as a happy and harmonious community and this has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The pupils know that adults who work in school expect good behaviour and they understand the consequences of their actions. The emphasis that has been placed by the school on managing the few pupils who have identified behavioural difficulties has been effective, and especially beneficial to their learning and achievement. The youngest children and pupils behave sensibly in the dining hall and play well together in the playground. They show respect for property and particularly value the environmental area. There have been no exclusions during the past year, and the pupils say that rare incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively.

16. The pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. Relationships are a strength of the school and there is a high level of mutual respect. The pupils work very well together in lessons and they value the contributions of others. The 'family' atmosphere is particularly evident at lunchtime, when older pupils sit with younger pupils and act as servers. In this situation, younger pupils respect and pay attention to older pupils. The pupils have very good relationships with adults working in school and are confident in asking for help. Pupils show initiative and take personal responsibility, such as acting as prefects. The school council has brought about beneficial changes in school life and pupils take their duties seriously. For example, the pupils decided on improvements to breaks and lunchtimes, including the provision of picnic tables. The pupils enjoy raising money for charity and participate enthusiastically in extra-curricular activities.

17. The pupils' attendance is satisfactory, but has declined slightly since the last inspection. The attendance rate for 2000/01 is in line with the national average and there were no unauthorised absences. Despite regular reminders from the school, a few pupils are missing an important start to the school day due to a late arrival at school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching and learning is good in all key stages. During the week of the inspection there was no unsatisfactory teaching, and it was good in over four fifths of lessons and very good in nearly half. This is an improvement from the last inspection. Teaching is overall good in English, mathematics, science and art and design. There are several strengths in teaching, including the management of pupils, the teaching of basic skills,

particularly in mental mathematics sessions, when pupils listen carefully to their teachers and are keen to answer questions.

19. In the class where the reception children and Year 1 and 2 pupils are taught together, the quality of teaching is good, and there is a high percentage of very good teaching. In this class there are three year groups and a wide range of ability, including over half the pupils in the Years 1 and 2 having special educational needs or requiring extra support. The quality of the planning and organisation is very good as it is very detailed and ensures that all pupils are working and learning at the appropriate level for their ability. The teaching assistant works alongside the teacher in planning for the youngest children and plays the major role in teaching them. The quality of this support is very good and enables the lessons to run smoothly. For example, in a numeracy lesson the teaching assistant supports all pupils in the whole class session, and because she has been involved in the planning of the lesson, she takes over the teaching of the reception pupils with a game. Her teaching skills are good and there is good use of questioning to provide information on pupils' understanding of addition. This class has the very good support of a group of parents and volunteers who come into the class every day. They take groups of pupils for small group activities and to listen to and record progress in reading. This support makes a significant difference to the quality of the learning and behaviour, as groups are small. It ensures that pupils concentrate well, are motivated, and are given constant support and direction. There is seamless teamwork in this class, with everyone playing a role in making observations of how well pupils have worked and what they have achieved, such as in the morning reading session.

20. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 classes is good overall, and there is now a good level of continuity and consistency provided by the two teachers who teach Year 5/6 pupils. However, there are variations in the quality of teaching across the key stage that is linked to the differing amount of experience and expertise that each teacher has in teaching each subject. For example, there are variations in the expectations of pupils' learning in science. In the better lessons in Class 3, the teacher has a good level of subject knowledge and expertise in teaching the subject, and the planning is more precise and structured than in Class 4. This provides Year 3 and 4, and the higher attaining Year 2 pupils with an understanding of what they need to learn, and enables the teacher to set challenges for the higher attaining pupils, especially in investigation work. All teachers have benefited from recent in-service training, such as in numeracy and literacy, and this is having a positive impact on planning, setting of learning objectives, and the matching of activities to different pupils' abilities. However, the teaching and learning in subjects such as music is not as good, and while teachers are able to teach some performance skills, they do not have the expertise to teach appraisal and composition. The expectations they have are unsatisfactory. For example, in a lesson for Year 5 and 6, pupils are not expected to sit in a correct position for singing, and although they sang tunefully there was no reference or emphasis made on how to control breathing. All teachers manage pupils well, and use the teaching assistants and voluntary helpers very well to assist individual pupils and small groups. For example, in science in the class for Years 5 and 6, a group of pupils with difficulties in literacy were supported well by a visiting grandmother who helped and guided them to extract information from reference books for their research work on planets.

21. In the wider context of teaching, the quality of the marking of the pupils' work varies between the classes, as does the expectation for the amount of work pupils complete in their books, especially in investigation work in mathematics and science. The best examples of marking provides pupils with ideas on how they might improve their work, while other examples only show whether the work was correct or not. The teaching of the necessary skills needed for using a library is also weak, and few pupils when questioned were able to demonstrate the skills of being able to locate and select books. In addition, there are very few examples of the use of ICT in curriculum subjects, such as in the use of databases in

mathematics, research in science and history, and the generation of ideas in art and design and design and technology. There are no differences in the quality of teaching and learning for different groups of pupils, either of different gender or for those with English as an additional language. The amount of support provided by volunteers and parents in the classroom has a beneficial affect on learning for pupils with special educational needs. In sport, all pupils are taught well, and the teaching provides good opportunities for pupils to excel if they have a particular aptitude. However, the school does not have any pupils who are identified as gifted or talented.

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

22. The curriculum is good overall, and the areas that at the time of the previous inspection needed improvement have been addressed. Schemes of work, based mainly on national guidance are now being used to plan a rolling programme of topics. This helps to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of the mixed age classes, and that learning is progressive and not repetitive. Improvements have also been made to the opportunities for pupils to solve problems and carry out investigation work. However, there are some inconsistencies in the amount of emphasis given to this in different classes. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, reflects the aims and objectives of the school by supporting the personal development of all pupils, and by preparing them well for transfer to secondary education at the end of Year 6. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good, as is the equality of opportunities for all pupils. Good opportunities are provided for pupils with special educational needs. The school's practice for all pupils to be socially included in all that the school provides is good. It continues to be committed to equality of access and opportunity for all pupils in all aspects of its life and practice.

23. The curriculum for the reception class is good. Planning covers all areas of learning so that children work towards the nationally recognised Early Learning Goals. It includes a wide range of exciting opportunities for them to learn from real experiences, such as a visit by the Fire Service who teaches them the importance of being able to call the emergency services or the dangers of playing with matches. There is particularly good emphasis on literacy, guided reading and numeracy, which for part of the session is taught to both the reception children and Years 1 and 2. Literacy sessions, for these young children are made more meaningful through the use of drama where pupils act out the story. For example, they all learn and understand how to get out of a burning building through their dramatisation of the 'Big Book' story entitled 'The Smoke Alarm'.

24. Many of the subject policies are out of date and do not reflect the current provision in the school, but the school's overall development plan shows a steady and logical approach to reviewing and updating these on a planned termly basis. The overall curriculum provides good learning opportunities that build on pupils' previous learning and acquisition of skills. It is consistently taught by teachers throughout the school and therefore ensures that pupils make progress. The subjects of English, mathematics and science are timetabled throughout the year, but some subjects such as history and geography, are taught on a rotational basis, sometimes a gap of two terms between topics. Because the subjects are not taught on a more regular basis, pupils' skills, understanding and knowledge can be lost in the intervening time, and especially those with special educational needs who have difficulty in recalling facts.

25. The National Literacy and Numeracy strategies are well established and implemented throughout the school. Through recent updated training for less experienced teachers, the provision for teaching literacy and numeracy is now good, although some aspects of these subjects need more attention. For example, the using and applying of mathematics in 'real life' problems and library research skills in literacy. The curriculum for science has been thoroughly reviewed, and through these evaluation areas of concern, such as coverage of aspects, amount of time allocated to the subject and the standards being achieved have been identified. The school has acted well on this information and moved the subject forward on its priority list. The curriculum for ICT has been implemented well during this last year and it is being taught as a discrete subject to all pupils. This has had a beneficial impact on their skills and understanding but these skills are not being used enough in other subjects, such as data collection and analysis in mathematics, and the monitoring of changes in science. This is mainly due to a lack of expertise by some teachers. The curriculum for music is satisfactory, but again there is a lack of expertise within the school to teach it, and therefore pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

26. The curriculum includes good opportunities for the development of personal, social and health education awareness. It includes aspects of sex education, drug awareness and responsible citizenship. The inclusion of 'Circle Time' sessions is particularly beneficial for pupils as it provides them with good opportunities to explore a variety of issues, such as dealing with difficult situations both in and out of school. This has a positive impact their personal development and prepares them well for transfer to the next stage of education.

27. The curriculum includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including horse-riding, stable management, opportunities to sing and dance and to participate very successfully in local sporting tournaments. A strength of this is the use of outdoor educational visits, including opportunities for all pupils to take part in residential experiences, and also supports the progress pupils make in personal and social development. Visits to the local community and visitors to the school, such as by the police and fire services, greatly enhance the quality of the curriculum and the learning opportunities for pupils, as well as developing their social skills and community awareness. Representatives from the local church and visiting clergy also play an important part in the life of the school, and bring a spiritual dimension to the curriculum. The pupils' education, especially in physical education, is further enhanced by 'Keep Fit' coaches, such as the Brazilian football coach who regularly attends the after school activities. The contribution made by the community to pupils' learning is very good and helps to extend pupils' learning beyond the four walls of the school.

28. The school's provision for the pupils' personal development is good. The provision of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development makes a good contribution to pupils' development, and this has been maintained from the last inspection. Assemblies, the personal, social and health education program, 'Circle time' sessions, and the relationships which adults have with the pupils all contribute well to this area of development and can be seen in the very good attitudes and relationships which are evident in the school.

29. Provision for spiritual development is good. Carefully planned assembly themes provide simple opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own actions and on global issues such as fairness and justice in the world. The co-ordinator for collective worship plans carefully for visits and visitors to enhance the provision for pupils. There is a range of activities that gives opportunities for quiet reflection. Assemblies give clear messages and appropriately related songs and hymns are used to reinforce the ethos of the school. Acknowledgement of a supreme being is made through saying the familiar school prayers and the symbolic use of the lighted candle. There are good opportunities in subjects such as art and design, science and literacy for pupils to reflect on their spiritual awareness and the values brought about by their own emerging beliefs. One pupil's poignant poem reflected a

developing maturity and empathy; “My eye sees sad things like people pushing and making people cry. My other eye sees happy things. I see happy people and kind people letting other children play their games”.

30. Provision for moral development is good. The school's rules and the Christian ethos form the basis of the behaviour policy. Attractively displayed posters around the school promote values of acceptance, fairness, honesty, and respect. In addition there are stories in literacy which relate to moral issues and a growing understanding of right and wrong. Pupils understand that Aesop's fables do not teach them to be good people, but teach them how to avoid mistakes. This provision is further enhanced by opportunities to reflect on issues in the news, such as car pollution and terrorist attacks. During general play and sport, the school emphasizes the need for fair play and that games are for everyone's enjoyment.

31. The provision for pupils' social development is good and this leads to positive relationships within the school. In lessons, pupils are given good opportunities to work in pairs and in groups, for example, to consolidate their reading skills, and practice their singing as observed in literacy and in music lessons in Years 3,4,5 and 6. They have good opportunities to take part in inter- school activities, when they learn the skills of negotiation. They adopt roles of responsibility, such as lunchtime monitors for younger pupils when they carefully supervise the 'family service' routine, offer help and assistance in choosing the daily menu, bring and take away the food. The residential visit for older pupils to an outdoor pursuit center challenges the pupils to the limit through activities such as orienteering and walks. In addition, pupils have to learn to be self-sufficient and look after themselves and others. There are good opportunities for pupils to raise funds for Children in Need and other charities.

32. Provision for cultural education is satisfactory overall. Pupils are introduced, effectively, to a wide range of opportunities to celebrate their own culture. Younger pupils visit the local bakery and Woolworth's in connection with their work on baking and food. Older pupils visit the local Power Station to learn about recycling, the nearby Wedgwood potteries, and savour and enjoy the beauty of the school grounds and the immediate countryside. They learn about their own culture through history topics such as 'Tudor England' and 'The Victorians'. The two pupils from different ethnic backgrounds mix well with other pupils and there is no racism. Pupils are taught about other religions and cultures, and show understanding and sensitivity towards pupils with different cultural backgrounds. Since the previous inspection, some attention has been given to extending and promoting pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity of British society, for example, through work on India in geography. Multi-cultural resources, such as music and books, have been extended to represent a wider range of cultures, but the range is still limited, as is the provision of relevant artefacts to support this work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. Overall, the school has good procedures to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety. A 'family' ethos permeates many aspects of school life. The school is a caring community and the headteacher strongly encourages all teaching, non-teaching staff, parents, governors and pupils to become involved in developing aspects of care. This has brought a sense of ownership, and there is high level of care and concern for staff, parents or pupils with particularly difficulties. The teachers know the pupils well and are responsive to their needs. Other adults including support staff, lunchtime supervisors and the secretary, also make significant contributions in caring for pupils. Supervision before school is good and lunchtime is well managed.

34. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. All staff involved with the pupils keep track of pupils' personal, social and emotional development through listening to pupils, especially during circle time (whole class discussion). The volunteers who work in the school also play an important part, and there were many examples during the week of the inspection of good advice, especially about behaviour, and care being provided to pupils by this group of adults. Valuable comments about pupils' personal development are apparent in the pupils' annual reports.

35. The school pays due attention to health and safety. Staff are vigilant over potential hazards and make checks of the premises. In lessons, pupils are taught valuable skills to keep themselves safe. For example, through drama the younger pupils explored the danger of fire and the correct responses. However, the health and safety policy is in need of urgent attention, as it is out of date and contains no details of roles and responsibilities. The arrangements for first aid are good. One member of staff is qualified in first aid and another has basic training. Appropriate records are kept of accidents and when medication is given. Pupils who are ill or injured receive good care and attention. At present there is no medical room and pupils are treated in the general office. Plans for alterations to the school were received by the school during the week of the inspection and these include a medical room which, when completed, will provide the necessary privacy required for treating pupils. The school has appropriate arrangements for child protection and has drawn up a sound policy. The headteacher is the designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection and carries out her duties effectively. Adults working in school are aware of basic procedures. The school provides good support for pupils in public care.

36. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. The school has a sound attendance policy, but there are some inconsistencies in the completion of registers. Some teachers do not distinguish between different types of absence, and this makes the job of monitoring absences more difficult. Staff follow up concerns about attendance and the school has regular contact with the educational welfare officer. The school regularly reminds parents about the importance of arriving at school on time, but due to the distances some pupils travel to the school this is not always achieved.

37. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. As with many of the policies, the behaviour policy and anti-bullying policy are about to be reviewed and currently do not reflect the current good practice. Since the arrival of the new head teacher, the management of behaviour has become stronger. Rewards and sanctions are applied consistently throughout the school and pupils are clear about the consequences of their actions. Each class has drawn up a set of class rules, emphasising the positive aspects of good behaviour. The ethos of good behaviour is reinforced in lessons, assemblies and by the examples of adults working in the school. Praise is used to good effect. Parents and staff say that changes in the arrangements for lunch have resulted in improved behaviour. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. Pupils, parents and lunchtime assistants say that rare incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively. Problems with anti-social behaviour are discussed in circle time and the school operates an informal 'buddy system' to support vulnerable pupils.

38. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic and personal performance are very good overall and have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Assessment on entry to the school is used well for identifying children when they come into the school who might have need for extra support. There are consistent and effective procedures for monitoring and recording pupils' attainment and progress, in English and mathematics in particular. In addition to the compulsory tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils take optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 in English and mathematics. The results that pupils achieve in national tests are analysed more rigorously and good use is made of these to project likely future

achievement in Years 2 and 6. This is helping to give the teachers a clearer picture of how well pupils progress, and how to plan their future work. In addition, the school has used assessment procedures very well to identify pupils who are in need of Early or Additional Literacy Support, and through this the school now has a complete profile of pupils' additional support needs and difficulties in learning.

39. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are in place in most other subjects. In these subjects, the records reflect well what pupils have learnt in the lessons, based on the objectives the teachers have set. Consequently information about pupils' individual achievements is sufficiently detailed and easily accessible to teachers. As a result, teachers have a clear picture of what pupils know and understand and the skills they have in these subjects. However, assessment in music has not begun and is only partially in place for younger pupils in history and geography. The school is aware that further refinement is needed in drawing on National Curriculum levels to help determine the standards being reached in the Foundation Subjects. Marking is used regularly to support and develop pupils' learning, but the quality of it varies between classes. The best examples are positive and encouraging, but in some instances it does not indicate how pupils can improve their work. Pupils are not always sure how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve.

40. The way in which teachers use the information they gather on pupils' attainment to guide their planning is now good. Much work is done to ensure that activities and tasks in lessons match individual pupils' previous skills and understanding in areas such as number work and mental mathematics. This good practice is being further extended to link teachers' planning to assessment practices. Target setting for groups of pupils is explicit and reflects their needs well, but there is an occasional lack of challenging work for the higher attaining pupils.

41. Pupils' academic progress is supported and monitored well. Teachers, throughout the pupils' school life, compile an individual record of achievement. This gives a good all round picture of general progress and achievement. The assessment of children in the Foundation Stage is thorough and leads to later effective teaching and learning. Strategies for the assessment of the needs of pupils who have learning difficulties are good. The school carries out a systematic screening of pupils when they enter the school. There are also good strategies for further assessment if difficulties are identified at a later date. Pupils with learning difficulties are then placed on a special needs register at a stage appropriate to their immediate needs. Targets are regularly and systematically reviewed to form the basis of more rapid improvement. There are good assessment, record keeping and communication systems that enable the progress of pupils with special educational needs to be monitored regularly.

42. Pupils who need special levels of support are usually identified at an early stage and are then well supported at classroom level, using the help given by the teacher, the special educational needs co-ordinator and the additional help offered by the support staff, and in some cases volunteers. Those with statements of educational needs are particularly well supported. The targets outlined on individual educational plans are specific enough to ensure that pupils move forward in small progressive steps. This level of support also extends to the few pupils for whom English is an additional language and they make good progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. The parents and carers have very positive views of the school. They recognise the school's many strengths and particularly value its 'family' ethos. A considerable number of parents who do not live in the village have made a positive decision to send their children to St Mary's. The parents feel that their children are expected to work hard and are making good progress. They say that teaching is good and the school keep them well informed about how their children are getting on. They are pleased that their children have mature and responsible attitudes and that behaviour is good. The parents value the way the school works closely with parents and feel that staff are approachable. The parents say that their children enjoy school and they feel that their children are getting the right amount of homework.

44. The school has very good links with parents and carers. The parents value the 'open door' approach and feel welcome in school. The school invites parents to achievement assemblies and special events. The school values parents' opinions through questionnaires and responds to their suggestions. For example, the school now invites parents to beneficial 'drop in' sessions and open mornings, where parents and staff can talk in a more informal atmosphere.

45. The information that the school provides for parents is good. New parents are well informed through visits and meetings. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are attractive and informative documents. Fortnightly newsletters are of a high quality and give parents advanced notice of future events as well as celebrating the school's successes. The school invites parents to valuable evenings on statutory tests and sex education. The school also sends parents useful information each term about the topics their children will be studying. The pupils' annual reports are satisfactory, but do not always give parents enough information about how their children are getting on and what they need to do to improve their work. Termly consultations with teachers give parents good opportunities to discuss their children's progress.

46. The parents' involvement with the work of the school is very good. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school and offer practical assistance, which has a positive impact on many aspects of school life. The parent governor and other parents who are governors are very active supporters of the school and help to shape its future. Parents are keen to attend events such as concerts and the sports evening, and the active Friends' Association raises considerable funds for the school. All parents have signed the home-school agreement.

47. The parents' contribution to their children's learning is very good. The school greatly values the help offered by parents and grandparents. They provide very good support in the classrooms and run the after school clubs. Parents are keen to support their children and attendance at parent consultation evenings is very high. The parents' views on homework are very much more positive than those found in similar schools. This is because the school surveyed the parents and responded to their concerns about homework. Parents now feel better informed about the school's expectations of homework, and as a result are able to support their children's learning. The home-school reading diaries and homework diaries provide very effective means of communication between home and school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The new headteacher provides very good leadership and management of the school. She has established, through very good evaluation, the strengths and weaknesses of the school, especially in relation to standards achieved and the school's performance. When doing this, nothing has been taken at 'face value' or 'for granted'. For example, when looking at the evaluation of the school's results, staff have been encouraged not to accept the results but to analyse them further and ask why pupils do not reach the nationally expected levels and why the results do not compare well with other schools. The outcomes of this systematic review of all aspects of the school have been well documented, presented to governors, and form a comprehensive development plan for improving the school. This provides staff and governors with a clear vision of how to improve the school and raise standards. There is a high commitment from staff to further improving the school.

49. Long term planning is documented and includes a rolling programme review and development of curriculum areas and policies of the school. The priorities that were still outstanding from the last inspection have been achieved, such as, assessment, and there has been sensitive attention paid to the workload of a small staff. Staff have appreciated this and relationships within the school are very good and have enabled the school to improve. The headteacher and staff are constantly reviewing the situation and have a flexible approach to the planned developments. For example, science had been identified as a curricular area that needed attention, and has been moved forward on the cycle of developments. For example, during last year there were 17 applications from parents for places in the Foundation Stage for their children and this meant that a different class structure had to be devised. However, management of this was good. The decision to place the higher attaining Year 2 pupils with Years 3 and 4 appear to be having a beneficial impact on the standards they have achieved.

50. Another appropriate priority for the school has been clearly identified through self-evaluation, and that is the number of pupils who need extra support and who were not likely to achieve the expected levels. This has produced an accurate and refined register of pupils with special educational needs. This focus has been carried out in the light of the recommendations of the new Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs. Pupils are identified either as requiring some additional support and intervention, while others are clearly pupils who have special educational needs requiring support from outside agencies and individual educational plans containing targets. This means that the school has more pupils who need intervention and support than is recognised on their special needs register, and impacts on the school's comparison with other schools. However, the very good management by the headteacher and the co-ordinator for this area has resulted in pupils being very well identified, and the review systems and targets being used effectively to ensure that these pupils make the best possible progress.

51. Financial planning is very good and is securely linked to developments. The day-to-day management of the budget is good. The school holds just under five per cent underspend, and has continued to use any other money to improve the accommodation, such as repairs to the roof and security fencing. The school has gone through a long period of administrative difficulties due to the long-term absence of the administrator. During this time, the day-to-day financial activities have had the support of a member of the Governing Body, but the basic word processing of documents, such as policies has slowed down. The school is to appoint a new administrator who will begin to work through the backlog of work and provide the support that the headteacher needs. The recommendations of the latest audit report have been accepted and improvements made to the systems in the school. The school, when purchasing goods, always considers the best value. Funds and grants, which have been allocated for particular areas of school development or support have been used

very well, especially any that has come into the school to provide additional support for specific pupils, such as pupils with special educational needs.

52. The governors of the school provide good support to the headteacher, and to the staff. Their involvement in planning, evaluation and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the school have improved since the last inspection. They are far more involved in the life of the school and many question the decisions being made instead of just accepting them. They carry out their responsibilities well, and although their involvement in understanding curriculum developments is satisfactory, there is a need for them to be more involved.

53. The school buildings have been improved since the last inspection with the enlargement of the hall, and this now provides adequate space. However, the school is short of space for storage, and there are no spaces for withdrawing and working with pupils in small groups. Modifications are about to be made so it provides the school with much needed office space, an enlarged library area, medical room and storage. However, there is only enough space in the classrooms for two computers and, in order for pupils to have access to computers in lessons, they have sometimes to go into other classes to work. Art and design is difficult to teach in the small classrooms, and careful timetabling has been put in place so that the largest classroom is available for art and design. In this way the school makes very good use of all its available space. The corridors are narrow, are restricted by pupils' coats that hang on the pegs along them. If the school were asked to admit a pupil who uses a wheelchair, this would be the only restrictive area, as the rest is accessible.

54. The number of teachers and support staff for the needs of the curriculum is adequate. The school has continued to develop its professional development systems in the school, along with national developments in performance management. These are good and have been particularly effective in helping raise the expertise in literacy and numeracy of the least experienced teachers. In-service training is clearly linked to the review of subjects within the school development and improvement, but has not yet had an impact on the teaching of music or ICT. The school's induction procedures for staff who are new to the school presently informal, but are part of the whole school development. Resources are good in English and mathematics, and satisfactory in all other areas. The lack of storage space does mean that the school cannot accommodate many more resources, especially very large equipment, such as for outdoor activities for the children in the foundation stage.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. The governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Raise standards in music by:
 - improving the quality of teaching and learning,
 - planning the curriculum more rigorously,
 - linking assessment to the subject,
 - ensuring there is consistency and continuity in instrumental tuition.(Paragraphs: 12, 18, 38, 95, 97, 98)

- (2) Raise standards across the school by ensuring that :
 - teachers have a more consistent approach to marking,
 - the expectations for the quality of written work is more consistent between classes,
 - there is an equal emphasis placed on the teaching of investigation work in mathematics and science.
 - library skills are taught.(Paragraphs: 8, 21, 22, 39, 68, 84, 86)

- (3) Raise standards in ICT by:
 - increasing teachers' levels of skills and knowledge in the subject,
 - ensuring that it is used in all subject areas to support pupils' learning.(Paragraphs: 21, 25, 77, 84, 88, 91, 95, 96)

The governors and headteacher should also consider the following minor areas for improvement as part of their whole school development planning:

- The governors' involvement in curriculum development. (Paragraph: 52)
- The consistency in the marking of registers. (Paragraph: 36)
- The continuing lack of space for storage. (Paragraphs: 53, 54, 60)
- Review of health and safety policy. (Paragraph: 35)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	17
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	6	8	2	0	0	0
Percentage	6	35	47	12	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	87
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	7	4	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	9	9	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (75)	82 (92)	82 (92)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	9	9	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (92)	82 (100)	82 (92)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Individual results are not reported where the number of boys or girls in the year group are fewer than 10

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	9	6	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	7	6	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	47 (83)	40 (83)	87 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (75)	73 (83)	80 (75)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Individual results are not reported where the number of boys or girls in the year group are fewer than 10

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	67
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	108

FTE means full-time equivalent

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)	0.9
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	204 480
Total expenditure	204 034
Expenditure per pupil	2 346
Balance brought forward from previous year	9 174
Balance carried forward to next year	20 928

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	87
Number of questionnaires returned	33

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	39	55	0	6	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	52	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	52	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	45	6	3	0
The teaching is good.	58	39	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	64	30	3	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	18	0	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	30	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	58	39	0	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	52	36	3	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	58	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	36	15	0	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Personal, social and emotional development

56. In the short time the children have been in the class for reception and Years 1 and 2, they have developed good personal and social skills and have made good progress. A few pupils have just arrived in the class and are still attending part-time. All children are aware of the routines of the day. For example, they know when they have to come together for whole group sessions and when it is time for break and for going home. Children are keen to learn, are enthusiastic about activities, and are eager to complete their work. They listen very carefully to the instructions they are given. In more formal settings, such as small group work with adults, and when they join the Year 1 and 2 pupils for lessons, they are confident in contributing ideas and initiate conversation with adults. They play together well in small groups or independently and have formed very good relationships with one another and with adults. There were many examples of children being confident enough to talk to inspectors. When children are expected to work unsupervised, the majority do so without silliness or unacceptable behaviour. They are developing independence by making choices, within the constraints of providing a learning environment for three year groups and a wide range of ability. All children are able to see to their own personal needs, such as putting on coats to go outside. Most of all, children are courteous and polite to each other. The teaching of these attitudes and skills by the teaching assistant is very good, reflects the standards expected in the rest of the school, and enables the children to attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they move out of this stage.

Communication, language and literacy

57. Although a number of children come into the school attaining below the expected levels in this area of learning, the majority this year will attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage, although there are a few children who have been identified as having special educational needs who will not reach the expected levels. Children's experiences in the Foundation Stage give them a good start in speaking and listening, as they have an unusually high ratio of adults in working with them. This is made up of parents and volunteers who support the Year 1 and 2 pupils in the class as well. Good emphasis is placed on the use of correct language through poems and stories, to which the children respond very well. Most children are attaining expected levels in communication, and their confidence is raised through the good use of drama in literacy lessons, which also supports their personal development and social skills. They are making satisfactory progress in literacy. They talk about themselves using full sentences, ask questions, describe what they have been doing, and listen to instructions. They look at books with interest and the most able children talk about what they see in the pictures. They listen carefully to teachers and are able to communicate their wishes and their fears. The higher attaining children know that books have titles, and that they are written by an author. They know that the words on the page are made up of letters and that the pictures will give them clues about what is happening. The highest attaining children recognise some letters and can find their name on a card. They enjoy basic writing experiences, with the highest attaining children attempting to write their names. Teaching in this area of learning is good, and children benefit from taking part in the literacy lessons with pupils in Years 1 and 2. All adults have very good relationships with the children, and they encourage conversation, give clear explanations and listen to the children's responses. The teaching of literacy is shared between the class teacher and the learning support assistant, and it is very good overall. The role that parents

play in helping children achieve by supporting lessons is considerable, and has a positive impact on standards.

Mathematical development

58. While the higher attaining children will attain the Early Learning Goals, some lower attaining children will not. In the time they have been in school the majority of children have made good progress from the baseline assessment results. Children are developing an understanding of number through the use of counting games, singing number songs and being part of numeracy sessions. Lower attaining children count to five and recognise when there are three objects. A few children of below average ability are still at an early stage of colouring similar shapes, or using a computer program to match similar shapes. Higher attaining children complete simple addition, such as adding one more to a given number. They recognise the written numbers and can name different shapes, such as circles, square and triangles. They also can name coins and add pence together. Teaching is good, with high expectations of attainment and of behaviour. Numeracy sessions are fun, such as taking part in outside number games, and are linked well to personal and social development. All adults, including the volunteers, use every opportunity to reinforce the concept of number.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

59. Children's progress in developing a knowledge and understanding of the world is good, and their inclusion in the class with Year 1 and 2 pupils helps them to make progress. Through the very good organisation and carefully chosen activities, children have access to a range of experiences, which enables them to gain a wider understanding of the world around them and how their senses are important. These arise from the termly topic, such as 'People who help Us'. Adults, including people from the community, such as the Fire Service, are involved in these sessions, and children know how to call the emergency services and understand the dangers of playing with matches. Children's awareness of the wider world is very dependent on their experiences outside school. This particularly applies to their skills in ICT. While some children know the parts of the computer by name, such as monitor and mouse, others have not developed these skills. Children, under the supervision of adults use computer programs to support their learning, such as matching shapes, and simple addition of numbers in mathematics. They are aware that items and objects can be selected on the screen and by using the mouse they can be moved across the screen. The majority of children will meet the Early Learning Goals. The teaching in these areas is good, with the exception of ICT when it is satisfactory.

Physical development

60. Children's progress in physical development is satisfactory overall and the majority will attain the Early Learning Goals. Overall teaching is good and children develop their physical skills through using a wide range of small construction equipment, and develop their fine skills, such as pencil grip and control by tracing pictures and overwriting. There are satisfactory opportunities for children to develop physical skills outdoors in their outdoor play area and through physical education activities. Children develop a sense of balance and demonstrate in playground activities an appropriate awareness of their own and others' space. They respond to the outdoor activities, such as throwing beanbags, or finding the correct number or shape with enthusiasm and concentration. Some activities take place with pupils from Years 1 and 2 and this provides the children with a mature attitude and examples of developed skills. The specialist teacher for physical education, who also teaches across the whole school, teaches children but no observations of teaching were seen during the week of the inspection, and a judgement on teaching cannot be made. The school is very

aware that it needs to develop and increase the range of large play equipment for this age group, but has an acute shortage of appropriate storage space.

Creative development

61. Children's progress in this area of learning is good. All children join in with songs, such as 'The Grand Old Duke of York', from memory. They respond to the instructions given by adults, and have learnt to carry out specific movements to the songs, such as marching. They also respond to the tempo of the music, can sing louder or softer, and with enthusiasm. A great emphasis is placed on children experiencing working with different materials and tools, and they take delight in making cakes with a volunteer. Here good links with other subjects made, such as weight and time in mathematics, and the combining of art and design with design and technology. Children's personal development is encouraged through the sharing resources when building their construction models. Teaching in this area is good overall, especially in the sessions that focused on music. The creative activities are well-organised and supervised, so that all children make good progress and will meet the Early Learning Goals.

ENGLISH

62. There has been good improvement made in this subject since the last inspection, especially to the curriculum, the implementation and teaching of the literacy strategy, and the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and the tracking of pupils' progress. Standards of attainment at the end of key stages are different from the time of the last inspection. They are below the national average at the end of Year 2 and in line with it at the end of Year 6. This decline at the end of Year 2, since the previous inspection, is because of an increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs and fewer pupils attaining the higher level. At the time of the last inspection, the Year 2 were a higher attaining group of pupils who had come into the school attaining nationally expected levels. The present Year 2 pupils contain a significant number with special educational needs who are not reaching the expected level for pupils of a similar age. However, there are a similar number of pupils in this year group who have been assessed as reaching the higher levels. In Year 6, standards are similar to those attained at the time of the last inspection, but once again the group is different, as some pupils who started at the school in this group have left.

63. In the tests in 2001 for pupils at the end of Year 2, the proportion attaining the expected level in reading was below the national average and the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level was very low compared with the national average. In writing, the proportion that attained the expected level was below the national average and no pupils attained the higher level. In the tests in 2001 for pupils at the end of Year 6, the proportion attaining the expected level was well below the national average and below the national average at the higher level.

64. Inspection evidence shows little significant variation in attainment across the different strands of English. Most pupils in this year's Years 2 and 6 have good speaking and listening skills. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6 pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. By the time they are Year 2 and Year 6, pupils generally listen well to their teachers and others. They respond articulately, using a good range of vocabulary. In 'hot seating' sessions pupils respond well to questions posed by the class and interesting scenarios are built up. For example, in a Years 2, 3, and 4 lesson, pupils were asked to express their feelings as the story book character 'Charlie', in response to questions that demanded more than just a 'Yes' or 'No' answer. Older pupils are given good opportunities to extend these skills, listen attentively and are not afraid to ask the meaning of words, such as 'assent' when they do not understand the story. The very small group of higher attaining pupils in Year 2, talks

confidently about their reading books, and can re-tell what the passage is about. Lower attaining pupils, including those with special needs, use a more restricted range of vocabulary, and grammar and pronunciation are less accurate. They lack confidence and listening skills are less acute. The small group of pupils, currently in Year 6, talk and listen confidently to adults and each other, they engage in sustained discussion, for example, on a commentary from the 1966 World Cup football match. Pupils with special educational needs and the very few pupils with English as a second language make good progress towards their individual targets.

65. Standards in reading of pupils currently in Year 2 are below the national average and in Year 6 are broadly in line with it. However, there is a significant number of pupils in Year 2 with special educational needs, almost 50 per cent. The remainder are expected to attain the expected level or above. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress, with some higher attaining pupils making good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as a second language make good progress towards their individual targets. The most able Year 6 pupils read a range of texts fluently and with confidence, but throughout the school, many pupils' reading lacks expression. A few higher attaining pupils are unsure about the meaning of some of the words they have read, such as 'liberation' and 'capitalist' and are unable to gain the meaning from the text. Many pupils understand the significant ideas in passages from books, they refer to the text to explain and support their opinions and are beginning to retrieve and collate information independently. As a result, reflective, perceptive and critical readers are emerging. Most average readers read in complete phrases, read fairly fluently and accurately, but lower ability pupils use these skills less well and are more hesitant at selecting the main points when retelling what a passage in a story is about. Most Year 2 pupils, with potentially higher attainment are taught literacy in the class with Years 3 and 4 pupils and their reading skills are developing well.

66. Discussions with pupils in both key stages indicate that pupils read to teachers and adults frequently, and a reading homework diary provides a very valuable link between home and school. This is completed by parents, teachers and in some instances by older pupils. Classroom reading books are presently adequate, and development plans show that the school has identified a need to supplement the reading scheme provision. The library accommodation is inadequate in size for the number of pupils in a class, and therefore pupils do not develop good research and retrieval skills. The quality, quantity and range of the school's library books are generally adequate and are supplemented by loans from the County Library service, but during the inspection pupils made little use of the library in order to find information.

67. Standards in writing are, by the end of Years 2 and 6, close to those expected nationally and satisfactory progress is made. However, there are a number of pupils in Year 2 who have special educational needs and are not attaining the nationally expected level. They are making good progress, as are the pupils for whom English is an additional language. Younger pupils write about characters of their own choice and extend their ideas logically into short stories. Sentences are usually punctuated with capital letters and full stops. Some pupils in Year 2, and those in Years 3 and 4 write traditional stories, compose poems, such as 'Wellington our Skeleton'. They create 'shape' poems, such as 'My Eye' and compile notes, for example on 'How to make a sandwich'. There is now a clearer focus on the different types of writing, such as fiction, reports, poems, persuasive and formal letter writing and older pupils examine in detail their relevant characteristics and style. Pupils' ability to complete extended pieces of non-fiction writing is satisfactory overall, but there are different expectations of its use in other subjects of the curriculum between classes. For example, in some subjects there is an over reliance of completing work by using a work sheet rather than writing explanations or ideas. This has been identified by the school as an area for development.

68. English grammar, such as powerful verbs, connectives and adjectives are taught systematically and are developing satisfactorily throughout the school, as are spellings, for example, short vowel sounds, and double consonants 'cl,', 'bl', 'fl'. The consistent and effective approach to spelling seen in some classes ensures that it is taught systematically throughout the school. Lower attaining pupils' basic grammatical sentence structure is usually correct, but words such as 'Proffesor', (Professor) 'anksiously' (anxiously) are often written incorrectly. The standard of handwriting is satisfactory but the use of print and joined up handwriting is inconsistent. The appropriate skills acquired in formal sessions are not always transferred when pupils are writing in other subjects.

69. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject has improved since the previous inspection, due to the emphasis placed on literacy training and the basic skills of writing are taught well. Teachers now refer more closely to the Literacy strategy objectives and then select activities to meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils of different ages and abilities within the class. Lessons are planned purposefully so that pupils experience an appropriate balance between focused teaching and activities. In the most effective lessons, pupils to move onto the activities, which are planned at different levels for different abilities of pupils, after an appropriate time of being taught as whole group. This holds their attention and they concentrate well, and as a result they make very good progress. The end of the lesson is used effectively to reinforce or consolidate what has been learned in the lesson. In less well organised lessons the whole group session is too long, and as a result the pupils' attention is not as good. Pupils' attitudes to their work in English are good. Most are keen to read, interested in their written work and work purposefully. Behaviour is good and very good relationships, contribute effectively to pupils' learning. Occasionally, as seen in a Year 6 lesson, the rapid pace and level of the teacher's communication was at too high a level for lower attaining pupils to understand, but this was quickly rectified when realised. Very good use is made of support assistants and parent helpers to support pupils who have the most difficulties. They supervise the planned activities and enable pupils to remain on task and achieve. This impacts positively on pupils' learning. Homework is provided for pupils and there is a good emphasis on reading, spelling, handwriting and writing opportunities.

70. The planning of the curriculum is good. The activities within in it have been appropriately organised to suit the different age groups, and attainment levels of pupils. This has been easier to achieve in the class for Years 5 and 6 where there is a narrower range of age and ability within the class than in the other two classes. In an attempt to resolve fluctuating numbers in different year groups and to challenge higher attaining pupils whilst supporting the lower attaining pupils, the oldest and more able Year 2 pupils have been taught alongside older pupils, whilst lower attaining Year 2 pupils work with the Year 1 pupils. Inspection evidence indicates that this arrangement has benefited the pupils in both classes. The higher attaining pupils are challenged by the work expected of them, and the lower attaining pupils are working at an appropriate level and are well supported by adults. The use of ICT is incorporated into the planning and pupils have opportunities to use electronic mail, and draft and redraft work.

71. Management of the subject is good. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are improved and are now good. They are analysed thoroughly and provide information on the progress of groups of pupils, or individual pupils. These are used well to inform the teaching. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is carried out by the headteacher and is good, and has identified weaknesses in the teaching of literacy which have been addressed through in-service training, and as helped to raise the quality of teaching and learning in this subject. Pupils' work in the subject has been monitored and the evaluation is being used to raise teachers' expectations in the quality of presentation and

handwriting. However, there is a need for this to extend to evaluating the quality of the marking between the classes.

MATHEMATICS

72. Overall, standards have declined since the previous inspection at Key Stage 1 because of the number of pupils with special educational needs and the lack of the higher level being achieved. In Years 3 to 6, the school analysis shows that many pupils leave the school in Year 5 and there are a high number of pupils with special educational needs. This has a negative impact on the overall standards of the school in this subject. The school has become more self-evaluative under new leadership and has taken significant action to raise standards in mathematics. Pupils' assessment is now more accurate as it is based on ongoing analysis of their progress and the setting of realistic and challenging targets. Inspection evidence shows that the teaching, in the three lessons seen, was good overall. Pupils' progress is monitored carefully, appropriate work is planned for differing abilities of pupils, and all aspects of the curriculum receive appropriate attention. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets and there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. All pupils are fully included in all aspects of work in mathematics.

73. The attainment of the 10 pupils currently in Year 2 varies considerably, ranging from above national expectations to almost 50 per cent of pupils being well below average. Five of these pupils have special educational needs. The school has organised its classes so that the Year 2 higher attaining pupils are taught in a class with Year 3 and 4 pupils and the remaining pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well in the Reception and Year 1 classes. During the inspection, these pupils were seen working with interest and purposefully engaged in the relevant tasks provided. In the present Year 6 class, most of the pupils are on course to attain the nationally expected level, with a few pupils attaining the higher level.

74. Pupils are benefiting from improved teaching and better implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, such as in mental mathematics, as shown in their increasing ability to recall facts quickly and accurately. Regular attendance at 'Booster classes' is helping to raise attainment, as is the work set more closely to each pupil's ability and their individual targets. The school has rightly given priority to establishing exactly what pupils' know, understand and can do and has undertaken a detailed analysis of all available data. It has adopted a more rigorous approach to analysing pupils' individual assessments and has set pupils' individual targets more closely to pupils' prior attainment, particularly the higher attaining pupils. These targets are not shared in more detail with pupils to ensure they know what and how they can improve. Lower attaining pupils experience the same areas of study, but their work is suitably modified and planning shows that in most cases there is extra help available. There is a sense of commitment and determination to do things well and the potential for the improvement of standards appears to be good.

75. Planning shows that by the end of Year 2, pupils have a broad experience of all aspects of the subject. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils have opportunities to add and subtract numbers to 100, tell the time to the half hour and measure in centimetres. They are given opportunities to solve problems involving money, solve simple algebraic questions and define the qualities of two and three-dimensional shapes. By the age of eleven, pupils have opportunities to convert fractions to decimals, simplify fractions, work out percentages of a whole number and understand how negative numbers work. In data handling they learn about mean, median and mode and use and interpret a range of different types of diagrams. Pupils are given increased opportunities to apply problem-solving skills to 'real life' situations, such as shopping with money using 15p and £2, as observed in the Key Stage 1 class. This

concept is further developed and satisfactory progression is evident, when Year 5 and 6 pupils choose the appropriate number operations to use when 'shopping' and explain the methods they used.

76. Standards are rising because the curriculum has improved and teaching and learning is generally good. The numeracy strategy has been introduced with success and the sharper focus on knowledge, skills and understanding is benefiting progress and standards. Pupils learn mathematical skills in a logical progression and cover all areas of the curriculum regularly and consistently by the end of the school year. The three-part lesson structure is well established, although in one lesson seen, the length of the introductory class activity was too long and some pupils lost concentration. Lessons have clear learning objectives and teachers share the objectives of the lesson with the pupils at the beginning of the session. The end of the lesson is used well to reinforce or consolidate the work, and ensure that new mathematical vocabulary has been remembered. Teachers' lesson planning indicates the different activities that pupils of differing abilities will be engaged in, what they should achieve and which resources will be used to support them. This ensures that pupils who experience difficulties in learning are working at the correct level.

77. The introduction of a 'Booster class' supports learning well and helps pupils to move ahead in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are given perceptive support and assistance and make good progress towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans. Classroom assistants are well briefed on the main learning objectives of lessons to ensure that help is well focused. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but some comments are not specific enough to promote maximum improvement. The best marking gives clear guidance and is written in a positive and encouraging style and helps pupils to progress in their learning. Pupils have very positive attitudes and most concentrate well. They are well behaved and cooperate well when working in pairs or in small groups. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good and this ensures that pupils work hard and do their best. Teachers set homework regularly and use it well to consolidate work begun in lessons.

78. The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who provides a good role model as an effective leader. She has an overview of the mathematical curriculum as a whole, and analyses information from national and school-based establish strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' work. This has had a beneficial effect on raising standards. The school's provision and teaching reflects the emphasis placed on improving standards and the regular and consistent use of all the mathematical areas of the National Curriculum. Teachers, governors, pupils and parents work together well in a joint venture to raise standards. These include a continuing focus on using and applying mathematics, challenging the higher attaining pupils and a review of the teachers' planning formats. There are now good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and to track the progress of groups of pupils and the progress of each year group. As a result, more realistic and challenging targets for 2002 to 2003 have been set to raise standards for each year group. Learning resources are well cared for, well stored and used efficiently to assist pupils' learning. Information and communication technology is not used as much as it should be for supporting learning.

SCIENCE

79. Satisfactory improvements have been made in this subject since the previous inspection, especially in curriculum development and assessment, and this is having a positive impact on the standards achieved at Years 2 and 6.

80. The school's results for the end of Year 6 assessment tests in the year 2001 were below the national average when compared with all schools, and with similar schools.

However, these results fluctuate from year to year and are very dependent on the number of pupils in the year group who have special educational needs and how many pupils who are higher attaining pupils have left before Year 6. For example, the school's performance in the year 2000 was well above the national average, while in 1999 it was below the national average. In the year 2001, the number of pupils with special educational needs was high in relation to the number in the group and they did not reach the nationally expected level. The school had lost all the pupils who were potentially higher achievers to independent education or middle school provision. A valid judgement that compares the school's results with the previous inspection cannot be made.

81. In the year 2001, teacher assessment indicated that at Year 2 82 per cent of pupils attained the nationally expected Level 2, but the school had no pupils who attained Level 3. Teacher assessment of current Year 2 pupils indicates that almost half of them will attain nationally expected level, and many will attain Level 3, while the pupils who are all on the school's special need register will attain below it. Because of this, while standards have risen, the school's performance is likely to be similar to last year, and overall below the national average. However, evidence from the inspection shows that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English, make good progress and achievement is good.

82. By the age of seven, pupils' ability to carry out investigations is satisfactory. The higher attaining pupils make predictions and observations about changes taking place. They know that when carrying out tests conditions must be the same and that information can be shown by using graphs and charts, as well as writing simple passages describing what they did. Most pupils, including the lower attaining pupils, have a good understanding of the needs of living things. They understand the differences between living and non-living things, and classify them according to their characteristics. Pupils know that they should eat certain food to remain healthy and use words such as, 'carbohydrate', 'protein' and 'vitamins'. They label the major parts of plants and animals and understand the different stages of growth in humans. Most pupils know that materials change if they are heated or cooled and can conclude from investigation work which materials are best for making carrier bags and why.

83. At Year 6, in the year 2001 test results were much better than the results in English and mathematics, with 87 per cent of pupils reaching Level 4 or above, with a few pupils reaching Level 5. The results predicted for this year's test results are similar to last year's and this is reflected in the work seen during the inspection. The improved procedures for assessment and the tracking of pupils' progress have provided a more accurate picture of pupils' achievements and areas that need additional support. However, there are fewer pupils predicted to reach the higher levels in science than in English and mathematics where the literacy and numeracy strategies have had a more positive impact.

84. By the age of eleven, pupils have made good progress and have gained confidence. They show that they have developed their skills in observing, recording and explaining their observations. They make predictions, understand fair tests, test their ideas and record their results using different methods. Pupils write descriptions of what they have done, work well in groups to solve problems and are able to draw conclusions from their investigations. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress. They have covered all the required aspects of the subject for National Curriculum, and are able to apply this use this knowledge to answer questions. However, although pupils demonstrate in lessons that they can carry out investigations, record results and understand the importance of fair testing and prediction, the work in books of pupils in Years 5 and 6 does not demonstrate their ability in this area. Expectations for this varies across the school and this lack of a consistent approach to recording learning means that pupils do not have a comprehensive record of their work to refer to for revision. Across the school there are not enough examples of the use of ICT to

support learning, such as for research, for monitoring changes or for displaying results. These aspects of the science provision are unsatisfactory.

85. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It was particularly good in Class 3, where the planning, introduction and the organisation of investigation work was clear, and as a result pupils knew what was expected of them and what they had to find out. Because of the size of the school it is impossible for all teachers to have a high level of expertise in this subject and some teachers have more experience than others in teaching it. This shows itself in the varying expectations for standards and presentation and emphasis on recording the investigation work. In the best lessons teachers are confident, do not over-rely on teaching scientific knowledge, but are encouraging pupils to become 'scientists'. Pupils behave very well in all classes, are eager to take part in the learning opportunities and are especially well behaved when they are expected to work in pairs or groups. Teachers plan lessons so that they make the maximum use of the volunteers who come into school, so that the pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. This has a considerable impact on the progress they make, and ensures that they understand the work, carry out investigations safely, but more importantly are able to record their results and complete written work.

86. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is good. The long term planning is now based on nationally agreed guidelines, with units of work covering all the aspects of the National Curriculum. Assessment has developed well and this is used to track the progress all pupils are making. A new co-ordinator has taken over the responsibility since the last inspection and, along with the headteacher, has been effective in evaluating standards and reasons why overall attainment fluctuates. The monitoring of teaching and learning has been effective and has resulted in a more consistent approach to teaching, but monitoring of the pupils' work needs to take place in order to ensure consistency between classes. The co-ordinator has effectively audited the resources in the school so that additional resources can be planned for and purchased to support the new units of work. However, storage space is very short in the school and limits the amount of resources that can be purchased and stored.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

87. There have been satisfactory improvements made to the school's provision for ICT since the last inspection, especially in the teaching of it as a discrete subject, and in the amount of resources in the school. However, ICT is not used enough or with sufficient confidence by staff to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum and as a support for the learning of individual pupils.

88. Standards of work at the end of both key stages are satisfactory, and many pupils, by the time they reach the end of Year 6 are knowledgeable and competent about the uses of ICT and have the skills to use it for word processing and to find out information. The progress pupils make by the time they are in Year 6 is satisfactory, but could be better if they were given more opportunities to use it in lessons. Pupils use the keyboard and mouse appropriately to word process their written work. They know the layout of the keyboard, are able to change from lower case to capitals, and can use the arrow keys to move the cursor around. They are able to delete and save work, but there are no examples of ICT being used for sorting and displaying information, or for drawing or artwork in these classes.

89. By the time they in Year 6, pupils have made satisfactory progress and are able to talk confidently about how to use the Internet to search for information, but are not aware of different types of search engines and sites available. They use the keyboard and access devices with accuracy and confidence and show that they have good word processing skills. This is due to the emphasis that has been placed on this aspect of the curriculum. More recently the pupils have been taught by the headteacher using a newly implemented curriculum and as a result, pupils in Year 6 are able to program and control a 'Roamer' accurately, and use Logo confidently to create precise patterns and representations. Pupils understand the use of spreadsheets and databases for analysing data, but there is no evidence that these skills are transferred and used on other subjects, such as in mathematics or science. In addition there is little evidence of pupils using ICT in art and design, design and technology, or music, although the majority of pupils by the end of Year 6 understand when and how to use electronic mail. Year 6 pupils have added responsibilities as part of their personal development, that being to operate the overhead projector and sound system in assembly. This they also carry out with confidence.

90. The quality of teaching and learning in those lessons where the subject is taught discretely is satisfactory. This is because the school has during the last year re-organised the timetable so that all pupils are taught ICT by the head teacher, who has appropriate skills and experience in teaching this subject. However, the re-inforcement and use of these skills in other subjects is not planned for by teachers, and is because the expertise varies between teachers. In the lessons where the subject is taught discretely, the planning is detailed and lessons are very well organised. The smallness of the school makes it impossible for all pupils to have access to computers at the same time, and the lessons are planned around the resources available and the amount of support in school, as well as the aspect being taught. For example, when teaching the basic of logo pupils are arranged into groups and while some work on computers throughout the school, other work on problem solving. A governor comes into school to work with pupils and provides valuable support to lessons, and enables pupils to be taught in small groups.

91. Development of the curriculum has taken place, and the school is now using units of work from the national guidelines. These have recently been introduced and the impact of this planning has yet to have a full impact on the attainment and achievement of all pupils. Assessment has been developed alongside this curriculum and pieces of work are now being kept as evidence of pupils' progress. The staff are aware of their need to raise their skills and expertise in this subject, and are about to start their Nationally Opportunities Funded training this term. Although this will raise their skills and confidence, there is a need for them to include ICT in lesson planning across all subjects. Resources are satisfactory, and the grants that have come into the school for developing ICT have been spent appropriately, such as by linking the computers to the Internet. All necessary safety precautions concerning the use of the Internet are in place. Computers are located in all classrooms but because of the smallness of the rooms there are only enough for a few pupils to work at any one time. The school does not have any space in which to locate a computer suite. Resources, such as scanners and digital cameras, have been purchased and are beginning to be used in lessons.

The foundation subjects

92. It was only possible to see a relatively small number of lessons in the foundation subjects of the curriculum. This because there was an emphasis placed on inspecting the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, and information, communication and technology. At Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning was observed in art and design, design and technology, music. History, geography and physical education were not observed at this key stage. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and teaching and learning were observed in music and physical education, but there were no observations of lessons in geography, history, art and

design, and design and technology. Where lessons could not be observed, information on the quality of the provision was gathered from pupil's work and discussion with staff and pupils.

ART AND DESIGN, AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93. Only one lesson of art and design was observed during the inspection. This was at Years 1 and 2, and included an element of design and technology. No lessons were observed at Years 3 to 6 but evidence of work and displays throughout the school indicate that standards in art and design, and design and technology for the pupils currently at the end of key stages are in line with national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and the few who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

94. Pupils explore ideas, using a range of media and resources to develop their work. They use a variety of media, including pastels, pencils and textiles effectively and across the school pupils make good use of their sketchbooks to record their ideas. By the time they are seven, they have experimented with colour mixing, completed still life sketches and produced printed patterns. Most of the work is connected with other areas of the curriculum and topics that are being studied, such as the colours of Joseph's coat. Design and technology is integrated with the art and design and work shows that pupils develop their design skills well through learning experiences which involve making and decorating boxes to hold Christmas gifts, and making three dimensional farm models, and cards for special occasions. In the one lesson observed, pupils demonstrated that they had developed the skills necessary to select the correct materials of an appropriate shape for their designs of fire engines. They had used a selection of joining techniques, such as glue and staples, and were applying paint in a methodical way. They applied their common sense well, and all finished painting one side before starting on another. Other aspects of design and technology are covered well, and pupils design and make models of vehicles using construction kits, and with the regular support of a volunteer take part in food technology sessions, where they apply their mathematical understanding of weight, measurement and time.

95. Pupils continue to build on these skills throughout Years 3 to 6, and by the time they are eleven, they have studied the works of artists, such as William Morris and Picasso. They develop skills in mixing so that they can apply tone and shade to work. With maturity, their observational and line drawings improve and become more detailed. Three dimensional work forms part of their study, but this is restricted in size due to a lack of space for working and storage. However, pupils have used plaster and wire to create and produce head sculptures. Again design and technology are integrated, and many of the projects have a good design emphasis, such as making Christmas cards that include a circuit so they are illuminated. However, there is little evidence kept to show that pupils evaluate and alter designs. Information and communication technology is underdeveloped within the two subjects and there is little use of the digital camera, to expand visual representation or experiment with patterns or visit virtual art galleries.

96. The development of the subjects has been identified within the school development plan through updating the policies, revision of the curriculum and assessment. Both subjects are led by one co-ordinator, who also teaches art and design across the school and advises and supports other teachers in design and technology. There is a clear recognition of the strengths of the subject and areas where it needs to be further developed, such as in ICT. Portfolios of work and the co-ordinator's evidence file shows coverage across the school of the curriculum but do not systemically track coverage in relation to the National Curriculum, and, as a result, aspects of design and technology are lost.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

97. There is an appropriate amount of recorded evidence of pupils' work in history and geography at both key stages. The history and geography co-ordinators' planning was seen along with pupils' past work and displays and this indicates that pupils gain a good understanding of the historical and geographical concepts and knowledge that are taught through topic and units of work. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and the few who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in these subjects.

98. Pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2 learn about the passage of time through personal photographs of themselves from birth to the present day and extend their developing knowledge to compare toys past and present. They learn about famous people, such as Florence Nightingale. In geography, work has focussed on the geographical features of the school and immediate locality such as the local shops and Lichfield. Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 build on this knowledge and make good use of a structured programme of geographical topics that ensures that specified curriculum areas are covered. Very good use is made of visits to enhance the history and geography curriculum and extend pupils' learning. For example, younger pupils visit the local bakery and Woolworth's, whilst older pupils visit the local Power Station to learn about recycling and the nearby Wedgwood potteries. Good links with literacy are made when pupils research into history topics such as 'Tudor England', and 'The Battle of Bosworth Field' and compare the Spanish and English accounts of the Spanish Armada.

99. Since the previous inspection, geography has been given a low priority because of the appropriate, significant input by the geography co-ordinator into English and assessment procedures. The lack of continuity and progression in the subjects has been addressed through the adoption of good schemes of work, which offer teaching and learning experiences that are consistent, challenging and progressive. They give detailed guidance and support on the knowledge; skills and understanding that pupils need to have and are linked successfully to the topics that teachers use. However, the block timetabling does not allow pupils to have frequent and regular opportunities to build up their historical and geographical skills. Assessment in both subjects is in its infancy. There are now whole school systems in place, whereby teachers make assessment at the end of pupils' units of work. Currently, there is no portfolio of pupils' work to give teachers a better understanding of the different levels of pupils' capabilities, nor monitoring of classroom practice to enable the co-ordinator to raise standards further throughout the school. Resources have improved as new units of work are introduced, but artefacts are not well represented.

MUSIC

100. Two lessons were observed in the Year 1 and 2 class, and in the Year 5 and 6 class, respectively, and pupils were heard singing in two assemblies. Four pupils were heard playing the clarinet in a lesson taken by a visiting peripatetic teacher. Whilst it is possible to comment on standards attained in the lessons seen, the small sample of work and lessons do not provide secure evidence on which to make judgements about overall standards, the usual quality of learning and teaching in the subject and the improvements in music, if any, since the previous inspection. However, it is clear that all pupils could make better progress with better provision.

101. Teaching in music lessons was good in the Year 1 and 2 class, and satisfactory in the Year 5 and 6 class. Teacher subject knowledge in these lessons was satisfactory overall. Younger pupils in Year 1 and 2, along with the reception children, sang tunefully songs, such as 'The Grand Old Duke of York'. They have a good sense of tempo, rhythm and maintained

a steady beat. They selected and played untuned percussion instruments to with confidence and enthusiasm. The activities planned for teaching the objectives of the lesson, which was to raise the pupils' awareness of rhythmic patterns related to pulse and rhythm, included the effective use of poems, songs and jingles. In a Year 5 and 6 class, older pupils sang in two parts, and demonstrated that they had developed a sense of phrasing and appropriate expression. However, their singing techniques lacked refinement, such as good breath control to aid phrasing, clear diction and quality of pitch. A few pupils lacked confidence when asked to sing various parts of an extract from 'A Mid-Summer Night's Dream'. There is no pianist on the staff, but the use of taped music in assemblies helps to lift pupils' performances and response to singing. Pupils sang enthusiastically and tunefully hymns, such as 'Come Follow Me' and listened appreciatively to 'Be Still for the Glory of The Lord'. In another assembly, all pupils sang very enthusiastically, and used the appropriate actions without any trace of self-consciousness.

102. Based on scrutiny of school music documentation and talking to the music co-ordinator the school's provision for music is unsatisfactory overall. There is a music policy, but currently there is no scheme of work in place. Medium term plans, based on a nationally recognised guidance, are in place in Years 1 to 4 and the performing elements are present in Years 5 and 6. There is insufficient monitoring of planning and no evaluation of teaching to enable the co-ordinator to raise standards further throughout the school. Pupils do not have music notebooks to record their work and no work on notation was seen. There is insufficient formal assessment of pupils' musical skills to ensure that future work meets the specific needs of each pupil, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

103. The visiting peripatetic teacher who teaches selected pupils to play the clarinet enriches the general provision for music. The short, observed session of four pupils playing the clarinet was well conducted and they played a short tune, successfully. Resources have improved with the acquisition of new musical instruments, but a formal audit of musical resources has not been carried out. The co-ordinator, whilst enthusiastic and committed, lacks subject specialist knowledge. It is therefore difficult to assess which elements of the curriculum need the greatest concentration of time, effort and resources. The school, as a matter of urgency, is endeavouring to recruit a music specialist to teach musical skills, but up to now has been unsuccessful.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

104. Overall, the curriculum for physical education is satisfactory, meets the needs of all pupils, and is particularly well enhanced by extra curricular activities. As a result of the emphasis placed on this area and the pupils' enthusiasm for the activities, the school is very successful in competitions and interschool sports.

105. Year 5/6 pupils, in a rounder's lesson, showed that they were able to work in groups and take turns to develop their batting and fielding techniques. Their eagerness to start the group work and their natural competitiveness made it difficult for the teacher to ensure that they were thinking and planning how they would organise their individual teams and how they would evaluate their performance. However, as the lesson proceeded and through good emphasis by the teacher, pupils were able to work more effectively as a team. Swimming is part of the curriculum for all pupils and by the time they leave school all pupils attain the appropriate national levels for their age. Although the element of dance was not observed as a class lesson, two Year 6 pupils performed a dance routine for their class assembly. This was of a very good standard, and demonstrated that pupils are able to choreograph routines, interpret music and express feelings with imagination.

106. The quality of teaching and learning in the one lesson seen was good. The teacher ensured that pupils understood what they were going to learn, how important it was to work as a team, and that all team members must have roles and take turns. Through demonstration the teacher helped them to learn new skills. There is a good knowledge of the subject, and the school is using this expertise very effectively by using this teacher to teach the subject to all classes. This ensures that there is consistency in expectations and continuity in learning.

107. Development of the subject has been identified within the school development plan with an appropriate emphasis on reviewing the policy and the curriculum against national guidelines. Assessment is also an area identified for development. The co-ordinator, who also teaches the subject is enthusiastic, provides a good opportunities for pupils to become involved in extra-curricular activities. Teachers, parents and external providers support these activities. The hall has been enlarged since the last inspection, and new gymnastic apparatus has been purchased. All teachers have been appropriately trained in the use of this equipment, and resources to support the subject are adequate. Storage is difficult in the school and most of this has to be stored outside the school. Outside areas, are adequate and includes an adjacent playing field.