

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CLUNBURY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Clunbury, Craven Arms

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123541

Headteacher: Mr A D Morris

Reporting inspector: Mr David Figures  
10269

Dates of inspection: 20 - 22 May 2002

Inspection number: 245763  
Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior School
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Clunbury Craven Arms Shropshire
Postcode:	SY7 0HE
Telephone number:	01588 660207
Fax number:	01588 660207
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend SB Bell
Date of previous inspection:	22 April 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10269	David Figures	Registered inspector	English Art History Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19446	Sue Wood	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for it's pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents and carers?
25431	Lesley Clark	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and Communication Technology Design and Technology Geography Physical Education Foundation Stage Equal Opportunities Special Educational Needs English as a Second Language	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is a voluntary aided primary school much below average in size, catering for 51 boys and girls between four and eleven years of age. It serves a rural area surrounding the village of Clunbury, in south Shropshire, with a few pupils coming from neighbouring villages. Almost all pupils are of white European heritage. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Twenty per cent of pupils have special educational needs; this is about average. The needs include moderate learning difficulties, dyslexia, dyspraxia and autism. Six per cent of pupils have statements of special educational need, an above average proportion. A significant proportion of pupils have joined the school during Year 6. The attainment of children on entry is generally below average although it varies from year to year. The attainment of the present Reception year pupils was average when they started school.

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

Clunbury Primary School is a very effective school. Standards are above average and represent very good achievement on the part of the pupils in the light of their attainment when they started in school. The quality of teaching is very good. Excellent leadership and management ensure a stimulating environment in which pupils are valued and flourish developing excellent attitudes to learning. This is achieved at a cost per pupil which is low in comparison with schools of a similar size: accordingly the school gives very good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve very well and reach above average standards in most subjects by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to school and behave very well.
- Relationships are very good; pupils are sensitively aware of the feelings and needs of others.
- Excellent leadership, reflecting the schools aims and values, promotes excellent attitudes to school and very good teaching and learning.
- Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures they make very good progress.
- A very good partnership with parents creates a community where learning thrives.

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

In this very effective school there are no key issues to be addressed.

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

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

The school has made very good progress since it was last inspected in April 1998, maintaining the high standards reported in many areas of activity at that time and improving others. Given the circumstances of a two-teacher school, it has addressed the issues raised effectively. Subject documentation is now complete, or its completion planned for. There is satisfactory provision of extra-curricular activities. Standards in information and communication technology have improved and are now satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes to school are now excellent. The quality of teaching then considered good is now very good. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, having formerly been judged sound. The leadership provided by the headteacher, formerly good is now excellent. The accommodation is much improved, although providing the pupils with the full physical education curriculum remains a challenge. The improvements have been brought about in large part by the energy and commitment of the headteacher whose excellent leadership skills enable everyone concerned to make their own contribution to the school's successful development. This, combined with the school's strong commitment to maintaining and even improving its high standards, ensures it has an excellent capacity to continue to develop.

## STANDARDS

Small numbers in each year group make the analysis of national test results unreliable. Results are not published as there were ten or fewer pupils in the age group. However, standards are above average by the end of Year 6 in most subjects and pupils are achieving very well. Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. In art and design, geography, history and music standards are above the level expected of eleven-year olds. In design and technology, information and communication technology and physical education, standards are closer to the average for the age group.

Standards of pupils at the end of Year 2 in music and history are above average. In the other subjects they are average and pupils have achieved well in relation to the attainment level from which they started in the school.

As the present generation of pupils leave the Reception class and start in Year 1, their standards in communication, language and literacy and the level of their personal, social and emotional development are on course to be above average. In the other areas of learning, standards are close to those expected of children at the age of six. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs and those with special gifts or talents, achieve well, and very well by the end of Year 6. Targets appropriate to the pupils' capabilities are set and generally achieved.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are attentive and industrious. They ask many questions because they genuinely want to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave responsibly and courteously and are very considerate of others. As a result pupils learn very well and make very good progress.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships between pupils are excellent. They accept much responsibility for organising their own work.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory: below national averages.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school and contributes very well to pupils' progress. The quality of teaching in English, including literacy, and mathematics, including numeracy, is very good. As a result, pupils learn at a very fast rate and achieve standards that are above average. Teaching is very good in history, music and physical education; it is good in art and design, science, and information and communication technology. No teaching was seen in design and technology or geography.

The strengths of the teaching include the very detailed planning of the work the pupils are to cover. As a result, pupils know exactly what is expected of them and concentrate well on the topic of the lesson. Because teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject matter, they are able to challenge the higher-attaining pupils effectively. Questioning is excellent and is coupled with a very good understanding of the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes: this ensures pupils of different ages and levels of ability are fully engaged in the lessons and learn effectively. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support, which is carefully managed so that they too can take a full part in the lessons and make very good progress.

Pupils of reception age are very well taught. Activities, including those to develop basic skills in literacy and numeracy, are very well planned and teaching encourages pupils' personal, social and emotional development very well. The good contribution of the skilled classroom assistants is very well deployed.

Pupils are well managed and those who are older or more able are suitably challenged. As a result, pupils make good progress.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There are plentiful opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and study independently; subjects are linked together well through the topics and give pupils a broad understanding. However, some subjects remain in course of development. Links between mathematics and other subjects are underdeveloped.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. It is very well organised: pupils make very good progress. They are aware of the strides they are making in their own learning and the improvement in their self-esteem.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Thought-provoking assemblies encourage pupils to reflect. The provision for pupils' cultural development is strong, and is notable for the programme to enhance pupils' understanding of other cultures. A willingness to consult pupils on relevant issues encourages them to become mature and responsible.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Well. It is a caring school with a strong family atmosphere which ensures pupils feel secure and can flourish. Assessment of pupils work is satisfactory; the assessment of subjects other than English, mathematics and science is in need of further development.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Very well. Parents' wholehearted support for the school and its work is reflected in the pupils' very good achievement. Particularly good information on forthcoming topics enables parents to help their children in different subjects.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent: The headteacher has energy and commitment, and provides a clear vision of where the school is to go. He creates productive relationships with pupils, staff, governors and parents through which all feel valued and enabled to make a contribution.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well. Governors bring a range of expertise and experience to the service of the school. Their monitoring role needs further development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Thoughtful monitoring of teaching and the curriculum is matched by careful analysis of test results.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Expenditure follows educational priorities helped by a well-structured school improvement plan. Through careful comparison and consultation, the best available value for money is obtained for the school.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Satisfactory. The school is well resourced and there is a good level of staff expertise. Much ingenuity is expended to give pupils an adequate physical education curriculum in the absence of suitable facilities.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school is very well led and managed.</li> <li>The school is very approachable and works closely with parents.</li> <li>The teaching is of very high quality.</li> <li>Much is expected of the pupils.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The quantity of homework expected.</li> <li>The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

The inspection team endorses the parents' positive comments. As regards homework the inspectors consider that the amount of homework expected of pupils is appropriate. Extra-curricular activities offered to pupils are satisfactory, bearing in mind the size of the school.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 The standards, which are satisfactory at the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6 where there are strengths in science, represent very good achievement, taking into account the comparatively low level of attainment of the same pupils when they started as reception pupils. In this the school is reaping the benefit of initiatives taken since the last inspection, which include the effective introduction of the national literacy and numeracy strategies, improvements in the assessment arrangements in English, mathematics and science, more systematic curriculum planning and more monitoring of what the pupils are learning. This informs the very good teaching which builds well on what pupils know and understand over the years they are in the school.
- 2 Taking the results for 1998 to 2001 together, pupils aged seven have been reaching standards in reading, and writing that are in line with the national average but below that average in mathematics. This is somewhat below the average of schools where a similar proportion of pupils is entitled to free school meals. In the national tests taken by eleven-year-olds in recent years, results have been above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. The results were similar to the average seen in schools with a similar free meals entitlement. Boys and girls attain similarly at eleven, but girls have been doing better than boys at seven.
- 3 The pupils achieve well in the reception year as a result of the very good teaching they receive and their attainment is on course to be above average by the end of the year in communication, language and literacy and in personal, social and emotional development and average in all other areas of learning, results which reflect the different periods of time pupils have been in Reception.
- 4 The work seen of the present generation of seven-year-olds represents good achievement on their part and is consistent with average results in the national tests. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is good at this age: most pupils are articulate, speak well and explain their ideas confidently, having listened with care. This is in large part because the teaching provides many opportunities for the pupils to listen carefully and respond thoughtfully. In particular, the teacher is skilled at giving pupils time to put their ideas into words. Standards in reading are nearer the average for the age: although the best readers are very good, others do not read sufficiently fluently or accurately, despite enjoying books. Standards in writing are satisfactory; higher-attaining and average-attaining pupils write accurately about recent activities and narrate stories but, do not write at sufficient length. Lower-attaining pupils have good ideas, but are without the skills to express them.
- 5 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 also achieve well, helped by very good teaching. By the time they are eleven, they produce writing in several styles which is above average in quality, some of the work on the Egyptians being particularly well written. They listen carefully and speak well, partly because the teacher expertly uses questioning to extend pupils' skills and to help them formulate and articulate their ideas. Reading standards are about average for the age group: most pupils are competent and keen readers, the best reading accurately; others are hesitant, and do not gain enough meaning from the text. However, most have good skills for finding out information from texts and other sources.
- 6 In mathematics and science, pupils also achieve very well by reaching satisfactory standards by the end of Year 2 and above-average standards by Year 6. In

mathematics, Year 2 pupils' knowledge of number is strong, helped by well planned and challenging lessons, although they find solving problems a challenge. In Years 3 to 6, pupils build on what they have learned in the Year 1/2 class, so that by Year 6, they successfully apply mathematical knowledge to new situations. This is because the inventive teaching provides them with interesting and challenging work. The use of mathematics in other subjects, however, is not well developed because the planning is not explicit enough. In science, good resources and enterprising teaching contribute to the good progress made in both classes and the high standards achieved at the end of Year 6.

- 7 The satisfactory standards in information and communication technology both at seven and eleven represent an improvement since the last inspection, brought about by better organisation of the subject, aided by the acquisition of new equipment. The application of the subject across the curriculum is particularly well developed in Years 3 to 6.
- 8 In art and design, standards are satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and good at the end of Year 6, representing good achievement following the careful development of appropriate skills. A similar pattern of achievement is to be seen in geography. In music, standards are above average because of the skilled teaching the pupils receive. In history the standards are helped by the additional interest generated by relevant visits. The pupils in Years 3 to 6, for example, visited the Egypt galleries of the Liverpool Museum to obtain additional information for the term's topic.
- 9 Design and technology and physical education standards are in line with those expected of pupils at seven and eleven. This is in part due to the fact that although the quality of teaching is high, it is not possible to overcome fully the limitations the building imposes on these subjects.
- 10 High-attaining pupils including those with special talents make good progress, reflecting the provision made for them. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. These are very well chosen and monitored regularly so they can be adjusted as each target is achieved. The experienced learning support assistants, supported by adult volunteers help them to learn and participate in the lessons. As a result, pupils make measurable progress and a good proportion attain standards in line with those expected of their age by the end of Year 6.
- 11 The school sets suitable targets for pupils in the national tests, which are also realistic in the sense that they are based on what pupils have achieved in the past, although they can be frustrated when pupils transfer into the school late in Year 5 or Year 6. The school is on course to meet its future targets. Positive contributions to pupils' achievements are also made by satisfactorily threading literacy and citizenship through pupils' work in other subjects.

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

- 12 Pupils respond very well to the school's provision to encourage their personal development, an aspect of their achievement which has improved since the last inspection. Their excellent attitudes to school are immediately evident: they are very keen to come to school and they settle quickly to the work prepared for them. Pupils listen very carefully and are eager to respond to questions, giving answers that are often mature, sensible and relevant. This was well illustrated in a very good Year 1/2 English lesson where pupils listened carefully to each other and the teacher and, having waited their turn to speak, they gave good answers to the teacher's questions. Pupils are

genuinely interested in their learning and show respect for the work of others. Pupils know what is expected of them and try hard to please the class teacher. They work sensibly and generally quietly, usually sustaining concentration whether they are working as individuals, in pairs or in a group. In a Reception/Year 1/2 physical education lesson, young pupils took turns well during a game and watched the other pupils very sensibly.

- 13 Pupils behave very well throughout the school day: their behaviour in lessons is often excellent and the majority of pupils move around the building and grounds sensibly. They are polite to visitors and ready to offer help. Pupils' behaviour in the playground is good and they clearly enjoy the structured play. Pupils respect property and handle resources well. They clearly understand what is expected of them and respond maturely to the school rules and adults' expectations. There have been no exclusions in the last two years.
- 14 Relationships throughout the school are very good because pupils are sensitively aware of the needs of others and show respect for other people's feelings. Parents appreciate the family atmosphere of the school where pupils look after each other well. Pupils know the daily routines of the school, quickly and willingly responding to teachers' requests. They respond well when they are given responsibilities. They prepare the school hall for assemblies and help with lunchtimes. A School Council has been established where each year group is represented, which recently organised equipment for the outdoor playtimes. Pupils show initiative and accept responsibility for their own learning. For instance, in a numeracy lesson, Year 2 pupils were confident to work independently to solve money problems.
- 15 Although the school's attendance figures are unsatisfactory there are indications that when figures are published for the current year they will show a significant improvement. The below-average attendance record is the result of term-time holidays and the disproportionate effect of illness in a small school. Registers are completed quickly at the start of each session and the majority of pupils consistently arrive at school on time to enable the school day to start promptly.

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

- 16 The quality of teaching is very good because the teachers' detailed and extensive knowledge of the subject matter, coupled with their very good understanding of how pupils learn, enables them to plan well for the needs of the different ages and levels of ability in each of the classes. Parents appreciate the high quality of the teaching and in almost all lessons observed it was good or very good in quality. It was very good in well over half, an improvement since the last inspection. Lessons have a clear purpose and a logical structure, which pupils recognise and to which they respond. As a result, they get on with their tasks and work industriously. In some instances teachers exploit the possibilities of the mixed ages well to support some pupils and challenge others. One Reception-aged pupil, declaring 'I am an *old* reception,' worked very happily with Year 1 pupils at a task which extended his skills. The practice of establishing mixed-age 'talking groups', pairing Year 1 and Year 2 pupils together, ensures the involvement of both and encourages positive ideas to come forward. Reception-age pupils have, at different times, the stimulus of whole-class session with Year 1 and Year 2, and also the benefit of working on their own with a classroom assistant.
- 17 Explanations and instructions are clear and ensure pupils understand and know what is expected of them. Stringent expectations of pupils' interest and involvement are repaid by excellent attitudes and behaviour on the part of pupils in both classes. The use of questioning is excellent in both classes. It keeps pupils involved and motivated. It

enables the teacher to assess what pupils know and challenge them to think more deeply. Lessons proceed at a well-judged pace. According to the needs of the lesson this can be brisk or more gentle. Pupils respond to the teachers' humour and appreciate knowing where they stand. In the infants' class the teacher's 'mistakes' bring forth a chorus of corrections, and cements productive relationships in which pupils do well. Both teachers model ideas well to show pupils what they can do and give them ideas to incorporate in their own work. The practice of taking time at the end of a lesson, or at the end of a unit of work, to review what has been learned leads to the pupils' very good knowledge of what they are learning and a desire to learn more.

- 18 The contribution of the very skilled classroom assistants enables the school to meet the needs of all the different groups of pupils well. In one instance a pupil with special educational needs received help in understanding the task and in setting out the work. In another the assistant worked with the younger pupils, encouraging and challenging them well, leaving the teacher free to concentrate on providing the older pupils with the additional stimulus they needed to work at their own level and make progress.
- 19 Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught by a specialist teacher who comes into school for one day each week. The teaching is very well organised so that pupils learn alongside others in a small group but nonetheless receive the specialist support they require. They receive very good quality help from support assistants during the rest of the week. Detailed notes are kept about each pupil's learning so that the pupils can be consistently taught. Some of the strategies to help pupils to learn are very well tailored to suit pupils' individual needs, such as the 'visual listening poster' placed at the side of the teacher. It serves as a visual reminder to pupils to listen and has a moveable star so that they can see when they are successful. This enables pupils to monitor their own capacity to listen and to learn.
- 20 The quality of teaching of reception age pupils is very good in all areas of learning. A strong feature of the teaching is the very good deployment of assistant staff and the emphasis on learning through role-play. In spite of the very cramped classroom, the teaching provides very well for imaginative and adventurously conceived activities. Inventive use is made of ordinary tables and chairs to create different make-believe situations such as a café or an old-fashioned coach.
- 21 There are nevertheless times in the teaching of reception aged pupils when they could be allowed to do more for themselves. For example, in one lesson, the children could have spread cream cheese on to the biscuits and pieces of celery as well as decorating them with currants and triangular shaped pieces of pepper. Elsewhere in the school, the marking does not always offer the pupils enough help in improving their work for next time. In some lessons, where the teacher's management skills are less well developed, the quality of pupils' learning is only average. Clearer instructions, a tighter timescale and better articulated expectations would help improve pupils' focus on what they are learning.

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

- 22 The school's good curriculum provides the pupils with well conceived opportunities for learning which interpret the National Curriculum well, and in which the different subjects support and illuminate each other well. For example, the project on the ancient Egyptians, on the face of it a history project, also provided scope for extended writing. Some very good accounts told the story of Howard Carter in the Valley of the Kings; others described the excitement of going to Liverpool to see Egyptian objects. The

geography, design and technology and information and communication technology potential of the subject was also well developed, and pupils made the most of the opportunity for independent work to practise individual study skills, and use their research, library and reference skills.

- 23 This is achieved without compromising the integrity of the different subjects of the National Curriculum or the effectiveness of the national literacy and numeracy strategies, except to the extent that the use of mathematics across the curriculum is under developed. Given the constraints of a two-teacher school, good progress has been made in addressing the concerns raised in the last inspection report: the documentation of all the subjects is now in place, either, as is the case for example of English, mathematics and science, fully developed and of good quality, or as is the case with history or music, in outline with a programme set for completion. Although aspects of health education are well addressed through the healthy schools project, drugs and sex education remain under developed.
- 24 The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. It is well organised so that pupils learn alongside and at the same time as others. So, for example, specialist support is provided for them within lessons so that they do not miss out on subjects such as art and music where they might have special talents. The small size of the school and the flexibility that goes with mixed age classes enables the needs of pupils with additional gifts or talents to be well accommodated.
- 25 The children of reception age experience a good curriculum addressing all their areas of learning. The mixed-age class allows their curriculum also to be flexible and so higher attainers or more mature children can work alongside older pupils for aspects of the curriculum such as literacy, numeracy and art while younger or less mature children have the opportunity to work with visiting nursery aged children, learning to share outside play equipment.
- 26 A particularly rich programme of visits and visitors strengthens the curriculum and supplements pupils' experiences. Musicians of different traditions visit the school to perform and run workshops. Parents with particular expertise use it to broaden pupils' understanding of their specialisms. The school works well with other schools, in the local school development group to broaden the range of reference in subjects like art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. The immediate environment supports local studies well, the school buildings, the neighbouring houses and the village church all providing rich material for study. Pupils of all ages, by their own accounts, have found the history visits stimulating and illuminating. 'Our group observed jewellery,' wrote one Year 6 pupil after going to the Liverpool Museum. 'The jewellery was exquisite.' A visit to a school in an urban area gave insights into a different way of life.
- 27 The programme of extra-curricular activity offered the pupils is satisfactory in the context of the school. Pupils have the opportunity for different sports, in association with other schools. The residential visit to an outdoor centre in north Wales provides another range of experiences including those directed at pupils' personal and social development.
- 28 The school's provision for pupils' personal development is good because of the way the different aspects are carefully integrated. Parents appreciate the way the family atmosphere encourages pupils to take responsibility for each other and the School Council, on which all age groups are represented, formalises this relationship between older and younger pupils. The link with the Foundation and the vicar's sensitive acts of worship make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development. It also contributes to

pupils' developing understanding of what is right and wrong, where it is well supported by the role models provided by all the adults. The measures to provide for pupils' understanding of different cultures are strong. Pupils have visited a multi-cultural school celebrating Divali as part of the experience. They ran a 'music down the line' project which studied music at different points on the meridian, and included corresponding with a school in Ghana. Educational visits are planned to make the most of the social and cultural opportunities offered.

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

- 29 The school's caring environment and strong family atmosphere, parents say, makes the school particularly attractive to them. They ensure that pupils can flourish. The school's procedures to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are satisfactory, and by appropriate collaboration with different agencies support the needs of individual pupils. Named staff are responsible for child protection and they ensure that all staff are aware of relevant procedures. This is an improvement on the position reported last time. Pupils are well known to staff, and feel confident to approach any adult if they have worries or concerns. Pupils are also encouraged to support each other if anybody is hurt or upset.
- 30 The school provides a safe and caring environment in which pupils and staff can work, with clear procedures for reporting and recording accidents. However, some areas of the playground surface rightly cause parents concern. There are uneven or damaged patches which hold water alongside a worn surface that in places becomes very slippery so that in some conditions it is not suitable for physical education lessons.
- 31 The school has satisfactory procedures to monitor attendance and takes reasonable steps to promote pupils' regular attendance. Parents are clear about the procedures they have to follow if their child is absent. Pupils' academic and personal development needs are met by staff knowing each individual child and they quickly recognise any change in behaviour or attitudes to learning. Pupils with special educational needs are very well provided for with personal needs included in their individual educational programs. These are reported to parents annually through the school reports.
- 32 The school's high expectations of pupils' behaviour are well supported by consistently applied reward systems. In the fortnightly reward assemblies, each adult member chooses a pupil to receive certificates in recognition of their good work or attitudes to school and each other. Photographs of the occasion are then kept in a Book of Recognition. The school does not tolerate anti-social behaviour, such as bullying, and there is no evidence of it. There are suitable procedures to follow if there is any inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour. The school's procedures for rewards and sanctions, though informal, are working well to promote very good behaviour.
- 33 Assessment procedures are satisfactory, in line with those reported last time, and are used to inform lesson planning. The school has developed thorough systems in English, mathematics and science to assess pupils' work at the end of topics but these have yet to be extended consistently to the other subjects of the curriculum. The school analyses available data, including the results of statutory assessment tests and other information. By this means it can respond to overall weaknesses and long and medium term planning can be adapted to ensure that the curriculum is properly covered.

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

- 34 Links with parents maintain the very good position reported last time. Parents wholeheartedly support the school and its work, and are very satisfied with what it provides and the good standards the pupils achieve. They say they always feel welcome and find all the staff very approachable. They like the way their children are expected to work hard and achieve their best.
- 35 Parents receive regular, good quality information through newsletters and the detail about topics that pupils are studying is particularly informative. It enables parents to support their children's learning by sharing first-hand experiences. The school holds curriculum evenings for parents, which have recently included an evening on health education, linked to physical education. Many parents appreciate these evenings, which inform them of changes in the education system. The annual written reports, issued at the end of the academic year, clearly inform parents of their children's progress both academically and in their personal development. They inform parents of the areas their children have studied over the year, giving ideas for development enabling parents to support their children if they are experiencing difficulties. Parent consultation evenings throughout the year also provide information on the progress that the children are making. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed and fully involved in their children's learning.
- 36 The prospectus is a well-presented and helpful document given to families as pupils enter the school. The annual governors' report to parents informs them of the work of the governors and the school. Both documents meet statutory requirements, although some of the information lacks sufficient detail; for example, on special educational needs, and little is said about the resources the school has and how they are used to help pupils.
- 37 A number of parents regularly help in classrooms with reading, art work or by mounting work and photocopying. The school greatly values this help. Parents appreciate and enjoy the school performances. The active parent-teacher association works hard to arrange social and fund-raising activities so that the school's equipment or facilities can be enhanced and further support pupils' progress. These often involve the rest of the village which strongly supports the school.

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

- 38 The excellent leadership provided by the headteacher represents a significant improvement since the last inspection and its effects can be seen in the excellent attitudes pupils have towards the school, their intense interest and enthusiasm for all its activities. It derives from his energy and his commitment to the school. He is clear where the school is to go and his grasp of appropriate detail while retaining the overall picture means he can take appropriate management action to turn the vision into reality through effective teamwork. His willingness to consult others and to create fruitful, productive relationships with pupils, staff, parents and governors creates the characteristic atmosphere of the school and makes each feel valued and thus enabled to make an individual contribution to its work.
- 39 The concerned and committed governors have good strategies for managing the school and bring with them a wide range of experience and expertise which they place at its service. They provide good general support. They are wisely organised into suitable committees so that all aspects of the school receive due consideration, and individual governors have accepted responsibility for monitoring particular aspects of the school. The recent acquisition of land and the erection of the new building are testimony to their

effectiveness in conceiving and implementing an appropriate strategy for school development.

- 40 The governors have, however, yet to move to the position where they exercise a more focused monitoring role, particularly in relation to pupils' standards of achievement. Nor have they yet acknowledged the further role of governors in a very small school to provide additional challenge to the headteacher, or to seek additional ways of supporting the headteacher, by, for example, taking responsibility for managing their own agenda, or providing a foil by which ideas for the school's development can be rigorously tested.
- 41 The headteacher provides excellent professional support to staff and pupils. Internal arrangements for monitoring the school's activity, facilitated by the school's small size and the individual attention available to each pupil, are good. They contribute well to the school's ability to help pupils improve standards through an appropriate programme of lessons and other activities. The school is well placed to improve this area of its work by increasing the level of formality with which the assessment and monitoring of individual pupils are recorded, in each subject so that areas of concern are quickly taken up and promptly dealt with. Curriculum co-ordination has made good progress since the last inspection, and because a suitable framework is in place, the school is well placed to continue to improve.
- 42 The school improvement plan, focused on pupils' standards, is good, indicating clearly the main lines of development for the next three years. The headteacher knows what needs to be done, and the documents set out a suitable order of priorities with realistic timescales. Spending decisions are carefully considered in the light of the priorities, and governors rigorously challenge themselves to pursue the best value for the money they commit, carefully evaluating the decisions in the light of their effect on pupils' standards.
- 43 The quality of the accommodation is much improved since the last inspection, and now information and communication technology is more widely available it is well used both in teaching and administration. There is sufficient space for the present number of pupils and outside play areas for the older pupils are adequate. However, despite much ingenious lesson planning, lack of a suitable space restricts the aspects of physical education that can be taught, with a corresponding effect on standards. The Governors have rightly given priority to developing the accommodation for children of reception age: it is at present without a number of essential features which the current building project is set to rectify.

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

- 44 There are no issues for action. In the context of the school's many strengths, the following comparatively minor issues should be considered by the governors and headteacher:
  - Achieve greater governor involvement in monitoring standards.  
(paragraph 40)
  - Make better use of mathematics across the curriculum.  
(paragraphs 23, 65)
  - Improve the quality of drugs and sex education.  
(paragraph 23)
  - Improve the assessment of subjects other than English, mathematics and science.  
(paragraph 33)
  - Improve the condition of the playground  
(paragraphs 30 and 43)



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	18
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	10	7	1	0	0	0
Percentage	0	56	39	6	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)	51
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

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	10

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

### Attendance

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
%	%

School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.6

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.*

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	47
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

**Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.25
Average class size	25.5

**Education support staff: YR - Y6**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	37

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2002
	£
Total income	127009
Total expenditure	125250
Expenditure per pupil	2665
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	1759

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	51
Number of questionnaires returned	29

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	31	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	34	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	62	34	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	31	21	0	0
The teaching is good.	76	17	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	45	3	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	86	7	0	3	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	24	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	52	41	0	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	83	14	0	3	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	34	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	36	7	18	11

## **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**

- 45 Children are taught in a mixed age class of Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Most children have attended the local nursery and playgroups. They enter school at the start of the term in which they are five and half the current group have summer birthdays. The school has very good links with the pre-school establishments and children from the nursery work with those in the reception for two afternoons each week. This benefits the attainment of the younger children who otherwise would have only a short time in the reception year. The mixed age class allows the children to work at the level they need; accordingly, higher attaining children work with Year 1 for some aspects of literacy, for example.
- 46 Attainment on entry to the reception class is usually below average. This year it is broadly average. The children achieve well because they are very well taught and by the end of the reception year have achieved above average standards in communication, language and literacy and in personal, social and emotional development; and broadly average standards in all other areas of learning including those such as creative and physical development where standards are influenced by pupils physical maturity. The quality of teaching is very good in all areas of learning and in the areas such as language development, where it can have the greater impact, standards are high. A strong feature of the teaching is the very good deployment of assistant staff and the emphasis on learning through role-play, and the planning for the mixed-age class enables pupils to experience a flexible curriculum which meets their needs well. In spite of the very cramped classroom, the teaching provides very well for imaginative and adventurously conceived activities. An area for development is to let the children do more for themselves.

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

- 47 The recent initiative, whereby children of nursery age work alongside those of reception age, clearly helps the children to achieve well, grow in confidence and make the most of starting school. Reception aged children quickly get to know the class routines and follow them very well. They listen attentively, confidently contribute to discussions and are unafraid to speak in front of the whole school in assemblies. The children show mature attitudes to learning for they choose an activity and persevere for a good length of time before moving on to the next. The quality of teaching is very good: the teacher's calm manner is a major contributor to the children's calm and industrious approach and they respond very well to the imaginative activities provided for them. They co-operate well and have a great deal of fun talking to each other and playing together in a constructive way. Sometimes they become totally absorbed in what they are doing; some of the youngest children sent into the role-play area with glove puppets and asked to make up a story involving them were to be found there some time later, still intently engaged in the task.

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

- 48 The quality of teaching is very good, so that children's skills in language and literacy and their basic communication skills are more advanced than those to be expected of pupils of this age. Supported by their excellent attitudes they achieve well. By the end of the reception year they are beginning to read and to write well. Higher attainers, after

discussion with the learning support assistant, are able to write a short sentence unaided. The letters are legible and most are correctly formed. The children read back what they have written accurately and fluently. The youngest children, who have only been in school for a few weeks, are not yet writing but compose a sentence orally. The children communicate very well with each other, devising their own story using puppets, without direct supervision. They are mature for their age, taking turns in conversation. Higher attainers speak clearly and audibly; others express themselves effectively. When pretending to be in a café, the children put on special play-acting voices to order food while the 'waiter' solemnly writes down their order, correctly writing some of the letters in 'banana', for instance. The teaching provides very good opportunities for children to learn through talk and play. They tell stories confidently which the support assistant records, with a proper introduction: 'We made up stories about Sid and he was sleeping in his basket and then decided to go for a walk.' A development would be to let the children tape their stories themselves. The flexible provision made for children at different stages of development is very discreet: enabling higher attainers to work for 20 minutes with Year 1 pupils is a particular example.

### **Mathematical development**

- 49 The children have many opportunities to learn basic skills in mathematics at their own level and also to learn more advanced skills as they acquire additional learning from listening to older pupils in initial sessions of the daily mathematics lesson. This helps them achieve well, and greatly benefits the learning of higher attainers. For example, they begin to recognise and understand the value of coins and in line with pupils in Year 1 begin to work out sums using coins to the value of 10p. Younger and average attainers accurately match coins and show a great deal of interest in counting them out to 'pay' for meals in their make-believe café. Adults take pains to pop into the café and so the children are kept busy and totally absorbed with a great deal of calculating and speaking as a result. They scurry round to sort out the bill and confidentially say that it is not real money. The teaching is very skilled and the degree to which adults enter the make-believe world enhances the children's development: it becomes imperative to sort out the correct change quickly when the 'customer' has a bus to catch. As a result, the children learn to count accurately and to co-operate well, developing very good attitudes to the subject. The teaching makes very good use of all available time and so, for example, when packing away the cutlery and crockery, the children know that they have to count out four of everything.

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

- 50 The children are on course to meet the expected level of learning in knowledge and understanding of the world. They learn a great deal in a short time and are very interested in the diverse activities. The very good teaching is well organised so that the children benefit from whole-class introductory sessions but have a lot of time to explore through imaginative play. In one instance, when looking at pictures of old and new vehicles, the children found it hard to work out which was which. Higher attainers quickly grasped that 'The old cars have old lights,' and another pointed out, 'They don't have them like that now but in history they do.' The children really enjoyed setting up a make-believe coach journey. They organised chairs into rows and dressed up in hats and shawls while the 'bus driver' donned his cap and declared they were off to South Wales. Through preparing a picnic, the children learnt that 'currants are cooking stuff' and they are very sure that 'you can only have picnics outside'. Higher attainers benefit from working alongside older pupils. One drew a recognisable butterfly which he identified as a peacock butterfly. Younger pupils co-operated very well together to play in the sand with toy frogs, leaves and water to create an imaginary landscape. Although the

classroom is very small, an area is set aside for children to explore; currently this is an African hunting lodge which is used very well to broaden the children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

### **Physical development**

- 51 In spite of the limitations of space, the school makes good provision for the children's physical development. The quality of teaching is very good and pupils' attitudes in response are positive. Very good use is made of support assistants to ensure that reception children have the opportunity to ride large wheeled toys when the nursery children are visiting. They know that they have to take turns if two people want to ride the same toy. They busily decide where to make a road using cones, and then ride round competently with good control of their vehicles, enjoying the sudden rush of speed on the downward slope. They play very well together, using the 'Stop/Go' signs 'to stop people being run over'. Although there is not a lot of space inside, the children have adequate opportunities to build using construction toys and their ability to control pencils, scissors and crayons is about at the level expected of their age.

### **Creative development**

- 52 The very good teaching makes good use of incidental moments to foster the children's creative development. In one instance, it was through song. After practising as a group children confidently performed for the rest of their class and happily joined in the class singing the final song of the music lesson. Along with pupils in Years 1 and 2, the children visited the local church to look at the kneelers and to draw the patterns they could see. Their work is very individual and some drew recognisable shapes. They enjoy using water-based crayons and then seeing how the colour runs when they add water to their finished drawings. Their printing of repeated patterns is of an average standard. The teaching is however hampered somewhat by the lack of space and access to water and pupils' achievement is accordingly reduced.

## **ENGLISH**

- 53 Small numbers make the analysis of national test results difficult to interpret and assessment results are not published if there are ten or fewer pupils in the age group. However, the results achieved by eleven-year-olds over the past three years have been generally above average, with some higher-attaining pupils doing very well. These results are average when compared with those of schools where a similar proportion of pupils is entitled to free school meals. As measured by the assessment results over a similar period, pupils' attainment at the age of seven has been nearer to the national average but below the average for similar schools in both reading and writing. This is echoed in the work of the present generation of pupils which is consistent with average results at seven and above average results at eleven. When the pupils' attainment on entry to the school is taken into account, they are achieving well both in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6 and very well overall.
- 54 Standards of speaking and listening are good by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are very attentive, listening carefully to both the teacher and each other waiting to speak in their turn. In discussing a recent history project involving a visit to Shrewsbury, Year 2 pupils spoke with enthusiasm, confidently using a good vocabulary and expressing their ideas in well-constructed sentences. This is the result of teaching which provides many opportunities for the pupils to listen and respond thoughtfully. For example, 'talking groups' pair Year 1 and Year 2 pupils together to help

them refine ideas. In particular, the teacher is skilled at allowing pupils enough time to process their thoughts into words, and encouraging them to articulate them accurately.

- 55 Most pupils between the ages of seven and eleven are confident speakers in informal and formal situations. They listen carefully and speak well, partly because the teacher uses questioning well to extend their skills. By the age of eleven, most pupils are thoughtful and express ideas well in properly formed sentences.
- 56 Standards of reading are average at the ages of both seven and eleven, but there is a very big range of attainment. The highest-attaining seven-year-olds read fluently and accurately, using different ways of tackling unfamiliar words. They talk about what they are reading and explain why they like certain stories. Average attainers also read skilfully, but not always accurately although they recognise many words; the lower attainers read the words but with incomplete comprehension. By the age of eleven, the highest-attaining pupils read widely and talk enthusiastically about the kind of books they enjoy. They read aloud accurately, but are not always good at conveying the meaning of what they read. The middle and lower-attaining pupils read accurately but are not yet fluent. Most pupils at seven and eleven can use a contents page or index effectively but, because they have little relevant experience, their library skills are unsatisfactory.
- 57 The standard of pupils' writing is average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. The highest-attaining seven-year-olds write an interesting story opening but many pupils the same age would write much more and vary their sentence structure more. Their handwriting and spelling are usually accurate; capital letters and full stops are properly used. Middle and lower-attaining pupils are not short of ideas: for example, a poem called 'The sun wakes up' contains a good sequence of ideas. However they lack the skills to record them. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 tackle a good range of writing styles increasingly well. By the time they are eleven, the higher-attaining pupils draft their work, and write cogently using well-constructed sentences and an enterprising vocabulary: 'When the Nile floods there is thick black mud, brilliant for crops, so there is generally enough food for everyone'. Handwriting and presentation are very good and spelling mostly accurate. Pupils confidently discuss two sides of a question and present good arguments before coming to a conclusion. Instructions on 'How to make a mummy' have every appearance of enabling the reader to succeed. The writing of the middle and lower attaining pupils is usually competent showing good ideas and a secure grasp of structure, even if the handwriting is sometimes irregular and ill-formed.
- 58 Pupils' literacy skills are well supported in other subjects. The recent history topic generated a good deal of interest which made the writing lively and informative. Pupils learn appropriate technical language in mathematics. Science study gives pupils good opportunities to write well-ordered records of what they have done. Pupils are given practice in interrogating different sources for research in topics. Information and communication technology provides good support for the subject.
- 59 Pupils learn at a very good rate because the quality of the teaching they experience is very good and ensures their continuing interest, commitment and involvement. The key to the successful teaching lies in the warm, productive relationship the teachers establish, their detailed knowledge of English as a subject and meticulous planning. The thorough organisation means that pupils of different ages and different needs, including those with special educational needs, are provided with work that is suitably challenging. As a result, pupils know where they stand and the supportive relationship gives them confidence to work independently. In both classes pupils respond to the high expectations of their interest and involvement with excellent attitudes and very good behaviour. The teachers' use of questioning is excellent in both classes. It keeps pupils



involved and motivated. It assesses, cajoles, challenges and maintains the attention of pupils of different ages and ability. Lessons proceed at a well judged pace which helps pupils make progress in different ways. Sometimes the pace is brisk as in some lessons in the juniors. Here the teacher injects a sense of urgency by setting time limits for the different tasks. At other times it is gentler and allows pupils time to think out what they want to say. The skills of the classroom assistants are used well to ensure that pupils of different abilities participate fully. Marking is supportive, although sometimes it gives insufficient guidance to pupils on how to improve.

- 60 There has been good progress since the last inspection and the school is well placed to improve. The quality of teaching, then good, is now very good. Teaching in the subject is now based on the National Literacy Strategy which gives it structure and uses pupils' time well. Good subject leadership is now in place with well considered plans for the future.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 61 Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 and close to average by the end of Year 2. The test results achieved by eleven-year-olds over the past three years have been generally above average, about a third of the pupils gaining results appropriate to thirteen year olds. However, when these results are compared with those of schools where a similar proportion of pupils is entitled to free school meals they are below average. As measured by assessment results over a similar period, pupils' attainment at the age of seven has been below both the national average and the average for similar schools. Pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve very well in relation to the level at which they start. Although this is similar to the findings of the last inspection, aspects of both the teaching and of the pupils' learning in mathematics including numeracy, have improved since then and pupils' attainment is now more consistent than it was five years' ago.
- 62 There are several reasons for this improvement. The national numeracy strategy is used very well and has raised teachers' expectations of what the pupils can achieve. The quality of teaching is very good and the subject is well led. Because of the way the classes are organised many pupils follow programmes of learning which are adapted well to suit their individual needs. This benefits particularly both higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs. The school makes very good use of support assistants and additional teachers to give extra assistance to those pupils who require it and to give variety to the teaching. One day a week, for example, a specialist teacher of pupils with special educational needs takes the daily mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 while another teacher takes pupils in years 5 and 6. This means that all the pupils in Years 3 to 6 therefore benefit from being taught in very small groups and gain from the additional expertise of the support assistant, when they work independently. The mathematics co-ordinator regularly monitors the teaching, pupils' work and the questions they attempt in national tests. For example, a close analysis of trends in pupils' attainment revealed that pupils had most difficulties answering questions on shape, area and probability. These units of work have since been moved to later in the school year and consequently higher and average attainers in Year 6 are able to work in these areas at a higher level as they have gained over the year in maturity, confidence and in understanding.
- 63 Standards for pupils in the current Year 2 are close to those expected of pupils their age. This is good achievement for this particular group of pupils for their attainment on entry to the school was below average. They cover a wide range of work and have many opportunities to use mathematics to solve practical problems. The quality of teaching is

very good. Lessons are very well planned to challenge pupils of different levels of attainment. The initial sessions are handled particularly skilfully for questioning is directed at pupils of different ages as well as abilities. Pupils are very responsive and listen attentively for when it is their turn to answer. The fast pace and the teacher's keen sense of fun ensure that this is enjoyable and that pupils rise to the challenge to respond speedily when asked to double numbers or count in tens and hundreds. Pupils in Year 2 can work out the missing numbers to solve a multiplication sum. Average and higher attainers find it hard to use their knowledge of doubles and halves to solve problems such as finding out how many sweets there are in six bags if one bag holds ten. Pupils work hard on their own to complete tasks in the required time. At the end of the lesson, pupils explain to others what they have learnt. This benefits the attainment of younger pupils as they learn from the older ones what the next stage of their learning will be. Often these closing sessions are used to provide additional challenge. For example, in one lesson, from explaining how to give change from £1, pupils were challenged to extend this to £100 and quickly began to see the pattern in numbers and in the method of calculation as a result.

- 64 The quality of teaching and of pupils' learning in the Year 3 to 6 class is also very good. Pupils build on what they have learnt in the Year 1/2 class and by the end of Year 6 standards are above average. Much of the work is practical and requires pupils to use and apply their knowledge. The work is interesting, wide-ranging and challenging. The teaching encourages pupils to keep their work in a book with a contents page which can be used later for reference. By the end of Year 6, pupils have an advanced understanding of place value; for example, they use their knowledge of decimal places to work out whether 51.24 is nearer in relation to 51.2 or 51.3. They have a good understanding of different triangles and use their knowledge of angles to help them to measure accurately. Higher attainers really enjoy solving problems and write about their discoveries with a laudable use of mathematical language. For instance, when working out how to wrap 24 cubes in the best shape so as to use the least amount of packaging, their calculations of dimension and surface area led them to conclude, 'We found that the least number of faces you can see the less paper you will need.' The teaching is inventive and pupils clearly gain a great deal from the challenging puzzles they are set. Higher and average attaining pupils do similar work in terms of content but there is a greater element of extended problem solving for higher attainers and of practical application for average and lower attaining pupils. 'Tangrams for sale' is an interesting example of the way the teaching links various elements of mathematics such as shape, space, measure, proportional amounts and calculations involving money. This exercise taxed pupils to fit the shapes within the Chinese puzzle, the tangram, to a proportion of a total cost in relation to their size. Higher attainers did this admirably.
- 65 Pupils achieve very well overall and the emphasis on practical mathematics and recording, presenting their calculations and results logically, clearly lead to above average standards. There is good provision for higher attaining pupils and for those who have special gifts or talents. Mathematics, including numeracy, is underused in information and communication technology, design and technology, science and geography.

## SCIENCE

- 66 Standards are above average at the end of Year 6 and close to average by the end of Year 2. In the national tests, over the last three years, nearly two thirds of the pupils in Year 6 have obtained results appropriate to thirteen year olds, almost all of the remainder getting results appropriate to eleven-year-olds. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well throughout their time in school and very well overall in

relation to their attainment when they first come to school. Standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection. Improvements can be seen, however, in the way pupils record their work and in the greater emphasis on pupils evaluating their own progress.

- 67 There are several reasons for the standards being above average. The resources for learning are good and although storage and space are a problem the teaching overcomes this well to give pupils many opportunities for investigative work. The planning is very thorough and work in the Year 1/2 class is very well linked to the programme of work in the juniors. The quality of teaching is very good overall and skilful questioning develops the pupils' spirit of enquiry so that they become curious and want to find out for themselves. The strengths in the teaching lie in the organisation, pace and planning for pupils to learn independently. The teachers' subject knowledge is very good and so pupils are attentive because the subject is made interesting for them. Teaching in the Year 1/2 class is gentler, though nonetheless purposeful, whereas in Years 3 to 6, both the pace and the demands are more exacting.
- 68 By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of the stages of development of a caterpillar before it turns into a butterfly. Their use of scientific language such as pupa is good and using information and communication technology they record their observations accurately in a 'caterpillar diary'. They classify pictures of insects according to numbers of legs or wings and small creatures with a suitable habitat but are a bit confused about how to categorise spiders. They have excellent attitudes and are plainly interested in living things. They have the confidence to speak and to ask questions, sometimes to very good purpose. For example, a higher attainer explained as he was drawing a spider's web, 'First I drew a hexagon then drew the lines in between like a star.' The teaching concentrates on bringing pupils to the same level of understanding which provides a good basis for learning in the junior class. Pupils begin to learn how to predict and to test out hypotheses. Lower attainers can predict for instance whether the light from a candle or the sun will be brighter but find it hard to explain why. Average attainers know a lot about light and dark but find it hard to express their thoughts clearly and logically. They have good ideas for testing materials. Higher attainers explain very clearly how to make a rainbow using a mirror, water and a torch. Over the course of two years pupils clearly make good progress in making predictions and in working methodically. The marking of pupils' work is very good and sets clear targets for improvement. At this stage, however, even higher attainers do not develop their ideas at length. This well ordered account, though, indicates their keen level of interest: 'We are learning about electricity. Batteries make things work. Today we drank our experiment! We made hot chocolate with a battery whisk.'
- 69 Pupils' accurate use and good understanding of scientific vocabulary mark out their work as being above average. When presenting a food chain in a diagram, for example, pupils use and understand terms such as predator, prey, consumer, producer and transference of energy. Higher attainers explain that a food chain has to start with 'a green plant which uses photosynthesis to produce energy.' The teaching targets different questions to different age and attainment groups well so that all are challenged to think to the best of their ability. Pupils with special educational needs contribute equally well, explaining for example, how the transference of energy between plants and animals works. Lessons are conducted energetically and with good humour. The pupils respond well to the fast pace and set to work with a will. Higher attainers work very quickly, producing four food chains in ten minutes, for example. The teaching provides well for different levels of attainment; for example, while lower attainers produce annotated diagrams, higher attainers discover that decomposers such as mushrooms cannot be producers as they do not take their energy from the sun.

- 70 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 present their work on specific topics in large books where a great deal of work is covered in the space of a term. Each unit of work begins with an analysis of what the pupils know at the outset. For example, when about to study space, light and sound, pupils in an aptly entitled frontispiece 'To infinity and beyond' wrote down what they knew about space, the planets and the seasons. At the end of the book they reviewed what they had learned under the same title. The increase in pupils' knowledge is evident, being much more detailed and factual. Thus pupils' own knowledge of their learning is very good. The whole approach to science, as a way of working, to pose questions and to make observations, challenges pupils. For example, in answer to the question, 'How does the distance from the object and the screen affect the size of the shadow?' pupils decided that they 'could test out different ways of doing the test'. The teaching encourages candid appraisal and so pupils write, for example, 'If I did it again I would make sure that the mirror was straight and try not to knock the table,' when trying to work out how the angle of incidence affects the angle of reflection when light strikes a mirror. Educational visits such as to Jodrell Bank to the planetarium 'where we gazed at the ceiling and saw all these stars and sometimes it felt and looked like we were moving' clearly bring science alive. The teaching makes good provision for pupils to use information and communication technology as a tool for research as well as books. Interestingly, pupils concluded that they gained more detailed information from the latter. It under-uses the potential contribution of mathematics. That the subject is very well led contributes to the high standards achieved

## **ART AND DESIGN**

- 71 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 work confidently in colour, using a brush or printing block to apply it. They work effectively with fabrics in collage. They observe well and convincing pictures of insects, flowers and trees, for example, are the result. They develop ideas systematically, evaluating and improving their work. In an exercise on animal markings they tested several approaches before they were ready to prepare markings for a large papier maché model of a giraffe.
- 72 Year 6 pupils, working in their sketch books, demonstrate that they can observe and use a pencil skilfully to record what they see. Some studies of stones and lichen were particularly well done. There is good work with colour, printing and patterns. The sketch books are well used so that the development of art projects is well recorded and the design processes are clear. Pupils have appraised established artists. Their work in two and three dimensions for the history topic on the Egyptians has resulted in striking masks of the Pharaohs and convincing pictures of good quality, in the style of the period which use colour well.
- 73 The quality of teaching in art for the pupils in Years 3 to 6 is good. The lessons are well planned to match the needs of different ages and abilities and to challenge pupils at their own level; accordingly they respond to the subject with enthusiasm. Insufficient teaching was seen in the younger end of the school to judge its quality.
- 74 Assessment arrangements for art are not fully established. The policy and scheme, however are completed with an appropriate emphasis on the systematic development of pupils art skills.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 75 Standards in design and technology, which are affected by the limitations of the building, are similar to those reported in the last inspection. Nevertheless, the school takes great

care to ensure that limitations of space and cooking facilities do not unduly hamper pupils' progress and goes to some lengths to ensure that pupils receive an interesting and balanced curriculum. Because of the lack of storage space, only limited samples of work can be stored.

- 76 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 designed and made houses, using cardboard as the basis. They found ways to make the roofs stand up and one pupil managed to erect a large chimney stack. They identified in their plans which materials they would need and used techniques of folding, cutting and sticking to make effective hinges. When evaluating the finished product, most pupils agreed that they 'wouldn't change a thing'. Some of the designs were quite inventive and used matchsticks and small squares of card effectively to indicate the half-timbered construction.
- 77 The school makes reciprocal arrangements with other local schools to supplement its provision. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 enthusiastically recalled a day they had spent with pupils from other schools on a task to design and make an effective means of transporting a supposedly radioactive container. The task involved devising how to lift the container off the floor, how to transport it some distance and then to lift it and devise a means to carry it across a chasm. To do this they had to design and make buggies for transport, vertical structures using pulleys and bridge-building techniques all from basic materials and in competition with others in a race against time. The pupils were disarmingly self-critical and had very good ideas as to how they could have improved on their designs. They clearly enjoyed the challenge of making, designing and using materials to solve problems.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

- 78 Standards in geography are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Where improvement has been made, it is in pupils' knowledge of their own learning and so they have a very good idea of how much progress they have made.
- 79 Pupils in Year 2 use information and communication technology well to help them to label the different countries of the United Kingdom and the position of their own village. They can place their own country in relation to Africa on a globe and understand where the Arctic and Antarctica are located. When studying an African village and comparing it with their own, higher attainers noted that 'They have no carpets. They have no electricity. There are low buildings'. Much of the work is based on discussion. In the Year 3 to 6 class, pupils build on this sound basis.
- 80 As in other topics, pupils keep their work in a topic book and write down what they know at the start and what they have learned at the end, thus giving a clear self-evaluation of the progress they have made. For example, by the end of the topic based on the weather and rivers, average and higher attainers indicated that they knew that 'rivers flow faster on the outside of a bend than they do on the inside'. They understand terms like the Beaufort scale and have acquired the technical vocabulary for different types of clouds. When writing about the water cycle, for example, higher attainers gave a detailed explanation using scientific vocabulary such as 'particles' and 'pressure' and accurately used terms such as 'evaporation' and 'transpiration'.
- 81 A great deal of work is covered and pupils are taught to set it out neatly and logically. The marking tends to be rather cursory and not as detailed in the juniors as in the Year 1/2 class. The teaching gives scope for independent enquiry which enables pupils to work to their full potential. Pupils collect data over a period of time and record, for instance, cloud type as well as cover and wind direction and speed. Pupils did not go

on, however, to make mathematical use of this data. Educational visits are used well to support practical research such as measuring the depth of a stretch of river, analysing the river life from a sample as well as looking at how people use rivers and valleys. As a result, pupils gain a comprehensive knowledge and attain a good standard of work. Literacy and communication skills are reinforced well by the study of geography, where pupils have opportunities for extended writing and also for discussion, both of which extend their skills and vocabulary

## **HISTORY**

- 82 Pupils of all levels of ability including those with special gifts or talents, are achieving well in history. Pupils' good knowledge and skills are demonstrated well in accounts by Year 2 pupils of their visit to Shrewsbury to see Rowley's house. They are clear that the house, having been built a long time ago can show them what life used to be like. They know that, like some of the houses in their own village they have been to look at, it was originally built of timber with the spaces filled in with 'hay and cow manure'. They accurately describe the clothes people used to wear and compare them with their own. They remember, in particular, the jewellery of the period. They remember too making drawings of the house preparatory to making models of their own. Recording by means of the digital camera helped those with limited pencil skills to concentrate on the history. They know that the task of a historian is ask questions: Who? Why? Where? When? They are very excited about local history, especially local festivals, bringing in newspaper cuttings to explain their origin and present day practice.
- 83 Year 6 pupils make very good use of well developed independent research skills to assemble lively books full of historical information. They have made good use of different book and non-book sources and the Internet. From their accounts, the visit to Liverpool to see examples of Egyptian articles added excitement and confirmed their interest and enthusiasm. The result is pupils' good knowledge which comes from well directed history skills and good individual research. Pupils' knowledge of their own progress in each project is well focused by completing the opening and closing evaluation sheets. Literacy and communication skills are reinforced well in the study of history. They give pupils opportunities for extended writing and for discussion which extend their skills and vocabulary.
- 84 The quality of teaching is very good. It interests, stimulates, questions: it provides a good framework for independent learning and ensures pupils are excited and interested by the subject as their recently completed project on Egypt testifies.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 85 Standards are higher than at the time of the last inspection because the subject's curriculum is much better organised and the school now has good quality equipment with access to the Internet for pupils to use. Aspects of information and communication technology are above average in both classes and there are clear pointers to future improvement.
- 86 Information and communication technology is taught and used very much as a skill. In Years 1 and 2, pupils keep a detailed record of what they have learnt to do and so are aware of what they are learning. This paves the way for them to make good progress in future years. Standards are average in Year 6 because it is only in the last two years that standards have improved so much in the Year 1/2 class and it is too soon for the benefits to be felt at the top of the school. Younger pupils understand well how to open, save and print their work. They can word-process their work and use a listening centre

to listen to stories on tape and with help they can record their voices. Their use and understanding of the Internet is above average. Higher attainers explain, 'The Internet is like a very big library joined by computers.' Average attainers described the process of finding 'photographs of a zebra and a butterfly' and some of the problems of modern technology for when they tried to print out their favourite animal 'the printer wouldn't work'.

- 87 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 use information and communication technology in increasingly sophisticated ways to assist them when they are studying other subjects, including history and geography. In discussion, pupils in Years 5 and 6 enthusiastically described making buggies in design and technology and then connecting them to a remote-control device to race them to see how fast they could go. They recalled ruefully how some 'broke in the middle'. Pupils word-process their work and save it in their own folders. In one lesson, pupils were busily engaged on making a virtual map of the school, using different tools and techniques to highlight relevant information. They work well together to find out information using the Internet. They are confident users of technology and are keen to learn new techniques. The computers are all linked and so one can be used to demonstrate to the pupils using the others. The lesson seen was lively, interesting and purposeful and very well thought out to make the best possible use of available resources.

## **MUSIC**

- 88 Pupils' singing is satisfactory. In assemblies and lessons, they sing mostly in tune with an accurate rhythm, although sometimes lacking in conviction. When the teacher does not correct poor intonation, the singing is less sharp and clear than it should be.
- 89 Younger pupils are attentive, well disciplined with instruments and creative. In a very well taught lesson composing music on the theme 'A walk in the wood', they worked very well in small groups to compose a short piece contributing an aspect of the agreed theme. They played instruments, including the voice, appropriately, as directed by the conductor. They listened well. They evaluated their own work and each other's work sensitively giving cogent reasons for their judgements. They were so involved in the work of the lesson that their attitudes and behaviour were exemplary.
- 90 Older pupils play and sing mostly accurately in response to the teachers' coaching. Boys and girls learn well, and can produce a final performance involving different layers of instrumental and vocal sound.
- 91 The quality of music teaching is good. Lessons are well planned from the basis of a good knowledge of the subject and, building on previous work, provide a good variety of musical experiences. This retains pupils' interest throughout and they concentrate well. Demonstration and explanation are good so that pupils can hear what is expected of them. Praise encourages pupils: as a result, they have the confidence to perform well. Supported in this way, pupils behave well, enjoy the lessons and make good progress.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 92 The quality of teaching is very good in both classes but overall standards are not as high as they could be because of the limitations imposed by the accommodation. The recent outbreak of foot and mouth disease restricted the use of the school field for a year reducing the possibility of practising games skills. The school uses the village hall for gymnastics and dance and the playground as often as possible to maximise the amount of time given to the subject. The playground surface, though, is very slippery and that, combined with the slope and its small size, add further restrictions on the speed at

which pupils can move and the scope of the activities they can undertake. It is because the teaching is so good that pupils achieve as well as they do. The school has good links with other schools and outside agencies to give pupils opportunities to play games competitively.

- 93 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know that 'when you run round you make the blood go faster' and that 'you have to start slowly to get the muscles working'. The teaching is very imaginative and pupils played 'Pirates' with relish, performing appropriate actions to commands like 'Ship ahoy!' and 'Climb the rigging' before racing to 'Get aboard' by standing inside one of the hoops scattered about the playground. Pupils perform with a high degree of independence and so not a moment is wasted. For example, pupils called out commands for the game called 'Sharks and Fishes'. This involved pupils' co-operation and co-ordination and left the teacher free to set up the next activity which involved a circuit of objects to throw and catch in different ways.
- 94 Because of the care that has to be taken on account of the slippery playground surface, pupils cannot perform as uninhibitedly as they should. This was very evident in lesson for pupils in Years 3 to 6 where during a ten-minute run round a 50 metre square in which pupils were attempting to improve upon their personal best, four pupils fell and grazed themselves. Pupils enjoyed developing their skills in striking and endeavoured to carry out the principle that a strike makes the ball travel. Some of the plastic racquets were a little small for some pupils. They enjoy playing competitively and co-operate well in team games. Because all pupils go swimming every year, standards are above average in this aspect of physical education.