

INSPECTION REPORT

CHALGROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Finchley, London

LEA area: London Borough of Barnet

Unique reference number: 101309

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Schmitz

Reporting inspector: John William Paull
22028

Dates of inspection: 23 - 25 September 2002

Inspection number: 246111

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Infant and junior |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 to 11 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Chalgrove Gardens Finchley London |
| Postcode: | N3 3PL |
| Telephone number: | 020 8349 1798 |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs Ruth Montague |
| Date of previous inspection: | 02 February 1998 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|--------------------|----------------------|--|---|
| 22028 | John William Paull | Registered inspector | Information and communication technology Music Foundation Stage Special educational needs | What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? |
| 1112 | Peter Oldfield | Lay inspector | | How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents? |
| 18480 | Douglas Lowes | Team inspector | English Art Design and technology Physical education Educational inclusion | |
| 16773 | Raminder Arora | Team inspector | English as an additional language Science Religious education | How well are pupils taught? |
| 20324 | Vera Morris | Team inspector | Mathematics Geography History | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Chalgrove Community School for boys and girls in Finchley, in the London Borough of Barnet, is smaller than the average primary school, and has 191 four to 11-year-olds on roll. Pupils currently attending the school are from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. The majority are white, including groups from other European countries. Other large groups are from black and Asian backgrounds. Just over half the pupils are from homes where English is an additional language, which is very high, and just over four per cent are at early stages of acquiring English. The main languages represented are Farsi, Somali, Pashto and Hindi. Currently, about 26 per cent are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is above average. Nearly 32 per cent of pupils are identified with special educational needs, which is well above average. Most of these pupils experience learning difficulties that are dealt with by the school itself, although a few require help from outside agencies to meet their needs. Six pupils have a Statement of Special Needs, which is above average for a school of this size. The overall attainment of pupils entering the school is below average and while the circumstances of families in the immediate locality are above average, most pupils who attend come from less privileged areas a little further away.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Chalgrove provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and is improving rapidly. The school has passed through a difficult period of instability in its staffing since its last inspection, which affected morale badly. As a result, National Curriculum test results fell away. Standards are about average now and beginning to rise again under the very strong leadership of a new headteacher and the good, supportive management of a recently formed team, which includes the deputy head and a teacher with nationally recognised advanced skills. This new direction is based on accurate identification and correction of weaknesses, thereby raising pupils' achievements in relation to their knowledge and skills when they start at the school. The capacity to succeed with further key improvements is strong. Governors share this renewed vision. All the staff are very conscientious and hard working. Overall, teaching is now good. Consequently, pupils of different prior attainments, including those with special educational needs and these from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, are learning effectively. Behaviour is generally very good. Taking these and similar factors into account, Chalgrove is now achieving sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Helped its leavers in 2002 to gain good Year 6 National Curriculum test results in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards in physical education and singing are generally above expected levels.
- Standards of behaviour, general politeness and relationships within the school are very good.
- The overall quality of teaching is good.
- The headteacher's leadership is very strong, which is producing good teamwork amongst the staff, willingness to put new policies into practice and a strong commitment to improve.
- The school's new systems of assessment are good.
- Arrangements for pupils' personal development, including personal, social and emotional development in the Reception class, are strong.

What could be improved

- Owing to gaps in past teaching and learning, attainment in English, mathematics and science is not always high enough.
- Standards in information and communication technology and in design and technology are below expected levels.
- Uses of assessment to set targets for pupils and to adapt plans to meet their different needs are not sufficiently embedded in practice (time since their introduction has been short).
- Attendance is well below the national average and a few parents regularly bring their children to school late.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

At the time of the last inspection, in February 1998, the quality of education in the school was good and, by Year 6, attainment in English, mathematics, science, and art and design was often higher than it is now. However, weaknesses were identified in the management and efficiency of the school. The school then passed through a period of instability, including a high turnover amongst its teaching staff. Over the same period, several pupils left and others entered the school during the year. A new headteacher has now taken up the leadership of the school and several new governors have recently joined. The main issues in the last report are being addressed, so improvement is satisfactory. For example, the senior management of the school has been reorganised. The situation now appears more stable and, based on the 2002 National Curriculum test results, indications are that the new structure is proving effective. Teaching is good and standards of attainment have begun to rise. A good system for assessing pupils' progress has been introduced. However, insufficient time has passed for it to provide enough information for full use. The school now meets several of the statutory requirements that were identified as not met in the last report. For example, a prospectus has been produced, and religious education and collective worship now comply with what is required. In a short time, the new headteacher has introduced and reviewed several policies, including those related to marking, home learning and behaviour. Senior managers and governors acknowledge that a lot more remains to be done. However, inspectors confirm parents' views that the school has made considerable progress in a short time and is now improving rapidly.

STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with: | | | | Key |
|-----------------|----------------|------|------|-----------------|---|
| | all schools | | | similar schools | |
| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2002 | |
| English | D | C | B | A | well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E |
| Mathematics | D | E | A | A | |
| Science | E | E | B | A | |

The table shows a remarkable improvement in National Curriculum test results in 2002. When compared with results of all other schools nationally, these results are much higher in all three of the core subjects shown than they were in either 2000 or 2001. In English and science, results in 2002 were above average and in mathematics, were well above. One of the main contributory factors to this improvement was the much higher proportion of pupils who attained at a level higher than that normally expected. Good teaching was found during the inspection and this feature is likely to have had a strong impact on the results, helping pupils to make up any ground that they might have lost in the past. This judgement is confirmed in the work of pupils currently in Year 6, in which overall standards in the three subjects were average, but clearly improving at a fast rate. Pupils' achievements, comparing attainment now with their knowledge on joining the school, have also improved and are now satisfactory. In 2001, the school did not reach targets that were set for it in either English or mathematics but, in 2002, it did so with ease. In reading, writing, mathematics and science, overall standards of work in Year 2 are also improving. Nearly all pupils are now attaining at expected levels. Indications are that a larger number than a year ago are working at higher levels than normally expected for their age. It is inappropriate to make firm judgements about current standards in the Reception class. The school has no Nursery of its own, so children have only been in the school for up to three weeks. Different groups in the school, such as boys and girls, those from various ethnic backgrounds or these with special needs, generally make progress at similar rates to all others. Attainment in physical education and singing is often above what

is nationally expected. However, it is below expectations in information and communication technology, and design and technology.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Good - pupils enjoy learning and usually try hard in lessons. They respond with gratitude to their teachers' efforts on their behalf. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Very good - pupils are nearly always very well-behaved in classrooms. Around the school, they are polite and helpful towards visitors and each other. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good - pupils respect their teachers and show a sense of justice and concern for those less fortunate than themselves. They respect each other's cultures and are tolerant towards different customs. |
| Attendance | Poor - attendance is well below national figures. Punctuality is generally good, although a few pupils are often brought to school late. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching through the school is good. It is consistently very good in Year 6. Some very good lessons also occurred in Years 1, 2 and 5, and in an instrumental 'cello lesson. Teachers use the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well, so teaching of English and mathematics is good. Music was also taught well with examples of very good teaching. Very little unsatisfactory teaching occurred. When it did, it was because the pace of the lessons was too slow, which affected the rate of pupils' progress. Teaching of this overall good quality is contributing strongly to recent improvements in pupils' learning and to the rising levels of attainment, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and also in the Reception class and music. Furthermore, it is helping pupils to concentrate and to acquire basic skills at a good rate. Support for pupils from various backgrounds or with differing special needs is sound overall. For example, teachers and assistants ensure that pupils from a range of ethnic backgrounds are fully included in what the school offers. Throughout the school, teachers have good knowledge of the National Curriculum and, in Reception, the areas of learning for the age group are understood well. Throughout the school, management of classrooms is usually very good, helping pupils to behave well and to learn effectively.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Satisfactory – all subjects are planned adequately and enhanced by a range of visits and visitors. However, information and communication technology is not used enough to support learning in classrooms. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Satisfactory – Individual Education Plans are usually specific and well constructed. Teachers and assistants work closely together to ensure that pupils know what to do to get on with their work. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | Satisfactory – teachers ensure that pupils understand what to do next, so nearly all make progress at similar rates to other pupils in their class. However, work is not always sufficiently adapted for those at the early stages of learning English. |
|---|---|

| | |
|---|---|
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good overall – pupils are encouraged strongly: to think well of themselves and others; to enjoy life and wonder at its rich possibilities; to look after the world and to care about other people. Opportunities to work together and to contribute to the running of the school are provided well. Spiritual, moral and social opportunities are therefore good. Cultural opportunities using the rich diversity of pupils' backgrounds as a source for development are, however, occasionally missed. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Satisfactory – personal aspects, such as checking that pupils behave well to each other and looking after them, are good. However, measures to ensure good attendance and to assess progress are unsatisfactory. Improvements are, however, ready to go into place. |

The school's partnership with its parents is frank and open. Clearly, it is a rapidly improving feature.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good – the headteacher offers an excellent vision of how the school can develop and of how good it ought to be. The senior management team offers strong support, and co-ordination of subjects is an improving aspect. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Good – governors share the headteacher's vision strongly. They are realistic in their support, keen to see the school grow and willingly involved in its management and daily life. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Good – the headteacher and senior managers have quickly established means to halt and reverse declining standards. Furthermore, they have prioritised what needs to be done to carry the school forward, and ensured successfully that the quality of teaching and learning is good. |
| The strategic use of resources | Satisfactory – past weaknesses mean that resources in several important areas are depleted, which limits the usefulness of what is currently available. What is available, however, is used well and present funding is prioritised effectively. |

Senior staff and governors understand principles of best value, such as comparing prices and ensuring that expenditure achieves its intended aims. Staff at the school are knowledgeable and well suited to their roles. A good basis of experience, qualifications and commitment to the job is evident. Accommodation is generally satisfactory. However, learning resources are inadequate in some key areas, such as information and communication technology, design and technology and the stock of books in the library.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school. • Teaching is good and their children make progress. • Their children behave well in school. • The school is well led and managed and the headteacher and staff are approachable. • The school has a good range of after school | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amounts of suitable homework and information about how to help their children at home. • Information about how their children are getting on at school, and expectations of how hard their children should work and what they should achieve. |

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| clubs and activities. | |
|-----------------------|--|

Many parents expressed their confidence in the headteacher and their gratitude to the present staff for their openness, hard work and friendly approach. Inspectors agree entirely with these and parents' generally positive views. Their concerns about homework are currently being addressed with the introduction of a new home learning policy. Staff training and the introduction of a new approach to the assessment of progress at the school should go a long way to meeting parents' concerns about information and expectations of their children's progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. At the time of the last inspection, in the important areas of language, literacy and mathematical development, standards of attainment in the Reception class were often above those usually found. By the end of Year 2, attainment in English was generally above the national average and, in mathematics and science, it was broadly matching it. At the end of Year 6, in work that was seen during the inspection, standards were broadly average in English, mathematics and science, although results of the previous year's National Curriculum tests were well above national averages in English and mathematics, and above average in science. In 2001, standards indicated in the tests at the end of Year 2 were below the national average in reading, and average in writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, they were average in English, but were well below national averages in mathematics and science. In terms of a straightforward comparison, therefore, results were not as good. Furthermore, results in Year 6 reflected a falling overall trend, in which standards dropped very sharply in all three subjects from 1999 to 2000. In 2000, when attainment on entry had earlier been judged to be above average, it was unlikely that pupils' achievements, compared with their starting points, were good enough. However, this straightforward comparison cannot be taken at face value for two main reasons. Firstly the school passed through a very difficult period of high turnover of staff. As a result, morale and direction suffered, which clearly had a strong impact on bringing results down. Secondly, a high movement of pupils, both in and out of the school, followed these factors. As a result, percentages of pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are considerably higher now than they were. Numbers of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals have also risen, so several characteristics are apparent that indicate pupils' backgrounds are very different now from the time of the last inspection. This feature is also likely to be affecting results. Furthermore, the school has a completely new team of senior managers, including its headteacher, who has been in position for only one year.
2. Results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests suggest that attainment is returning to the levels of the last inspection. Attainment in this latest year compares well with that of 1997 and it is much better than in 2001. The improvement is seen in all three tested subjects, and it is particularly strong in mathematics and science. In science, for example, the 2002 results were considerably better than in either 1997 or 2001. Furthermore, a relatively high proportion of pupils attained at a level higher than that normally expected for their age. In mathematics, the 2002 results were well above average in comparison both with all schools in the country, and with similar schools. These improvements indicate that the achievement of nearly all pupils in the class, compared to when they began the National Curriculum in Year 1, was good. Differences in results of boys and girls and comparisons between ethnic groups are not statistically significant, owing to relatively small numbers in some of the groups and differences in the characteristics of subsequent year groups through the school.
3. Attainment at the end of Year 2 produces a similar picture. Overall, results in National Curriculum tests are not as good in recent years as at the time of the last inspection. However, improvements are beginning to take place. In 2002, in reading, writing and science, numbers of pupils attaining around average for their age were higher than in recent years, although improvement was less obvious in mathematics.
4. It is inappropriate to make firm judgements about standards in the Reception class. Children enter this class on a staggered basis, so at the time of the inspection, they had been in school for varying amounts of time up to a maximum of three weeks. The school has no Nursery of its own, so previously recorded work carried out by these children was not available. However, last year's work indicates that good progress is made in the Reception year. Last year's tests that are undertaken soon after young children begin at school show that attainment on entry was a little

below what is usually found. This finding is different from the last inspection, when it was a little above.

5. Analysis of work seen during the inspection confirms the recently improving picture of the National Curriculum test results. In the Years 2 and 6 (which are at the end of key stages in the National Curriculum), attainment during lessons and in pupils' books was about average overall in English, mathematics and science, and included evidence of rapid progress, supported by generally good teaching.
6. In Year 2, nearly all pupils listen attentively and speak confidently, answering teachers' questions and contributing eagerly to discussions. Several higher-attaining pupils are particularly articulate speakers, who have a broad vocabulary at their disposal. However, a few pupils, some of them with English as an additional language, are understandably less fluent and use more restricted patterns of speech. Overall, therefore, attainment is about average. By Year 6, nearly all pupils share their thoughts and ideas expressively and, when they speak, take account of their audience and of what others have said previously. Again, overall attainment is average. The large majority of pupils currently in Year 2 read accurately. A few pupils do not always use their phonetic knowledge effectively, often preferring to make guesses at whole words, before they have tried initial sounds and blends. Where this gap in understanding of how and when to use their knowledge occurs, it reduces fluency and understanding. Conversely, more able pupils read very fluently and often with expression. Currently, pupils in Year 6 read a wide range of books with confidence, enjoyment and expression. Higher attainers offer plausible inferences that they draw from what they read, and nearly all pupils use indexes to seek information. Written work is also about average overall in Years 2 and 6. However, attainment is uneven in different aspects of writing in different classes through the school. This variation is apparent in Years 3 and 4, and the most likely reason is past instability in teaching and what was taught that has caused gaps in pupils' knowledge. However, consistently very good teaching in Year 6 is causing a significant number of pupils to attain at higher levels than normally expected. Improvements in the identification and support of pupils with special educational needs are resulting in improved progress in lessons.
7. Current attainment seen in mathematics provides evidence that improvements indicated in the 2002 National Curriculum test results are likely to be sustained. Nearly all work out simple sums using paper and pencil methods and work with regular shapes at expected levels for their age. As in English, good teaching is beginning to identify and correct past weaknesses in knowledge and skills. A new system of assessment is being used to gather information about pupils' progress. At present, this system has not been in place for long enough to be used fully in this identification of what should be done next. However, its introduction is clearly a considerable improvement on previous provision. In Year 6, in work on number, shape and space and data handling, overall attainment is around average. However, several pupils demonstrated advanced thinking for their age when they explained how complicated fraction problems could be solved, suggesting that standards are rising rapidly.
8. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are employed well across the curriculum. They pinpoint relevant information in non-fiction books to use in, for example, history and geography. Numeracy is used well across the curriculum, including charts, tables and graphs to interpret and present information in, for example, science and history. Pupils understand the relative sizes of numbers as expected at different ages through the school. However, information and communication technology is not used enough.
9. In science, attainment is currently close to average through the school, which is similar to standards reported in the last inspection. Year 2 pupils, for example, are beginning to make detailed observations as they explore different groups of food items. Currently, they carry out investigations successfully, using their senses well when they are gathering information. However, a scrutiny of past work suggests that scientific tests and observations were not taught enough previously. Pupils' present studies of habitats are further examples of a growing emphasis on investigative work and are indicative of improvements. In Year 6, pupils clearly make appropriate uses of charts, diagrams and pictures. However, the use of information and communication

technology to support learning in the subject is not sufficiently apparent. A comparison of work carried out so far in this Year 6 with that in books from the beginning of last year indicates that standards are better now. Furthermore, they are improving rapidly. The use of scientific methods, such as observation and testing, and teachers' expectations of work are currently much higher and more pupils are working at the expected level.

10. In religious education, attainment broadly matches expectations of the locally agreed syllabus (what is taught in religious education is agreed after consultation within local communities) at the end of Years 2 and 6. Attainment in other subjects broadly matches what is nationally expected, except in physical education, singing, information and communication technology, and design and technology. In physical education and singing, standards are above expected levels. Pupils' singing enhances the quality of collective worship in assemblies on a daily basis. They sing with considerable enjoyment, taking note of the words and varying the tone, mood and dynamic qualities in their voices, so performances are particularly expressive. In lessons, they are beginning to use standard and non-standard forms of notation to help them to remember how they performed before. Skills in physical education cover a wider range of situations and sports than are usually found. However, in information and communication technology, and design and technology, attainment is below expectations. In information and communication technology, pupils are confident and the subject is taught well in the computer suite. However, insufficient opportunities are available for them to use and develop skills further in their classrooms. The main reason is that both hardware and software in the classrooms are inadequate to meet present expectations in this rapidly developing field. In design and technology, pupils' past experiences have been too narrow for them to develop sufficient knowledge of the uses of various materials and the skills to join them.
11. Recent improvements in the management and co-ordination of special educational needs are helping to meet pupils' requirements more closely. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall and they are learning at a similar rate to other pupils. Teaching assistants support them well. Those pupils with identified learning difficulties are included fully in the work of the classroom, usually within groups of previously lower-attaining pupils. In this way, they are included in the study of similar material to other pupils, albeit at a lower level. In general, pupils of various ethnic backgrounds, including those with English as an additional language, make progress at similar rates to other pupils. However, in the case of those at an early stage of acquiring English, work is not consistently adapted to take account of ideas that they might already understand in their home language. As a result, progress is at first slower than it might otherwise be.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attitudes, values and personal development were a strong aspect in the school. That finding has been maintained and, in some respects, is now even better. Pupils have good attitudes to school and this has a positive impact on their learning. Most of the pupils are keen to come to school and to take a very active part in what it offers. Pupils who had only recently started school in the Reception class were mostly settling well into school life. Nearly all of them appeared confident and ready to take advantage of what the school offers. One or two who were less confident were supported well by the Nursery nurse and teacher and their parents were encouraged to stay longer in the morning to help them to begin an activity. Standards of personal, social and emotional development were therefore better than might normally be expected at this time of the year.
13. Standards of behaviour around the school and in classes, including the Reception class, are very good. As a result of the staff's strong efforts to develop self-esteem, nearly all pupils are pleased to be at school and want to succeed. It is therefore surprising that attendance is as low as it is. Pupils also enjoy very good relationships with teachers, teaching assistants and all adults, which makes a significant contribution to personal development.
14. Pupils' moral development is good, and their social skills are usually very good. The rules of each class and whole school rules are well known to them and they generally follow them closely, even when not directly supervised. The result is a calm and orderly place, in which pupils are courteous

to visitors and respect property, equipment and each other. For example, when a younger pupil was carrying two pots in a corridor and struggled a little with the effort of co-ordination, two pupils in Year 5 asked where he was going and took the pots for him. Pupils with identified emotional and behavioural difficulties are supported well and usually co-operate and get on well with their work. As a result of these good arrangements, no exclusions have been necessary and, during the inspection, no incidents of bullying, sexism or racism were observed. Spiritual development is also strong. Pupils' self-esteem is generally high, so they are able to turn it outward and think well of others, their accomplishments and of the world around them. In music, for example, they are generous in their praise of others and listen well to each other's compositions. Similarly in physical education, they are willing to watch others and to learn from them. Pupils play happily together at break times. A supply of playground equipment is available and is shared well between pupils. The appointment of equipment monitors allows an organised distribution and collection of what is available. During the inspection, pupils handled the equipment in a sensible manner at all times and this maturity contributed highly to enjoyable break-times. Older pupils were frequently pleased to play with and supervise younger ones at lunch time. These responsible attitudes added to very good relationships between age groups. Lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions, where pupils chat together about their interests.

15. The school has developed several other good opportunities for pupils' personal development. For example, their ideas are taken seriously through questionnaires, which seek their opinions about how the school is run, and a School Council is supported well by teachers. Time is offered to two representatives elected from their class to gather suggestions and contribute ideas for the whole school community. Pupils in Year 6 act as chair and secretary, offering insights into the workings of formal committees and developing ideas of good citizenship. Pupils are pleased to take an active part in daily routines. For example, they willingly act as register-monitors and older pupils help with equipment in the hall. Whatever job is requested, pupils willingly accept the task, which is especially noticeable when equipment for physical education needs to be set out.
16. Attendance is poor, with levels that are well below national standards. Holidays during school terms, the poor attendance of a few pupils and absences for reasons that are doubtful or not given all contribute to this picture to varying degrees. Unauthorised absences, for example, were six times the national average in the last full year for which data were available, as several parents failed to provide details of absence, either by telephoning the school or sending a note. Such a high level of absence makes learning harder, as the amount of practice and discussion that takes place when a topic or point is presented to a whole class cannot possibly be reproduced. Standards of attainment are therefore affected adversely. Furthermore, it is unfair to class teachers, as it puts an extra burden on them of filling in work that individual pupils have missed. Although punctuality is generally good, a small number of pupils are regularly brought to school late in the morning. Lateness also affects pupils' learning, reducing the rate of their progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was described as usually sound and sometimes better. The overall quality of teaching is now good throughout the school. It is therefore better than it was in 1998. Furthermore, the very small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching was lower in this inspection and the amount of very good teaching was proportionately higher. Class teaching in Year 6 was invariably very good and examples of very good teaching were observed in Years 1, 2 and 5, and in an instrumental 'cello lesson. Throughout the inspection, teachers used the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well, so teaching of English and mathematics was good. Science and music were also taught well with examples of very good teaching. Teaching was also good in the Reception class. Children had only been in the school for up to three weeks, so the emphasis on personal, social and emotional development helped them to feel settled and at ease. As a result of this good teaching throughout the school, learning of basic skills is improving rapidly and pupils listen and concentrate well, helping them to make progress and to grasp what is planned and taught. The school has worked hard on issues such as the monitoring and evaluation of teaching. The teaching staff agreed with inspectors that professional feedback of the

outcomes of this monitoring and in-service training has made a positive contribution to the improvements.

18. In the Reception class, all areas of learning are planned well and the teacher and Nursery nurse understand the needs of young children well. They note their successes and preferences as well as weaker areas. This ongoing observation is then used to ensure that children are guided in their choices of activity, so progress is even and suited to their learning needs. At this early time of the year, formal literacy and numeracy lessons, when children are required to sit still, listen and respond to questioning, are rightly kept very short. However, planning shows that as children's aptitudes and levels of confidence increase, so the length of these sessions will increase in order to prepare them for the full Literacy and Numeracy Hours that they will meet in Year 1.
19. Overall, the quality of teaching is similar in classes for younger pupils to that in classes for older age groups, although in Years 5 and 6 it is nearly always either good or very good. This highly skilled teaching is built on very good questioning of pupils that identifies and then meets their needs with well-organised and well-explained tasks. As a result, pupils are challenged to think and explore learning that carries them forward very well. On rare occasions, teachers are less clear with explanations about what pupils need to do, or their questioning is less confident. Consequently, extra time has to be spent on further explanations and organisation, causing restlessness amongst pupils and slowing the rate of learning. In only two lessons were these features present to the extent that teaching was unsatisfactory, and in neither case was it typical of the teacher's general performance during the week of inspection.
20. The quality of teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science accounts for the good progress that pupils make in these important subjects. The consistency in quality reflects the school's emphasis on developing teachers' confidence and expertise. Both literacy and numeracy are skilfully taught across the school and standards are rising in both. Many teachers have only recently been appointed, yet it is evident that teamwork and morale are high, which was not the case a short time ago, according to documentary evidence that was made available to the inspection team. Teachers work well with their teaching assistants and other adults. Assistants understand the requirements of the lessons they support and how to encourage higher attainment and improved performance. Teachers provide them with clear guidelines of what pupils will be learning and the important teaching points to facilitate it. Together, teachers and their assistants successfully embrace the principles of recent national initiatives in literacy and numeracy. These are well embedded in their daily practice. Lessons are well structured and teachers are confident in passing on basic skills of reading and number. As a result, past gaps in these important areas are being identified and taught well, although it is clear from the inspection that this process is not yet complete. Generally, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop literacy and numeracy skills through their work in other subjects, although pupils' writing skills sometimes demonstrate weaknesses in spelling and punctuation when used in other subjects. National initiatives in information and communication technology have also been absorbed confidently. Evidence of this factor is seen in the good teaching of skills that takes place in the computer suite. However, owing to shortages in the school's resources, it has not been possible to apply the results fully to teaching and learning in classrooms.
21. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils, and class management is usually very good. Teachers know their pupils well and encourage them with appropriate praise, showing very powerful awareness of the need to build self-esteem and pride in good working routines. Consequently, pupils enjoy school and work hard. Good explanations in nearly all subjects help pupils know what they are expected to do and the amount of time they have to do it. This feature adds a sense of urgency to the task and increases pupils' motivation, perseverance and purpose. A weaker aspect is that in a few lessons, the point and object of the teaching was not shared with pupils at the beginning. On such occasions, understanding was made harder for pupils as they were less aware of the direction that their learning should take, which resulted in less clarity of purpose. For example, in an otherwise sound science lesson, pupils in Year 3 were offered few insights into what had been planned for them and they were not told what they were expected to learn from the lesson.

22. Discussion sessions are a prominent feature of many lessons. In these sessions, teachers encourage pupils to reflect on what they have learnt and to relate it to others. The teaching of technical vocabulary, specific to particular subjects, is also often good, although not all teachers have consistently well-developed strategies to develop ideas and concepts for pupils at early stages of English as an additional language. However, standard forms of English are used well by teachers when talking with all pupils and they encourage the use of correct technical terms in their own speech. For example, in a Year 1 numeracy lesson, the teacher spoke of “number patterns” and “sequences”, making effective use of earlier learning from a previous lesson.
23. Resources and artefacts are often well chosen to promote learning. However, weaknesses are particularly apparent in the quality of computer programs that are available for use in classrooms, which restricts teachers’ planning. This impedes teachers, who are mostly confident in the subject and use what is available well.
24. Some parents do not feel that enough homework is set. The school acknowledges that this has been the case in the past. However, a new home learning policy has been developed and has the potential to meet parents’ concerns. During the inspection, homework was set satisfactorily, supporting the work of classrooms well. Pupils felt that it helped them with their work.
25. Teachers’ ongoing assessments of how their pupils are getting on in lessons are satisfactory in English, mathematics and science, and are used well to link lessons into good sequences. The marking of pupils’ work is variable, and does not always tell pupils what they should do next to improve. Examples of recent marking are better, offering praise, encouragement and purposeful remarks.

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

26. The last inspection reported several weaknesses in the curriculum. Since then, owing to staffing and other difficulties, progress towards the resolution of these issues has been slow. Nevertheless, a new headteacher and senior managers, with the support of governors, have made a concerted and successful effort to make necessary changes. As a result, significant progress has been made in a relatively short period of time, putting appropriate policies and planning into place. The implementation of these policies still requires time to have a full impact on what is taught. Even so, these changes are already bearing fruit in pupils’ improving levels of attainment and the quality of teaching. For example, the statutory requirement to teach the National Curriculum is now met, and religious education is taught according to what is laid down in the locally agreed syllabus. Identified failures to teach all aspects of information and communication technology, science and design and technology have been rectified. The breadth of what is taught is now sound, although the levels at which information and communication technology and design and technology are taught do not consistently match expectations at different ages through the school. Further developments of these subjects are already planned and prioritised in the school’s own improvement plan for the next year. Furthermore, the overall balance of the curriculum, with its emphasis on literacy skills, reflects the needs of the relatively high proportions of pupils with either English as an additional language or special educational needs. The school has appropriate strategies in place for teaching about the misuse of drugs and for sex education, which are supported by a planned programme for personal, social and health education.
27. In the Reception class, what is taught follows national guidance for the age group. All areas of learning are taught with due regard to the development of skills.
28. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced well, ensuring that long term planning of English and mathematics is good. Planning in science has also improved considerably. In other subjects, planning of what should be taught, and when, is satisfactory overall. In the past year, senior managers with the support of subject co-ordinators have mapped out topics, skills and knowledge that should be introduced to pupils. However, many policies are

out-of-date and require further developments. Again, however, the new senior management team is fully aware of what needs to be done, and has already made a significant start.

29. Measures taken to ensure that all pupils have access to learning at levels that meet their individual needs and that they have equal opportunities to progress are a good feature. For example, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and improving rapidly under the leadership of the deputy headteacher, who is also the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo). Much of the focus towards raising standards recently has been on identifying and providing improved support for pupils with special educational needs or with

English as an additional language. As a result, nearly all pupils in these groups are included well in what is taught across the full range of subjects. A start has also been made on building up the challenge for pupils who are particularly gifted or talented in mathematics.

30. The school's links with other educational institutions and the local community are satisfactory and improving. Close links are maintained with local secondary schools to help pupils in the process of transfer to the next stage of education. Recently, links with other primary schools have been established, including links with schools identified for their good practice, as a means of developing staff professionally. The school's own potential to be involved in the training of students is strong, as it seeks to improve its own effectiveness. Good links with the community include visitors who contribute to pupils' appreciation of, for example, the arts. These include theatre groups, African drummers and similar planned activities, as well as local businesses, such as *Halifax*, *McDonalds* and *Tesco*. Visits off the site are also planned and undertaken. Recent examples have been visits to a workshop on Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Pupils from the school also appeared in the English National Opera's recent production of *Madam Butterfly*.

31. Parents feel that good extra-curricular provision, which used to be strong at the school, is beginning to be re-established. Inspectors agree that activity is now good. For example, music is well represented by the Chalgrove Choir, strongly supported by both boys and girls, several of whom are in Year 6, and a school orchestra. Pupils are also offered 'cello, violin, flute and trumpet lessons. Dance and drama are also being reintroduced. Last Christmas, for example, the school performed its own *Dance of Festivals* and subsequently appeared in Barnet's dance festival. Pupils from the school also took part in a local music festival. Touch-rugby, football and "kwik-cricket" are also examples of what is provided. In the summer term, the school took part in a local rounders tournament and Barnet's West Region Athletics Day.

32. At the time of the last inspection, provision for moral, social and cultural development was mostly sound while for spiritual development, it was unsatisfactory. Improvements have occurred and arrangements for these aspects of personal development are now good overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is now good, which is a considerable improvement. In religious education, pupils are taught to respect beliefs other than their own; to understand a range of religious practices and festivals, and to achieve tolerance and respect for cultural differences. Good quality assemblies promote care for others and for the created world. In lessons, teachers praise pupils' efforts whenever they can, providing opportunities for growth in self-esteem. By helping pupils to acknowledge the worth of what they do themselves, the school attempts to enable them to value and wonder about the world and to recognise the artistic and aesthetic achievements of others.

33. Arrangements for moral development are also good. Teachers' expectations of behaviour, politeness and kindness towards others are high. The behaviour policy establishes a good framework for everyone to work within and all adults employed at the school set good examples of politeness and respect, showing these attributes towards their pupils. Clear examples of the difference between right and wrong were given explicitly during stories in assemblies.

34. Provision to develop pupils socially is very good. Opportunities to learn about principles of democracy are available through elections to a School Council. Opportunities to work together on topics and tasks, both with a partner or as part of a group, are planned in many subjects. Good examples were seen during the inspection in science and music. Teachers set good examples of

teamwork and co-operation and older pupils are frequently encouraged to help and care about those younger than themselves. Team games, singing in a choir and similar opportunities to act together in a social group, thus to achieve an aim, are also available to pupils, and the results are specifically pointed out and praised.

35. During the inspection, opportunities for cultural development were not as frequently apparent as other elements of personal development. However, visits are planned that raise pupils' awareness of, for example, drama and opera, and lessons in singing contain a repertoire of songs from various heritages, such as Africa and North America. In art, the work of famous and practising artists is used to exemplify particular skills and effects. However, opportunities to use the knowledge and understanding of pupils themselves, representing as they do a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, were sometimes missed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. Support and care of pupils at the time of the last inspection were strong features of its provision. However, extensive procedures for assessing their academic performance were not used to any extent to identify weaknesses and to correct them, or to set targets. In some respects, although for very different reasons, the situation is similar now.
37. The school provides a safe, caring and welcoming environment where all pupils are valued and where they generally receive good personal support. Satisfactory procedures exist for ensuring their welfare. Staff and adults in the school have a genuine concern for all pupils. This concern extends especially to those with special educational needs, early learners of English as an additional language and recently arrived pupils. For example, new children in the Reception class were considered carefully during the inspection and their social and emotional needs were addressed strongly. This strong support provides children with a good, secure start and enables them to feel happy in the caring environment that it produces. The school's named person with overall responsibility for child protection has a good knowledge of the requirements. The school has an appropriate number of approved first-aiders and a separate medical room, where minor accidents are treated in a caring way and records kept of incidents and treatments. Appropriate testing has been done of firefighting and electrical equipment. Fire drills are generally carried out at appropriate intervals.
38. Current procedures for promoting good attendance are clearly not working and, therefore, are not good enough. However, arrangements will soon benefit from the introduction of a computerised system. This system is designed to help schools to identify patterns of absence and to enable them to track and follow up reasons for absence when they are not immediately given. However, more could be done to reward those pupils whose attendance is excellent, as a means of raising awareness (of both pupils and parents) of the need for good attendance.
39. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The draft behaviour policy is awaiting the governors' acceptance, but has appropriate rewards and sanctions. It was drawn up with the good co-operation of parents and pupils. A few parents had expressed concerns that levels of supervision in the playground may not be good enough, but this was not the case during the inspection, and inspectors saw no real difficulties arise. Pupils understood the school's good procedures for signifying a need for adult intervention, or the end of play, and reacted quickly when an adult blew the whistle.
40. Good systems for monitoring and assessing pupils' progress have recently been devised and introduced with the help of the local authority. These have the potential to provide powerful information about the work that pupils carry out and how well they grasp what is taught. This system presents findings through colour codes, so it is readable and easy to understand. The process of gathering information has already begun in the core subjects of English and mathematics. However, uses of assessment to set targets and to track the progress that each pupil makes are as yet unsatisfactory, as the system has not been in place long enough to provide sufficient information to use effectively. Furthermore, little evidence exists of any previous

system, so past information of this kind is not available. It is of credit to the teaching skills of the present staff that, without this kind of information, they have managed to identify weaknesses in pupils' past learning, and begun to rectify them as quickly as they have. Nevertheless, one outcome of this new system is the provision of this type of information. Assessments of pupils with special educational needs are carried out and recorded thoroughly. This aspect has undergone considerable development recently and several new identifications have been made, including referrals to outside agencies that have resulted in statements of need being issued. These developments comply well with the government's new code of practice. Recommendations that are made in statements of need are met as outlined. Access for pupils and for adults with physical disabilities has been monitored. While further improvements are indicated, such access is available and adequate toilet facilities are already in place. In the case of pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language, not all teachers fully understand relevant language demands of the curriculum. As a result, work is not consistently matched to the known stage of pupils' English. This weakness is especially so with technical vocabulary that is specific to particular subjects. In a more general sense, however, teachers are very aware of the need to adapt work and explanations for pupils with English as an additional language, so they know what to do to make progress. Procedures for their pastoral care are a high priority and they soon become happy members of the school community, mixing easily and naturally in the work and play of other pupils. In this way, they learn English quickly and are included well in school life.

41. Procedures for promoting and monitoring pupils' personal development are good. Much information is gained through the very strong relationships that exist between teachers and pupils. This feature is further underlined with the development of lessons in personal and social education and the records that are kept. Furthermore, the recent pupils' questionnaire explored aspects of their feelings and levels of contentment when at school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. At the time of the last inspection, the school's links with parents consisted of an unusual mixture of strengths and weaknesses. Parents raised considerable sums of money for the school and supported their children well through high levels of attendance at consultation evenings about academic progress. Conversely, only a few parents volunteered to help in the school, and only a few availed themselves of opportunities that were offered to make queries or raise concerns. As then, the school values good links with parents. It regards a good partnership as a very important factor in ensuring that pupils do their best.
43. Parents' overall views of the school are that, after a period of instability in staffing, it is now improving rapidly and doing well. Parents confirmed that they feel welcome at the school, and that teachers are warm and friendly towards them, smiling and greeting them whenever they meet. Many parents are impressed with the willingness of staff to discuss matters of interest or concern on the playground immediately before or after school. Parents' views of the school are generally good. Nearly all of them see it as improving and support it strongly. The good practice of meeting with all parents of children entering the Reception class has been established. As a result, an open approach has been made at the outset, so parents are confident to offer daily information about their children's needs and feelings towards school, whenever necessary. Such information is helping to settle children quickly on entry to the school and parents are able to stay with their children at the start of the day.
44. The school encourages parents to support their children, helping them with homework and the acquisition of skills and ideas. However, owing to a lack of the school's documents translated into their home language, parents who speak only a little English may be restricted in the amount of help that they can give. Home-school reading books allow them to make comments. A recent home learning policy has been introduced and, during the inspection, homework was set regularly. This should go some way towards easing the concerns of some parents that homework is inconsistent and varies in its usefulness. The new headteacher and staff are committed to bringing parents into the work of the school, using skills or expertise to help pupils with their learning. At present, only a few parents are regularly helping in classes.

45. A few parents had concerns about music at the school but the re-organisation of the choir and the recent appointment of a music specialist are beginning to contribute very effectively in this regard. Parents are pleased that a good range of extra-curricular clubs is provided.
46. Overall, information provided for parents is satisfactory. The overall partnership with parents is frank and open and clearly an improving feature. A few minor omissions have been made from the school brochure and governing body's annual report to parents. These documents are due to be corrected when they are next printed. Parents receive weekly newsletters containing items about school life. The school has also sent its own questionnaire to all parents, as a means of monitoring their views about improvements to both resources and to the general quality of education. A group of enthusiastic parents runs a school association. Other parents support this group well in its social and fund-raising programme, which raises extra money. Furthermore, parents are consulted about how this support should be used. The school association is well organised and sends out its own newsletter, providing further information about events. Good opportunities are provided for parents to discuss their children's progress during the school year and an annual written report is also provided. Some parents reported that they do not feel well enough informed about what levels of work to expect at different ages, making interpretation of their children's reports difficult. Inspectors found that pupils' annual reports give a good indication of work covered and often contain comments about personal development, but agree with parents that they do not consistently make comparisons with average levels of work or targets of attainment that might be expected nationally.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. At the time of the last inspection, many aspects of education that were provided at the school were judged to be good. However, a number of weaknesses in structures and systems of management were reported that had also been identified by a (then) recently appointed headteacher. For example, systems that were used to identify priorities for action were questioned in the report, and items that had been prioritised were not considered to be the most likely to lead the school forward. Furthermore, teachers' responsibilities and senior management structures were not appropriate to achieving stated aims. The inspection found several weaknesses in the planning and organisation of what was being taught. These weaknesses were particularly apparent in science, information and communication technology, design and technology, religious education and collective worship. Since then, the school has passed through a period of considerable instability, making it difficult to rectify such difficulties. Staff turnover has been high and morale has suffered. Mobility amongst pupils was also a feature and results in National Curriculum tests fell away. The present headteacher was appointed only a year ago, and has been fully in post for only two terms. Nevertheless, a very promising start has been made.
48. The overall quality of leadership and management is good. The personal leadership qualities of the headteacher are excellent and she is well supported by staff and parents. A renewed direction and purpose for the school have been established very quickly and morale has risen rapidly and is continuing to do so. For example, several of the weaknesses that were outlined in the last inspection report are being addressed successfully. A new senior management team has been appointed, which includes the deputy headteacher and an advanced skills teacher. They support the headteacher well, bringing expertise and willingness to work very hard with her to effect rapid changes and general improvement. Their responsibilities in managing the school are clear and they are efficient and effective in what they do. For example, the deputy headteacher has brought about considerable improvement to policy and provision within special educational needs, and the advanced skills teacher has assisted strongly in the development of teaching and learning. Parents have clearly recognised this vision and effort. All of those who attended the meeting agreed when a parent stated that the rise in morale was "...so tangible that you feel you can touch it". What is to be taught each year has been mapped out, so it can be demonstrated that the statutory requirements of the basic curriculum, including the National Curriculum, are fully met. Teaching is being monitored and evaluated and the findings of this process are being used to

rectify any weaknesses that are found. As a result, teaching through the school is now good and pupils' learning is effective and enjoyable. Standards of behaviour and relationships are nearly always very good.

49. The contribution of the governing body to support and test the effectiveness of strategic management is good. Chairs of committees are knowledgeable in their areas of responsibility and carry out their roles effectively. Newly appointed governors are supported well by longer standing members of the group. Governors are fully aware of past weaknesses and, despite rapid recent improvements, demonstrate no signs of complacency about future developments. On the contrary, they are determined to support the staff fully and to ensure that progress continues. Strategic reports are received from the headteacher and senior staff, including financial statements, to support this process. As a result, governors' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses is good. Governors have sound policies for race equality and procedures to see that individuals and distinct groups can progress equally. As a result, pupils of different ethnic groups and prior attainments generally make progress at similar rates to others. Governors communicate and share the strong vision of the headteacher and her senior management team.
50. The new headteacher, senior staff and governors are monitoring performance and evaluating strengths and weaknesses to good effect. Systematic management and use of the information that is gathered are good. For example, structures for managing the school, weaknesses in the curriculum, management of behaviour, and systems and uses of assessment were identified as areas in need of review. Improvement plans were drawn up on the basis of this information and the action taken has been successful. For example, the new senior management team and the curriculum that is taught have clearly been influential in raising standards of attainment during the past year, culminating with the much improved 2002 National Curriculum test results. Arrangements have been made for involving teachers in setting targets for the development of their skills. Such professional development is linked to the school's improvement plan and planning for in-service training. Data from tests and other sources are being analysed to establish priorities for the school as a whole. The commitment of the whole staff to make improvements and work towards such targets and priorities is very strong. Consequently, the capacity to sustain improvements is also very good. Newly qualified teachers are supported well and newcomers are welcomed strongly and told what they need to know in order to work effectively straight away. The staff handbook is a useful document in this process.
51. Resources, including funding, are used satisfactorily. A large contingency sum was recorded at the end of last year. However, owing to an overall fall in numbers of pupils, part of this has had to be returned to the local authority, increasing unit costs. A considerable part of the remaining sum was already committed to improvements in resources, developments in the school's grounds and to the building. Workable budgets have been set and priorities are being successfully targeted with adequate funding. Sound use is made of new technology to support administration. The school's budget is monitored electronically. Printouts are regularly provided for the headteacher and chair of the governors' finance committee to keep a check on patterns of spending. Funds that are provided for specific purposes are recorded under separate budget headings and are spent legitimately. A computer program to help with the monitoring of attendance is to be introduced soon. In the light of poor attendance figures, it is likely to prove a good investment. However, deficiencies in the quality and power of classroom computers restrict their usefulness in supporting the curriculum and keeping classroom records. The school's secretary is very efficient and effective in her role and is an asset in helping the school to run smoothly. Best value is sought satisfactorily by comparing prices in different catalogues, seeking quotations for repairs or maintenance works, and taking relevant professional advice about the quality of proposed purchases. Furthermore, the headteacher and governors are beginning to consult with parents through questionnaires and to relate spending more directly to standards of attainment.
52. Staffing and accommodation are generally adequate for teaching the basic curriculum. The school's teaching staff looks a lot more stable than it has been in recent years. The headteacher, senior staff and governors continue to target professional development and in-service training as priorities. Teaching assistants are both conscientious and informed well. They are also willing to

train further for the roles that they undertake. Accommodation is satisfactory with mostly level access for people with physical disability. Space outside is very good with various types of area, such as grass, asphalt and woodland. This variety has the potential to support, amongst other things pupils' play, study of habitats in science, physical education and environmental work in geography. Learning resources, however, are unsatisfactory, owing to specific weaknesses identified in information and communication technology, geography and design and technology, and the stock of library books, which is fairly limited.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In their *School Improvement Plan*, the headteacher and senior managers have identified the key weaknesses that have been found in the inspection. These weaknesses have been prioritised effectively for action and the staff and governors are strongly committed to implementing improvements.

The headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Continue to raise standards in English, mathematics and science, by:
 - using the results of assessment to identify past gaps in learning (in English, especially in writing and, in science, especially in experiments and testing) (see paragraphs 6, 7, 9, 20, 36, 40, 72, 73, 75 and 86);
 - revising and reinforcing work wherever gaps in learning are found (see paragraphs 40, 72, 76 and 81);
 - using the results of assessment to set targets for pupils through the school, adapting what is taught to match these targets and thereby meeting individual learning needs more closely (continuing with the good start made for those of pupils with special educational needs and with English at an early stage of development) (see paragraphs 6, 7, 29, 40, 73 and 74);
 - Ensuring that all pupils, when reading, use their knowledge of sounds and blends appropriately to recognise words (see paragraphs 6 and 72)
 - ensuring that all lessons proceed at an adequate pace, so learning is maximised (see paragraphs 19 and 78);
 - raising expertise in the teaching of pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language (see paragraphs 11, 40, 74, 82 and 87);
 - continuing to improve provision for gifted and talented pupils (see paragraphs 73, 82 and 86);
 - using information and communication technology more extensively in work in classrooms, especially in mathematics and science (see paragraphs 9, 10 and 88).

- (2) Raise standards in information and communication technology, and design and technology, by:
 - improving the availability of both hardware and software in classrooms, so skills acquired in the computer suite can be applied more frequently at other times and in the teaching of all subjects (see paragraphs 10, 23, 51, 52, 88, 108 and 109);
 - continuing to raise teachers' expertise and expectations in using and teaching information and communication technology (see paragraphs 10, 26 and 51);
 - using assessment to ensure that what is taught consistently matches pupils' learning needs closely (see paragraphs 36 and 92);
 - improving the availability of resources, materials, kits and methods of construction and joining, so as to increase the range of pupils' experiences of design, making and evaluation of models and products through the school (see paragraphs 10, 52, 92 and 98);
 - using the results of assessment to ensure that pupils' knowledge, use and understanding of design and making skills broaden and deepen at the rate required in the National Curriculum (see paragraphs 10, 26, 36 and 92).

- (3) Use the school's new *On-Track* system for monitoring, assessing and recording pupils' progress as soon after it provides enough information as possible, in order to:
 - set apt targets for pupils (see paragraphs 7, 36, 90 and 107);
 - raise standards of attainment, especially in those subjects where attainment has been identified as below expected levels (see paragraphs 10, 36, 90 and 107).

(4) Raise attendance, by:

- ensuring that all parents understand the consequences of poor attendance on their children's learning (see paragraph 16);
- introducing the school's new system of computerised monitoring of attendance as soon as possible (see paragraph 38);
- using the new computerised system to follow up absences rigorously on the same day that they occur (see paragraphs 16 and 38);
- raising pupils' pride in good attendance by rewarding improvements and particularly good records of attendance (see paragraphs 16 and 38).

Other features that governors may wish to include in an action plan

- Explore ways of involving more parents who have relevant skills and expertise in the daily work of the school (see paragraphs 44 and 95).
- Explore, as a means of using them, what possibilities exist for translating documents and relevant policies into a range of home languages, so more parents are empowered to help their children to acquire ideas and concepts at home (see paragraph 44).
- Ensure that the point of lessons and what pupils are expected to learn are always shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons (see paragraph 21).
- Use pupils' own different cultural experiences as a resource for their cultural development (see paragraphs 35 and 95).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 40 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 25 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 0 | 8 | 15 | 15 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 0 | 20 | 37.5 | 37.5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |

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

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) | 191 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 50 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 6 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 61 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 67 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 16 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 30 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|-------------|-----|
| School data | 5.0 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|-------------|-----|
| School data | 2.9 |

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| National comparative data | 5.6 |
|---------------------------|-----|

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| National comparative data | 0.5 |
|---------------------------|-----|

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 2002 | 17 | 13 | 30 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 13 | 14 | 14 |
| | Girls | 12 | 13 | 11 |
| | Total | 25 | 27 | 25 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 83 (81) | 90 (85) | 83 (92) |
| | National | 84 (84) | 86 (86) | 90 (91) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 13 | 12 | 15 |
| | Girls | 12 | 13 | 13 |
| | Total | 25 | 25 | 28 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 83 (85) | 83 (88) | 93 (88) |
| | National | 85 (85) | 89 (89) | 89 (89) |

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 2002 | 17 | 9 | 26 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | | | |
| | Girls | | | |
| | Total | 23 | 22 | 24 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 88 (71) | 84 (64) | 92 (79) |
| | National | 75 (75) | 73 (71) | 86 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | | | |
| | Girls | | | |
| | Total | 17 | 20 | 21 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 66 (61) | 77 (68) | 81 (64) |
| | National | 73 (72) | 74 (74) | 82 (82) |

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

Separate figures for boys and girls are not included as so few girls took the tests.

Ethnic background of pupils

| Categories used in the Annual School Census |
|---|
| White – British |
| White – Irish |
| White – any other White background |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean |
| Mixed – White and Black African |
| Mixed – White and Asian |
| Mixed – any other mixed background |
| Asian or Asian British - Indian |
| Asian or Asian British - Pakistani |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean |
| Black or Black British – African |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background |
| Chinese |
| Any other ethnic group |
| No ethnic group recorded |

Exclusions in the last school year

| No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 48 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 52 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 12 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 | 0 | 0 |
| 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 | 0 | 0 |
| 11 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 | 0 | 0 |

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, 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) | 8.4 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 22.7 |
| Average class size | 28 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-------|
| Total number of education support staff | 9 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 201.8 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|--|---------|
| Financial year | 2001-02 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 575,551 |
| Total expenditure | 507,135 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,601 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 10,353 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 78,769 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 11 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 13 |

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate: 20.4%

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 191 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 39 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 62 | 26 | 5 | 0 | 7 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 33 | 54 | 10 | 3 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 46 | 51 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 10 | 44 | 31 | 15 | 0 |
| The teaching is good. | 28 | 59 | 5 | 0 | 8 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 23 | 44 | 28 | 5 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 54 | 40 | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 21 | 51 | 18 | 3 | 7 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 13 | 69 | 8 | 8 | 2 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 54 | 44 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 38 | 49 | 5 | 0 | 8 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 39 | 51 | 10 | 0 | 0 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

53. Currently, 14 full-time pupils attend the Reception class. They are taught the six areas of learning for their age group as laid down in *The Curriculum for the Foundation Stage* (a government publication that explains what to teach children in Nursery and Reception classes). Another group of children of a similar number will be admitted to the class in January.
54. At the time of the last inspection, planning of work in the Reception class was good. Children attained a standard that exceeded the *desirable learning outcomes* (standards that were nationally recommended for five-year-olds at that time). In this inspection, inspectors found that planning is still good and all the areas of learning as recommended now are fully taught. However, it is not possible to make direct comparisons with previous findings as national recommendations have been considerably altered since then. Children now continue to work within the Foundation Stage (the stage of education for children in Nursery and Reception classes) until the end of the Reception year, rather than up to their fifth birthday. Furthermore, the *desirable learning outcomes* have been replaced with *early learning goals*, and *stepping stones* are now used to describe stages that children would normally be expected to pass through as they acquire knowledge, skills and understanding. Currently, teaching is based firmly on these recent recommendations. Overall, the quality of teaching was good. In lessons, it was nearly always good and never less than satisfactory, meeting young children's needs well. The teacher's knowledge and understanding of the areas of learning, and that of the Nursery nurse, are strong, which is resulting in good learning of basic skills. During the inspection, a very strong emphasis was placed on children's personal, social and emotional development. As the school has no Nursery class, children had been in school for periods of up to only three weeks at the time of the inspection, so this emphasis was understandable and appropriate. As a result, children were settling into daily routines very well with very high levels of interest and concentration. Links with parents were clearly good and parents were welcomed into the classroom to help in the process of settling their children.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. Children's personal and social experiences cover a wide range when they enter the Reception class. Some have come from local nurseries or playgroups, but a few come straight from home and they represent various ethnic backgrounds. At first, adults have to work hard to ensure that all children understand the need to sit still and listen and to take turns when speaking and using resources. Children were learning these skills very well during the inspection, which was the result of very good teaching of this area of learning. The teacher and Nursery nurse are very ready to praise and encourage children when they help each other; show respect for others, and demonstrate good attitudes towards work. Frequent opportunities are planned for children to share toys, equipment and resources, and to work and play together in ways that structure their social learning and help them to settle quickly. However, it does not end here. At the end of sessions, they are often brought back together to explain what they have done and how successfully they carried out their work. In this way, they acquire a measure of independence and begin to accept responsibility for what they do. Adults are also sensitive to children's different needs, such as offering special encouragement and consideration to those who were less confident. As a result of this very good provision, children learn to co-operate well with adults and to show interest in what they and each other do. Adults used praise and encouragement well to help children feel good about themselves and to build self-esteem. For example, children with English as an additional language were encouraged to use their home language to answer the register, as it "...is clever to know another language".
56. Adults provide good examples for the children. They co-operate with each other, and consistently speak with respect to the children. This very good teaching sets the tone for personal and emotional development. The children learn well from it. They acquire good habits of behaviour.

They learn to listen and concentrate and to follow the required routines of their classroom and the school. They are likely to attain the *early learning goals* in this area.

Communication, language and literacy

57. Children join the Reception class with a wide range of language and literacy skills. Most of them are about average, while a few children are very articulate. Another significant group is clearly below what is usually found on entry to Reception and one or two, although confident, are at early stages of speaking English as an additional language. Judged overall, attainment on entry is a little below what is usually found. After such a short time in school, it is not possible to predict whether the present group of children is likely to attain the *early learning goals* in this area. Results of assessments that were made last year, on pupils now in Year 1, showed that attainment was a little below local averages in language, communication and literacy, whereas at the time of the last inspection, they had been above. However, this drop reflects changes in the composition of groups entering the school during this period, rather than differences in the quality of teaching and learning. For example, percentages of children with English as an additional language and with special educational needs have risen. In fact, the overall quality of teaching during the inspection was good. Teaching is based on gathering information about what each child can do and should therefore do next, and the use of good methods that are appropriate to the age group and its needs. For example, children were expected to listen and then to respond to questions. At this early point in the year, this approach was already getting them used to methods that are used in Literacy Hours. However, adaptation was good, as the requirement to sit still was shortened to a limited period of time, so children were able to cope successfully. Planning clearly shows that, as confidence and success grows, the intention is to extend the length of these sessions. Children listened well and showed interest. Higher attainers used extended sentences, explaining that "...rhinoceroses do not live in fields in England". The sounds of letters are introduced well. For example, children were looking at the shape and sound of the letter 's'. Several made correct suggestions when they were asked for words that began with the associated sound. Children with English as an additional language were included, concentrated well and were happy and involved.
58. Storybooks are introduced well and children are encouraged to take them home. Links with other areas of learning are good. For example, children's writing was emerging as they made shopping lists, while thinking of items of food and where they come from.
59. Teaching consists of a variety of approaches. Different methods included choices of activity that were guided by the Nursery nurse and teacher, and explanations, including clever questioning, to help children reach correct answers for themselves. Nearly all children are beginning to understand that writing and print convey meaning.

Mathematical development

60. Similar methods are being applied to children's mathematical development to those found in language, communication and literacy. That is, at this early stage in the year, times when children are expected to sit and listen are kept short. This approach is working well. During a good mathematics session, children were challenged to put objects on a card to match a given number. They listened quietly, showed a lot of interest and concentrated well. Nearly all children demonstrated understanding up to nine. However, a few lower attaining children struggled with the idea of always counting from one, so needed considerable support to relate the correct number of objects consistently. In other situations, nearly all children said their numbers up to five or ten, and a few higher attainers went beyond. However, a few, of prior lower attainment, still struggle when asked to count in a practical situation, missing a number out, or continuing to say numbers, without actually relating the count to objects in front of them. Good teaching of both the teacher and Nursery nurse is focusing well on such issues, helping children to understand the nature of counting. In activities around their classroom, children were given opportunities to match objects, shapes and colours, which nearly all of them did successfully, when asked.

61. Overall, teaching of this area of learning is good. The teacher's management and organisation of children are strong features. As a result, they concentrate well and sit together sensibly. At this stage, children have not been in school for long enough to make firm judgements against *stepping stones*, or to predict with any certainty how many children are likely to meet *early learning goals*. However, assessments of pupils currently in Year 1 show that attainment last year was below local averages. Despite good teaching, this may also be the case this year, as the Reception year alone will not provide enough time for them to make up the ground.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. Children's learning within the area of knowledge and understanding of the world is well planned. During times when they were offered choices of activities, sand and water were available to them. In a good session with the Nursery nurse, a group explored ideas about "earth", "sand" and "mud". They used moulds to make sand pies and explained that the shape inside of the mould was what shaped the sand. On another occasion, children were encouraged to think about different types of food. A group explained what was good for them and what they liked to eat. They knew, for example, that apples and oranges were fruits, but that sausages were made "...out of meat". Last year's work shows that to develop an understanding of the past and present, children are taught to compare new toys with old ones. Toys and kits are available for children to explore early ideas of planning and making models.
63. Cross-curricular links are good. Resources are available to structure learning about roads, other places and the lifestyles of people such as farmers.
64. Opportunities are available for children to use a computer and a session is timetabled for them in the computer suite. However, this activity was not seen during the inspection, so no judgement is made. In other elements of this area of learning, children were working at around the *stepping stones* that might be expected so early in the year.
65. Teaching is good. The teacher and Nursery nurse demonstrated good teamwork and provided good levels of support and encouragement. Activities are set up in advance, so that time is not lost during lessons. Questioning is good and is often directed to the needs of individuals. As a result, learning is of good quality.

Physical development

66. An exterior area is available to children and a session is timetabled in the school's hall. During part of a session that was seen in the hall, very good teaching methods were observed. As a result, children made good progress in developing awareness of space, moving in and out of gaps and anticipating the direction of each other's movements. Pupils controlled their bodies well, rolling up into tiny balls and then stretching out to fill a large space. Their attainment was close to that described in *stepping stones* that might be expected for their age. By using paintbrushes, kits, pencils, crayons and other tools and materials provided in their classroom, children develop the finer control of their hands and fingers and exercise hand and eye co-ordination.
67. The overall quality of teaching in this area of learning was very good. The teacher used very good knowledge of the subject to show children how to warm up before carrying out vigorous activity. Her explanations and control of children were very good, ensuring that they understood what to do to acquire skills, and were also kept safe.

Creative development

68. The use of a range of media to create their own objects of art and craft is planned for children and they experience a weekly session with a music specialist. Good links are also made with physical activity. For example, in a lesson in the hall, children acted as "bunny rabbits" hopping about. They also pretended to be sleeping tigers that woke up and roared. On another occasion,

they used percussion instruments in their classroom. Several showed that they are beginning to hear and copy simple rhythms that are tapped out for them. Although most of them are confident when given these opportunities, a few are still reticent about performing in front of the group. Nevertheless, teaching is good and they receive plenty of encouragement to help them grow in confidence.

69. The quality of teaching is good, because of good knowledge of the area of learning and good ongoing assessment of children's needs. As a result, children's skills and knowledge are usually within the *stepping stones* that might be expected so near the beginning of the autumn term.

ENGLISH

70. At the time of the last inspection, results of National Curriculum tests were generally well above average. However, many changes have affected the school since, and these have affected standards. A high turnover of staff, which affected morale, and high mobility amongst pupils are examples. As a result, standards fell sharply in the years in between. For example, National Curriculum test results in 2001 indicated that attainment in Year 6 was only broadly in line with the national average. The subject is now co-ordinated by different teachers and the 2002 results show that results are now similar to those of 1998. In 2001, in reading, pupils attained average standards at the end of Year 2, but attainment was below average in writing. However, in reading and writing, work in Year 2 is also beginning to improve. Nearly all pupils are now attaining at expected levels and, in what was seen during the inspection, indications are that a larger number than a year ago are now working at higher levels than normally expected for their age. From these lower starting points, pupils' achievements through the school are currently satisfactory, although elements of underachievement are still found in writing, especially amongst pupils who have been in the school for a few years. The headteacher and their present class teachers are well aware of this factor and are working hard to rectify it.
71. By the end of Year 2, pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. Pupils are confident in answering questions and contribute readily to discussions. More able pupils are articulate speakers and are confident when answering questions. In a Year 1 phonics lesson, pupils responded positively to the challenge of thinking of additional words beginning with the same sound. They are using increasingly more difficult words and developing a clear understanding of letter and sound relationships. In Year 2 these skills are developing further with pupils sequencing instructions towards making a cup of tea. These aptitudes develop well from Year 3 onwards and, by the end of Year 6, pupils attain good standards. They are capable of listening for extended periods of time and they take an active role in sharing their thoughts and ideas. For example, they discussed how characterisations in a novel often change in visual interpretations such as film or video. Their insights demonstrated that they had listened to previous speakers carefully and adapted their own contributions to take account of what had been said before. It was clear from discussions about writers' uses of phrases such as "tension-filled tug of war" (in Year 4), and explanations about the significance of synonyms (Year 5) that skills in speaking and listening are developed thoroughly.
72. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are currently making good progress overall in their reading. In 2002, almost all of Year 2 attained the nationally expected level in the National Curriculum tests. However, in the recent past, this has not consistently been the case, as is evident from gaps in knowledge and understanding that are found in the written achievements of a few pupils who are now in middle years. Their present teachers are very aware of this and are working hard to complete pupils' understanding whenever such gaps are found. Achievement over time, therefore, is adjudged satisfactory through the school and it is clearly improving rapidly. The large majority of pupils currently in Year 2 read accurately. Nearly all of them are confident using letter sounds, pictures and the general meaning and context to help them with new and unfamiliar words. Less able readers also know sounds, but have to be prompted to use them, often preferring to make guesses. More able readers read fluently and often with expression. Pupils enjoy reading and are able to talk with enthusiasm about stories and poems that they have read and higher attainers offer opinions on particular characters. An example occurred when a pupil read non-fiction on the

habitat of foxes, relating what he read to his own former knowledge of these mammals. Several able pupils use the terms “author” and “illustrator” in explanations of their reading and know how to use “contents” and “index” sections to find information.

73. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are also taught well and make good progress currently, although, for the same reasons that apply in the younger age group, overall achievement is satisfactory. Shortcomings in uses and systems of assessment in the past have been a contributory factor, as it has been difficult for teachers to know the precise levels of pupils’ knowledge and understanding, and to take them forward from appropriate points. This difficulty occurred across groups with different prior attainment, including pupils with special educational needs and those of particularly high attainment. However, it is being rectified quickly with the introduction of a locally devised system that tracks and records progress thoroughly.
74. In reading, almost all Year 6 pupils attained the nationally expected level for their age in the 2002 National Curriculum tests, with a significant number achieving the higher level. During the inspection, pupils now in Year 6 read a wide range of books with confidence, enjoyment and expression. More able pupils in both Years 5 and 6 offered clear opinions in relation to fiction and non-fiction. An example occurred during the reading of a passage from *Hannah Gater Remembers*, about which insights and understanding of World War II were used to make inferences about the circumstances of Anne Frank’s capture by Nazi soldiers. The majority of the oldest pupils are adept at finding information from different sources. They demonstrated the capacity to use detailed indexes and glossaries successfully. They are confident readers of poetry and non-fiction as well as fiction. However, the reading skills of pupils with special educational needs and of a few pupils who have recently entered the school with English as an additional language are sometimes considerably weaker, which causes difficulties when learning is dependent on reading. Teachers are now taking better account of the needs of these groups, with the use of better planning and the new system of assessment. These improvements are having a strong impact on raising the quality of teaching. However, it is very recent and has not yet had a full impact on the learning of such groups. Furthermore, sufficient use and availability of texts that match pupils’ own backgrounds were not consistently evident during the inspection.
75. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make sound progress in their writing and overall at the end of Year 2 standards are broadly in line with national averages. This signifies good achievement for the majority of these pupils. In lessons they are taught the key skills of punctuation, grammar, spelling and handwriting, and are beginning to use them in their extended writing. Year 1 pupils practise letter writing skills and in Year 2, pupils effectively apply their writing skills when sequencing instructions towards making a cup of tea. Pupils write for a sound range of purposes, including stories, reports and instructions. Many develop their stories well, establishing a clear structure of beginning, middle and end. Some are beginning to use imaginative vocabulary as well as a joined writing style. Nevertheless, variations in the amount of work achieved and the accuracy of its presentation are still apparent. Pupils’ attitudes and behaviour are good throughout lessons.
76. In writing, from Year 3 on, progress over time is satisfactory, although it has clearly been uneven. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have obviously been taught about capital letters and fullstops. In their own writing, however, punctuation mistakes creep in. A likely reason is that, in the past, they have had insufficient practice and guidance about checking and redrafting. As a result, they have missed out on acquiring the necessary skill of knowing how to apply their knowledge. Nevertheless, it is evident that pupils’ learning is currently good. Therefore, progress is accelerating as such weaknesses are identified and corrected. Furthermore, in Year 6, standards are broadly in line with national averages. This level of attainment represents good achievement for the majority of pupils in this class and, as a result of consistently very good teaching, a significant number are beginning to attain at higher levels than normally expected. Pupils write for a good range of purposes and are learning to adapt their writing to meet various situations. In Year 5, pupils successfully introduce direct speech and dialogue into their writing to bring it to life. They use good phrases and adjectives to make an impact and they understand the importance of synonyms to convey shades of meaning. For example, pupils correctly used the word “irritated” rather than “angry” to good effect. Year 6 pupils are making good progress in

writing for a range of purposes, for example eulogies for Leonardo Da Vinci and accounts of the death of Charles Dickens. The quality of imaginative and descriptive writing is generally high in Year 6. Pupils use a good range of interesting and perceptive words and phrases to capture mood and to describe, for example, how the characters in *Goodnight Mr. Tom* are feeling. They empathise with the characters and some write clearly about the dilemma that Tom has been placed in, while others identify with Willie. They use a good number of adjectives in their work. For example, “awkward”, “nervous”, “grumpy” and “impatient” are all used to produce impact. Pupils’ attitudes and behaviour are good throughout lessons but the enthusiastic and highly motivating teaching in Year 6 produces attitudes and behaviour of excellence.

77. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are generally supported well by teaching assistants, enabling a large majority to engage thoroughly in lessons. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers, as when a group of Year 3 pupils were led in a discussion of the role of narrators in stories. Throughout the session, the teaching assistant was also able to focus on developing phonics, vocabulary and grammar. Despite their growing confidence and enthusiastic responses, the literacy skills of a few pupils remain well below average. Teaching assistants work effectively to ensure these pupils listen to lesson instructions and are fully included in learning activities.
78. Overall, teaching is good through the school. Over half of the lessons that were observed were good, including a significant proportion that were very good. Teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing. They plan effectively and challenge pupils to achieve their best. In the best lessons teaching was conducted at an enthusiastic pace and work was clearly adapted to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, such as those who picked up ideas quickly, or those with special needs. In these lessons pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject and are achieving well and the enjoyment level is high. For example, in Year 6, very good teaching enabled pupils to sympathise with the characters in stories and to write detailed descriptions. In Year 1, teaching of phonics was carried out with flair, enabling pupils to maintain interest and develop their understanding. In the few lessons that were less successful, the pace at which instruction and questioning occurred meant that the use of teaching time was less effective than it might otherwise have been. In these lessons, questions were insufficiently directed to meet the different needs of groups and individuals in the class, so not all pupils were consistently involved and challenged throughout. Sessions at the end of literacy lessons are generally effective in identifying what pupils have learnt and offer glimpses and insights into what they are going to learn next, whetting their interest well.
79. The management and co-ordination of English are very strong. The headteacher and co-ordinator are both very committed to improving the subject further and have already worked tirelessly to raise standards. The literacy co-ordinator has a very good knowledge and understanding of how language skills develop. Considerable recent investment has been made in reading and a good range of material, including commercial reading schemes, is available. The headteacher and advanced skills teacher have observed lessons and evaluated and checked the progress of pupils’ work. Information from this process and from monitoring pupils’ exercise books has been particularly effective in identifying strengths to be shared and areas for development. Positive links with *Beacon Schools* have also assisted in enriching ideas and practice, through the provision of additional resources. Good uses of funding have paid for a visiting author to work with pupils during book week and for a visit of the *Young Shakespeare Company*.

MATHEMATICS

80. At the last inspection standards of attainment in mathematics were found to be in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Evidence on this inspection found standards to be again in line with national averages. In the three years following the last inspection, pupils’ performances in National Curriculum tests in Year 2 have remained broadly in line with national averages. By contrast, the school’s results in Year 6 showed a marked deterioration from 1999 onwards, failing to keep pace with improvements in national figures. Recently, appropriate action has been taken to rectify the situation. Improvements in co-ordination, the quality of teaching and what is taught have begun to prove effective. As a result of very good support in Year 6, including

classes that were held to boost pupils' achievements, the 2002 National Curriculum test results were well above the average of both all schools nationally and similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining a level higher than expected also increased considerably.

81. A high turnover of teachers in the past year or so resulted in disruptions to the school's National Numeracy Strategy. In the context of mathematical understanding, in which knowledge and skills build up sequentially, learning did not always progress on a solid base. This finding is evident in gaps in pupils' learning that are found currently. For example, several pupils in Year 4 demonstrated a shaky knowledge of shapes. However, teaching through the school is now good and the present learning environment appears more stable. This better quality of teaching, combined with a strong commitment to raise standards, is making a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning. Pupils are rapidly gaining confidence in their numeracy skills and are deploying newly learnt mathematical strategies effectively. As a result, levels of attainment are rising and pupils are increasingly keen to learn, displaying very good social behaviour in lessons and eagerly responding to teachers' questioning. The work of pupils currently in Year 6 shows reasonable understanding of place value, multiplication, division, addition and subtraction. In a very good lesson, they demonstrated excellent ideas for solving problems with fraction. Understanding of shape and space is at levels that might be expected early in the year, when the inspection took place. In data handling, pupils were beginning to explore the uses of spreadsheets in work that was begun in the computer suite.
82. Teaching of numeracy strategies is now good. Activities are well planned and generally match the educational needs of the wide range of different ability groups. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Teachers are very aware of the needs of pupils with English as an additional language. They are developing strategies to give additional support for solving word problems in mathematics, which these pupils find difficult. Sometimes a lack of mathematical language in English slows down those pupils at the early stages of learning English. The quality of teaching of high attainers is usually good; often it is very good. Teachers are aware of the needs of these pupils and the high percentages of pupils attaining at higher than expected levels (including the much higher than expected Level 6) in the 2002 National Curriculum tests is evidence of effectiveness. Teaching strategies support and further challenging activities for high attainers are now being carefully developed. As a result, pupils gain satisfaction from their numeracy lessons and often perform very well. Examples were apparent in Years 2 and 6. At the beginning of the school year, a few pupils were already attaining the higher than expected Level 3 in their number work and, similarly, a few pupils in Year 6 are clearly working at a standard above the expected Level 4.
83. The teaching of mathematics and numeracy in Years 1 and 2 is good. This is because of good lesson planning and a clear understanding of what is to be achieved and how it is to be taught. Explanations are clear and well sustained by careful questioning which effectively helps to reinforce understanding. In nearly all lessons, the selection of activities is adapted to the needs of different groups of pupils, and the use of time and allocation of resources contribute efficiently to a sustained pace of learning. Expectations are realistic and challenging for higher attainers. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support.
84. In Years 3 to 6, the overall quality of teaching is good. It is consistently good in Year 5 and very good in Year 6. A few classes have suffered particular disruption in their prior learning. This difficulty means that lost ground has to be caught up, and new learning habits acquired. Currently, teaching is sensitive to such special problems. Lessons are generally well planned with clear statements about what pupils are expected to learn. Pupils in Year 3 are responding especially well to their teacher's positive attitudes. In Years 5 and 6 pupils benefit from particularly strong teaching. Pupils' confidence in their knowledge is particularly noticeable. They respond well to questions, enjoying the pace that their teacher sets. This pace produces a good challenge to find answers in the available time and its impact on learning is very positive, as it keeps pupils thinking hard and quickly.
85. The subject has a new co-ordinator, who is currently being supported by the advanced skills' teacher. She has good management experience and was a subject co-ordinator at her previous

school. Plans for development include use of data to track pupils' progress and to raise awareness of the implications of performance management for setting targets in all year groups. The further extension of the existing programme to support pupils who are achieving at levels above or below expected levels is also being prioritised. An audit of strengths and weaknesses in numeracy was undertaken during the summer term. The information that this audit produced is being used to help in the process of effecting changes. Lack of information from the past limits how assessment can be used at present. Development of expertise, while a good, recently introduced system builds up information, is a sensible way forward. Present resources are sufficient to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum. The co-ordinator herself has not yet undertaken monitoring of teaching, but the advanced skills' teacher is a member of the senior management team and has assisted the headteacher with this important work. In-service training for staff and attendance of relevant numeracy courses is planned this year. The co-ordinator has made a very good start in her new post and brings the necessary skills to strengthen the numeracy strategy. This development includes what is taught and the broadening of mathematical content of other subjects, such as measurement in science, design and technology, information and communication technology and geography.

SCIENCE

86. The standards seen during the inspection are close to average through the school. Overall attainment is similar to that reported at the last inspection. The 2002 Teachers' Assessments of pupils in Year 2 and National Curriculum test results of pupils in Year 6 are very encouraging. These results represent considerable improvement over two years ago, when standards declined sharply. Analysis of pupils' work and observations made during the inspection indicate that nearly all pupils now achieve sound standards compared with their prior attainments and are currently making good progress as a direct result of consistently good teaching. The number of pupils achieving higher than nationally expected levels for their age is on the increase, particularly for pupils in Year 6. However, this improvement is at present inconsistent through the school. In lessons that were seen in Years 1 and 2, more able pupils were not always challenged sufficiently to be sure of attaining higher levels, and previous work through the school shows that insufficient emphasis has been placed on investigative and observational science and on practical work. As a result, especially in the school's middle years, most pupils' enquiry skills and ability to record experimental findings systematically and independently are limited.
87. The achievements of boys and girls and those with English as an additional language are consistent with those of other pupils. However, the progress of those at an early stage of learning English is sometimes slower than for other pupils. This weakness is largely due to teachers' lack of expertise in teaching new scientific vocabulary to pupils who do not speak English freely. Pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriate levels, and support is based on the targeting of their identified needs. An analysis of pupils' recent work and a discussion with Year 2 pupils indicate that good leadership and co-ordination of the subject have already identified pupils' lack of skills in observational work. Currently in Year 2, for example, they are beginning to make more detailed observations as they explore different groups of food items. They carry out investigations, for example, when planting and growing broad beans or flowers and use their senses skilfully when gathering information. Pupils' studies of minibeasts and different habitats in the school grounds are further examples of this growing emphasis on investigative work and demonstrate that standards are beginning to rise further. Nearly all pupils in Year 2 know about the life-cycle of a frog and average and higher attainers observe and record what they know using a format provided by their teacher. Furthermore, they are beginning to offer reasoned explanations of what they observe. Pupils in Year 1 confidently name different parts of the body or the main parts of a plant. Pupils in Year 6 use scientific methods of enquiry satisfactorily to undertake work about life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical science. For example, in Year 6, they were able to identify different groups and families of plants and animals with the use of identification keys. They collected exhibits of their own and used scientific vocabulary to explain their findings satisfactorily.

88. Uses of literacy and numeracy are generally sound. Pupils throughout the school are developing satisfactory understanding of scientific vocabulary. They record and express what they have found out in their observations and employ methods that their teachers have prepared for them. Higher-attaining pupils show a mature approach to their work and respond well to opportunities to work independently, whenever clear expectations are set. This aspect was noticeable in a Year 6 lesson, when groups of pupils searched the school's own wooded copse to identify plants and animals in their habitats. Pupils used vocabulary such as "consumers", "predator", "composers" and "producers", with developing understanding. A few explained terms such as "photosynthesis" and "interdependence" with great clarity. Pupils clearly enjoy science and are excited by it. They are beginning to measure and use numbers to record findings. This emphasis on observation and the scientific method is contributing strongly to improvements. In

Years 5 and 6, appropriate uses of charts, diagrams and pictures are part of this process. However, the use of information and communication technology to support learning in the subject is not sufficiently apparent in the work of the classroom.

89. The quality of teaching is generally good. In the best lessons, teachers' knowledge of the subject and scientific understanding are good. Most teachers use probing and open-ended questions to elicit full responses, to prompt further inquiry and provide challenge. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher's explanations and use of good methodology successfully supported pupils' understanding of four main features of woodland. In this lesson, resources were used effectively to support learning and pupils of all abilities achieved success as they researched through books for themselves. Teachers regularly mark pupils' work and praise good effort. Their good-humoured management of pupils and constructive relationships encourage effective learning.
90. Co-ordination of the subject is good and its leadership provides clear educational direction. What is taught follows a nationally prepared scheme, and this is a clear improvement since the last inspection, ensuring that what is taught meets statutory requirements. However, it is acknowledged that more development is required to adapt what is planned more fully to the particular needs of pupils at the school. Procedures for assessment are new and do not yet inform planning sufficiently. However, resources are adequate and are generally well organised, with an appropriate range of reference books and pictures to support learning.

ART AND DESIGN

91. Attainment in art in Years 2 and 6 is broadly in line with that expected nationally. Teaching through the school is sound and enables pupils to demonstrate satisfactory achievement and progress. No significant differences are apparent in the achievement of boys and girls or those of minority groups. Standards of attainment are not as high as at the time of the last inspection, when they were judged to be well above expected levels, especially when undertaken by specialist teachers. Nevertheless, photographic evidence, along with displays of pupils' work, shows satisfactory progress in the basic skills of art. Numerous displays of pupils' work are visible around the building, but they vary in quality and presentation. In Year 2, satisfactory teaching that involves clever planning introduced "before" and "after" pictures, enabling pupils to talk about the starting points for their work and to develop what they wanted to do next. As a result, they used their imagination to improve pencil and colouring techniques. Opportunities to develop personally are provided when pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively with each other. They respond well on these occasions and demonstrate good attitudes and behaviour.
92. Pupils in Year 4 learn about the effect of light and shade on objects, looking from different directions. For example, everyday objects were used to increase skills of observation. The teacher's clear instructions ensured that pupils understood what was expected of them. Pupils in Year 5 develop understanding of the work of William Morris, observing his patterns and designs and reproducing them. Good cross-curricular links support work in history on the Victorians. Pupils evaluate the impact of colour and pattern satisfactorily and apply this skill to improve their own creations. Displays of pupils' past work show how the subject is used in other subjects. For

example, in history Year 6 pupils worked on portraiture that they had seen in Kenwood House, while Year 2 pupils produced effective collages and pictures of flora and fauna.

93. The main reason that the quality of teaching and learning are not as high as in the last inspection is that skills are not built on successively from one year to the next. Thus learning is not always consistent as pupils move through the school. This inconsistency is undoubtedly partly due to the frequent staff changes in the past couple of years. As a result, opportunities for cultural development are missed in other subjects. For example, when pupils use illustrations to record work, time is not always made available to refine shading and colouring techniques or to draw in detail.

94. Nevertheless, teachers throughout the school are interested in art and the majority of pupils enjoy it. Pupils make a good creative effort, as a result of their positive attitudes and the good relationships that teachers maintain and foster with them. Pupils of different needs and backgrounds, including those with special educational needs, are given an appropriate amount of individual support. At the same time, teachers encourage pupils to be independent and to use their skills and understanding.
95. Artwork across the school is beginning to include the differing experiences and cultures of its pupils. However, opportunities are missed sometimes to invite pupils and their parents to bring artefacts and objects of art from home to enhance understanding of the cultural diversity that exists in the locality. Co-ordination is good, as weaknesses that have been raised in the inspection have already been identified. Increasing resources is a priority for the future along with the overall development of teachers' skills and knowledge, so skills can be developed more evenly and incrementally.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

96. The inspection took place at the start of a new academic year, before the school's programme of study in the subject had begun. Based on evidence from around the school including classroom displays, photographs of past work, folders and work in books, standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are below what is normally expected. A conversation with a small group of pupils about their work also indicated that attainment is below expectations. This judgement is very similar to the picture in the previous report. Year 2 pupils produced two-dimensional models of people and animals that included moving parts. The planning of this work shows some features of design at a level that broadly matches national expectations. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now following a process of designing, making and evaluating that matches the requirements of the National Curriculum, which is an improvement on 1998, when this was not the case. This improvement was evident, for example, in displays of different homes by last year's Year 2. Pupils had successfully made model houses as part of a topic. However, understanding of materials and components is still not broad enough. In the past, insufficient opportunities have been provided for pupils to understand the characteristics of different materials and to acquire a wide enough range of techniques for joining them.
97. Some older pupils are currently building structures based on ideas from the story *Stig of the Dump*. These pupils demonstrated sufficient understanding to choose sensibly from tools and materials that were available, carrying out the different steps that they had planned. They co-operated well in their groups to produce adequate designs prior to construction. Pupils in Year 6 visited *Pizza Express* and were able to make their own pizzas. They evaluated the outcomes of their work including recipes and appropriate ingredients. Photographic evidence shows older pupils designing and making Easter bonnets as well as vehicles to carry an egg in the *Great Egg Race*. However, the materials and components provided were fairly limited for this older age group. For example, uses of electrical, hydraulic and mechanical components were not apparent, and uses of mouldable materials and textiles, although included, appeared rudimentary.
98. It was not possible to see the subject being taught during the inspection, so it is not possible to make an overall judgement of teaching. However, the time allocated in the past was limited, particularly in classes for older pupils. This finding is consistent with the previous judgements about the limited nature of pupils' experiences. Nevertheless, teachers' current planning provides more evidence that what is to be taught now meets statutory requirements in the National Curriculum. It also makes appropriate links with other subjects that are based on national guidance. Furthermore, the lack of resources that was identified in the last inspection has been identified by the new headteacher and co-ordinator as the main reason for lack of progress in the subject since then. Planning is now in place to rectify the difficulty. Pupils indicated that they enjoy the subject. Teaching has clearly been effective enough to enthuse in them a desire to learn more and to make progress. They were able to explain the reasons why particular tools might be used in one situation and not another, and why planning, design and evaluation are important to the process of using technology to make something work.

99. The headteacher and co-ordinator are aware that much needs to be done, but their action plans are good. Health and safety are seen as a priority. A visit to a technology day at a local secondary school is planned in Year 5.

GEOGRAPHY

100. The last inspection report made no explicit judgement on standards of attainment at that time. Similarly, it has not been possible to make a judgement this time. The inspection took place at the beginning of the school year, so no current work was available to scrutinise. Furthermore, it was possible to observe only one lesson in Year 1, as other classes had not yet begun their programmes of study.
101. In the lesson that was observed, teaching was sound. Careful questioning tested pupils' skills of observation and recall, and successfully developed their understanding of "location", "direction", and "features". Methods were good, successfully engaging the whole class in working together by sitting in a circle with a plan in the centre. Pupils were challenged to make their own contributions. As a result, learning was sound. Pupils with special educational needs were included well and also made sound progress. A good geographical display in Year 3 contributed to personal development, showing how children in the class come from all parts of the globe.
102. A new humanities co-ordinator is responsible for leadership of the subject. She has a clear vision for the subject, and has already developed a new scheme of work for the subject, which reflects careful thought and follows discussions with staff. This scheme clearly meets statutory requirements in the National Curriculum. Weekly teaching plans are being developed for the spring term when geography will be taught throughout the school. The co-ordinator is also undertaking an audit of the school's resources. Resources seen during the inspection were limited in scope and few artefacts from other countries were available. Shortages of maps, atlases, globes and photographic and other visual material are also evident.

HISTORY

103. At the last inspection standards of attainment in history were judged to be in line with national expectations. Evidence from this inspection based on lesson observations and a range of other sources showed that standards in history remain in line with national standards, with several examples of good work.
104. Teaching through the school is sound and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Lessons are well planned using a good variety of methods and strategies. Questioning is used effectively to promote pupils' understanding of the subject, encouraging them to think about why historical figures acted as they did. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 2, pupils learnt how previous events in the life of Florence Nightingale influenced later events in her life. Activities, such as sequencing a series of pictures, were well selected and helped pupils to develop skills of deduction and interpretation of evidence. In this way, pupils are given opportunities to produce their own ideas and to form opinions. Teachers adapt activities well to match the range of ability within their classes, creating interesting opportunities for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs receive additional support, and high attainers are given opportunities to extend their thinking. Teachers have high expectations and lessons contain variety and pace. As a result, pupils respond with enthusiasm and learn effectively. It is clear that pupils take their history lessons seriously, and try to produce good work. Their behaviour is always good and they engage very enthusiastically in question and answer sessions and discussions.
105. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have already developed an understanding of past and present and are keen to build on their newly acquired investigative skills. In Year 2, they demonstrated that they could write sentences about Florence Nightingale's life, deducing their findings from pictorial

evidence. In Year 4, despite a slow start in a lesson about Henry VIII, pupils demonstrated remarkable skills of observation at the end of the lesson when they were asked to put themselves in the place of Henry VIII. Nearly all of them had good ideas, explaining, for example, that they had been hunting, eaten roast meat or spoken to one of the six wives. In Year 6, most pupils revealed a solid depth of knowledge and understanding about Ancient Greece, even though teaching was insufficiently adapted to meet the full range of pupils' needs.

106. The use of literacy is good. Pupils record their ideas and findings in writing and use their reading skills to seek and augment information. Younger pupils were seen putting their sequencing skills, acquired in mathematics, to good historical effect. However, skills in information and communication technology were not seen in use during the inspection and little evidence of their use in history was available.
107. The subject is well managed, alongside geography, by a new co-ordinator of humanities. She has already introduced new planning of what should be taught, based on national recommendations. It provides pupils with interesting and challenging opportunities to build their knowledge and skills sequentially. Assessment of pupils' work and collecting evidence of progress have been identified for future development. The co-ordinator is also undertaking a complete reorganisation of resources, many of which are scattered through the school. The target is to bring them together, so all staff will have easy access to them. A clear sense of direction lies behind future development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

108. At the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment in information and communication technology were well below national expectations throughout the school. Furthermore, what was taught failed to match the statutory requirement to teach the National Curriculum. Teaching was unsatisfactory, owing to lack of knowledge and expertise and poor resources. Several teachers lacked confidence to teach the subject. Attainment has clearly improved, although it remains below expected levels. No longer are teachers lacking in confidence and a new scheme of work ensures that all aspects of what the National Curriculum requires are now included. However, nearly all of this improvement is recent and not enough time has elapsed to raise standards sufficiently to match what is normally expected in Years 2 and 6. Weaknesses in resources are also still apparent. These shortcomings restrict the amount of practice that can be made available to pupils in their classrooms, although the teaching of skills in the computer suite is often of good quality.
109. Planning and display show that in Year 2, pupils learn to control programs with the use of buttons and toolbars. They employ a word processing program adequately, involving skills to use a keyboard and mouse. In a lesson in Year 1, good teaching was based on very good use of time. Initial instruction was carried out in the classroom, so use of computers was maximised when pupils arrived in the suite. The lesson linked well with science and literacy, as pupils developed skills of clicking on areas of the screen and then dragged labels into position. A human body was displayed and labels were dropped into place to name its different parts. Although this and other learning reflect the requirements of the National Curriculum well, it is not consolidated quickly or sufficiently enough for pupils to sustain progress and attainment to expected levels. The main reason is that computers in pupils' classrooms are not sufficiently powerful to practise such skills often enough. Nevertheless, those skills acquired in the younger age groups are developed sequentially as pupils move up the school.
110. In Year 4, work on word-processing builds well on what pupils have learnt previously. Pupils acquire skills related to choosing fonts, deleting and redrafting. They successfully learn to refine skills of controlling programs, accessing menus and changing applications to gain the results that they require. In a good lesson, pupils were well motivated as they redrafted news articles. They knew how to use the spellchecker, highlighted text that they wanted to alter, and demonstrated the confidence to experiment with ideas of their own. Adult support in this lesson was good.

Pupils with special educational needs made similar progress to other pupils. By Year 6, pupils understand and use instruction lists to operate spreadsheets, word processors and similar programs. Pupils through the school understand applications such as printing, saving and retrieving. As with the younger age groups, however, experiences away from the computer suite are not frequent enough for skills to be consolidated. Resources do not permit enough use of the Internet or CD-ROM to support work in other subjects in the classrooms.

111. The quality of teaching that was seen in the computer suite was good. It was based on good methods. In Year 4, for example, the teacher demonstrated skills confidently, using a projection, so pupils were able to see each step. Her knowledge of the program was good, so it was conveyed to pupils confidently. In this way, pupils followed what was expected and were able to reproduce the required skills. Similarly, in a lesson in Year 1, instruction was confident and effective. As a result of this good teaching, pupils are acquiring good knowledge of what new technology can achieve.
112. Co-ordination is good. Senior managers and the subject co-ordinator are aware of the unusual mismatch between teaching and standards of attainment. They understand the reasons for it and have prioritised weaknesses in hardware and the lack of available resources that lay at their root. An action plan that seeks to address these difficulties has been drawn up, including further training as new equipment is introduced. However, it is also recognised that considerable funding may be needed to rectify these difficulties quickly. Possible solutions are being sought.

MUSIC

113. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in music was described as exceeding national expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6. Many pupils received instrumental lessons and extra-curricular activities helped to enhance the overall standard. Since the last inspection, difficulties that affected other aspects of provision also had an impact on music. The teacher responsible for the subject at that time left, and resources deteriorated. Many parents at the pre-inspection meeting expressed the view that standards dropped considerably. Attainment during this inspection was broadly in line with what is normally expected in both Years 2 and 6. However, singing was clearly above what is typically found and enhanced the quality of collective worship on a daily basis. Indications are that the recent appointment of a specialist has reversed any decline that might have occurred, so standards are rising again.
114. The quality of teaching was often very good, including in an instrumental 'cello lesson and as a result, learning was very effective. For example, pupils enjoyed their lessons, concentrating hard and acquiring basic skills with ease. Personal development was good. Pupils through the school made good use of planned opportunities to compose together, co-operating well. They demonstrated responsible attitudes towards instruments and listened to each other's performances with interest and respect. A school choir, composed of approximately equal numbers of boys and girls, provided very good social opportunities for pupils to sing together at a high standard. Management of pupils and organisation of instruments and other resources were very good. Pupils of different prior attainments and levels of confidence were well supported, so pupils, including those with English as an additional language, make progress at good rates.
115. In Year 2, nearly all pupils attain at expected levels. For example, they kept simple rhythms well and began to use non-standard musical notation to help with the recall of tuned phrases, reproducing "high notes" and "low notes" on a glockenspiel. Their singing of a song about *Goldilocks* entailed changes in the tone and texture of their voices, depending on which of the three bears was singing. In Year 6, very good teaching resulted in the use of crotchets, quavers, semi-quavers and crotchet rests to record and then reproduce rhythm patterns. Nearly all pupils were able to relate their rhythm patterns to sequences of words, such as "fly-spider-grasshopper-fly". Pupils' subsequent singing of *Zum-gali-gali* and insect-raps were of a high standard. Skills are being developed very well. Other examples of good teaching of singing, leading to high standards, were seen in lessons in Year 1 and in a choir session. In a 'cello lesson, two boys who had only just begun to learn the instrument were keen and followed their teacher's advice well. The teacher had established a very good relationship with them and they enjoyed his

teaching style, which employed “ta-ti” rhythms and tonic sol-fa. Recent opportunities to play in an orchestra and to perform in concerts have been well received and supported by parents.

116. Co-ordination is good. Previous weaknesses were identified and the appointment of the specialist teacher has clearly been a strong factor in the positive features that were found in the inspection. Further performances for parents are planned and as the present quality of teaching is sustained over time, standards are set to rise.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. At the time of the last inspection, standards in physical education were at about nationally expected levels in Years 2 and 6. Pupils’ co-ordination was developed well. Teaching was good. During the present inspection, attainment was often above what is normally expected, bearing in mind the range of sports and activities which pupils experience and to which they successfully apply the skills that they acquire.
118. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 work enthusiastically in gymnastics, attaining good standards, for example, in rolling, jumping, moving in different ways around the hall and balancing. They thoroughly enjoy their activities and demonstrate a good awareness of space, weaving in and out to avoid others. They co-operate well with each other. Overall, teaching is good with well-planned activities, including “warm up” and “warm down” exercises at the start and end of lessons. The pace of teaching is good and teachers challenge pupils to practise and improve. For example, pupils were encouraged to vary their movement and to demonstrate it for others, so different ideas could be spread and shared. A strong emphasis is placed on consolidation of learning, involving pupils in thinking about how to improve. Good opportunities are taken to make links with speaking and listening. For example, language such as “flexing” and “snake-like” was introduced whenever appropriate. Nearly all pupils link their movements into simple sequences and use apparatus such as mats, bars and beams successfully. As a result, pupils learn skills at a good rate. Attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good, sometimes very good. All pupils actively take part, including those with special educational needs. Teaching assistants help pupils to participate, explaining what to do or supporting those with physical disability, ensuring that they are included.
119. In Years 3 to 6, pupils consolidate their existing skills in throwing, batting and catching further. More consistent control and quality are encouraged and pupils understand the need to practise skills in order to hone performance. Girls and boys in Year 3 co-operated well in group activities and built effectively on skills learnt in earlier years. Activities included rotating between bowling, batting and retrieving to improve confidence and accuracy of skills. Good features in the teaching included a high degree of encouragement and praise for pupils. Good methods such as demonstrating skills to small groups of pupils are employed to ensure that pupils understand what to do next. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 apply throwing and catching skills very successfully to sports and games. At times, for example, during *touch-rugby*, a group threw the ball with considerable accuracy and verve.
120. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 attend swimming lessons at a local pool. By the time they leave the school, a large majority achieve what is required to meet the government’s minimum requirement in the subject and many exceed it comfortably.
121. The co-ordinator is a specialist whose positive and enthusiastic approach ensures that the subject has a high profile. He has worked with staff and parents to enable pupils to take part in a wide range of activities. An identified priority is to monitor teaching and learning to ensure consistency and quality. New exercise mats are enabling teachers to develop pupils’ confidence in gymnastics. However, other small games equipment is ageing, so improving available resources is another future priority. Conversely, the quality of the school’s grounds and spacious hall contributes significantly towards enhancing standards. Several after school clubs exist, and these include touch-rugby, netball, dance, football and, in the summer, “kwik-cricket”. These clubs are well attended by boys and girls of all abilities and therefore make a good contribution to overall standards of attainment. Currently, because of their popularity, all of these clubs, except

the dance club, are open only to older pupils. Parents take a keen interest in these clubs and many were observed encouraging and watching their children participate.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

122. At the time of the last inspection, very little religious education was being taught and, what was taught, did not fully meet statutory requirements. This situation has improved, and requirements to teach the locally agreed syllabus are now met. Weaknesses, such as a lack of guidance about what should be taught, have been rectified. However, the new programme has not had time to have a full impact on standards. Nevertheless, attainment that was observed in lessons broadly matched the agreed syllabus, while gaps in past learning were apparent in discussions with pupils about their previous work. This inconsistent picture occurs mainly because, in the past, the subject was not taught regularly and systematically, and reflects the fact that religious education had a low profile. Nevertheless, the quality of learning is now strong. For example, it was never less than satisfactory in lessons that were observed and was very good in one.
123. Younger pupils are beginning to develop their own ideas about appropriate personal responses to right and wrong. They look at events in their own lives to help them understand choices and decisions of a moral nature. Pupils in Year 2 know the story of Christmas and simple aspects of Christianity. In a sound lesson, they were told how Muslim children learn the story of the Prophet Mohammed when he was a child. The teacher then told this story to the class. Pupils confidently discussed and highlighted qualities of a special person, including honesty, kindness and trustworthiness. However, few links with Islam were actually made explicit at this point.
124. Pupils in Year 6 have a reasonable knowledge and understanding of Christian ideas and they know that God is worshipped in different ways in other faiths. Their attitudes are good, and they express tolerance and positive views about other people who have different ideas from their own. Pupils have heard stories from the Bible and recall some of them well, although they do not fully understand the deeper significance of such stories to believers. Pupils are introduced to major religions, such as Islam and Buddhism, and the lives of people from various cultural backgrounds. Nevertheless, detailed understanding of festivals, religious leaders, and places of worship are fairly limited. However, the inspection took place early in the school year, and some elements of this work are due to be studied later in Year 6.
125. The quality of teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons that were observed. It was very good in one. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is sufficient to teach the locally agreed syllabus. For example, tasks are suitably planned with due regard to pupils' different levels of need and previous knowledge. In a very good lesson about 'Diwali', in Year 5, pupils were effectively involved in identifying ideas and questions about 'good', 'evil' and 'rich deeds'. The teaching of religious education contributes well to pupils' speaking and listening skills. For example, in Year 2, pupils spoke about a range of situations and experiences to identify special human qualities, exploring appropriate vocabulary and using it in their explanations. However, in the past, it is clear that pupils were given insufficient opportunities to write. School assemblies support religious education and encourage respect for pupils' own religions. During the inspection, pupils' knowledge of Sukkoth, the Jewish harvest festival, was broadened in an assembly that was led by the local Rabbi. He illustrated Jewish traditions and customs linked to the festival very successfully.
126. Subject co-ordination is sound. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and clear about the future direction for the subject. For example, the absence of a consistent approach to recording and assessing pupils' progress has limited information to help teachers to plan on the basis of what pupils have already achieved. The co-ordinator's monitoring of teaching and pupils' work is also restricted. Senior managers are aware of these weaknesses.