

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wimbledon

LEA area: Merton

Unique reference number: 102670

Headteacher: Mrs V Vaughan

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Wotherspoon  
22199

Dates of inspection: 31<sup>st</sup> March – 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2003

Inspection number: 246231

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Russell Road  
Wimbledon  
London

Postcode: SW19 1QL

Telephone number: 020 8542 4580

Fax number: 020 8542 5301

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs F Hibbert

Date of previous inspection: December 1997

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22199	Mrs J Wotherspoon	Registered inspector	Mathematics Geography English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9039	Mr B Eyre	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23300	Ms L Evans	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Educational inclusion, including race equality Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
12394	Ms C May	Team inspector	Information and communication technology History Foundation Stage	
32385	Ms L Hastings	Team inspector	Science Music Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?

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Burnham-on-Sea  
Somerset TA8 1AN

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School draws its pupils from a wide area. The proportion of pupils taking free school meals (seven per cent) is lower than average, indicating that many pupils come from economically advantaged backgrounds. Sixty-eight pupils speak English as an additional language (this is high) representing 20 different languages. Twelve pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The school has undergone considerable change since the last inspection. It is now an all-through primary school catering for pupils aged from three to eleven, having previously catered for pupils up to the age of nine. The school population is currently 254 full-time and 41 part-time pupils. Numbers are due to fall again as the school reduces in size to become a one-form entry school. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below average at 15 per cent. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. There is a wide range of attainment when children start school in the nursery but it is broadly average.

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

This is a very good school. Standards are well above average in English and mathematics by Year 6. Pupils achieve well because all the adults in the school have high expectations of them. Pupils learn to have high expectations of themselves in a school where the outstanding provision for spiritual development pervades all that they do. Very good leadership is ensuring a smooth transition to the school's new status as a primary school. The school gives good value for money.

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

- Encourages each individual to do their best and values their contribution to the school community
- Fosters excellent relationships and promotes very good behaviour and attitudes
- Children make a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception)
- Teaching is consistently good and pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science
- Provision for music is very good and standards are high
- Links with parents and the community are very positive
- The headteacher gives a strong lead in setting expectations of the whole school community

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

- Provision and resources for physical development and outdoor play for pupils in reception
- The role of the subject leaders in monitoring the quality of provision and standards in their subjects
- The balance and organisation of the curriculum for Years 5 and 6
- The use of assessment information in planning in subjects other than English and mathematics

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

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

The school was last inspected in December 1997 when it was judged to be a good school with very good features. Since then it has sustained and strengthened many of its positive aspects and addressed the areas identified for development satisfactorily. Teaching has improved with a greater proportion of good and very good teaching observed during inspection. Staff are confident in teaching those areas identified as having weaknesses in the last inspection. The governors' long-term strategic planning is better developed and they have secure procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's achievements. Able pupils are challenged well in English and mathematics although the school could now extend this good practice to other areas of the curriculum by making better use of assessment information when planning activities at different levels. Taking account of the significant changes to the status of the school and the improvement in standards in English, mathematics, history and music, the school has made a good level of improvement overall.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	n/a	n/a	B	C
Mathematics	n/a	n/a	A	B
science	n/a	n/a	B	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Until 2002, the school did not cater for Year 6 pupils. Hence there is no information about trends over time. In 2002, the school's targets were met in mathematics but not in English. Results were well above average in mathematics and above average in English and science. Results of tests in Year 2 have been consistently well above average in reading, writing and mathematics until 2002 when they were above average. A good proportion of pupils attained levels above those expected for their age. Compared with similar schools, the results are broadly average, both at Year 2 and Year 6.

Pupils in the current Year 6 are on course to achieve the targets that have been set for them. A significant number work at the levels expected for their age and a good number works at higher levels. Standards are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Currently, Year 2 pupils are achieving well and attaining standards above those expected for their ages in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Throughout the school, pupils are articulate and their good speaking and listening skills are reinforced regularly in lessons. The quality of handwriting and presentation is good and adds significantly to pupils' work. Standards in history are above average by Year 6 and in music they are high. Standards in art and design are above average up to Year 4 but these good levels are not sustained because pupils in Years 5 and 6 do not have enough opportunity to develop their skills regularly and consistently. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress across all areas of learning. However, reception children have inadequate facilities for outdoor play and too few opportunities for using large apparatus.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen and enthusiastic about the activities on offer. They approach their work with a high level of interest. A very good level of concentration and effort is sustained in most lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Movement around the school is well ordered. Pupils respond positively to teachers' high expectations. There have been no exclusions. The school is a happy and harmonious place.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships are excellent at all levels. Pupils are self-confident and outgoing but unassuming. They are polite and friendly. All pupils are well integrated and sensitive to each other's needs. Members of the school council are justifiably proud to represent their classmates in making decisions about the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are similar to the national figures. The punctuality of a small number of pupils remains a problem.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good and the needs of pupils are met well. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all the lessons seen during the inspection. In a significant proportion of lessons, the teaching was good. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage where the high level of adult support in the nursery enables adults to work closely with small groups of children. It is consistently good in English, mathematics and science and very good in music. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage pupils very well. Excellent relationships underpin the positive working environment. Learning support assistants are deployed well and the teamwork between adults is a very good role model for pupils. The strong focus on giving pupils opportunities to work in pairs and groups supports their independence and extends their social development as well as their thinking skills. Good quality explanations and clear demonstrations support pupils' learning of new ideas. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well and skilfully integrated into other activities. Computers are used soundly across a range of subjects despite the constraints of resources. Homework makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and independence.

Occasionally, lessons are over-long and teachers spend too much time introducing a lesson; this makes it difficult to sustain a good pace. Planning for different levels of work is more precise in English and mathematics and this caters very well for pupils of all abilities. This level of difference is not so secure in other subjects and, at times, there are missed opportunities to challenge pupils, especially higher attainers, to work at a higher level.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Literacy and numeracy are promoted strongly but tend to over-dominate the curriculum in Years 5 and 6, leaving too little time for some other subjects. Provision for personal, social and health education makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development, as do the stimulating and interesting range of visits and visitors that extend the curriculum. There are too few after-school and lunchtime clubs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs learn well because they have work that is appropriately matched to their needs, especially in English and mathematics.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils' needs are recognised and they are supported well. Teachers' good focus on practical activities and their emphasis on key vocabulary are appropriate and helpful strategies for learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for spiritual development is outstanding. Pupils' moral and social development are promoted very well and cultural development is good. This aspect is a significant strength of the school's work.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are looked after well on a daily basis. Staff are sensitive to individual's personal circumstances. There are good procedures for

	monitoring pupils' progress but the information could be used better in subjects other than English and mathematics.
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## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and a strong direction for the work of the school. She is supported well by the deputy headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators who share her commitment to school improvement. Changes to the school have been managed very successfully. The roles of subject co-ordinators are in various stages of development and there is more to do to extend their responsibility for monitoring and evaluating standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They play an active role in shaping the direction of the school. They have a clear structure and terms of reference for carrying out their duties. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and the challenges it faces as it continues to change.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has effective strategies to monitor and evaluate standards in English, mathematics and science and to identify areas for further improvement. These good procedures could now be extended as the roles of co-ordinators develop further.
The strategic use of resources	Financial management is satisfactory. Cautious spending during a time of uncertainty has resulted in a large underspend which is gradually being reduced. Educational priorities are linked soundly to financial planning and specific grants are used well for their intended purpose.

The school applies the principles of best value for money successfully. The accommodation is unsatisfactory for the number of pupils currently in school and this poses restrictions on the use of some rooms. As the numbers fall so the school will be able to reinstate the library and develop a computer suite. The new school improvement plan shows how the school intends to improve the accommodation and facilities for reception children. Staffing levels and learning resources are satisfactory. The purchase of additional resources is planned to coincide with building developments.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• The school expects pupils to work hard and they are making good progress</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• The school helps pupils develop into mature and responsible people</li> <li>• The staff are approachable when parents have queries or problems</li> <li>• The pupils behave well</li> <li>• The school is led and managed well</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents and keeps them well informed about their children's progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The work that pupils are given to do at home</li> <li>• The range of activities outside of lessons</li> </ul>

The school enjoys an effective partnership with parents, who are very pleased about many aspects of its work. More than 90 per cent of the parents who replied to the questionnaire made positive comments.



Inspectors agree with parents' positive views and endorse their criticism of the lack of clubs. However, homework is judged to make a good contribution to pupils' learning at school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The school has had only one set of Year 6 results in National Curriculum tests, having previously not catered for pupils of this age. In 2002, the results were above the national average in English and science, and well above average in mathematics. In comparison with schools in similar circumstances the results were average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Standards of Year 6 work seen during the inspection show that almost all pupils are attaining the levels expected for their age in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In English and mathematics a good proportion of pupils attains standards above the level expected. The school has set challenging targets for these pupils that are likely to be met as a result of the school's emphasis on these subjects.
2. At the end of Year 2, National Curriculum test results have been consistently well above the national figures in reading, writing and mathematics. In the most recent tests in 2002, results were above the national average and in line with those of schools with similar circumstances. In each test a good number of pupils reached levels above those expected for their age. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in science were close to average at the expected level but very high at Level 3. This group of pupils contains a higher number of pupils with special educational needs than in previous years.
3. During their time in school pupils are achieving well across a range of subjects. In English and mathematics they achieve very well from their average starting point to attain standards well above expectations by the time they leave.
4. The level of attainment of children on entry to the nursery varies from year to year, and each year there is a wide variation of ability amongst the pupils. Generally, however, when the children start in the nursery their knowledge, skills and understanding are as expected for their age. The children enjoy school and make good progress throughout their time in the nursery and reception classes due to the very good quality teaching and the wide range of activities provided. By the end of the reception class standards are generally above average. They are well above expectations in personal, social and emotional developments, broadly average in communication language and literacy, above average in number work, and in line with all other areas of learning, namely physical development, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress.
5. Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are above average by Year 2. Pupils have many opportunities to practise listening carefully and speaking clearly and confidently in lessons. Many pupils have good strategies for working out unknown words and most read with good accuracy. There is a good emphasis on practising reading both in school and at home. Pupils write well in a variety of styles, paying good attention to grammar for their age. In mathematics, standards are above expected levels, with a good proportion of pupils developing a range of strategies for working out mental calculations and using their knowledge of number bonds to help them. In science, pupils attain above average levels for their age. For example, most identify the characteristics of a healthy plant and use careful observations to describe differences

between plants. Their knowledge and understanding of a fair test and their ability to predict what will happen are good.

6. By Year 6, standards in English are well above average. Speaking and listening skills are very good because of the many opportunities within lessons to share ideas with partners or in small groups. Teachers expect pupils to answer fully and often build on their answers with additional questions. Nearly all pupils enjoy reading and standards are high. They read with good understanding, phrasing, fluency and expression. Many exceed the levels of comprehension expected for their age. Pupils continue to develop a good range of styles of writing and use interesting vocabulary. The quality of handwriting and presentation is consistently very good. In mathematics, standards are high. Of note is the speed with which pupils work out the answer to mental calculations and the range of different strategies they use. They have regular opportunities to use these skills in lessons and to apply strategies to investigations. Pupils have a good understanding of how to control variables to ensure a scientific test is fair. Their knowledge and understanding of scientific processes are developing well.
7. Standards seen in other subjects are broadly in line with the levels expected for pupils' ages. Previous standards have been sustained. Standards in music have risen since the last inspection and are above expectations by Year 2 and well above expectations by Year 6. This is as a result of consistently good teaching by the music specialist. In history, standards are above expectations by Year 6.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they have realistic targets. Pupils on School Action Plus and with statements are well supported in small groups and individually. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and speak little or no English on entry into school, are supported well. These pupils make good progress as a result of the regular and well-focused targeted support from a part-time teacher.

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

9. The attitudes of the pupils to the school and their behaviour are very good, and this significant strength is helping the pupils to learn effectively. Their personal development and relationships have been sustained during the period of change the school has experienced and this is also very good. Together these combine to make the school a happy and harmonious place. Teamwork, endeavour and mutual respect are evident throughout the day. Pupils make visitors welcome; they are encouraged to be inquisitive and to express their opinions. Discussions with them confirm that they feel that the school routines are fair; this gives them confidence. They talk enthusiastically about the visits they make and are keen to tell their parents about the visitors who come to the school.
10. Standards of behaviour are very good. Consequently, the pupils make the most of their lessons and they learn well. Pupils are encouraged to take charge of their own behaviour and the vast majority of them respond positively. The behaviour management policy contains the right balance of rules and guidance and there are simple but effective classroom rules, which the pupils helped to devise. Occasional shortcomings are addressed in a supportive manner. Parents believe that the behaviour of the pupils is good and inspection evidence fully confirms this. There have been no exclusions.
11. The pupils' very good personal development and excellent relationships are secured by the high level of interest and support all adults provide. The school rightly prides itself as an extended family; it is alert to the interest of each individual and it helps pupils

overcome emotional difficulties. The school is sensitive to individual family circumstances and such matters are addressed with appropriate discretion. The school has a policy of racial equality; it has an inclusive attitude in its approach towards other cultures and faiths. This helps the pupils to become effective citizens who are becoming aware of democratic processes. Pupils actively assist in the running of the school. Members of the school council are rightly proud of their involvement in shaping the direction in which the school is heading. The school is free of graffiti and litter. Pupils with litter patrol badges on their jumpers are keen to explain their role in keeping the school tidy. They are also proud of their role in 'friendship' arrangements provided to anyone new to the school or who is seeking a playmate. Older pupils readily undertake the role of 'big sister or brother' to their youngest colleagues. These matters combine to make the school a special place in pupils' lives. Parents express overwhelming support for the manner in which relationships are promoted.

12. Attendance is satisfactory and it has improved slightly over the last two terms. Unauthorised absence remains at a low level. The school is adept at being able to persuade parents not to take their children on holiday during term time and it has reduced the trend generally seen. When the last report was published some unpunctuality was reported and this remains a problem; for example, during one day of the inspection a number of pupils arrived late for an important morning assembly.

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

13. The quality of teaching is good and the needs of all pupils are met well. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all the lessons seen during the inspection. The proportion of lessons in which teaching was good has increased since the previous inspection. Good and very good features were present in most lessons and there were relatively few weaknesses. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and in music. It is consistently good in English, mathematics and science. Examples of good teaching were seen in all subjects and all year groups. This level of consistency in the quality of the teaching is a strength.
14. The quality of teaching in the nursery and reception classes is very good overall and ranges from satisfactory to excellent. Lessons are well planned to cover all the areas of learning in the new nationally recommended curriculum. However, the nursery and reception class staff do not plan together, so the curriculum is not as cohesive as it might be. Planning within each class is very detailed and well thought out and the day-to-day monitoring of children's progress is very good. This ensures that the learning activities provided are matched closely to the needs of the children. There is a strong emphasis on children's personal, social and emotional development. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and promote good manners strongly. Children develop a good level of independence and are unusually confident for their age. A significant emphasis is placed on communication, language and literacy and on developing mathematics skills. Teaching in these areas is very good. The teachers ensure that every child has the opportunity to contribute to discussions and to answer questions. This supports children with speech and language difficulties, and those at the earliest stages of learning to speak English, to make very good progress in developing their vocabulary. Sharing stories and reading books are regular activities that promote enjoyment as well as developing reading skills. Children are given plenty of opportunities to write independently in their play but there are too few opportunities to practice correct letter formation as children get older. Number activities are carefully planned and adapted well to meet children's needs and to challenge those who are more able.

15. In Years 1 to 6 teaching is good with frequent examples of very good practice. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of what they can achieve. Teachers manage pupils very well, but rarely need to resort to overt behaviour management strategies. The excellent relationships in school underpin the positive working environment. Learning support assistants are deployed well and the teamwork between adults is a very good role model for pupils. Whole-class teaching sessions are managed sensitively to involve all pupils, whose contributions are openly valued. Pupils respond very positively to the well-established routines and expectations, and they in turn value each other and their teachers. The strong focus on giving pupils opportunities to work in pairs and groups supports their independence and extends their social development.
16. Teachers frequently tell pupils what they will learn and sometimes, but not always, return to the lesson's objectives at the end of the lesson to review the extent to which pupils have developed new skills or strengthened existing ones. Good strategies for older pupils to evaluate for themselves whether or not they feel more confident about the lesson's content help teachers to identify where more support is needed and gives pupils a real sense of achievement.
17. Sustaining the pace of work was a weakness in a small number of lessons. It was a feature of lessons that extended for most of the afternoon session. This drifting caused some loss of enthusiasm among pupils that was soon curbed when teachers brought pupils back on task. In most lessons, the pace was brisk and pupils covered much ground, working productively. This was a significant feature of the music lessons, where teaching was very good. Lessons are relatively short, about 35 to 40 minutes, and yet cover a good range of skills and knowledge.
18. At times, there are missed opportunities to challenge pupils, especially higher attainers, to work at a higher level. This was more obvious in lessons other than English and mathematics where teachers tend to teach directly from the detailed unit plans for the half term. These occasionally identify different activities or expectations for pupils of different abilities. For example, the activities in the geography lessons in Years 3 and 4 were modified to give additional support for lower attaining pupils. However, samples of pupils' past work show that pupils are frequently given the same tasks to complete and the main difference is the amount and quality of the written work completed. In the foundation subjects there is little evidence that lesson plans are adapted substantially as a result of what has gone before. Teachers are beginning to formalise the ways in which they assess how well pupils have achieved the learning objectives of units of work. Systems are still developing and there is scope to use the information more rigorously when planning the next steps in pupils' learning. Pupils' work is marked well in the majority of classes. In English, mathematics and science good comments help pupils to know what to improve.
19. Teachers' good subject knowledge showed in the way that they modelled the use of specific and technical vocabulary in subjects such as mathematics and science. The emphasis on repeating key vocabulary is a successful strategy for pupils learning to speak English as an additional language. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well and skilfully integrated into other activities. Teachers make good links between subjects so that skills are reinforced in a relevant but interesting way. Computers are used soundly across a range of subjects despite the constraints of resources. Practical activities stimulate enthusiasm and teachers plan a good number of visits, visitors and first-hand experiences to bring learning to life. This practical and visual approach is beneficial for pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Homework is given regularly. It is

relevant, pupils' efforts to complete it are acknowledged and it makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and independence.

20. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well over time through teachers' good planning, especially in English and mathematics. The quality of support during lessons is good and learning support assistants foster pupils' self-confidence well so that pupils offer to answer questions and participate confidently. Time out of lessons is rare which means pupils are included fully in lessons. In a number of lessons in Years 3 to 6 in foundation subjects, teachers' plans show that work is the same for everyone and only occasionally adapted to pupils' needs. However, pupils are frequently well supported to complete the tasks.
21. Pupils in the early stages of learning English have additional support that is well focused to their needs. There is an appropriately high emphasis on developing and extending their vocabulary to provide the foundation for reading and writing.

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

22. The quality and range of the curriculum provided by the school are good and promote the aims of the school well. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is very good and makes a strong contribution to pupils' social and moral development. The very good scheme of work relates to the school's mission statement '*fostering positive relationships*' and includes appropriate attention to drugs misuse and sex education. Allowing for the changes that have been made within the school and the different demands of the curriculum since the last report, there is good improvement and all statutory requirements are met. The issues which were identified in the last report have been successfully addressed. The school is inclusive in practice and the needs of most pupils are met within the class for a very high proportion of the time. There is a strong ongoing link with a local school for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties. A very good range of visits, including residential visits, and visitors to the school enrich the curriculum significantly and make a strong contribution to provision for pupils' personal development, which is very good.
23. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage are good. The curriculum recommended nationally for the youngest children has changed since the last inspection when some of the oldest children in the reception classes were regarded as being in Key Stage 1. The staff have worked hard to bring about the changes required. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection. This has had a very positive impact on both provision and on teaching and learning. Both the nursery and reception classes are attractively set out in areas of learning. The curriculum for the nursery children is of an exceptionally high standard but, at present, there are insufficient opportunities for the reception class children to work and play outside as stipulated in the new requirements for the Foundation Stage. The school is aware that there is further work to do in order to create a cohesive key stage and has sound plans to address these omissions.
24. Throughout the rest of the school the curriculum is carefully planned and, in Years 1 to 4, it is well established, balanced and relevant. The curriculum for Years 5 and 6 is still evolving, with plans to include French. During the week of the inspection the curriculum for Years 5 and 6 was narrow. In these two years, the balance of the timetable favours English and mathematics, which share 47 per cent. Although this has been effective in establishing high standards, it reduces the available time for other subjects. Increased time for science has further reduced the breadth. Planning of blocked units in the foundation subjects adversely affects continuity and progression in developing skills.

This is because of long gaps between them and the small percentage of time assigned to them. Examples of this are geography, history, art and design, and design and technology. Lessons in foundation subjects in the afternoons tend to be long and, at times, the pace drifts. In shorter 40-minute lessons such as music, time was used more efficiently; the pace of the lessons was fast and the opportunities within them planned well, suggesting a more efficient use of time. All subjects have well prepared policies and follow nationally recommended schemes. The strategies for teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills are very good overall, are used well and developed across a range of subjects. The daily literacy and mathematics lessons are taught effectively and there are very good links made to other subjects such as science, geography, personal and social education and history, all of which enhances pupils' learning. Pupils in Year 6 take responsibility for preparing the agenda and writing up the notes from the school council, using information and communication technology to do so.

25. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language is good because they have appropriately matched work especially in English and mathematics. Teachers provide appropriate work for higher attaining pupils as well as those pupils who need extra help within set groups. Small groups are formed for extra help in literacy and numeracy and these are well taught. Pupils benefit from consolidating basic skills and working at an appropriate pace. Individual education plans are very good. They state clearly the strengths of pupils and review learning over the term. They are monitored regularly by the special educational needs co-ordinator who supports teachers in writing targets. Parents and pupils are also consulted in setting targets which means there is a team approach to achieving them. Targets have improved since the last inspection and are now sharp in focus. In the foundation subjects, teachers tend to plan the same level of work for everyone, which affects pupils' ability to work independently.
26. Good links with the community and other local institutions enrich the curriculum through visits and visitors, and activities support learning in English, history, music, science, design and technology, and art and design. In Year 4, pupils have a residential visit to Suffolk and in Year 6 to the Isle of Wight, which contribute significantly to pupils' social development. Pupils have recently visited Wimbledon Polka Theatre, the Barbican to listen to the London Symphony Orchestra, and the Young Proms. They have had visiting drama groups giving performances related to their study of Greeks and Egyptians. Visiting African drummers extended pupils' understanding of music from another culture and there have been opera groups and a singing workshop. Design and technology has been supported well by a visiting adviser showing how to use pneumatics. Older pupils have visited Wimbledon College for a science lesson. Years 3 to 6 pupils experienced a science workshop led by Professor Bonkers. The school has good links with the community through the local church and the choir performs at community events. Pupils raise funds for charity and take part in the local 'fun run'. The school explores well the resources within the locality to help learning about Victorian buildings, art and design within the church, and to conduct surveys at the roadside and within the shopping centre.
27. Inspectors agree with parents that extra-curricular activities after school and at lunchtimes are unsatisfactory because they are limited to one after-school club, which provides a range of activities but has a limited number of places for which parents pay. The school has concentrated its energies on establishing a range of activities within the day to cater for Years 5 and 6, such as specialised coaching to promote skills in football, and choir lessons and instrumental tuition. However, it does not yet provide the number and range of additional activities normally found in primary schools.

28. The provision for pupils' spiritual development has improved since the last inspection, when it was judged to be very good, and is now an outstanding feature of the school. The school's very strong and positive Christian ethos places high value on the worth of the individual, on raising self-esteem and on the need to 'love one another'. The atmosphere in classrooms is characterised by a sense of calm purpose, built on mutual respect, shared values and tolerance. Assembly themes complement spiritual development. They are well planned, promote opportunities for all and reinforce the values that the school holds dear. Clergy from St Winefride's Church support them very well in this. For example, in the well thought out Lent reconciliation service for pupils in Years 3 to 6, the priest had planned carefully with the school staff so that the pupils were actively involved in leading the service. It was pitched at exactly the right level and helped pupils to understand human feelings and emotions very well. The special achievement assembly for the nursery, reception and Years 1 and 2 is designed to recognise children's and pupils' efforts and to develop self-esteem and promote a positive attitude to school. In the assembly seen during the inspection, examples of high quality work from most areas of the curriculum were celebrated. Surprise, awe and wonder were included as the pupils marvelled at the way the sunflowers planted by Year 2 had grown. Pupils' creativity was celebrated as models and collages were shown. Academic effort and pride in neatly presented work were given appropriate value as another Year 2 class showed pupil-made dictionaries. Quiet reflection was incorporated both when simple prayers were said and when work about 'special places' was shown. This simple but effective celebration promoted the values held dear to the school, helped pupils to link lessons to a wider framework of reference and made a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual development.
29. As at the time of the last inspection, the provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Throughout the school, the pupils respond well to the teachers' very high expectations of behaviour. Considerate and respectful behaviour are expected routinely throughout the school and pupils are taught to behave courteously towards one another from their earliest days in school. The clear emphasis on mutual respect stresses consideration and care for others. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on both local and worldwide events and to do what they can to help with regular collections for charities. Teachers and assistants make very good role models for pupils by the way they work together, promoting and fostering high quality relationships and interactions. Pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong. Circle time and personal, social and health education lessons are used constructively to talk about positive attitudes and values and help children to realise that they need to take responsibility for their actions. The planned programme links well with subjects such as art and design, religious education, history and geography. Studies for younger pupils include an emphasis on rules and developing a healthy lifestyle, as well as keeping themselves safe. Valuable learning about citizenship includes helping others and looking after the environment, respect for similarities and differences between peoples, and personal relationships. Pupils' first-hand experiences of electing representatives to the school council aid their understanding of the democratic process and the importance of personal qualities required in a role of responsibility. Staff are currently supporting the school council with their recycling activities and in helping it to understand the moral and ethical reasons for recycling waste materials. Older pupils put their learning into practice throughout the school day in the very good role models they provide for younger pupils. The safe and open learning environment encourages pupils to express their views and opinions. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to work collaboratively in all subjects, either in groups or pairs. Pupils are encouraged to show consideration and sensitivity toward one another and are taught the value of friendships during break and lunchtimes.



30. The provision for pupils' cultural development remains good. Religious education and music make a significant contribution to pupils' knowledge of other cultures through teaching about beliefs of different religions and cultures. The main Christian festivals are routinely celebrated and, in religious education, pupils learn about those of other religions such as those celebrated in the Jewish and Muslim faiths. Pupils benefit from listening to, and participating in, a range of styles of music. For example, pupils played a delightful composition on the drums in African style. This was very tuneful and well received by the rest of the school. In a music lesson, Arabic pipe music was played and pupils were asked to comment on the quality of the instruments. When practising hymns for Easter, pupils in the choir are taught to sing in parts, creating simultaneously discord and harmony, reflecting exactly the spiritual nature of the words 'Crucify Him'. Pupils are encouraged to enjoy both literature and poetry in their lessons. The school's cultural values are reinforced by displays and posters throughout the school. All cultures within the school and wider community are respected and valued. This is exemplified by the information provided for parents in photographic form, where the activities are described in the most common community languages within the school. A variety of high quality picture books with dual language texts are provided to help pupils and parents new to the school to feel welcome. This is reinforced by labels and notices around the school in several languages spoken in the local community.

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

31. This is a secure area of the school's work and it has a good impact on learning because everyone feels safe. Inspectors judged health and safety procedures and child protection to be firmly in place, although the child protection policy does not clearly reflect the latest Code of Practice regarding the disclosure of a concern. The interest and support of the governing body give further reassurance. Personal development and care are significant strengths of the school. There is effective provision for all areas of statutory responsibility, for example health and safety and child protection. Fire evacuation procedures and other checks to ensure safety are conducted properly and security has been improved.
32. The inspectors found that there are excellent procedures in place to promote good behaviour and to eliminate oppressive behaviour. Discussions with the pupils confirm that they have a very clear understanding of, and sensitivity towards, prejudices which they know are unacceptable. One pupil felt able to explain just how hateful and bigoted some people can be towards each other, adding that, 'we are not like that here'. This very secure aspect of school life is reinforced by the example set by all adults. Personal, social and health education lessons strengthen pupils' understanding of right from wrong and the need to speak out on behalf of the oppressed.
33. The procedures for promoting and supporting pupils' personal progress are good; all staff understand the pupils very well and this enables them to give individual attention and encouragement. Teachers keep appropriate notes to ensure personal interests are not overlooked. The headteacher also uses suitable and effective techniques to make sure that sensitive personal matters have appropriate attention; this includes arranging for specific training if necessary. The school takes all matters relating to behaviour, personal development and attendance seriously and it has very well laid out policies to ensure consistency. Parents are justifiably confident that their children are looked after well.
34. Assessment procedures are good overall but there are variations in the systems established for different subjects of the curriculum and in the way that the information is

used when planning lessons. Children are assessed on entry to the nursery against the stepping stones for the national early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage. Members of staff keep detailed records of each child's progress. This is especially effective in the nursery where there is a ratio of one adult to seven children. This means that staff know the children and their abilities very well. In the reception class, there is a ratio of one adult to 15 children in the mornings and one to 30 in the afternoons. The teacher and the classroom assistant make regular, ongoing assessments of the progress made by the children in the areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Progress in the other areas of the curriculum is not monitored as thoroughly. Changes are being made nationally to the kind of assessment to be used in reception classes. The reception class teacher is newly appointed and has not been trained in the new assessment procedures. The headteacher and nursery class teacher plan to work with the reception class teacher to introduce a coherent assessment process to use throughout the Foundation Stage.

35. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and for monitoring their progress in English and in mathematics are very good. Individual progress is monitored carefully and pupils' strengths and weaknesses are identified so that teachers can match work more closely to pupils' needs. The information is used to group pupils by ability and to identify those who need additional guidance and support with their work. The school analyses test results in Years 2 and 6 in great detail to identify weaknesses that need to be addressed in future. From this year, the same level of scrutiny will be applied to the optional tests taken at the end of each year in Years 3, 4 and 5. The results of annual tests are checked to ensure that pupils are on track to achieve their potential, and end-of-year targets are set. In addition, pupils have targets related to the expectations for their year group. Plans to modify these to relate better to pupils' different levels of attainment are well judged. Procedures in science are good and the information is used soundly to modify tasks for pupils, especially in Years 5 and 6.
36. In other subjects of the curriculum, assessment procedures are satisfactory, though informal. In the main, teachers check what pupils have learnt at the end of each unit of work through pupils' self-evaluation. They are also developing records of how well pupils have achieved the learning objectives set for each unit of work. However, these are not matched to National Curriculum levels of attainment. There is scope to make more use of this information to modify planned activities to ensure that challenging tasks help pupils make progress from one level to the next, thus raising standards generally across all subjects.
37. Throughout the school, the progress of pupils with special educational needs and those at the earliest stages of learning to speak English is monitored very well and these pupils have carefully set targets that are regularly reviewed.

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

38. The parents have very good views of the school. When the last inspection took place, relationships between home and school were judged to be good; it is clear that further improvements have been made to strengthen the partnership. The very high level of agreement expressed in the parents' questionnaires and positive comments made by the parents provide further evidence of the bonds and trust that exist. Parents are enthusiastic supporters of everything the school does.
39. In the annual reports, parents receive satisfactory information about the progress their children have made. Some subject areas lack clear information about the progress made, although others, for example mathematics, contain full explanations of what has

been learned. The teachers also discuss matters in detail when they meet parents formally to review progress. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are very well informed of their children's progress through helping to set learning targets, working with their children towards targets and through the review meetings. The school keeps parents well informed of events and of the school's work. It seeks their views on how the school should develop. The governors' annual report to parents is enhanced by the contributions it contains from individuals; this enables the reader to have a good insight into the work of the governing body and the commitment it has to take the school forward.

40. The funds raised by the parents are used wisely to enhance the quality of education provision; this includes ensuring that school funds are subsidised when outings are arranged. Parents and pupils are encouraged to support organisations performing charitable work both locally and in Third World countries. The concept of working together to provide a helping hand and to look out for areas of need has strong support. This benefits the pupils' understanding of the world around them and is making them good citizens.

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

41. The headteacher provides very good leadership and a strong direction for the work of the school. She is supported well by the deputy headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators who, together with governors, share her keen commitment to school improvement. She is well respected by staff, governors and pupils, and her contribution to setting the tone for the school is highly regarded by parents. Since the last inspection, the key focus has been the reorganisation of the school from a first school to a primary school. This has been led and managed very successfully, with the minimum disruption to the pupils' education. Staff have sustained the positive ethos of the school and supported and developed those pupils who would previously have left at the age of nine. They have kept parents well informed of changes and have developed the curriculum effectively. The growth of the school population has been managed well and plans are in place for further changes as numbers fall again and the school gradually evolves into a one-form entry school. The staff team has good cohesion and, led by the good example of the headteacher, all members of staff are very supportive of each other.
42. Senior managers meet regularly, as do staff within their year group teams. Responsibilities are delegated well but the full potential of the management structure is not yet realised. Co-ordinators play a useful part in planning work and managing resources, and have responsibility for checking on the quality of pupils' work. The co-ordinators' roles are at various stages of development with regard to checking on standards of teaching and learning. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance are very good in English and mathematics. End of key stage results are analysed and careful assessments are made of pupils' achievements to set specific targets to raise standards. This has resulted in very good standards being achieved in both subjects and the identification of areas of improvement to raise standards even further. There is scope to develop co-ordinators' roles further and to extend the practice of monitoring and evaluating standards to other subjects of the curriculum in order to share good practice. Provision for special educational needs is well managed. There are suitable structures in place for assessment, identification, consultation and support of pupils with special educational needs. Learning support staff are competent and have had suitable training in, for example, the early and further literacy strategies.

43. The school's mission statement incorporates explicit aims and values which emphasise a deep-rooted commitment to pupils' personal development, equality of opportunity and excellent relationships. The vision that St Mary's is 'a place where everyone tries to do and be the best they can' is clearly threaded through all policies and practices and is realised successfully.
44. The governing body is effective. It plays an active role and fulfils its statutory duties in shaping the direction of the school through formal and informal consultations. The governors are well informed about the work of the school and visit regularly, following a protocol agreed with staff. They have a good understanding of its strengths and the challenges that face the school as it continues to change. They work in close co-operation with the headteacher and staff team in a spirit of open trust. Governors have now developed effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the headteacher and the school. This was an area of criticism in the last inspection. Governors evaluate their own effectiveness annually. This involves consultation with parents and staff and resulted in reviewing the governor committee structure and agreeing new terms of reference for all committees. Parents and staff are also consulted in agreeing the school improvement plan, which is thorough and covers developments for the next five years, the first two in detail. This process helped set priorities for staff development, which is a high priority for the governors and headteacher. The success criteria in the school improvement plan are primarily that identified tasks are carried out, and there are limited references to measurable outcomes that relate to how well pupils achieve.
45. All staff are hardworking and committed to the school. The school has sufficient experienced teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and has reviewed this recently in the light of reorganisation. Staffing levels are generous in the nursery but barely adequate in reception where the support assistant works mornings only. Throughout the school, staff know the pupils well and work effectively as a team. The school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is well established. Staff new to the school are supported well by a good induction process.
46. The school is making the best use of the accommodation within the restrictions imposed by the increase in the school's population, which has outgrown the available classroom space. As numbers reduce so rooms will become available; the library, which is used temporarily as a classroom, will be restored to its intended use and the following year the newly built classroom will become a computer suite. The school has plans to purchase new books for the library and computers for the suite in due course. Considerable effort has been put into improving the fabric of the building, including improving toilet facilities, providing an additional classroom and converting part of the kitchen into a music room. The new school improvement plan shows how the school intends to improve the accommodation and facilities for reception children, which are currently unsatisfactory. There is a good wildlife area; the children value this and it is used well to enhance the quality of environmental study lessons. Levels of learning resources are satisfactory; limitation of space makes it difficult to both store and display items that would enhance learning. Displays of pupils' work celebrate their achievements and brighten the rooms.
47. Financial management is satisfactory. The school has accrued a large budget surplus over the period of reorganisation and governors have been cautious about spending. This underspend is gradually being reduced but is still above the level expected. Educational priorities are linked soundly to financial planning and are monitored regularly by the governors. The finance committee compares actual levels of expenditure against the budget at intervals and the headteacher uses her delegated

responsibilities to authorise payment responsibly. The school receives a range of specific grants, all of which are used well for their designated purpose and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The secretary is efficient in her day-to-day management of the school finances. Cash handling matters are secure and the most recent audit judged administration to be good. The office makes good use of modern technology.

48. The school applies the principles of best value for money successfully. The headteacher, governors and staff compare the learning outcomes in the school with those of other schools and constantly seek improvement. The subject co-ordinators ask teachers for verbal feedback on the effectiveness of resources purchased and inform the headteacher. The headteacher and governors have contracts that are put out to competitive tender and they investigate suppliers to find the best pricing for good quality. However, as yet, systems for evaluating the impact of expenditure are informal.
49. Taking account of the very good standards achieved in English and mathematics, pupils' good achievement overall, and the strengths in the quality of education provided, the school gives good value for money.

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

50. This is a very good school that is coping well with significant changes to its organisation. Further changes are ahead and it will be several more years before the school is settled into its intended pattern of one class per year group. The school has already identified the challenges it faces and has strategies to deal with these in its improvement plan that covers the next five years. The areas highlighted for improvement by inspectors are in line with the school's own evaluation. In order to build on the high standards achieved in English and mathematics and to raise standards further in other subjects, the school should:
  - (1) improve the outdoor facilities and learning opportunities for children in the reception class by increasing the current level of provision and support;  
*(paragraphs 23,34,45,46,55,71)*
  - (2) develop the role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision and the standards pupils achieve;  
*(paragraphs 42,109,115,122,127,143)*

- (3) refine the organisation of the curriculum for pupils in Years 5 and 6, to ensure a better balance and more even distribution of subjects across the year (to improve the continuous development of their skills and knowledge in subjects such as art and design, design and technology and geography);  
*(paragraphs 24,108,110,117,142)*
- (4) develop further the systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress across the range of subjects and use the information to modify curriculum and lesson planning.  
*(paragraphs 18,34,36,101,109,115,120,127,132,143)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	65
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	20	32	8	0	0	0
Percentage	8	31	49	12	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	21	254
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	18

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	33

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	68

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*



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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	22	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	22	21
	Girls	13	14	15
	Total	35	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (91)	95 (98)	95 (98)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	21	20
	Girls	15	14	14
	Total	37	35	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (96)	92 (100)	89 (98)
	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	15	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	13
	Girls	24	24	24
	Total	35	36	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (n/a)	84 (n/a)	86 (n/a)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	13	13
	Girls	22	24	24
	Total	30	37	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (n/a)	86 (n/a)	86 (n/a)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils****Exclusions in the last school year**

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	89	0	0
White – Irish	29	0	0
White – any other White background	24	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	6	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	17	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	13	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	7	0	0
Black or Black British – African	24	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	4	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	6	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

*The table 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)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.2
Average class size	29.5

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	95

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.5
Total number of education support staff	2.2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	38
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.3

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

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.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	620,178
Total expenditure	646,493
Expenditure per pupil	2,350
Balance brought forward from previous year	65,076
Balance carried forward to next year	38,761

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	295
Number of questionnaires returned	179

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	25	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	63	35	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	71	26	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	39	11	2	4
The teaching is good.	73	26	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	39	4	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	17	2	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	27	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	62	36	1	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	79	20	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	28	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	44	11	3	10

## **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**

51. The previous report referred only to the provision for nursery children, which was good. The oldest children in the reception classes were regarded as being in Key Stage 1. Since the last inspection, the staff have worked hard to implement the national changes to the curriculum and to the organisation of education for children of this age. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection.
52. The nursery has 41 children who attend part time either in the morning or afternoon. Children are admitted to nursery at the start of the term after their third birthday. They progress to the reception class following their fourth birthday. At present, there are 30 children attending full time in the reception class. There is a wide range of ability among the children who start nursery but, overall, attainment is broadly average. A few of the children do not speak English as their first language and are in the early stages of learning English. Across the Foundation Stage children achieve well in all areas of learning. Most children are on course to meet the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year.
53. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall. Weekly planning is very detailed in both classes, and soundly based on the recommended areas of learning. However, staff do not plan together and this is an area for development. Teaching is very good, but more consistently so in the nursery. Activities are adapted for children of different ages, abilities and experience. Relationships are very good, and there is a high level of interaction between adults and children, especially in the nursery where staffing is more generous. Children are managed very well and given clear expectations about the way they should behave.
54. Relationships between staff and parents are very good. Parents are pleased with the education their children receive when they first start school and with the educational advice and guidance the school provides for them. However, the documentation is in need of updating to ensure that parents understand that the Foundation Stage incorporates both the nursery and reception classes. Also, the parents' notice board in the entrance to the nursery displays some interesting information about the way that young children learn best, but as the reception class children do not use the same entrance, this information is not available to all parents of Foundation Stage children.
55. The management and co-ordination of the Foundation Stage are good. The headteacher is currently caretaking the role. She is aware that more needs to be done to create a cohesive key stage and these improvements have an appropriately high priority on the school development plan. All staff in the nursery class are very well qualified for the age of the children they teach. The effective reception class teacher has recently returned to teaching and has not had the benefit of training in implementing the Foundation Stage curriculum. Plans are in hand to address this training need. Resources in the nursery are very good, and satisfactory overall in the reception class. Here the shortage of adults in the afternoons and lack of outdoor facilities limit the children's learning opportunities.

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

56. By the end of the reception year standards are well above those expected for children of this age. This is due to the emphasis placed on this important area of learning by all the adults. The teaching and learning of this area are particularly good. Children throughout the Foundation Stage generally behave very well. In both the nursery and reception classes the children are given small responsibilities such as taking the register back to the office. They carry these out with pride.
57. The nursery children have plenty of opportunities to develop their personal and social skills and quickly learn to become independent. They know the nursery routines very well and this gives the children a sense of security and a clear framework in which to play and learn. They take off and put on their own coats and put their name cards in the special place that indicates that they are present. They help themselves to the equipment and resources they need. Children are encouraged to select their own activities and to work and play together. They learn to take turns and share and to return things to their correct place. At the end of each session they know that they all have to help to tidy the nursery.
58. All adults act as very good role models for the children. They will often join in an activity chosen by the children to help them maintain their interest, stay on task and to extend the children's learning whilst helping them to grow in independence. In the nursery, concentration skills are encouraged well in all areas of the curriculum by the nursery staff. For example, when a boy was playing with a toy farm he asked the nursery nurse for some toy people to enhance his game. She replied, 'you must get them for yourself as I don't know what size you want'. All the adults working in the nursery have high expectations of the children's behaviour and promote it very well, including the use of 'Gotcher' awards. These are given out in every session to children who have been observed doing something right. As a result, children are very confident and independent. Good manners are consistently promoted. For example, when moving around the school, children are reminded to say thank you to the two children who are holding open the doors.
59. In the reception class, the children have fewer opportunities for independent learning. Children behave well, particularly when they are busy on a task that really interests them, and their concentration span is good. When children are unclear about what they have to do, behaviour slips a little. Opportunities for talking, sharing and socialising are missed because snack time is not used as part of the curriculum.

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

60. On entry, a few children have immature speech and approximately a quarter of the children in the nursery class are at the early stages of learning to speak English. Very good attention is paid to developing children's speaking and listening, and early reading. As a result, all children in the nursery make very good progress and, by the time they leave the reception class, the majority are in line with expectations in speaking, listening and reading. In writing, attainment is below average and progress is sound.
61. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. Most children in the nursery are able to explain what they have done by making short statements. The more able children in the nursery speak clearly in sentences and act as good role models for the others. The children enjoy stories and are encouraged to make comments on, and answer questions about, stories they have heard. The teacher ensures that every child has the opportunity to contribute to discussions and to answer questions. When singing familiar songs as a whole class all the children join in and try hard to perform the actions to go with the words. Children with speech and language difficulties and those at the earliest

stages of learning to speak English are supported and encouraged very well by all the adults and these children make very good progress. One pupil who started speaking English just two weeks previously is already making himself clearly understood and volunteered the information 'chickenpox in my house'.

62. In the reception class, the teacher builds on the skills the children acquired in the nursery and children continue to make good progress. By the end of the reception class the standards they achieve are above average in speaking and listening. The teacher gives frequent opportunities to listen and to answer questions, and to practise what they have learnt.
63. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children are likely to achieve expectations in reading and writing. In the nursery, they are encouraged to recognise both their own and each other's names and to write their own name on their work. They are beginning to recognise initial letter sounds and enjoy books and stories. During the inspection, children shared 'reading' books together, telling stories from the pictures. In the reception class, children are given plenty of practice in recognising letters and sounds and building up words and many can practise reading both on their own and with the teacher. Children clearly enjoy reading and are interested in books and print around the room. However, some children reading on their own became restless because there was no one present to help them read the text or discuss the pictures. Both the nursery and the reception class have cosy book corners. However, there are too few high quality picture books in the reception class.
64. In both the nursery and reception classes, children are given opportunities to write independently in their play and the more able children achieve the standard of writing expected for their age by the end of the reception class. They use their knowledge of sounds to write simple words correctly and make good attempts at more difficult words. For example, when writing his news, a little boy wrote, 'at the Wecend I wet to frns' (at the weekend I went to France). Children's use of simple punctuation is not yet secure. The average and below average attaining children write over the top of, or underneath, the teacher's writing and do not have enough opportunities to write freely or to practise letter formation using writing in sand on trays and finger painting on tables. Children with special educational needs are supported well by the good intervention of the teacher and classroom assistant. As a result, these children make good progress.

### **Mathematical development**

65. Standards in number work are above average at the end of the reception class. The children make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage because the teaching of number skills is very good in both the nursery and reception classes. Standards in using space, shape and measures are as expected. In the nursery, children playing a game using dice and one pence coins were asked very challenging questions stretching the children's ability to the limit. Children learn to use the language of size and to count in a variety of practical ways using toys and mathematical apparatus. They learn about 'one more' and 'one less' in number songs and rhymes, and compare and measure things using words such as 'bigger', 'smaller', 'longer' and 'shorter' when using the building blocks and playing outside. They enjoy water play and adults help children to develop the language of capacity very well.
66. Reception class children are given good opportunities to use and play practically with number games and toys, and are well supported in their learning by working in small groups, either on their own or with an adult. In the very good lesson observed the work was carefully planned. Three different levels of work were well matched to the

children's different abilities and needs. Children working independently worked very well because their tasks had been clearly explained to them and they knew exactly what they were expected to achieve in the lesson. When the class gathered together again at the end of the lesson the teacher checked the children's understanding of the mathematical skills taught in the lesson and helped to reinforce their learning well. The teaching and learning of mathematics are given a high priority. However, children are sometimes given low-level worksheets to complete which do not build upon what they already know, understand and can do.

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

67. Children make good progress in this area of learning and most will achieve the level expected by the end of the reception class. Teaching in this area of learning is good overall and, as a result, the children make very good progress in the nursery and good progress in the reception class.
68. In the nursery, children engage in a very wide range of activities both inside and out and have plenty of opportunities to discuss their work with adults. They find out about living things by discussion and observation, such as the frogspawn and tadpoles that were brought into the nursery. They build and construct with a wide range of objects, such as old cardboard boxes, small construction toys and large building blocks. They experiment with sand and water and select the tools and equipment they need. Outside they experiment with rocks, stones and plumbing pipes, and also grow and care for plants. In both the nursery and reception classes, children are taught to use simple computer programs and by the end of the reception class children are confident in clicking on icons and dragging and dropping symbols on the screen.
69. In the reception class, the greatest emphasis is on the scientific aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world and the historical and geographical aspects are underdeveloped. Children are, however, given frequent opportunities to experiment with construction toys, model making and sand play. In both the nursery and reception classes the children learn about other cultures, customs and beliefs. The nursery children are taught to greet one another in a variety of different languages. They do this with great confidence and enjoyment.

### **Physical development**

70. By the end of the reception class the majority of the children are likely to meet the expectations for their age in this area of learning. This is because of the opportunities provided in the nursery coupled with regular high quality teaching. In the nursery, children have frequent opportunities to develop their awareness of space in their daily play activities. They can move around the outdoor area sensibly, showing an awareness of one another. Children are supported well by adults and encouraged to practise skills such as steering vehicles, climbing, balancing, throwing and catching. Both inside and outside the nursery, children are given opportunities to improve their manipulative skills. They use tools, equipment and materials for a wide range of purposes such as digging, cutting, rolling, stirring and mixing.
71. The reception class children develop fine manipulative skills well through such activities as writing, cutting and sticking. However, they have inadequate opportunities for more vigorous activity. Although they have a weekly lesson in the hall, they do not have direct and regular access to a secure outdoor play area. At present, the reception class children go out to play as a class with the rest of the school. The school is aware that



these arrangements are not ideal for such young children and has plans to adapt the building to meet their needs.

### **Creative development**

72. Most of the children are likely to meet the expectations for their age by the end of the reception class. Children in both the nursery and reception class experiment with a variety of painting and drawing techniques. They make 'string' paintings, paint self-portraits, and create pictures of things that interest them using a variety of materials and textures to make collages. They experiment with Playdoh to make three-dimensional models and use a variety of different shaped objects for printing. They learn to sing simple songs.
73. Teaching of this area of learning is good overall and all aspects are taught well. Nursery children are provided with very high quality opportunities to foster their creativity. Many opportunities are provided to experiment with musical instruments and they are taught their sounds and names, maintaining a steady beat when playing to accompany their favourite songs. They are encouraged to use a wide range of tools to create models made from fibreboard, 'junk' and natural materials to make models and collage pictures. Very good progress is made in painting and drawing because of the very high quality support and provision.
74. Sound opportunities are provided in the reception class. Role-play opportunities are provided every day and these are linked appropriately with the topic children are studying. This enables children to act out stories they have heard, such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. In this way they are encouraged to use their imagination, to develop their spoken language, social skills and begin to develop an empathy with other people's points of view and lifestyles. Very high quality paintings are produced for their age. Sometimes, however, adults do too much for the children. For example, children making collage pictures of Goldilocks were given a pre-cut shape to decorate.

### **ENGLISH**

75. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 are above average and the achievement of all pupils during Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, is good. Results in national tests for 2002 at the end of Year 2 were above average in reading and writing and average when compared to similar schools. Slight fluctuations in standards over the last three years can be traced to differences in cohorts. For example, the number of pupils in Years 3 and 4 on the register of special educational needs is higher than in previous years. Good standards are due to strengths in: (1) early identification, (2) close monitoring, (3) good teaching of pupils with special educational needs, and (4) good teaching throughout the school. Very few pupils attain levels below Level 2 in national tests.
76. Standards in Year 6 are continuing to rise and are well above average. Results in national tests were above average in 2002 when compared nationally, and average when compared with similar schools. All pupils in Years 3 to 6, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Few pupils leave the school with below national average standards. Over Years 1 to 6, pupils make very good progress in English because they enter at average levels and leave the school having attained well above average levels. The very good performance of boys, compared with boys nationally, is due to their very good attitudes to their work. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported well. They make rapid gains in developing speaking and listening skills and achieve well in reading and writing.

77. By the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are above average. Pupils are given many opportunities to listen carefully and speak clearly in lessons. In a very good lesson in Year 1, the teacher made learning to ask questions fun, confiding in pupils that she really wanted to know why tigers have stripes and inviting pupils to say what their questions about tigers would be. They asked, for example, 'why do tigers live in Africa?' Pupils in Year 2 enjoy reading poetry aloud and do so with good changes of tone, voice and pace. Teachers value and praise their efforts to speak out well, which helps to improve the pupils' confidence. By the end of Year 6, speaking and listening skills are very good. Pupils have many opportunities within lessons to share ideas with partners or in small groups. They listen carefully, and respond to each other's ideas and suggestions. Teachers give pupils the freedom to answer fully; for example in Year 5, explaining with reasons how to present information about volcanoes. Year 5 pupils with special educational needs and pupils learning English as an additional language listen to and enjoy poetry before reading it with the sensitivity that promotes spiritual understanding, because the teacher has emphasised listening and enjoying the sounds of the words.
78. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading are above average because of the good emphasis on practising reading both in school and at home. Reading practice is recorded in well-kept reading logs by both parents and teachers. A very good system is in place for grading books. In Year 1, most pupils have a secure knowledge of sounds and have interactive reading displays to practise reading skills. By the end of Year 2, many have acquired good strategies for having a go at building unknown words and a high proportion are reading without hesitation at the correct level for their age. They read with good accuracy and confidence. A few higher attainers read difficult words easily and enjoy the English text in dual language books. The majority know about information books, contents and index, whilst all pupils are familiar with the terms 'author' and 'illustrator'. Pupils learning English as an additional language benefit greatly from the support they receive when working in small groups with a specialist teacher. The repetitive nature of the activities gives them confidence to read aloud and with expression. The good emphasis on understanding the words in the text extends their vocabulary.
79. By the end of Year 6 standards in reading are well above average and nearly all pupils enjoy reading. Almost all pupils are reaching the expected level for their age and many exceed this. All pupils borrow, and most purchase, books from school and many belong to the local public library. Some pupils prefer newspapers and like to read and research on the Internet. They read with good understanding, phrasing, fluency and expression. They skim and scan texts and most pupils can 'read between the lines'. All pupils have good strategies for reading and know how to use text to help them understand meanings. Lower attainers occasionally misread or omit words and are less skilled in phrasing and paraphrasing. Higher attainers can compare and contrast different genres expressing preferences, such as for 'real life' rather than 'fantasy'. They recognise common themes such as the struggle for good over evil in 'The Lord of the Rings' and Harry Potter books. The temporary absence of a library and information and communication technology (ICT) area limits the opportunities for independent research skills, although pupils use well the texts and computers that are available in classrooms.
80. Standards of writing are above average at the end of Year 2. Pupils use a variety of writing forms and the school pays considerable attention to the teaching of grammar. Pupils enjoy writing diaries, retelling well-known stories and using poems as models for their own work. For example, Year 2 pupils use a poetry model to compose their own antonym poems, such as: 'Quiet as a bird/ Waiting to be heard. Loud as a giant/

Waiting to stamp'. Pupils learning English as an additional language gain a secure understanding of sentence writing because of the step-by-step approach and they are helped to structure their work using writing frames. Spelling and handwriting are consistently well taught and pupils use their spelling logs routinely when they are writing. The school has targeted raising the standards in writing over this year successfully, by providing extra support for pupils whose writing is at a low level. Standards in writing in Years 3 to 6 are above average. The quality of handwriting and presentation is consistently very good throughout, because teachers have high expectations, give handwriting practice and pupils take pride in their work. They learn to edit their writing in Year 4 by redrafting instructions, applying clear rules taught by teachers. Average attainers find difficulty in reading critically the effectiveness of the instructions, whereas higher attainers apply the rules well. In Year 6, pupils note key words, make notes, plan, draft and redraft, often on computer, in a range of styles. They write persuasive letters and record salient points to argue: 'Zoos – prison or sanctuary' using a good range of appropriate language. Occasionally, pupils select words that have slightly different meanings from those intended because they are using a thesaurus. Pupils have a good knowledge of formal writing features, although at times informal expressions such as 'didn't' are used inappropriately.

81. The quality of teaching and learning of English observed during the inspection was good throughout the school, with examples of very good teaching in a third of lessons. Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour with the result that most pupils are diligent and hardworking. The exceptions seen were when pupils had to sit for too long in introductory sessions and became restless. Teachers who kept pupils actively involved in introductory sessions were successful in holding interest and motivating pupils. Teachers teach basic skills very well throughout the school and this is evident in the very good progress pupils make in acquiring new skills. In Year 1, pupils reminded the teacher and assistant about finger spacing, capital letters and full stops as they wrote on the board. 'Don't forget the finger space!' said one pupil. In Year 4, teachers make sure pupils have a good knowledge of connectives for denoting time. Pupils give many examples of them and use them in their work writing instructions. By Year 6, pupils jot key ideas for paragraphs, and plan reports with appropriate elements. Learning support assistants are well informed and provide good support for pupils with special educational needs within class and in groups. Teachers make good use of assessment, recording progress towards the learning targets in the front of English books, and keep detailed reading records. Pupils are clear about their learning goals. Marking is positive and teachers give guidance on what pupils should aim for next. In a few individuals' work, sentence punctuation and spelling errors are uncorrected, which pulls down the quality of otherwise good writing. Pupils have regular set homework tasks linked to their work in class. English makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development because peer and pupil-teacher relationships are very good. Pupils express their feelings in their work and are enthusiastic about tasks. Sometimes they act as critical readers and, when they do, they show sensitivity to the feelings of others.
82. The National Literacy Strategy has been very well implemented. Learning about sounds and spelling patterns is particularly successful. The Early Literacy Strategy and Further Literacy Strategy intervention programmes are effective in helping pupils with special educational needs and pupils who are at early stages of acquiring English, giving them good opportunities in small groups to have extra practice and support where it is most needed. Since the last inspection, consistent approaches to teaching of reading, and recording progress have led to very good standards by the end of Year 6. The current focus on raising standards in writing is appropriate. Standards are set to rise further when the current Year 5 reaches the end of Year 6. Literacy skills are used well in other

subjects such as history, religious education and personal and social education. Pupils prepare minutes and notes of school council meetings. Older pupils support younger pupils in the school council when they are lacking confidence in speaking. The use of ICT is good and is planned in most lessons for small groups of pupils.

83. The management of the subject is good. There is a practical, well-organised plan for developing the subject, with a current review and clear aims for raising standards within an appropriate time-scale. The co-ordinator is very aware of standards across the school and monitors planning and pupils' work regularly. She provides in-service training for teachers in areas of need, thus promoting good expertise and high standards. Although the headteacher monitors teaching in English, the co-ordinator recognises this as an area for development of her role. The quality of resources is only satisfactory because of the unavoidable lack of a library at present. However, available resources are used well. There are very good procedures for assessing the learning of individual pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and those developing skills in English have small targets to meet, which are assessed termly. Targets for groups of pupils ensure that they meet the required national standards. Teachers' evaluations of pupils' learning are used well in planning following lessons.

## **MATHEMATICS**

84. Results of National Curriculum tests in Year 2 have been consistently well above average until 2002 when they were above average. A higher proportion of pupils have special educational needs in this year group, although a good number of pupils attained the level above that expected for their age. Standards in the current Year 2 are above average. A good proportion is working at the levels expected for their age.
85. Standards are well above average by the age of eleven. Results of tests last year were well above the national figures and the highest attained in the local education authority. A high proportion of pupils attained levels above those expected for their age. Results were above average compared with schools in similar circumstances. They are predicted to be similarly high this year. Targets set for the current Year 5 are even higher and likely to be met if those pupils continue to make the good progress they are making now.
86. The school sets pupils into groups by similar ability in Years 3 to 6 and this strategy is successful in meeting the needs of pupils and in ensuring that they achieve well. During their time in the school pupils achieve very well in mathematics. They make consistently good progress from year to year because of the good quality teaching they receive that continually builds on what has gone before. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in activities by class teachers and by learning support assistants where these are available in Years 1 and 2. Older pupils benefit from a good level of adult attention when working in small sets that helps them to sustain good levels of effort and involvement. Teachers' emphasis on practical activities and plenty of repetition of mathematical vocabulary are beneficial for those learning English as an additional language who respond positively to the visual stimuli provided. Pupils who are fully competent in English are among some of the highest attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6. There are no significant differences in the standards and achievement of boys and girls.
87. By Year 2, nearly all pupils are confident to use strategies, such as splitting digits into tens and units to add together two numbers over 20, because teachers place a strong emphasis on teaching specific methods. Pupils name common shapes and find simple fractions of shapes. They are learning to measure accurately. Higher attaining pupils

carry out challenging addition of three two-digit numbers and competently use strategies such as counting on to find the difference between two numbers.

88. By Year 6, pupils have good understanding of patterns in numbers and are using this knowledge to begin to develop formulae to find the unknown term. Guided by their teacher they use a logical, step-by-step approach to solving problems and to investigations which challenge their thinking skills. Teachers emphasise the importance of rapid recall of addition and multiplication facts to aid the speed with which pupils work out the answer to mental calculations. Pupils have a secure understanding of place value. The accuracy of pupils' work is aided by good presentation and the careful way that calculations are set out following the model provided by teachers as they demonstrate methods on the whiteboard. For example, pupils are developing expanded written methods for multiplication and division by two-digit numbers. They have accurate skills in drawing and measuring angles and a good knowledge and understanding of shapes and their properties.
89. Teaching is good and has a positive impact on pupils' rate of learning. There are good, and often very good, features in most lessons. The most significant factor is teachers' high expectations of pupils to work hard at a challenging level. Teachers' step-by-step approach to new work ensures that explanations are clear and pupils understand what they have to do. Good opportunities for pupils to talk to partners and to explain their methods help them to recall and apply strategies. Teachers encourage pupils to share their difficulties and in this way address the aspects that pupils find hard through focused teaching. Lower attaining pupils are not afraid to admit their lack of understanding especially when working in small groups. This is because there is a supportive environment in classes that stems from the positive relationships enjoyed between pupils and between staff and pupils. Praise is used well to commend pupils' efforts, but is not overdone.
90. Teachers know the capabilities of their pupils well. Regular assessment of which pupils achieve, or do not achieve, the lesson's learning objectives ensures that work is suitably pitched. Just occasionally, activities require a greater level of challenge in order to challenge pupils at the correct level. For example, pupils' past work in Year 2 reveals little difference in expectation when pupils complete exercises in a commercially produced workbook that also reduces opportunities for pupils to record their work independently.
91. Basic number skills are taught very well. The very good focus on teaching pupils a range of strategies for mental calculations was evident in the numerous options chosen by pupils in Year 6 to answer the challenging questions set in the first part of the lesson. For example, at least three approaches to solving mentally 27.5% of 160 were explained by different pupils. The high focus on pupils explaining their methods is a strong element of many lessons in Years 3 to 6.
92. Teachers follow the principles of the numeracy strategy closely but are not constrained by it. There is a strong focus evident in the pupils' work of a consistent approach to using and applying skills to problem solving. An effective focus on practical activities stimulates pupils' interest and reinforces learning through 'doing'. Key mathematical vocabulary is reinforced effectively and there is an expectation that pupils will use the correct terminology in their explanations. High expectations lead to a productive pace of work that can be seen particularly reflected in the past work of the oldest pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' work is marked well and, in most classes, they are given good feedback on what they have done well and how they can improve. Target sheets in the front of pupils' mathematics books reinforce expectations for their learning.

93. The quality of the mental and oral starters to lessons is quite variable. Sometimes the pace is too slow and teachers are unsuccessful in injecting speed into pupils' answers. The nature of the task, such as circle games, is not always successful in including all the pupils. By contrast, some very good opportunities for pupils to share methods and to talk through strategies lead to a high level of motivation. Pupils are simply bursting to answer. In most lessons, independent tasks are tackled confidently and pupils maintain a good level of concentration and effort. Occasionally, this part of the lesson drifts and the teacher then skilfully refocuses the pupils. Regular homework is relevant, well marked and makes a very good contribution to learning as well as to pupils' personal development.
94. Teachers make good links between subjects and use mathematics skills well in science, for example, when pupils present and interpret the results of their experiments. Geographical mapping skills, such as giving directions and finding grid references, and surveys of shops in the local Broadway reinforce pupils' use of mathematics. Computers are used frequently in activities that require pupils to present data, and occasionally to reinforce skills during lessons. The co-ordinator hopes to extend the use of ICT when the school has a computer suite. Some imaginative activities combine a range of mathematical skills. For example, a display of pupils' work in Year 5 shows how they surveyed each other, calculated the results in percentages, presented the information in different formats choosing a suitable scale for the graph, and then identified the mode.
95. The subject is led and managed well. Assessment procedures are very good and the school makes good use of the information to modify curriculum planning. Very good monitoring of the standards pupils attain in National Curriculum tests includes a detailed analysis of pupils' errors and this highlights areas for improvement. The school intends to extend this practice to annual test results in order to identify specific areas for development for each year group. The subject has a high profile within the school and has been the focus for staff training which has raised teachers' subject expertise and confidence. Although the school has undergone a significant level of change since the last inspection, high standards have been maintained. Overall, this represents a good level of improvement.

## SCIENCE

96. Attainment in science across the school is above average. The good practice seen in the last inspection, when Year 4 were the oldest pupils, has been extended to Years 5 and 6. In the first year of Year 6 national tests, results were above average overall, with a very good number of pupils attaining the higher level. Analysis of these results shows little significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls, or of those pupils who speak English as an additional language. Teacher assessment at Year 2 overall was broadly in line with expectations for the age group and also shows a very good number of pupils attaining the higher levels. Pupils achieve well in response to good teaching. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour in science lessons were good.
97. Standards in the current Year 2 are above expectations for their age. In their work on plants, most pupils identify the characteristics of a healthy plant and use careful observations to describe differences between plants. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of a fair test and ability to predict are above average for their age. The recording of pupils' work is neat and well presented, showing pride in it. Teachers establish a supportive ethos whereby all pupils feel confident to offer predictions and suggestions for setting up investigations. In the lessons seen, teachers provided a

range of work for different groups within the class, ensuring that the higher attaining pupils were challenged sufficiently and the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs were well supported and able to succeed. Teachers challenged pupils well with questions pitched at different levels of difficulty.

98. By the time they leave the school, pupils are able to decide which variable needs controlling to make a fair test and explain how to do this because of the good quality of discussion and explanations set up by the teachers. Pupils' clear understanding of solutions, dissolving and evaporation is due to good explanations, and investigative and research work set up by the teachers. They are able to extract key points from text and make informative and succinct notes. An analysis of pupils' work shows that they consistently make good progress and have a good knowledge of forces, plants, and the human body and its systems. Their work is neatly presented and a useful reference for later revision. However, all pupils in a year group are given much the same work. Although teachers may expect more or better quality recording from the more able, there are sometimes missed opportunities for the higher attaining pupils to work at a more challenging level, especially in the older age group in mixed-age classes.
99. The quality of teaching is good overall with a number of strengths that account for pupils' good progress. One strength is that the teachers plan together in teams, ably supported by the co-ordinator, so they regularly share ideas about what works well in lessons. The emphasis on investigative work, which all pupils enjoy, has established a good foundation for developing pupils' understanding of scientific work in the adult world. Teaching is based on good subject knowledge that enables teachers to ask probing questions to make pupils think and explain their thinking to others. Good resources, including some made specifically for certain investigations, such as the boards made to investigate the effects of stretching elastic bands, ensure that pupils can have first-hand experiences to experiment for themselves. The wildlife garden provides a good living resource, which was used well by Years 1 and 2 for their work on plants. Good links are made with other subjects. For example, in the good Years 5 and 6 lessons the teachers linked literacy to science well and taught research skills to enable pupils to find out more about solutions, solvents and evaporation. Skills in data handling in mathematics using ICT help pupils to accurately record the results of their experiments. Teachers value science, and good interactive science displays are evident in all classrooms. Overlong lessons in some classes of older pupils resulted in their attention drifting and the pace of the lessons flagging so that teachers had to work hard to enable pupils to sustain concentration.
100. Pupils co-operate and discuss ideas well in pairs and groups in science lessons. They listen attentively and are polite. They are able to discuss the beauty and lovely smell of plants as well as their scientific characteristics, and pupils said 'plants make the world a better place'. This was evident in a Year 1 lesson where the teacher encouraged pupils to think in a broad context of beauty and delight in plants before looking at their scientific value. In this way, science makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
101. There is little within the teachers' planning to show how tasks are adapted for different groups of pupils, especially the higher attaining pupils; this was a criticism in the last inspection. Planning for the termly units of work is detailed but does not identify assessments to be used for different groups of pupils to enable future planning to be adapted. The new co-ordinator has established good assessment systems to monitor achievement throughout the school and recognises the need to develop further the use of the information in planning activities at different levels in mixed-age classes.

102. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has made a good start to leading the subject. The comprehensive policy and good scheme of work support teachers' planning. She scrutinises teachers' plans and pupils' work to ensure that pupils are covering the full curriculum. She monitors Year 2 and Year 6 performance in tests and advises colleagues on strengths and weaknesses so that they can be addressed. She has established good links with Wimbledon College to enhance provision in the school for ICT and specialist teaching. There have not yet been opportunities for the co-ordinator to observe and support colleagues in the classroom to ensure consistency in teaching and to share good practice.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

103. The school has maintained the above average standards in art and design since the last inspection in Year 2 and by end of Year 4. From the small amount of evidence drawn from scrutiny of work and talking to pupils, standards are at least satisfactory by the end of Year 6. The stained glass panel in the front entrance of the school is a tribute to the creativity of pupils whose designs were used for this Millennium project. Pupils benefit from specialist visiting artists who enhance their art experiences. For example, in Years 5 and 6, pupils enjoyed a day of African art and cultural experiences.
104. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is the second language, make good progress and enjoy art and design. They concentrate very well and produce work of a good quality because they are taught the basic skills well. They have well-planned opportunities to draw and mix paints, use colour in several mediums and to create two- and three-dimensional forms, exploring a good range of materials. They experience sculptures in their own shopping centre, and have good knowledge of the work of a number of sculptors and artists such as Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth and Andy Goldsworthy. One pupil was inspired to produce a miniature version of the 'Angel of the North'. They create hanging sculptures, weaving, explore natural materials and create collages of their favourite places. By the end of Year 2, pupils make self-portraits with easily recognisable and often detailed features such as hair and eyes because they are taught to make careful observations. They apply their observation skills to produce good quality, detailed still life drawings, many pupils showing an awareness of position of objects in front of others. They use sketchbooks well to practise the techniques, such as the use of charcoal.
105. Up to Year 4, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well because they have an established regular cycle of art and design lessons. Pupils in Year 3 study pattern in the environment, explore textures and make rubbings of patterns and sketch ideas in their sketchbooks. Using their sketches, they create string templates and print their designs. From still life sketches they enjoy creating colourful fabric collages by sewing, sticking and using a good range of materials to create their finished products. Year 4 pupils study David Hockney's 'Mr and Mrs Clarke and family'. Teachers suitably link their work with personal and social education in their study of relationships. They use Hockney's technique to create their own figure groups of family within appropriate landscapes, most drawing well- proportioned figures, applying colour mixing, some with good detail. On a residential visit to Suffolk, pupils in Year 4 visited Flatford Mill and were impressed by the work of the artist John Constable, having gained an understanding of the environment in which he painted.
106. In Years 5 and 6, and by the end of Year 6, achievement is satisfactory. In discussion with pupils they talked with enthusiasm about the 'African day' they had enjoyed and about the drawing, painting and opportunities for trying tie-dye. The work that they have produced is of a good standard, showing fine detail in drawing and painting, and



particularly successful shaded observational drawings of African sculptures. The day also included dance and music, providing a good opportunity for pupils to develop some good understanding of another culture. However, the range of work is limited.

107. During the inspection, due to timetable arrangements it was possible to see only one lesson in Year 2, in which the quality of teaching was good. Scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils suggests that pupils are well taught and have some worthwhile and well-planned experiences. In the one lesson observed the teacher had a good understanding of, and taught well, the basic skills for the lesson, although the introduction to the lesson was overlong, leading to some restlessness from the pupils.
108. The curriculum range of opportunities in Years 5 and 6 is narrow because there are few opportunities for ongoing development of skills. Art and design modules are far apart and squeezed in time, so that knowledge, understanding and development of skills, which are good up until Year 4, lose continuity. For example, although pupils knew of artists that they had studied in Year 4, their knowledge of a range of artists was narrow. Scrutiny of planning shows that there is a mismatch between the percentage of planned time and actual time for art and design. The use of ICT is developing in Years 1 and 2 where pupils draw using software programs. Clipart is increasingly used in Years 5 and 6.
109. Although the co-ordinator's vision for the development of the subject is good, it is yet to be realised. The management of the subject is satisfactory because the role is one that is still developing. There is a suitable action plan, appropriately prioritised, and the programme of study is being modified to suit the school. Monitoring of planning and photographic recording of work are developing, although monitoring of teaching by the co-ordinator is undeveloped. Teachers assess end of modules of work. This information is not recorded to make a cumulative picture of the development of pupils' skills and experiences or used to plan future work. Art and design provides good support for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Cross-curricular opportunities for art and design are good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Resources are satisfactory and are used well. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

110. Standards of work by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English, achieve satisfactorily. Evidence is drawn from scrutiny of planning and work, photographs, talking with pupils and two lessons in Years 3 and 4. Pupils in most years have had the benefit of visiting experts who have provided valuable insights for teachers in developing previously unexplored modules of work. The curriculum for Years 5 and 6 is still developing and time for design and technology is low because of the emphasis on English and mathematics. There are large gaps between modules, which affect the continuous development of skills.
111. Evaluation of their own work is a strength of the subject from Years 1 to 6. Pupils in Year 2 design and make fruit salad, choosing the tastes that they enjoy and combining fruit and juice to create their design. They record their evaluation at the end of the project and say how they could make it better. In Years 1 and 2, pupils extend their knowledge of different kinds of transport and gain an understanding of how axles work to enable wheels to go round, by designing their own vehicles. They learn how to make toys with moving parts using sliders and split pins. They apply this knowledge in creating Christmas cards with moving parts, such as Santa on his sleigh.

112. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 discover how pneumatics make their monsters' mouths open, and apply this knowledge and understanding in solving problems such as where to place the pneumatic pump to make the wings move up and down. Teachers offer very good opportunities for pupils to discuss in pairs, try out ideas and report back suggestions to the class as a whole. This encourages pupils to think carefully and take account of elements in the design, promoting spiritual and social development well. In pondering about the placement of the second pump one pupil commented, 'we have to make sure it does not get in the way of the head of the monster'. Year 6 pupils recounted animatedly how they investigated and evaluated a range of different cookies from the shops. In groups they had to negotiate and come to an agreement about the shapes and tastes of their own design of cookies. They explained clearly and confidently, 'We had to alter the design because we could not make a particular shape'. Following making the cookies, they compared them and gave opinions about which they considered best and how they could improve the design.
113. The broad range of evidence shows that teaching is satisfactory overall. It was good in the two lessons observed. A visiting expert had introduced the pneumatics module, giving teachers confidence in the basic skills. Pupils enjoy the practical opportunities to make exciting moving objects and work well collaboratively testing their ideas and selecting the best. When pupils were presented with solutions, such as where to place the pump and how to fix it, the challenge was lessened. In some of the projects pupils have very limited opportunities for designing which limits their independence and creativity. Teachers give pupils very good opportunities to evaluate their own and others' work. Pupils are sensitive to the feelings of others, making their criticisms without hurting feelings.
114. Literacy skills are used appropriately in design and technology to record research and evaluation and label diagrams. Numeracy skills are practised in weighing and measuring and the use of ICT is an area which is underdeveloped in this subject.
115. The management of design and technology is satisfactory. The joint co-ordinators have taken effective action to support teachers by providing good quality outside expertise, which has led to development of expertise in several areas. The medium-term planning from a commercial scheme of work is established up to Year 4 and continuously developing in Years 5 and 6 as teachers evaluate each module over the two-year cycle. Pupils have clear knowledge and understanding of their learning through end of module evaluation. Assessment of learning at the end of lessons to inform planning is underdeveloped, although teachers record at the end of unit which pupils have met the learning objectives. Design and technology makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. It fosters personal and social skills, challenges thought and intellect, and raises awareness of the environment.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

116. Just two lessons were observed, both in classes of Years 3 and 4 pupils. However, samples of work from pupils of all ages and discussions with pupils from Year 6 confirm that pupils attain standards in line with expectations by the age of seven and eleven. Teaching is satisfactory and pupils achieve soundly. These are similar judgements to those made at the last inspection; the satisfactory provision has been sustained.

117. The curriculum is structured into units of work and taught in blocks of time. This is well organised and managed in Years 1 to 4 but weaker in Years 5 and 6 where geography is taught just once a year. This arrangement does not ensure that pupils' geographical skills and knowledge continue to develop in a systematic way. However, it is clear from talking to pupils that they have a rich experience of well-chosen visits, including residential visits, and interesting activities within the geography curriculum that make a good contribution to their personal development.
118. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are learning about their local area and draw maps which show the position of key features including the school and the station. They are beginning to identify and describe the key features of countries in other parts of the world from looking at the origin of different foods. Their work is neatly presented and well organised. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 build well on previous work on the local area. They talked knowledgeably, identifying what has changed and how that change might have an impact on the local residents. They have a secure understanding of how people affect and change the environment and recognise that different people have different views based on their personal circumstances. However, these well-expressed views, that are drawn out by good questioning from their teachers during class discussions, are not always reflected in pupils' written work.
119. Pupils in Year 6 have good recall of their previous experiences in geography. For example, when talking about rivers, they use specific geographical vocabulary confidently and demonstrate a sound knowledge of the physical processes involved. Previous studies of contrasting localities in the United Kingdom have given them a secure understanding of the effect that people have on the environment and the changes people bring to urban and rural areas. Their knowledge of different parts of the world is not so well developed because their study of a locality in another country is planned for the summer term.
120. Teaching is satisfactory with strengths, but with aspects that could be improved. During discussions teachers build well on pupils' responses to extend their ideas and encourage pupils to work together, share ideas and to learn from one another. There is a good emphasis on getting pupils to explain their views and this contributes well to opportunities for speaking and listening. Pupils are articulate and show interest, but they become restless when discussions are overlong. For example, one lesson that extended across the whole afternoon began to drift and pupils' interest waned. In the lessons seen, the activities had been simplified to provide additional support for less able pupils and those who needed additional support with the geographical concepts and vocabulary. This was done well. However, pupils' past work was frequently the same for all abilities within the class. Assessment systems are satisfactory, though informal; pupils' self-evaluation at the end of a unit of work clearly shows what they have learnt. However, this information is not used in any rigorous way by teachers to make modifications to future planning and this is unsatisfactory. Medium-term planning occasionally identifies slight modifications to activities for higher or lower attaining pupils but there is scope to increase the variety of work provided for pupils of different abilities in order to raise standards further.
121. The units of work are planned well to encompass many geographical ideas and skills, and to use first-hand activities where possible to increase the relevance for pupils. There is a good emphasis on key geographical vocabulary and explanation of physical and human processes. Mathematical skills are reinforced well when pupils undertake surveys, find different ways of presenting information in tables and graphs, and interpret the results.

122. The headteacher is providing a satisfactory lead for the subject in her caretaking role as co-ordinator. Planning is monitored regularly and teachers are guided by each other's expertise when planning units of work. However, there are no formal methods of evaluating the standards pupils attain to identify areas for improvement; this aspect of management is underdeveloped.

## **HISTORY**

123. During the week of the inspection two lessons were observed, one in Year 1 and one in Year 2. No lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6. However, evidence gained from the scrutiny of pupils' work, from displays around the school and conversations with pupils indicate that standards at the end of Year 2 are satisfactory and that they make sound progress throughout Years 1 and 2. Standards in Year 6 are above average and progress is good in Years 3 to 6.
124. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 understand the differences between their own and other people's lives when they learn about the history of transport. They know that a timeline can represent the passing of time. The neat presentation of their work demonstrates the positive attitude they have towards the subject. In Years 3 to 6, pupils develop a good awareness of the past through the study of the Ancient Egyptians, the Ancient Greeks and the Vikings. In Years 3 and 4, for example, they related well to the life of the Ancient Egyptians through the study of their beliefs, deciding what they would take into the afterlife. By the end of the Year 6 they understand chronology, using timelines to order significant events in their studies of the Ancient Greeks and know some of the contributions made by Ancient Greeks to the world today. Pupils talk very knowledgeably about the historical topics studied. They are keen on research and know how to use textbooks and computers to select the information they need.
125. In the lessons seen in Years 1 and 2 and, from the standards of work produced in pupils' books, teaching is satisfactory. In Year 1, the work pupils are doing about transport is supported well by ICT and lessons in handling data. In the satisfactory lesson seen, pupils showed a good understanding of choosing criteria for sorting and classifying modes of transport but, in this context, the concept of old and new was not fully understood. By the end of Year 2 pupils have built on the knowledge gained in Year 1 and demonstrate a much clearer understanding about how modern transport is different now from in the past. However, the lesson observed in Year 2 was too long. Pupils spent 50 minutes sitting on the carpet discussing wide-ranging ideas that, whilst linked to the topic, detracted from the historical focus of the lesson. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 behave well in lessons and produce neat work.
126. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 demonstrate very good attitudes to the work that they produce. Their work is very well presented, showing that they take considerable care when drawing maps and diagrams, and when writing within the subject. Pupils show a very high level of interest in the subject. This is a tribute to the good teaching that clearly takes place in these classes. In discussion with Year 6 pupils they talked with great animation about Greek gods, the wars between the Greeks and Persians, of how they had produced 'old' pieces of Greek writing and were keen to show the work on display. They talked about times they had dressed up as Victorian children and studied the Victorian features of the school. They said how much they had enjoyed watching the documentaries that teachers had recommended for homework. Another firm favourite was the topic on World War Two, when they had to pretend to be evacuees. To support this theme, pupils had read 'Goodnight Mr Tom' in their English lessons. Pupils revealed a mature understanding and empathy with the plight of children both in Victorian times and in the Second World War. They enjoy the role-play aspects

teachers provide in the subject and are motivated to extend their knowledge by further research.

127. The history curriculum provided for the older children is well suited to their needs. They have the maturity to cope with the long lessons planned and the action-packed lessons help fix what they have been taught in their minds, whilst lessons for the younger children are too long and often of a less practical nature. Formal assessment of standards achieved in the subject is underdeveloped. The headteacher, who is currently caretaking the management of the subject, oversees teachers' plans, and has the opportunity to see what is happening in lessons because of her role as headteacher. However, there is no formal monitoring of teaching in the subject. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

128. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards of attainment are in line with national expectations and pupils' progress is satisfactory. The quality of teaching in the previous inspection was judged to be mainly good. Now it is satisfactory. This is not a reflection on the ability of the teachers but is more related to external changes, such as having older pupils, the more sophisticated requirements of the National Curriculum and the lack of a computer suite. Despite the additional challenges placed on the school, staff are working hard to keep pace with the constantly developing nature of the subject in terms of knowledge, understanding and resources. Throughout the school it is evident that skills in using ICT are seen as important tools to use to support teaching and learning across the curriculum. This element of teaching ICT represents an improvement since the last inspection when inspectors found that more work needed to be done regarding the use of computers in all subjects of the curriculum. Another improvement that has been made is in the teachers' knowledge and expertise. They are now much more confident and provide the pupils with more opportunities to use the computers in the classroom to develop and reinforce their skills.
129. In Year 1, pupils learn to sort and present data. In the very good lesson observed, attractive photographs were provided for the children to sort out. All pupils were included well and the classroom assistant was well deployed in helping a pupil with special educational needs to take full part in the lesson. The tasks provided for the pupils were well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils so that, by the end of the lesson, all pupils had produced work that showed they had understood the lesson very well.
130. The skills learned in Year 1 are built on well by pupils in Year 2 who understand that data represented graphically can be easier to understand than textual information. In the good lesson observed, the teacher used a projector to demonstrate how to use a computer to make a 'pictogram'. In this lesson, however, the lack of sufficient computers available to the class meant that pupils did not have the opportunity to practise the skills taught immediately, but would work at the two classroom computers in pairs throughout the week. Although the level of understanding was satisfactory, in this lesson the quality of the learning did not match the quality of teaching because of lack of resources. Nevertheless, by the end of Year 2, pupils are familiar with the different functions of the keyboard and mouse. All pupils load programs and save and retrieve their work. Most pupils know what a font is and some can change the size and appearance of their text. When using an art program, pupils change the colours and the size of the palette, and control the mouse with care to drag and drop an icon in a specific place. They use the commands to fill, line draw and add text. Computers are used well to support work in literacy and numeracy and reinforce learning.

131. By the end of Year 6, standards are average. Pupils use ICT as a tool for learning, research, presentation and for reinforcing learning. They use computers with great enthusiasm and with good levels of concentration. They behave well and are ready to give a helping hand to others who might be struggling. Pupils are keen to explore the potential of computers and to find things out. There are timetabled lessons when they are directly taught the necessary skills in an appropriate manner to help them become more proficient computer users, especially for research tasks in subjects such as history. The pupils find information using a variety of search facilities and, instead of just printing out the information, they use it to enhance their topics. Pupils are not yet proficient at using a wide range of applications, for example desktop publishing programs, nor have they had the opportunity to send e-mails. Throughout Years 2 to 6, pupils confidently use computers to present their written work and make very good use of them for editing and drafting.
132. The leadership of the subject is very good because of the whole-school vision and its high profile on the school development plan. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator provides good support for the rest of the staff who are managing to teach the statutory curriculum under the difficult circumstances of having no ICT suite. The curriculum for ICT is satisfactory. National guidelines for teaching and learning in the subject are being used, along with appropriate use of a range of programs, to support the different subjects of the curriculum. At present, assessment in ICT is in the early stages of development.
133. Following the change of status from a first school to an age three to eleven primary school, the governing body and the senior management team put into place an effective action plan to bring ICT provision in line with the rest of the country. As soon as the anticipated drop in pupil numbers frees up sufficient space, the school will be able to realise its long-term vision. In the meantime, classroom resources have been increased considerably and there is now approximately one computer to every eleven pupils. Classroom computers are linked to the Internet and the school has recently installed Broadband to improve pupils' access to research facilities.

## **MUSIC**

134. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in music is above expected standards. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, attainment is well above the standards expected nationally. This has extended the good standards from the last inspection where the oldest pupils were in Year 4. Pupils throughout the school thoroughly enjoy their music making activities. The tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers and the school's music specialist teacher is a strength of the school and the two choirs, guitar, clarinet and violin lessons further enhance the provision for older pupils. This enables the more able pupils to achieve very well. The pupils aged seven to eleven who play musical instruments attain particularly good standards in their ability to read and play music. They perform confidently in assemblies and concerts. Older pupils achieve highly in music lessons, with demanding and challenging work set for them.
135. The teaching seen with the younger pupils was good. The teacher has high expectations for very good behaviour, which all pupils meet. As a result, pupils work well individually, in pairs and in groups with a high level of co-operation. Younger pupils sing well and confidently show good control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm; this is as a result of the good teaching of techniques for breathing and articulating clearly. Good planning and organisation by the teacher enabled them to compose and perform simple

pieces well using unpitched and pitched percussion instruments. Pupils identify high and low notes and follow symbols to play a sequence of high and low notes because of the good explanations and demonstration from the teacher. The teacher places strong emphasis on evaluating music. For example, pupils listened well to some Arabic pipe music and discussed the quality of the instruments compared to other instruments they knew.

136. The teaching for Years 3 to 6 pupils was very good. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were taught to improvise melodic and rhythmic phrases within a group based on Stravinsky's 'Firebird'. They performed very well to each other and evaluated the performances very sensitively and with good ideas for improvement. One group's performance impressed the class very much and resulted in spontaneous applause and the comment 'that was even better than Stravinsky!' This quality of work was due to the excellent planning, classroom control and questioning of the teacher. The class teacher supported the music specialist and joined in, helping pupils to evaluate and improve their performances. Both teachers assessed the work and gave the pupils good feedback. This developed the class teacher's subject knowledge of music, a criticism made at the last inspection. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 extended their composition work to develop some outstanding harmonies, melodies and rhythmic phrases on a space theme using their music notebooks to record ideas. They evaluated each other's work very well. This was because of the excellent explanations and questioning from the teacher, ably supported by the class teacher who interacted effectively with groups. The teaching throughout the older pupils' lessons was good in the last inspection and is now very good and often excellent. The older pupils sing very well with good pitch, breath control and phrasing, and very clear articulation of words. In the singing and choir lessons, the teacher developed the pupils' skills by good demonstrations, teaching very good techniques and skills and having very high expectations of the quality of the singing in very challenging contrasting parts. When pupils stood up to sing, the quality of their work improved, although they did not stand to sing often. The pace in all the music lessons was very good and the pupils made at least good progress in each lesson. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and make good progress. Pupils from all ethnic groups are fully included and participate well.
137. Parents enjoy the opportunities to listen to the musical performances of the pupils in Christmas, Easter and summer concerts and in Mass in the church. They also enjoy instrumental performances in informal concerts throughout the year. The music specialist supports class teachers in planning and preparing the concerts, and events are a good team effort.
138. The knowledgeable co-ordinator gives very good leadership in music and manages the subject very well. Each class has a weekly music lesson plus singing practice and choirs. A comprehensive scheme of work meets the full requirements of the National Curriculum, which is extended well with preparation work for visits to the London Symphony Orchestra, the Barbican and workshops from visiting specialists. Resources have improved to a good level since the last inspection. All classes and instrumental groups enjoy working in the new music room. As yet, the co-ordinator has been unable to introduce composition using ICT but has plans to address this now that there is a specialist room.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

139. Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations in Years 1 to 4; it was not possible to see lessons in Years 5 and 6. The picture is much the same as in

the last inspection. There was no difference in standards seen between boys and girls in the lessons observed. Pupils of all abilities participate well.

140. The teaching seen during inspection was good overall although there were some inconsistencies. Pupils work enthusiastically in dance, gymnastics and swimming. They enjoy their work and co-operate well with each other. Teachers place a good emphasis on reflecting and evaluating movements in dance and gymnastics. For example, in a very good Year 2 dance lesson, the creative planning and teaching enabled the pupils to show imagination in responding to modern music and in developing movements to show toys waking up in a toyshop. The toys came together in a traditional country-dance which pupils remembered well and performed to a good standard. Teachers use questioning well and give good, ongoing assessments so that in a gymnastics lesson for Years 3 and 4, pairs of pupils took pride in improving a sequence of balance movements on the apparatus. The class teacher's effective feedback on their performance and good questioning helped them think of ways to control their movements more successfully. There are no formal systems for recording assessments of pupils' achievement over time, except in swimming. Teachers do not assess pupils' skills as they develop and so cannot use the information to adapt their future planning; in common with many schools, this is an area for development. Where teaching was just satisfactory, a few pupils did not co-operate well and ball catching and throwing skills did not improve as much as they could have.
141. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn to swim and standards are as expected for their age. Swimming instructors work in close collaboration with the class teachers to ensure a good learning environment and pupils made good progress within the lesson seen. Less adept pupils showed developing confidence in plunging into the water from the side of the pool and getting their faces wet. By the time they leave the school, most pupils can swim a minimum of 25 metres and many do much more, gaining both distance and personal survival certificates.
142. The curriculum provided is satisfactory and the school has improved the opportunities for pupils to take part in traditional sports, which was criticised in the previous inspection. Professional coaches and sports personalities develop work in football, basketball and athletics. As yet, there are no clubs or extra-curricular provision for physical education to enrich the curriculum. This is another area for development.
143. The management of physical education is underdeveloped. It is unsatisfactory that there is no monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school to ensure consistent good practice, or to check the standards achieved to identify areas for development. However, the co-ordinator leads the subject enthusiastically and has successfully raised the profile of physical education within the school. A clear and comprehensive policy gives good guidance for safe practice and procedures. Resources are adequate. A series of training sessions has improved teachers' subject knowledge since the last inspection. The co-ordinator supports teachers with their planning, and links with other schools are strengthening.