

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SACRED HEART RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Teddington

LEA area: Richmond-Upon-Thames

Unique reference number: 102916

Headteacher: Mr M Thompson

Reporting inspector: Mr J G F Parsons  
22546

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 March 2003

Inspection number: 246253

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: St Mark's Road  
Teddington

Postcode: TW11 9DD

Telephone number: 020 8977 6591

Fax number: 020 8943 2449

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A Breaks

Date of previous inspection: 10 November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22546	Mr J G F Parsons	Registered inspector	Art and design Physical education Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? School's results and pupils' achievements What should the school do to improve further?
13450	Mrs J Madden	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?
11901	Mrs P Lowe	Team inspector	English Music English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?
20063	Mr G Slamon	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30075	Mr M Duggan	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Educational inclusion	How well are pupils taught?

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services

Strathblane House  
Ashfield Road  
Cheadle  
Stockport  
SK8 1BB

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>31</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Sacred Heart is a Catholic aided primary school in Teddington, Middlesex. It is of about average size compared to most other primary schools with 232 boys and girls on roll aged 4 to 11. In addition there are 10 part-time children in the Reception, giving the equivalent of 237 full-time pupils. The enrolment is predominantly from the parish of Sacred Heart, which covers quite a wide geographical area. The majority of pupils come from comparatively advantaged homes. Employment is high and most families live in owner-occupied housing. At slightly more than five per cent, the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is low, but is more than during the previous inspection. There are very few children of refugees but almost a third of pupils are from minority ethnic groups (29 per cent). Some speak English as an additional language (three per cent) but most of are at the later stages of learning English. Standards on entry are above average and the majority of pupils are mature and speak and listen well. Most children joining the Reception do so from the Sacred Heart Kindergarten, which is privately run but on the same site as the school. Although 17 per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs, approximately three quarters of these are at the early stages of support and there are fewer than one per cent with statements. The headteacher is relatively new to the school having been appointed less than a year ago. There is some staff turnover but the staff are mostly stable and long-serving.

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

This is a very good school offering very good value for money. It is well led and very well managed and has made very good progress since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is very good and in English, mathematics and science pupils achieve above average standards by Year 2 and well above average standards by the end of Year 6.

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

- The standards in English, mathematics and science are above average by Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in art and design and physical education, and by the end of Year 6 in history and geography, standards are above those expected for pupils' age. Pupils achieve very well across the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good across the school.
- The school is well led, very well managed and parents think very highly of it.
- The attitudes, behaviour and development of pupils are very good.
- It offers pupils an enriched curriculum with a very good emphasis on teaching basic skills in literacy and numeracy, which prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' moral and social development are very good and the school is a harmonious and very effective learning environment.

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

There are no significant weaknesses.

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

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

Since the previous inspection in November 1997, the school has made very good improvement. The quality of teaching has improved and is now very good. It has successfully built on the many strengths found at that time but in particular the development of more rigorous management systems have enabled this very good progress to occur. As a result the school has successfully dealt with the issues raised in the previous report.

- National guidance is now followed thoroughly in covering programmes of study in information and communication technology, art and design and design technology.
- The senior management team have a full range of responsibilities and they are effective.

- In order to manage their subjects, co-ordinators have fully delegated responsibilities and all documentation is complete.
- With the introduction of monitors and the school council, there are good, increased opportunities for pupils to take responsibility but there are still not enough consistently planned opportunities for independent learning.
- The school is in the process of evaluating a sex education policy for imminent implementation.
- Full performance management systems are in place to appraise the headteacher's and teachers' performance.
- The school successfully monitors and evaluates its work.
- The governing body play a full role and financial planning is successful.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A*	A*	A*	A*
Mathematics	B	A	A	B
Science	B	B	B	C

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

The very good teaching means that pupils achieve consistently very well in English, mathematics and science, so that they reach standards that are above those expected for their age by the end of Year 2 and, well above by the end of Year 6. Standards are similar to the previous inspection. Children achieve very well in Reception, when many of them exceed the expected standard in the six aspects of learning for their age group. The majority can read and write when they start Year 1. The national tests of 2002 show that by the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, are average in writing and well above the national average in mathematics. Teachers assessed science as well above average. A significant proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in these tests, more than half of them in English. Compared to schools in a similar context, attainment was above average in reading, well above average in mathematics but below the national average in writing. Since then, the school's intensive development of writing has been successful and standards have improved. Pupils are very articulate and show very good mental agility.

In the 2002 national tests by the end Year 6 standards are very high in English, in the top five per cent of schools nationally. They are well above average in mathematics and above the national average in science. Pupils achieve very well: a significant proportion of them reach the higher Level 5 in these tests, in English more than three quarters of them. Compared to schools in similar contexts standards remain very high in English, they are above average in mathematics and meet expectations in science. Since then, the very good development of practical science means that pupils have improved. Statistically, from Year 2 to Year 6, the overall improvement in results in national tests is good. Over four years from 1998 to 2002, the yearly improvement in standards in English, mathematics and science has broadly followed the national trend, but standards have always been above the national average. The school is very effective in teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills. By the end of Year 6 standards in these aspects of learning in English and mathematics are very good. In other subjects:

- standards meet expectations for pupils' age by the end of:
  - Year 2 and Year 6 in information and communication technology, design and technology and music;



- Year 2 in history and geography.

- standards are above those expected for pupils' age by the end of:
  - Year 2 and Year 6, in art and design and physical education;
  - Year 6 in history and geography.

The school achieved its challenging targets in English by the end of Year 6 but missed its targets in mathematics by a few percentage points. It has similar targets for 2003. However, the group of pupils taking the tests is not as high attaining as in the previous year, which makes these targets more challenging this year. Religious education was inspected under Section 23 provision for aided primary schools.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in classrooms and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and very good relationships contribute to their learning.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils are punctual and attendance is well above the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is very good overall. It ranges from satisfactory to excellent and is better than during the previous inspection. In most lessons it is good or very good. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy particularly is very effective and teachers have very good knowledge of the supporting strategies. All teachers have developed a strong relationship with their pupils that enables them to get the best from them. Classrooms are invariably bright and stimulating and in the best lessons teaching is challenging and inspiring. In Reception, in all lessons, teaching was either good or very good. In particular, teaching challenges their literacy skills, making them more articulate, and encourages them to be independent and mature. In Years 1 and 2, the majority of teaching is good or very good and the lessons are well planned. In a very good Year 1 English lesson for example, the teacher built on pupils' prior knowledge of poetry which pupils had previously enjoyed. The teacher showed very good subject knowledge and the basic skills of spelling and grammar were well taught. In a very well taught Year 2 mathematics lesson, the very well structured planning helped to maintain the pace of learning and a very good mental session meant pupils were very well prepared for the next stage of learning. The very high quality of teaching and learning is maintained in Years 3 to 6. In a very good and extremely well planned English lesson for example, the teacher encouraged thinking skills and the participation of pupils of all abilities when she lead a discussion about fact and opinion. The teacher showed very good subject knowledge and used the National Literacy Strategy extremely effectively. She developed pupils' scanning skills as they highlighted facts and opinions in the text. Flexibility in the organisation of teaching was shown in an excellent Year 6 mathematics lesson on shape space and angles: pupils were split into groups and teachers, including the headteacher, taught as a team and most effectively. There are no significant weaknesses in teaching but in the few lessons where teaching was satisfactory, sometimes the teacher spent rather too much time talking to the class and not quite

enough in follow-up activities; in other lessons, for example in information and communication technology, teachers' subject knowledge was not as strong as elsewhere. In all lessons, the careful pitch of work ensures that all the different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, progress very well.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities including extra-curricular activities and sports.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The arrangements for these pupils are effective and they learn very well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. There are very few of these pupils. Most are at the later stages of learning English and achieve as well as their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Procedures encourage pupils' very high levels of respect for teachers and each other. As a result they have a very good understanding of right and wrong and reflect very deeply on their actions. There is good awareness of their own culture and others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. This is a very caring school that tracks pupils' performance effectively and ensures they have challenging targets to achieve.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL WORKS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

This relationship is generally very good and the school has effective links. Parents consider it to be a very good school. They have very good involvement and the quality of weekly newsletters and all other information, including reports, is very good. Parents make a very good contribution to their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall. The good leadership and very good management skills of the headteacher are very effectively supported by the senior management team. This creates a very good climate for learning and helps pupils and staff to achieve success.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The greater involvement of governors in the life of the school means that it holds the headteacher and staff to account effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. There is rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and analysis of data to ensure teachers' greater knowledge of pupils' performance.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources are carefully husbanded by the governing body to ensure that good value for money is obtained. However, the principles of best value are not fully used in the process.

Staffing accommodation and learning resources are good. All rooms are in use and there is no place for a central library, which is a drawback. Learning resources are adequate and are used very well by teachers.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

There were 237 questionnaires sent out and 86 returned (36.3 per cent). Thirty parents or carers attended the meeting held by the Registered Inspector (11 per cent).

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most agree that their children like school, are making good progress and that the teaching is good.</li><li>• All consider behaviour is good and most agree that their children are expected to work hard.</li><li>• Most agree that they would be comfortable approaching the school, that the school is well led and managed and is helping their children become mature.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some do not consider that their children get the right amount of work to do at home and they do not feel well-informed about their progress.</li><li>• Some do not consider that the school works closely with them or provides an interesting range of extra-curricular activities.</li></ul>

The inspectors agree with parents' positive views. Homework is set regularly and is good at extending pupils' learning. The quality of information for parents is very good, particularly the newsletters sent home weekly. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1. The very good teaching results in consistent very good achievement in English, mathematics and science. The inspection found that by the end of Year 2 pupils reach standards that are above, and well above, those expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, standards in these subjects are similar to those found at the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in the national tests, in contrast with the national trend, boys perform significantly better than girls. By the end of Year 6, both boys and girls achieve standards that are above or well above average in English, mathematics and science. The gap between boys and girls narrows between Year 2 and Year 6 but does not disappear completely. During the inspection there was no obvious difference in boys' and girls' performance. Almost a third of the school is from a minority ethnic heritage. Only a very few of them speak English as an additional language and most of these are at the later stages of learning English. They are totally integrated in the school and there is no identifiable difference in their performance in class or the quality of the work they produce. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well and by the end of Year 6 many reach the standard expected for their age. In some instances pupils who in other schools might fall into the normal ability range are regarded as having special educational needs because their standards are below the very good levels found in the rest of the school. Those with individual education plans make very good progress towards achieving the precise targets set. The school recognises that there are some pupils who are gifted and talented and provides planned opportunities for them to develop their skills. For example, a talented artist in Year 6 was given his own special still life to draw and paint to enable him to exercise his talent.
2. Pupils enter school with standards that are above those expected for their age, many having come from the Sacred Heart Kindergarten. Children make very good progress in Reception, where many of them exceed expected standards in the six aspects of learning for their age group. The majority read and write when they start Year 1, some at a very high standard. For example, one higher attaining boy is reading Harry Potter and says it is his favourite book. They sound out words effectively and link them with letters when reading the story of *Ellie's Egg* together. Most understand the difference between lower and upper case letters. They recognise words like *parsley*, *mint*, *lettuce*, and *apple* when preparing food and identifying which is healthy or unhealthy as part of developing their *knowledge and understanding of the world*. Some copy adult writing with varying degrees of control; all know that writing goes from left to right and the higher attainers write sentences independently, often spelling words correctly. Unaided, one boy wrote *the sun is on the flower* using correct spelling and punctuation and illustrating the sentence with a picture. Children have good numeracy skills and in *mathematical development* they write numbers in the correct order, becoming familiar with those over ten. They weigh and measure effectively using sand, making snakes of modelling material to measure with and use words like *shortest* and *longest*.
3. The national tests of 2002 show that by the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, they are average in writing and well above the national average in mathematics; teachers assessed science as well above average. Compared to schools in a similar context, attainment was above average in reading, well above average in mathematics but below the national average in writing. A significant

proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in these tests, more than half of them in English. Since then the school's intensive development of writing has been successful; standards continue to improve and pupils achieve very well. In Year 1 for example, they read from the *Big Book of Poems*, learning simple verses, reciting them from the text and recalling others from previous weeks. One pupil said *I like the taste of toothpaste tingling on my tongue*. They have a good understanding of rhyming patterns and onomatopoeia and they write very effective verses of their own. Literacy skills are very well developed. Pupils are articulate and show very good mental agility. By Year 2 they have a very good understanding of division, knowing that *divide* is the reverse of *multiply*. All pupils know the strategy: *if in doubt draw it out*, some used this to divide 20 by five, drawing four groups of five dots. In science in Year 2, pupils make a simple circuit using a battery, bulbs and two wires; they develop a really good understanding of how electricity works and relate their experiments to real life.

4. In the 2002 national tests, by the end Year 6, standards are very high in English, in the top five per cent of schools nationally. They are well above average in mathematics and above the national average in science. Pupils achieve very well. A significant proportion of them reach the higher Level 5 in these tests, in English more than three quarters of them. Compared to schools in similar contexts, standards remain very high in English, are above average in mathematics and meet expectations in science. The development of practical science means that pupils have a very good knowledge of how to set up an investigation and understand what a fair test is. The evidence from inspection is that standards in science have improved.
5. By Year 6 pupils are raising their awareness by reading books from other cultures. They read *Yeh Shen*, a traditional Chinese story. They identify the characters and compare two of them in writing, showing very good insight into their personalities. They know the difference between fact and opinion. They use well-developed scanning skills to identify examples. They know the definitions of *a fact* as something that is true and *an opinion* as someone's viewpoint. They extend their vocabularies with difficult words such as *haywire*, *bilge*, *authenticated* and *supernatural*. Meanwhile, in mathematics they have a very good understanding of shape, space and angles. They show very high levels of mental agility, often calculating very quickly and writing their answers on small whiteboards. For example, nearly all know that an equilateral triangle has three equal sides and that there are eighteen 50ps in £9.00. They round up 36.67 to the nearest  $\frac{1}{10}$ ; they know how many degrees there are in a circle and how many are wrong if 13 per cent are right.
6. Statistically, the overall improvement in results in national tests from Year 2 to Year 6 (sometimes called *value added*) is good. Pupils speak and listen very well. They developing their understanding by asking pertinent questions in an exceptionally mature way, their written work is of very high quality and they are productive. Over four years from 1998 to 2002, the yearly improvement in standards in English, mathematics and science has followed the improvement of schools nationally, but standards have always been above the national average. In the 2002 national tests, standards in science were above average but matched those for similar schools. The inspection found that the standards have been improved by the strong approach to the practical aspects of this subject. The inspection found that weaknesses have been addressed by the strong approach to developing the practical aspect of this subject and standards have improved. The school is very effective in teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills. By the end of Year 6 standards in these aspects of learning contribute to the very good standards in English and mathematics. In other

subjects, standards match those expected for pupils' age in information technology and design and technology by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and in history and geography by the end of Year 2.

7. In information and communication technology, pupils show good familiarity with computers. They use information technology in other subjects such as mathematics, but this is not consistent. In art and design and in physical education by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are above expectations, in history and geography this is the case by the end of Year 6.
8. The school achieved its challenging target in English by the end of Year 6 but missed its target in mathematics by a few percentage points. It has similar targets for 2003, which are more challenging as the group of pupils taking the tests is not as high attaining as in the previous year. Religious education was inspected under Section 23 provision for aided primary schools.

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

9. Pupil's attitudes, values and personal development are very good and are a strength of the school. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when they were good.

Particular strengths in this area of school life are:

- behaviour in the school and playground;
  - pupils' enthusiasm for school;
  - other pupils' very good support for those with special needs;
  - relationships in the school;
  - the complete integration and success of pupils from minority ethnic heritage and /or with English as an additional language.
10. Pupils arrive happily and punctually in the morning. They seek each other out, compare work and during registration comment on visits, events or happenings at home. They quickly settle into the very good working environment where they are involved and enjoy applying themselves to the task in hand. This was very well demonstrated in a Year 2 lesson on traditional stories when they put considerable creative effort into their work and made very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported so that their learning is similar to that of others and very good planning ensures that those of all ability levels are clear about what is expected of them. As a result, they are keen, interested and anxious to learn more. Pupils care about each other's well being. They accept and care for those with special educational and physical needs. As a result, these pupils see themselves as respected members of the school community.
  11. Behaviour in and around the school is very good. Parents are very conscious of this and full of praise for the school. Very high standards prevail in all classes and are so well incorporated into school life that a teacher has only to look at a pupil or slightly raise his or her voice to show displeasure. This ensures all lessons progress uninterrupted by disruptive behaviour. In the playground, pupils play happily in the separate areas with no sign of rough or boisterous behaviour even though the majority are engaged in energetic play. There have been no exclusions in the previous academic year.



12. Relationships in the school are very supportive of learning and are modelled on the example set by teaching staff. These permeate the whole of school life, in lessons, in the playground and around the school. The very good rapport and respect between

teachers and pupils ensures that pupils are motivated, interested and enthusiastic. This was clearly shown in a Year 3 science experiment where pupils were so keen to know the result they were bouncing up and down in their seats with excitement. It is also apparent that, whilst pupils are competitive, they work well together, they listen to each other and respect others' contributions. This co-operative approach in turn helps the very good learning.

13. Personal development is similarly good. Pupils are well aware of the effect of their actions on each other and in playtimes. When space is limited during wet conditions, they use it safely with little supervision. When they accidentally hurt each other (as happened in a physical education lesson) they are extremely upset and try very hard to put things right. During lessons they encourage one another's efforts, which noticeably improves self-confidence and self-esteem. For instance, in a Year 5 class working on a poem all pupils made very good progress and happily acknowledged the efforts of their peers. They are given responsibility in classrooms and readily accept it. Year 6 prefects are very involved in their responsibilities around the school. It is very apparent that pupils take full advantage of the opportunities to show incentive in their learning and in wider areas. The individuality of their written work is a clear example of their ability to think independently, as is the quality and individuality of their project work. All pupils are keen to help those less fortunate than themselves by undertaking fundraising through a series of well thought-out activities. Parents interviewed during the inspection cite the residential visit as the single most effective event in helping their offspring to mature so they feel more confident about their children's ability to flourish at their new secondary schools.
14. Pupils for whom English is an additional language show very good attitudes to learning. They are very interested in their work and very keen to achieve well. They interact very well with others in the classroom and are fully integrated into play activities at break times and lunchtimes. Their very good behaviour and the very good relationships that prevail promote very good learning. The mutual respect shown between all adults and pupils assists pupils' learning and helps to develop their self-confidence.

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

15. The quality of teaching is very good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when it was satisfactory overall, with 10 per cent unsatisfactory. During this inspection it was good or better in more than 90 per cent of lessons, very good or better in more than half, nine per cent was outstanding and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching in the Foundation Stage was always consistently good or better. In the Years 1 to 2 and Years 3 to 6 there was little variation between year groups and individual classes, only rarely is it of a satisfactory standard and in most lessons teaching was good or better. Throughout the school, English, mathematics and science are taught very well and the teachers have a very good knowledge of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Overall, the quality of teaching in other subjects was good or better. Very good teaching also ensures that the learning of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of all other pupils. Support staff are well trained and are usually used well in lessons by teachers.
16. The teachers are very hard-working and are concerned for their pupils' welfare. Very good relationships exist which contribute to the pupils' learning. Pupils are managed well and, as a result, behaviour in classes is very good. This was exemplified well in a Year 6 English lesson where a poem was analysed. All the teachers value the pupils' answers, even when they are not exactly correct, as observed in a Year 6

science lesson on pollination, seed dispersal and germination. This raises self-worth and gives pupils the confidence to tackle new work. They pick up on these good models of relationships and are considerate and thoughtful of others.

17. In the Reception, good classroom organisation and management, coupled with consistently applied routines, ensure a good start is made to the children's education. They display a positive attitude to learning and respond enthusiastically and responsibly to given tasks. Very good examples included a lesson where children identified sounds in a text and another where the emphasis was on the acquisition of physical skills and social development. The consistent good use of praise and encouragement contribute well to a friendly but purposeful atmosphere where the children feel secure, where self-esteem is enhanced and good learning follows as a result.
18. The quality of teaching in Years 1 to 2 is generally very good with some excellent lessons. In Year 1 the teaching is always very good. Teaching in English, mathematics, science, design and technology and in music is very good. In art, physical education, information and communication technology and in geography it is good, and in history it is satisfactory. The pupils have generally made very good progress in this age range as a result of very well-planned and well-delivered lessons.
19. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is very good overall with nine per cent of lessons being excellent. Teaching is very good in English, mathematics and science, and it is good in all other subjects. Consequently the pupils make very good progress in English, mathematics and science. They all also achieve very well, mainly because of consistently very good teaching and their willingness to learn.
20. Where teaching is very good or excellent there is a sense of excitement, high challenge and a quick pace to learning. In these lessons the pupils are engaged in a range of practical and investigative activities that extend their learning well. This was well illustrated in a Year 2 science lesson on electrical circuits and a Year 6 lesson investigating shape, space and angles. In the science lesson, the pupils were able to meet the challenge because of the teachers' good planning and skilful questioning, which extended their thinking, and because of tasks set to match the needs of different ability groups. Excitement came from choosing equipment and predicting the outcomes when components were linked.
21. Clear explanations are a feature of many lessons and promote learning well. For example, in an excellent Year 4 mathematics lesson, the pupils tackled the difficult concept of grid positions with references to vertical and horizontal axes. This is a challenging concept for young pupils but the teacher's very good strategies, referring to familiar displays such as the 100 number square, enabled them to understand it. In a Year 6 geography lesson the very clear explanation ensured the pupils were left in no doubt about the formation and uses of river systems.
22. The very good teaching provides opportunities for the pupils to work together and pool ideas. Their discussions in these co-operative activities contribute well to their learning. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson about dissecting a flowering plant, they worked very well together using magnifiers to collect and present to their peers information about the function of the stigma and stamen in relation to fertilisation. Similarly very good examples were observed in a Year 1 design and technology lesson and a very good English lesson on changing a non-fiction text into a narrative.

23. Some lessons build effectively on what the pupils have already learned and set challenging targets. For example, in a very good Year 3 music lesson, they built well on their ability to sing simple tunes before exploring pentatonic scales. Another example was observed in a very good Year 5 English lesson where pupils studied a poem, investigating how poetic language and features are used to heighten effect and create mood and tension. By revising their previous two days' work and referring to the model of a story map, they were well able to respond imaginatively and write an effective narrative version in their own words.
24. In the seven per cent of lessons where teaching was satisfactory, explanation sometimes lacked clarity and introductions were lengthy, because of less secure subject knowledge. This resulted in some pupils losing interest and it slowed the rate of learning. For example, in a Year 4 information and communication technology lesson some pupils were unsure about the procedures they should employ to construct a given shape.
25. The quality of learning and the rate with which the pupils acquire new knowledge, skills and understanding are very good in all age ranges. For example, in a Year 4 geography lesson about Kenya, the pupils learned very quickly about the tourist areas and about how Kenya aims to persuade visitors to come to its country. In many lessons the pupils have a good understanding of what is expected of them and discuss what is needed for them to learn. For instance, in a very good Year 4 English lesson, the teacher referred to the week's learning objectives to establish what the class already knew and understood and went on to say what needed to be done to analyse various types of texts that give instructions or explanations: the resulting activities ensured very good learning. Pupils generally sustain concentration and interest very well. This was seen to very good effect in a Year 2 mathematics lesson using multiplication and division operations. Generally, during the majority of lessons, the pupils' intellectual, physical and creative effort is very good and, by the time they leave school, most work well on their own and during collaborative activities.
26. Teachers ensure that pupils from minority ethnic heritages and/or for whom English is an additional language are integrated well into the life of the class. Work is well matched to their needs and there is appropriate support to enable them to access the curriculum. They are encouraged to take an active part in discussion and to apply themselves fully to group work.

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

27. The planned curriculum is effective. There is a good range of learning opportunities and the time available for different aspects of the curriculum is carefully organised and effective. All National Curriculum subjects are taught as well as religious education and the school meets statutory requirements. The school makes very good use of available resources from within and outside the school. There is a detailed programme of personal, social and health education that is closely linked to the religious education scheme of work and reflects the teachings of the Catholic Church. It provides well for personal development and teaches awareness of the misuse of drugs and the effects of bullying and it gives pupils a clear understanding of how to be good citizens. The involvement of the local health authority, the police and fire service in these programmes, in the Junior Citizen Scheme for example, ensures that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues. The governing body is in the process of adopting a long-overdue sex education policy that is based on a successful scheme used in Manchester.



28. There are very strong links with the private, on-site Kindergarten from which children transfer to the Reception class. This ensures they are familiar with staff and pupils before they join the school. Pupils transfer to a number of secondary schools at the end of Year 6, and the school has forged very good curricular links with most of them. Pupils are well prepared socially and academically for the next stage of their education, but there needs to be a more consistent approach to developing their independent research skills to support their learning in subjects such as history and geography. The school does not have a central library where a wide range of non-fiction books would allow pupils the freedom to research topics independently.
29. Curriculum planning is very good, and weaknesses noted in the last inspection have been addressed successfully. Policies and schemes of work in all subjects now guide planning and provide continuity in learning. The structures of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have strengthened provision resulting in a good improvement in standards. Consequently, basic strategies in English and mathematics are now strengths of the curriculum and support learning in other subjects. There is a more consistent emphasis on investigative and experimental science than at the time of the last inspection and this has resulted in raising standards. However, more work still needs to be done to ensure that all teachers give pupils enough time to investigate and experiment independently. Provision for information and communication technology has improved greatly because of teacher training and the development of the suite where basic skills are learnt and applied. Although these are increasingly used to support learning – in mathematics for example – the school recognises the need to give pupils more opportunities to apply them in other subjects across the curriculum.
30. Pupils are offered a good range of extra-curricular opportunities. Football, netball, basketball, athletics, chess and French enrich the curriculum and provide them with opportunities to develop their talents and interests. They appreciate the efforts of teachers and parents who give of their time freely after school and on Saturday mornings. The school and parents recognise the need to look at how these activities are organised so that all those who are interested can take part. The school's very good links with the local community also gives strong support to the curriculum. Visiting speakers are very well used: as, for example, the Story Tent's performance of *Macbeth* for Year 6 pupils and the Quantum Theatre's performance to support learning in science. When parents and grandparents visit classes they give pupils a very good first-hand understanding of their memories of the past. Visits to places of cultural and educational interest, such as Kew Gardens, the Wimbledon Theatre, the Wetlands Centre, Gunnersbury Park Museum and the National Gallery, as well as an annual residential trip for Year 6 pupils, further support the curriculum and broaden pupils' horizons. Good opportunities are provided to take part in sporting events and in dance and music festivals with other schools. This enriches the curriculum and pupils' sense of achievement.
31. A homework policy is in place, clearly setting out a programme to support the curriculum. Most parents report that they are happy with the amount and quality of homework set to support pupils' independent learning and research skills.
32. The governing body's curriculum committee is well informed and meets regularly to monitor, evaluate and review the curriculum with the senior management team and co-ordinators. Each governor is responsible for a subject area and visits the school in order to have first-hand knowledge and understanding of how the curriculum is delivered.

33. There is a very strong commitment to ensuring the integration of all pupils regardless of circumstances or heritage. All pupils are afforded full and equal access to the curriculum. The school successfully meets the needs of those with special educational and physical needs and those who speak English as an additional language or are from a minority ethnic heritage by providing well-trained, high quality support staff. Most teachers use this support well to ensure that all pupils are fully integrated in lessons and included in all aspects of learning. The individual education plans and statements of educational needs are carefully prepared and accurately identify new targets for pupils' development. The school has recently set up a register of gifted and talented pupils and has plans to use the strong links already established with secondary schools to help provide for their specific needs. These are already well met – in mathematics for example, where during some weekly lessons Year 6 are set in ability groups taken by three teachers and where able pupils are encouraged to take part in Maths Challenge competitions and to attend classes organised by the local education authority.
34. Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is generally good. Provision for moral and social development is very good and is a particular strength of the curriculum.
35. The school provides its pupils with a calm, peaceful learning environment that forms a good basis for their spiritual development. Spirituality is nurtured in assemblies, religious education lessons, class masses, and opportunities for reflection and prayer that form part of the school day. In areas of the curriculum such as science, history and English, there are good examples of pupils being encouraged to consider their responses and feelings. Displays of pupils' *Memories* and of poetry describing their thoughts on winter weather show they are given time to think and reflect. In response to this one pupil wrote:
- *On Monday snow fell like foam across the land.*
  - *On Tuesday fog rolled like in like white smoke.*
36. The strong Catholic ethos and the school's aims and Mission Statement, which stress respect for self and for others, provide a very effective focus for moral development. Values are fostered through the caring and supportive relationships that exist between staff and pupils and by the very good example set by the adults who work in the school. The revised behaviour policy and class rules underpin moral development and pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. The importance of truth and justice are communicated through the school's evident concern for them. Pupils are aware of the Gold Awards system, which praises and awards them for their good work and behaviour. They are also aware of the consequences of inappropriate conduct.
37. The school provides very well for pupils' social development. Teachers frequently remind them that they are important members of a community and they must respond to the needs of their peers in a thoughtful way. School council representatives, for example, search for ways to ensure that playtimes and lunchtimes are enjoyable social occasions. Social development is further enhanced by shared assemblies, public performances, the prefect system and opportunities for pupils to take responsibility around the school. They are offered very good opportunities to appreciate and contribute to the local community through their involvement with the parish, through taking part in inter-school activities, public performances for parents and local people and by representation on the *Richmond's schools Pupils' Parliament*. They are also offered many opportunities to contribute to

the wider community through the links with Ayeltige Primary School in Ghana and by



helping a range of charities such as Cancer Research, Sports Relief, Catholic Children's Society, British Heart Foundation and a donation of football shirts to a school in Lesotho. The annual residential trip for older pupils further enhances their social development and sense of independence.

38. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and develop their knowledge of British culture and traditions through learning about Britain's past and through visits to places of cultural interest. The school's commitment to pupils' cultural development is evident in the high quality displays around the building. Pupils are taught to respect all people; all races and backgrounds are very much accepted and included in all aspects of school life.

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

39. There has been an improvement in this area of school life since the last inspection and overall it is good with some very good features. All pupils are very well known by their class teachers and more generally across the school.

Particular strengths of this caring school are:

- the caring environment;
- the promotion of very good behaviour;
- the monitoring and elimination of oppressive behaviour;
- procedures for tracking pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science.

Particular areas identified for development are:

- training for child protection;
- provision of a health and safety policy.

40. The school values all pupils and meets their individual needs through appropriate challenges for those of high ability and support for those with special education needs and those from minority ethnic groups and for whom English is an additional language. Very good planning ensures that work is pitched to suit the range of abilities found in class thus ensuring that all pupils are working to the maximum of their ability. The good provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they have full and equal access to the curriculum and all aspects of school life. The special educational needs co-ordinator has very good links with secondary schools to which these pupils transfer. This helps to ensure a smooth transition and continuity in pupils' learning.
41. Some parents would like pupils experiencing difficulties to be identified earlier. The inspection found procedures are good: teachers and support staff are aware of the different needs of these pupils and, as a result, help them meet the precise targets outlined in their individual education plans and statements. The school fully meets the requirements outlined in pupils' statements of educational needs. It has also drawn up a register of more able pupils, including those who are gifted or talented, and provides for them through challenging teaching and learning opportunities within and outside the school. This initiative is fairly recent and has been instrumental in raising standards.
42. The school has no Health and Safety policy in place although informal procedures are effective. This should be put right as a matter of urgency to protect the school in the unlikely event of an incident. All necessary safeguard procedures are being

undertaken. The caretaker checks the building on a daily basis and, together with

the headteacher, undertakes an in-depth inspection at regular intervals. There has been no recent risk assessment on the building and again this should be undertaken as soon as possible. However, teachers always undertake pre-visit checks before taking children out of school and parents' permission is sought for their children to use the Internet. In lessons, pupils are taken through the health and safety implications of activities where necessary. This was clearly demonstrated in a Year 2 physical education lesson where pupils had to take extra precautions because of the temporarily restricted space in the hall. The school is aware that the child protection policy should be brought up to date as soon as possible and training must be undertaken by key members of staff at the earliest opportunity. The welfare assistants have an in-depth knowledge of those pupils with medical problems and in addition throughout the school provide pupils with a much-appreciated listening ear.

43. The promotion and monitoring of attendance are good and as a result attendance is well above the national average and unauthorised absence is well below.
44. Procedures that support and promote behaviour are very successful, resulting in very good behaviour across the school. Pupils are well managed in the classrooms with teachers insisting on and receiving consistently high standards of conduct. Because of this there is no loss of learning or teaching time and pupils achieve very well. These expectations extend into the playground where pupils play well together and are careful to ensure their play does not cause problems for others. Classes take turns to use the football and netball areas. Younger pupils are separated for their safety and comfort and are extremely well behaved and considerate. As a result, pupils return to their classrooms ready to work having expended their excess energy. Through its Catholic ethos, work in the classroom and re-enforcement in assemblies, the school ensures bullying is kept to a minimum, pupils are very aware that any incidents should be reported to an adult immediately.
45. Personal development has a high priority and is well supported so that the majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agree that the school is helping their children mature and become more responsible. Every effort is made to emphasise the positive aspects of pupils' achievements in taking initiative, of their attitudes to learning, their efforts in the classroom and their academic achievement. These are rewarded through the *house points* system and the *Gold Awards* that are given out weekly in assemblies. Pupils work hard towards these and, as a result, are motivated, they are made to feel secure and valued and they learn very effectively. In lessons, they are encouraged to become independent and pro-active in their learning. They work towards their individual targets in mathematics and English, know how to improve their work to achieve best results and understand the importance of research. This is very apparent in their approach to history and in topic work produced for homework that is very well presented and demonstrates their approach to a variety of information sources. Teachers form a good rapport with pupils by listening to them carefully and valuing their opinions. Because of this pupils work in a supportive learning environment that encourages them to offer opinions without being afraid to make a mistake. They are encouraged to work in pairs and teams and they readily help each other to support learning; this was clearly demonstrated in a Year 3 information and communication technology session.
46. There are good systems in place for the monitoring of academic performance. The school undertakes a regular programme of formal and informal testing including the optional national tests, a commercial reading test and similar spelling tests. This enables it to analyse pupils' progress as individuals, by gender and as part of a learning group such as those with special educational needs, including those who are

gifted or talented, those from a minority ethnic heritage, refugees and those with

English as an additional language. The results are built into the planning process – a good example being the identification of the need to concentrate on writing in Year 3 in order to raise standards to an appropriate level by setting specific work. Pupils are comprehensively tracked from the time they enter the school in the Reception class when they are screened using the local education authority's *infant entry profile*. A profile of work is begun that moves through the school with them showing the standards reached in religious education, mathematics and English. Teachers, all using the same key, keep a day-to-day record of work and use this information to ensure it is kept at an appropriate level and pupils have achieved an appropriate understanding of it. In addition, pupils' understanding is continually assessed during lessons by the use of questions, observation and discussion. Pupils are also encouraged to assess their own work and that of others in such subjects as music and physical education and as a result have a good knowledge of their own learning.

47. Teachers have a very good understanding of the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Regular monitoring ensures they receive appropriate provision and support. Those who joined the school during the last six months participate in all activities and work effectively alongside pupils whose first language is English.

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

48. The last inspection found that the school had satisfactory relationships with parents. Relations have greatly improved and are now generally very good. In response to the questionnaire more than 90 per cent of parents agreed that their children like the school, that they are making good progress, working hard and growing in maturity. They agree that this is the result of good leadership and management allied to good teaching that also results in good behaviour in and around the school. An overwhelming majority would feel comfortable approaching the school, but considerably fewer feel the school works closely with them and keeps them well informed about their child's progress. A similar number are of the opinion that their children are not receiving the right amount of homework. The largest area of disagreement is with the amount of extra curricular provision. However, the inspection team finds that the school makes good provision for pupils in this area. The school works very well with parents and links with parents are good.

49. The particular strengths of the school's partnership with parents include:

- exceptionally informative weekly newsletters;
- very evaluative and informative annual reports to parents;
- parents very good involvement in the life of the school;
- a very effective parents' association.

The two areas for continued development are:

- the daily informal contact between all teachers and parents;
- consultation with parents about major expenditure by the school in line with the principles of best value.

50. The school provides good links with parents. This starts with meeting them before their children begin at the school and the informative brochure provided. The weekly newsletters are very informative, providing an all-round picture of school life. In addition each class teacher provides parents with details of the curriculum to be

followed each term. As a result many parents provide appropriate help at home including visits to suitable museums, galleries or, for example, geographical sites.

51. Overall, information about pupils' progress is very good. Parents see the targets set by teachers at the beginning of each academic year whilst those with children who have special education needs are kept fully informed and involved through review meetings and individual education plans. There are two formal progress meetings held during the year but these inevitably only provide time for the briefest discussion. However, parents especially appreciated the opportunity provided at the end of the last academic year for them to go through their children's work with them and discuss it in detail. The annual reports to parents provide a very knowledgeable and in-depth picture of each pupil's year in the school. They are perceptive and informative and parents are encouraged to respond in writing with their comments. If they feel it necessary, parents can also make an appointment to discuss the report with a teacher.
52. The school conforms to statutory requirements by inviting parents of pupils with special educational needs to discuss proposed changes to individual education plans. Good records are maintained by the special educational needs co-ordinator and she is available to discuss pupils' progress.
53. Parents are very involved and supportive of the school. They help on a regular basis, providing assistance on outside trips, with football coaching on Saturday morning. The parents association are responsible for raising very large sums of money to support the school. In addition, those with particular skills help pupils with relevant areas of the curriculum. Parents are mostly very involved in ensuring their children do the homework expected of them.
54. Parents for whom English is an additional language are fully informed about the life and work of the school and of their children's progress and welfare.

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

55. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is good and the management systems introduced are very good. Leadership and management are very effective overall. In the short time that he has been in post, the headteacher has maintained and further developed a very effective and continually improving school where pupils are eager to learn. At the time of the previous inspection, his predecessor provided effective leadership. The new incumbent is very ably supported by his deputy and by the senior management team. He has a very clear vision for the future development of the school and has gained the full support and commitment of all teaching and non-teaching staff. He leads by example and empowers others to become leaders within their areas of responsibility. All teaching staff are responsible for one or more aspects of improvement and contribute to the school improvement plan.
56. Leadership fully reflects the school's aims and values. It creates a positive climate for learning in which both pupils and staff achieve success. The action taken to meet the school's targets is good. There is a shared commitment to further improvement and the capacity to succeed is very good.
57. Improvements in teachers' planning, in subject knowledge and in assessment procedures and their use have been instrumental in raising standards. All staff identify priorities, set targets for improvement and provide leadership in their areas of responsibility. The school improvement plan identifies areas for development and includes time scales and cost implications. This is to be reviewed and added to as the need arises.

58. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. It has addressed the issues of the previous inspection report in that it has ensured that appraisal takes place and that the work of the school is monitored and evaluated. Its role in financial planning has been further developed. However, now that the decision to teach sex education has been made, the sex education policy under consideration should be introduced as a matter of priority. The governors are very supportive of the school. They have a very good understanding of its strengths and the areas for development and are developing their role in strategic planning, shaping its direction and monitoring its performance. The headteacher works closely with the governing body and provides regular detailed reports for governing body. Governors have individual responsibility for liaising with the school regarding National Curriculum subjects or aspects of teaching. They have established the necessary committees to assist them in their work and each of these keeps the full governing body fully informed through written reports. There is a racial equality policy and the governors are in the process of producing the required plan to ensure the buildings and grounds are fully accessible to adults and pupils with physical disabilities.
59. The management provided by the headteacher and key staff is very good. The issues of the last inspection report have been addressed. Throughout the school, there is now full coverage of the programmes of study for information and communication technology, art and design and for design and technology. The role of the senior management team has been developed in order to identify curriculum and resourcing priorities and to monitor and evaluate progress towards the achievement of these targets. There are policies and schemes of work for all subjects, all co-ordinators have been allocated time to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects. There are increased opportunities for pupils to take greater responsibility in the daily life of the school, but in some instances there remains the need for pupils to exercise greater responsibility and initiative in the curriculum.
60. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the senior management team are fully involved in strategic planning, in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and in taking effective action. The governing body aims to become increasingly involved. The monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom by the headteacher, the senior management team and local education authority personnel has proved very effective in raising standards in teaching and learning. This has now been largely devolved to co-ordinators who, through their performance management targets, are beginning to take an increasingly active role in monitoring teaching and learning in the classroom. As they develop this skill, standards in the foundation subjects should begin to rise above national expectations. Improved planning ensures that pupils' learning builds on what they already know, what they understand and what they can do. This has led to a very good improvement in teaching since the last inspection.
61. There are good procedures for reviewing the performance of the headteacher and other staff. With the support of an external advisor, the governing body appraises the work of the headteacher and sets performance targets for him. Together with the senior management team, he appraises teachers' work. Teaching assistants, some of whom are very well qualified, participate in training and development opportunities and have developed their expertise in managing initiatives in literacy and numeracy. They give valuable support to pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. There is a very good programme of induction for new teachers and assistants and a comprehensive and informative staff handbook. The school is very involved in the training of student teachers, to the mutual benefit of itself and the trainees. The associate tutor on the staff, ably



supported by class teachers, provides very good support for trainees and secondary school pupils on work experience.

62. The management of special educational needs is good and is a significant factor in the very good progress made by those who benefit from it. The co-ordinator is ably supported by class teachers, trained teaching assistants and external agencies. The school fulfils its legal responsibilities in special educational needs. The governor who oversees this area is well informed and liaises with the co-ordinator on a regular basis. The secondary school to which pupils transfer is worked with closely in order to ensure the smooth transition of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Limited space means that the special educational needs co-ordinator does not have a specific room in which to work with groups and keep her records and resources.
63. The school is equally successful in addressing the needs of the whole range of pupils. Teachers are developing skills in extending pupils' thinking through the use of focused questioning and the provision of extension work. The school is aware of the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their higher order skills through open-ended investigative work.
64. The governors, headteacher and staff actively endeavour to promote equal opportunities for personal and academic development and achievement. This is a significant factor in the very good progress made by all pupils. Resources are vetted for bias. Pupils play an active role in the ongoing development of the school through their involvement in the formation of personal targets, class rules, the school council and areas of responsibility.
65. Educational priorities are supported very well through financial planning. Very good use is made of new technology in managing the budget and keeping track of pupil data and progress. All expenditure is budgeted for systematically. The administrative officer, ably supported by the administrative assistant, manages the school office very efficiently and extends a warm welcome to visitors. Finances are managed effectively. Issues highlighted in the most recent audit report have been addressed. There is close liaison with the governing body and the school has ready access to outside expertise in managing its finances. The budget process is managed efficiently and the headteacher keeps the governors fully informed of spending levels. The strategic use of resources, including specific funds to support educational priorities such as special educational needs, is good. The headteacher and governors do not fully apply the principles of best value to ensure efficient use is made of all resources. However, they recently purchased computers and moved the Reception class to a self-contained building with an attached outdoor play area, which is a significant improvement to the school's facilities. The governors and staff have a strategic overview, and the school's priorities for development are very well thought out. The governors allocate and agree funds to support the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. Financial reports show careful analysis of spending against aims. The large carry forward is to enable the staffing levels to be maintained on the occasions when the number of pupils on roll drops.
66. The matching of teaching and support staff to the curriculum is very good. The level of staffing is appropriate and there is a good balance of experienced and younger teachers. Teachers are appropriately qualified and training and support have been provided where gaps exist in their expertise. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively; they make a good contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. All staff, including lunchtime assistants, make an active contribution to the school's development and the very good relationships that prevail. The staff who look after the school play a significant role in creating a clean and attractive environment for learning.



67. Accommodation is satisfactory: as soon as is practicable, the school is keen to establish a central library in order that pupils might more fully develop their library and research skills. Regular checks are made on the buildings and grounds to ensure everyone's safety but there is no Health and Safety Policy.
68. Overall, resources for learning are satisfactory: adequate in most subjects and good in music and art. They are readily accessible and are used well to support learning. The corridor library is not adequate for teaching library skills to a whole class. Resources in information and communication technology are adequate and this has helped to raise standards. Resources are used well at lunchtimes.
69. The school ensures that all pupils for whom English is an additional language feel welcome and secure. Every effort is made to fully integrate them into school life and pride is taken in their success in learning English.

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

70. This school has no significant weaknesses and the following minor issues are for the consideration of the governing body, headteacher and staff to help them continue to sustain and improve the existing high standards.
1. Plan more regular opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning by:
    - using information and communication technology more frequently to support learning in other subjects;
    - establishing a centralised library as soon as possible to give pupils the opportunity to research in a suitable environment. (paras:28,29,59,62,91,103 and 127)
  2. As a matter of priority, introduce the sex education policy, which is under consideration, in order to complete the arrangements for pupils' personal development. (paras:27 and 28)
  3. Complete a Health and Safety Policy and update child protection procedures including staff training. (paras:39,42 and 67)
  4. Use the principles of best value more thoroughly in all major financial transactions to ensure good value for money is achieved. (paras:49 and 65)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	29	20	4	0	0	0
Percentage	9	50	34	7	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 almost two percentage points.

### 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)	N/a	237
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	42

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	20	20	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	28	20
	Girls	18	17	19
	Total	36	35	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (100)	88 (100)	98 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	20	20
	Girls	19	19	20
	Total	37	39	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (100)	98 (97)	100 (100)
	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	12	13	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	23	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (96)	96 (89)	96 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	11	12
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	24	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	96 (93)	92 (82)	98 (93)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

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

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

<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
154	0	0
6	0	0
14	0	0
6	0	0
1	0	0
11	0	0
13	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
21	0	0

*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

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

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.47
Average class size	24.2

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

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	62

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a
Total number of education support staff	N/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/a

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/2002
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	646,027
Total expenditure	638,827
Expenditure per pupil	2,495
Balance brought forward from previous year	76,067
Balance carried forward to next year	83,267



Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/a
--------------------------------	-----

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.61
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.81
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

#### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	237
Number of questionnaires returned	86

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	28	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	35	6	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	63	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	49	17	1	0
The teaching is good.	50	41	5	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	45	16	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	38	7	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	30	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	36	44	15	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	60	33	2	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	34	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	48	19	5	6



## **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**

71. The arrangements for children in Reception are good and they achieve very well. There has been a very good improvement in provision since the previous inspection. The school has successfully adopted the Foundation Stage curriculum, which has been very well modified to suit the good academic standard that children have achieved on entry. Most are transferred from the Sacred Heart Kindergarten, which is a private nursery on the same site as the school. Reception has been moved into a classroom that better suits this age group with a small, separate, protected playground. This improvement in accommodation has improved the provision for physical development, which was a weakness in the previous inspection.
72. Children are admitted to Reception in the term in which they are five. Some younger ones are part-time until they are ready for the full day. This means that children born in summer get a shorter period in Reception than those born during the school year. The school takes this into account very effectively in its planning and organisation, often giving different activities and more opportunities for constructive play to the younger, less mature children. Older ones enjoy a more challenging academic environment which the teacher and her assistant carefully plan. The very effective monitoring of children's progress when they join Reception, using a commercial computer program, enables each child to be tested using as the basis for the test the Early Learning Goals, identified in the Foundation Stage curriculum. This procedure gives the teacher a very good idea of children's standards and the best approach towards challenging them. The children are tested again when they leave Reception to see what they have achieved, and this useful information is passed on to Year 1.
73. The very good management of Reception means children achieve very well and the majority exceed the standards identified in the Early Learning Goals. They are very articulate and all can read or write to a good extent by the time they reach Year 1. For example, one high attaining five-year-old boy is successfully reading books aimed at pupils of nine-ten years of age. At present, there are no children identified with special educational needs. At this early stage of learning, all children, including those from minority ethnic heritage, are fully integrated and there is no discernible difference in their progress. The very few children at the early stages of learning English as an additional language are fully supported during lessons.

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

74. By the time children start Reception they are well adjusted to school life. Standards are good and similar to the previous inspection. The very good teaching encourages them to be independent. For example, most can undress and dress themselves for physical education although some need help to tie their ties. They choose what activity they are going to do in the classroom or outside. Older children show exceptionally good powers of concentration: they listen intently to the teacher and are confident and articulate in their response to questions. They play together very well, are respectful of each other and work well collaboratively. For example, the plates of healthy food they have prepared as part of a topic on *knowledge and understanding of the world* are handed round sensibly. Two girls politely enquired what the inspector was doing in the classroom and engaged him in some detailed conversation about what they were doing in the lesson. Without exception, children are well behaved and

have a strong sense of what is right and wrong. They sometimes point this out to the teacher.

## Communication, language and literacy

75. Standards are good and similar to the previous inspection. Most children are articulate and responsive and are able to hold a conversation with adults and with each other. They are curious and will frequently ask questions if they are not clear about a topic. A particular feature is their high level of self-confidence and self-esteem. This means that they contribute fully to discussions and enjoy expressing their ideas to an audience. For example, in a very effective lesson following up some work with a big reading book about *Herb the Vegetarian Dragon* children explained clearly how they had grouped the various jewels (coloured counters) in order to count them accurately. Skilful encouragement by teacher, who values all contributions, helps them build their confidence to speak. Great care is taken to integrate all children into activities and in one instance a little girl who recently arrived from overseas was helped by adults saying words like *frog spawn* and *conservation area* to increase her vocabulary. The very good teaching ensures children have the skills to sound out letters in order to enable them to tackle reading; all know that books are read from left to right and most can read by the time they reach Year 1 – often fluently and with little adult help. Similarly the very good teaching of writing skills, with frequent opportunities for children to practise, means that all can write: either copying the teacher or writing independently. One high attaining pupil wrote: *the sun is on the flower* with correct spelling and punctuation.

## Mathematical development

76. Standards are above those expected for their age and children achieve very well, frequently achieving the early learning goals in this area early in the year. This is similar to the previous inspection. For example, they showed an interest in numbers and counting when they grouped the coloured counters that represented the gold and jewels hoarded by a dragon in a story they were reading. They worked out that the most effective way to count was by grouping the twenty counters into four sets of five counters of the same colour. Many children can count numbers beyond twenty and all are secure in their knowledge of numbers to ten and readily count backwards and forwards. They use words such as *longer* and *shorter* when measuring using bricks or modelling clay and they understand the concept of *more* or *less* when comparing one pile of bricks with another. They say *I am making a big model* when constructing with card and glue and compare the sizes of what they have made with their friends: *my model is smaller than yours*. They match shapes when they play with jigsaw puzzles and can log on to the computer program to play a counting game. The quality of teaching is very good: teachers use various home-made resources to help promote learning – laminated measuring boards, for example, and number cards. The teacher and her assistant encourage children to talk about their activities and explain what they are doing.

## Knowledge and understanding of the world

77. Standards in this aspect are above expectations and are similar to the previous inspection. For example, children know that a seed will grow when it is planted, but only if it gets light and water, and that it will become a flower. Most can read the words *sun*, *seed*, *soil* and *pot*. They plan the process of planting, identifying elements by cutting out pictures of the sequence of events and putting them into order. Higher attainers write about what they are doing. They are intensely curious and discuss why one plant grows taller than another. At the end of the lesson they all go on to plan how to plant their own individual seed and what they need to do to ensure it thrives after planting. They construct a wide range of objects using glue

and scissors with care and dexterity. They have a sense of self as they discuss their news and think about themselves in relation to others such as their mother and father or brother and sister. They have a sense of past and present and will talk about *yesterday* and *tomorrow* as in: *tomorrow it is my birthday*. They are confident in using the computer and logging on to the program they want to use and many have the use of a computer at home to develop this skill. The very good teaching develops their understanding and gives them a wide range of opportunities to explore their own immediate environment and the natural world around them. The high quality dialogue between the teacher and the children follows up the practical work done and promotes very good achievement in this area.

### **Physical development**

78. This is much improved since the previous inspection and is above the standards expected for the pupil's age, mostly because they now have a small, exclusive, well-equipped playground that enables regular physical development. They move freely around it showing good spatial awareness. They persevere when they have a new piece of challenging apparatus until they have mastered it. For example, one child tried a new type of trolley, which was propelled by peddling foot plates up and down. Although he fell off a couple of times, he brushed himself down and kept trying until he had acquired this new technique. In physical education lessons, all children change into their physical education kit quickly, mostly unaided. They warm up by moving round the hall, vigorously but safely. They move rhythmically to the tambourine and stretch or curl in different ways, making patterns with their bodies. They move very well collaboratively, making shapes that require them to work closely together. Most can hop or jump effectively.
79. They understand that some foods are better for you than others and know that they should wash their hands before preparing food. They use scissors and knives safely and dextrously. They know many movements to songs. For example, they imitate the action of sowing the seed as they sing a hymn about the farmer coming to do that. Teaching is very good and the teacher and her assistant work together closely to make sure that children have physical challenge and many opportunities to develop their skills.

### **Creative development**

80. This has improved since the previous inspection and achievement in this aspect is above the standard expected for the children's age. They make complex models using various materials and building-bricks, use their pencils and paint brushes with dexterity and their pictures of people often show details such as ears and hair. Many have very good pencil control and this contributes to their ability to write clearly. They enjoy working individually or collaboratively, as they did, for example, when producing a large frieze for Harvest Festival and making tissue paper flowers to decorate it. They enjoy participating in musical activities and sing in two-part harmony when joined by other classes for hymn practice. They move rhythmically to the music and sing in tune, often with movements that illustrate the words. For example, they flutter their fingers to show rain as they sing about it. Invariably, the quality of teaching is very good. Teachers provide a good range of resources such as paint, various types of card and oil pastels. Children are given many opportunities to demonstrate their creative skills and constant interaction extends their learning. They have opportunities to illustrate written work by drawing and colouring pictures for example, of plants growing.

## ENGLISH

81. The good standards by Year 2 have been maintained since the previous inspection and have improved to be well above average by Year 6. In speaking and listening and in reading, standards at the end of Year 2 are above the national average; in writing they match it. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress from their prior attainment and achieve very well. Boys performed better than girls in 2002 and over the last three years. However, there are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls at present. In 2002, 90 per cent of pupils achieved the national standard in reading and 88 per cent in writing. In reading, 50 per cent achieved the higher Level 3 compared with 30 per cent nationally and in writing 15 per cent, compared with nine per cent nationally. These results were well above the national average. Compared to the previous three years there was a slight drop in standards in 2002. The relative fall in standards in writing, which is similar to that found nationally, is being addressed. There has, however, been very good improvement in pupils' progress and achievement since the last inspection because of the very good improvement in teaching.
82. By the end of Year 6, standards seen in English are well above national expectations in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Boys achieved significantly higher than girls in 2002 and over the last three years have consistently achieved better than girls although both sexes achieve above the national average. This gap narrows between Year 2 and Year 6, but such differences result from the composition of the groups taking the tests and there are no significant differences in performance at present. In 2002, 92 per cent of pupils achieved the national standard in English, with 76 per cent achieving the higher Level 5. This compares with 29 per cent nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make very good progress and achieve very well.
83. In Year 2, standards in speaking and listening observed during the inspection are above those expected and are well above this mark in Year 6. Pupils listen very carefully to each other and to adults and they respond well to questions and discussions. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson when these skills were used to assess how well they and others had understood Rudyard Kipling's poem, *The Smugglers* and which group read it to the class most expressively. The good use of questioning by most teachers and their expectation that all pupils will actively contribute towards discussion encourages the more reluctant speakers to participate fully. During daily reading sessions, pupils experience a wide variety of carefully selected material, which provides a range of contexts for formal and informal speech. There are planned opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills during class discussions and in paired and grouped activities and there is a strong emphasis on the use of subject-specific vocabulary in all areas.
84. Standards in reading are above those expected in Year 2 and well above this in Year 6. The termly assessments of pupils' reading ages and the use of the results to inform planning have a positive effect on standards. The use of a structured reading scheme in the early stages of reading is helpful, as are regular, focused reading sessions. A consistent approach to the teaching of letter sounds is beneficial and most pupils use a range of strategies to help them to read unfamiliar words. The books in the school library and those loaned from the Richmond School Library Service are fully used. In Years 3 to 6, research and referencing skills are taught well, despite the fact that the school lacks a room to house all its library books. Years 3 to 6 make some use of the Internet for research. Year 6 are becoming proficient in taking notes and skimming and scanning books for information: as, for



example, when they scanned the text of *The Bermuda Triangle* to distinguish between *fact* and *opinion*. Gifted, talented pupils and higher achievers are able to appraise texts quickly and effectively. Using inference and deduction, they are beginning to analyse how mood, feelings and attitudes are conveyed. Many have personal preferences for authors and types of text. Most read regularly at home and parents of younger pupils are very supportive in regularly hearing them do this. In addition, several parents come into school to hear pupils read in Years 1 to 3.

85. Standards in writing meet those expected in Year 2 and are well above this in Year 6. The school's focus on writing and its regular assessment are having a positive effect on raising achievement. Planned opportunities for writing in some other subjects are proving particularly beneficial, but this practice is not consistent in all classes. During the inspection week, progression in pupils' learning from one year group to the next was very evident. Pupils in Year 1 developed their understanding of poetry and read aloud fluently and expressively. Year 2 demonstrated their understanding of *Yeh Shen*, a traditional Chinese tale. They noted that the story was very similar to *Cinderella* and this helped them to realise that various cultures often have more similarities than differences. Year 3 pupils went one step further and wrote a traditional tale. Year 4 demonstrated yet further progression in their analysis and writing of instructional texts. Year 5 learnt the difference between literal and figurative language, as revealed in Alfred Noyes' poem, *The Highwayman*, while Year 6 showed their competence in changing this poem into their own words. This good development of knowledge, skills and understanding shows that the National Literacy Strategy is having a very positive influence on standards.
86. The school places strong emphasis on spelling. From Reception onwards, letter sounds are taught systematically. By the end of Year 2, most pupils spell many common monosyllabic words accurately and make good attempts at spelling longer words by sounding them out. The learning of weekly spellings and the termly assessment of pupils' spelling ages have a positive effect on standards. By the end of Year 6, there is clear evidence of the accurate use of a range of spelling patterns on the part of most pupils and many of their vocabulary choices are adventurous and effective. There is the potential for more use of information and communication technology in the younger classes in order to reinforce correct spelling and to improve writing.
87. The National Literacy Strategy provides the structure for the progressive development of reading, writing and spelling skills. Investment in a range of good quality resources for the literacy hour has helped teachers to deliver the elements of the strategy very effectively. Following national guidance, early literacy support is very effectively provided in Year 1, additional literacy support in Years 3 and 4 and, in Year 5, further literacy support for those who need it. Pupils are encouraged to transfer their reading, writing and spelling skills to other areas of the curriculum and do so very effectively. Marking is generally good and indicates the next steps for further improvement. Literacy is very well developed in a wider sense. For example, pupils take part in debates and school productions and in *Readathons* to raise money for charity. It contributes well to pupils' spiritual development through their appreciation of the writings of others and the expression of their own thoughts and feelings in speech and writing. Class discussions, and group and paired work, aid social development. Moral issues are considered effectively as they arise and the study of texts from a range of countries and cultures significantly enhances pupils' awareness of other cultures.

88. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The strengths of teaching lie in the effectiveness of planning, the very good emphasis on the teaching of basic skills, teachers' very high expectations, the good quality of ongoing assessment and very good class management. These inspire pupils to apply intellectual and creative effort to their work. They are highly motivated, interested and enthusiastic and they concentrate fully. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make very good progress and achieve very well. Their acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills is very good and they also have a very good knowledge of their own learning. Most pupils with special educational needs achieve at least the level expected for their age although some of these would simply be regarded as lower attainers in schools with lower standards. Time and resources are used well and teaching assistants provide valuable support to pupils experiencing difficulties. Regular homework is used well to consolidate and extend the work in the lesson.
89. The curriculum is enriched by book weeks, visits to theatres and visiting authors and poets. Procedures for the formal and informal assessment of attainment and progress are very good and assessment information is used very well to guide curriculum planning. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring pupils' subject performance. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and learning in the classroom, teachers' planning and all aspects of pupils' work very effectively.
90. Leadership and management of English are very good. The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and gives very good support to colleagues. She has produced a clear and helpful policy, and has a very strong commitment to raising achievement. Her leadership displays very clear educational direction. She encourages the application of literacy skills in other subjects. She has established very effective whole-school systems, which reflect the school's aims and values and ensure that there is a strong emphasis on basic skills and equality of access and opportunity for all.
91. Areas for future development include providing more regular opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take more responsibility for their own learning, establishing a central library as soon as is practicable in order to develop library and research skills and using information and communication technology more widely to develop the sounding out of words and other skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

92. The good standards identified at the time of the last inspection have been well maintained for pupils at the end of Year 2 and have been improved for pupils at the end of Year 6, who now attain standards well above those expected for their age. In lessons, the inspection found no difference between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils enter Year 1 with good levels of attainment in mathematical development and achieve very well as they move through the school. A measure of the school's success is that most pupils identified as having special educational needs attain expected standards at the end of Year 6, although some of them would probably be regarded as mainstream pupils in schools that don't have such high standards. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully in place since 1999 and many features, such as the mental sessions and the discussions of strategies, are securely embedded and are having a strong impact on standards of attainment.

93. The overall quality of teaching is very good with little significant difference between the standards of teaching in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Work in pupils' books, and the quality of their answers in lessons, indicate that they are receiving very good teaching throughout each year group. Common features of all lessons are:

- detailed planning;
- teachers' secure subject knowledge, which allows them to teach the basic skills very well;
- the very good management of behaviour because of positive relationships.

As a result, pupils are interested in their work, behave very well and work hard. The pace of teaching is generally brisk, and because lessons are carefully structured so that pupils' interest is maintained, there is a very good balance between direct teaching and independent learning. However, in lessons that are otherwise satisfactory, the pace of learning slows when, after a stimulating mental session, the class teacher spends too much time explaining tasks rather than challenging pupils to discover what needs to be done. Where teaching is good or better, teachers rigorously challenge pupils as they work on group or individual tasks. An example of this was seen in an excellent Year 4 lesson where pupils employed their knowledge of co-ordinates by locating and drawing shapes on a grid. This was a brisk and challenging mental session, which moved smoothly into a brief, but effective and highly stimulating, whole class question-and-answer session on co-ordinates. Adults supporting the class teacher had been very well-briefed and were well prepared, resulting in no time being wasted as they moved on to supported group tasks where the pace of learning continued to be maintained. The excellent relationships and expectations resulted in impeccable behaviour and an obvious joy in learning.

94. Impressive work was seen throughout the school in number work and its application, which are central to National Curriculum and National Numeracy Strategy requirements. Throughout, there is a strong emphasis on mental computation. All pupils benefit from regular practice at the start of lessons and their understanding of mental strategies is well developed. Pupils in all classes have a good instant recall of number facts. In most lessons, teachers ensure that everybody is fully involved in the mental sessions and they use classroom assistants and volunteer helpers well to ensure the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. However, in a few lessons, during whole class sessions, teachers do not use this rich resource effectively even though some pupils are seen to struggle when they are not supported. The very good relationships that exist between all members of the school community gives pupils of differing attainment the confidence to offer answers and to ask questions, secure in the knowledge that they will be appreciated. Teachers check each answer quickly, allowing all pupils to answer, using an effective range of resources such as *number fans*, *digit cards*, *fraction walls*, *100 squares* and whiteboards. In these lessons, questions are carefully targeted to challenge all pupils at a level appropriate to their abilities. Teachers are generally aware of the need to challenge all pupils to answer rather than accepting only the answers of those who volunteer. In all lessons, boys and girls work well together, regardless of ability.

95. Pupils develop a good understanding of the number system and of place value. Most pupils in Year 2 are beginning to understand the place value of digits and to sequence numbers to 100. They use this knowledge well to add, subtract, multiply and divide. In a very good Year 2 lesson, they made capable use of their basic knowledge to understand that if  $5 \times 3 = 15$  then  $15$  divided by  $3 = 5$ . All were fully

included in learning division because the class teacher has taught them to use the strategy: *when in doubt, draw it out*. When dividing 20 by five, pupils who were not as clear about the process drew five groups of 4. By the end of the lesson, all had gained a good grasp of basic division and higher attainers went on to divide larger numbers, including those with remainders. Pupils in Year 1 were also making very good progress in learning about money problems because the class teacher made use of her knowledge of pupils' abilities in order to set appropriate tasks and to target prepared support well. As a result, by the end of the lesson, all pupils could find ways of grouping coins to pay for items up to 5p whilst higher attainers could group coins to make 9p and beyond. In well-devised tasks, the use of real money stimulated interest further.

96. Guided by very good quality teaching, by the end of Year 6 most pupils make good use of their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by 10, 100 and 1000 and they devise efficient strategies to quickly work out the number of minutes in an hour and a half, the number of 50ps in £9.00 and the squares and square roots of various numbers. Work in books show that they calculate fractional and percentages of quantities and they understand that  $0.65 = \frac{65}{100} = 65$  per cent. Because teachers provide them with interesting tasks such as measuring temperature, they also gain a good understanding of negative numbers. Throughout the school there is a consistent approach to teaching pupils the correct mathematical vocabulary: by the end of Year 6, pupils show that they understand situations by describing them mathematically using symbols, words and diagrams. In a very good Year 3 lesson, for example, the teacher used very effective strategies to challenge the class to develop and use the correct terminology when dealing with fractions. As a result, pupils gained a very good understanding of numerator and denominator as they worked on interesting tasks on the relationship between different fractions such as  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$ , and  $\frac{1}{8}$ . The class teacher and the support assistant made very good use of fraction games to consolidate pupils' learning and their acquisition of the correct mathematical terminology.
97. A special feature of the teaching of strategies for adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing, is that formal methods are only introduced when pupils, through using a wide range of methods, have a good understanding of their purpose. Pupils in Year 5, for example, learn to use efficient methods to add  $2034 + 5398$  and to subtract  $5649 - 762$  in columns using a standard technique called *exchange* only when they have experienced and used their own informal strategies for doing so. In some Year 6 lessons during the week, pupils are set in three ability groups. An excellent lesson of this kind was seen where the three teachers took full advantage of the small number of pupils of similar abilities in each group, teaching rigorously at a suitable, but very challenging, level.
98. All aspects of mathematics are given due consideration. Pupils gain a very good understanding of shape and measure and find areas of a range of shapes using formulae. Recent improvements in information and communication technology have provided them with opportunities to develop their data handling skills in meaningful ways across the curriculum. However, more work needs to be done in this respect. Most pupils, by the end of Year 6, collect separate data and use a table to represent them, while higher attainers go on to explain the conclusions demonstrated by graphs and diagrams – including pie charts.
99. Throughout the school, teachers are well focussed on what they want their pupils to learn. Learning objectives are clear and precise and are shared with pupils in order that they too can focus on their learning. Lessons end with a good final session,

which gives pupils an understanding of what they have learnt. This also allows

teachers to evaluate their lessons in the light of what pupils have, or have not, understood. Assessment information is very well used to plan work for different groups. Work is marked regularly and most teachers are successful in showing pupils how they can improve: either through positive feedback in lessons, or by written comments in their exercise books. Pupils' very good numeracy skills make a good contribution to their learning in other subjects, such as science, design and technology and geography.

100. The management of mathematics is very good. The subject is conscientiously led by a well-informed co-ordinator. She has successfully monitored lessons, which since the last inspection has led to the improved teaching. National and optional tests are closely analysed to identify any weaknesses in provision or to identify any groups of pupils who might be underachieving. There are good procedures in place for monitoring pupils' progress and for setting realistic but challenging targets for individuals. There is a satisfactory range of resources to support teaching and learning and these are well managed. Teaching assistants are well trained; they are efficiently prepared and used well to provide very good support to learning. Teachers make good use of homework to consolidate what pupils have learnt in class.

## SCIENCE

101. By the end of Year 2, standards in science are above the national average, and by the end of Year 6 they are well above. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. In the 2002 Year 2 teacher assessments, the results were very high in comparison to schools nationally. The National Curriculum test results for Year 6 pupils in the same year indicate that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level, or above it, was well above the national average. Since the last inspection the trend in the Year 6 National Curriculum test results has been improving but not as quickly as nationally so that although standards remain higher than the national average the gap between this school and others has narrowed. A strong feature of science is the very good factual knowledge and understanding which the pupils acquire throughout the school and then apply successfully to given questions.
102. A very good assessment system and satisfactory target setting ensures that the needs of all the pupils are met. Their progress in relation to prior attainment is very good. As a result of very good teaching, positive attitudes and a willingness to learn, they also achieve well over periods of time. Development of their scientific skills, knowledge and understanding is very good.
103. By the end of Year 2, pupils know that light comes from a variety of sources including the sun. They explain well, in simple accurate terms how force makes things speed up, slow down or change direction: this was noted in an analysis of Year 2 work. Higher-attaining pupils clearly explain the classification of materials, for example dividing them into wood, metal or plastic; they vividly illustrate how materials change when heated, cooled or are added to another substance. For example, in discussion with an inspector they explained clearly the process of changing a solid to a liquid by heating chocolate. They talk readily about seasonal changes and explain clearly that sounds get fainter as the person travels away from the source, and that plants and animals adapt to their environment, as observed in samples of their work. Years 1 and 2 set up experiments accurately and know what constitutes a fair test. However, the opportunity for independent investigative work is sometimes limited by following a closed set of instructions on a worksheet.

104. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts, including representation of circuits in drawings and diagrams and balanced and unbalanced forces. They use precise scientific names for the skeleton, major body organs and the function of the solar system; this was noted during an analysis of a sample of Year 6 work. They discriminate successfully between solids, liquids and gases, and accurately determine which changes are reversible, which are not, and what constitutes a soluble and insoluble substance. They predict, test and record their findings, thus reinforcing literacy and numeracy skills. For example, in an experiment about conditions for growing plants, Year 3 pupils outlined in detail the process for fair testing in relation to water, soil and light. During experiments they begin to understand the process of filtration, as in a Year 6 presentation about separating mud from water. The pupils in Year 5 know that force is measured in *Newtons* and higher and average attainers sensibly discuss how day and night occur in relation to the Earth and sun. In work about life processes and living things, creatures such as carnivores, herbivores and omnivores are classified accurately. Older pupils understand about the part played by evaporation, condensation and precipitation in the water cycle, and record their work in a variety of ways, including graphs and tables to represent their findings. All build well on their knowledge as they get older. For example, in Year 1, they examine roots and the conditions for growing seeds. This is developed further in Year 6 as they study the life cycle of flowering plants and seed dispersal. In discussion, a group of Year 6 pupils explain clearly how pitch or resonance changes when plucking guitar strings of varying length or when tapping wood blocks of different sizes.
105. The pupils' attitude to science is very good, especially when they are motivated to sustain concentration. This was particularly noticeable in a Year 6 lesson where, during an experiment in dissecting flowering plants, they talked animatedly about pollination and fertilisation and discriminated between the two. They listen attentively to each other and to the teacher and work well both independently and collaboratively, as observed in a Year 2 lesson about constructing electrical circuits. They enjoy lessons and as a result of the teachers' good questioning skills the majority answer thoughtfully, as witnessed in a Year 1 lesson on studying the differences between living and non-living things. However, only the higher attainers seek to extend their knowledge independently or show the curiosity needed to understand the process more fully. In all the lessons observed the pupils were very well behaved, showing respect to adults and peers alike.
106. Teaching is very good overall, and one lesson was excellent. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. In all cases, the teachers' very good scientific knowledge and consistent planning in the parallel year groups help them to set clear learning objectives for each lesson. When the objectives are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons and their success is evaluated during and at the end, good progress ensues for all. Pupils are routinely required to discuss their methods and justify their conclusions. This engages their mental processes and deepens their thinking. For example, in a Year 5 lesson a group of average attainers discussed knowledgeable how and why they had selected different sloping surfaces of similar lengths and gradients to measure the effects of gravity and friction on a moving object. There is very good balance between discussion, practical and written work which ensures that the pupils know what is expected of them and how they can improve. This was exemplified very well in a Year 2 lesson on discovering how a simple electrical circuit is constructed. As a result of these challenging tasks, matched well to the pupils' needs, learning is consistently very good. The teachers use probing questioning very effectively to expand their thinking; this was seen to good effect in a Year 6 lesson on dissecting flowering plants. Good use is made of

recalling previous work done to establish current knowledge and understanding, to



highlight discoveries and reinforce key learning points, as observed in a Year 1 lesson on distinguishing between living and non-living things. The management of the very small number of less motivated pupils is very effective and teachers are unfailingly polite but firm. They do not tolerate behaviour that might disrupt the learning of others. Pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language are supported well. Teaching assistants work frequently with these pupils to ensure that they have a good understanding and are able to contribute effectively to the lesson. Overall, marking is good; it is often evaluative, especially in the older classes and helps the pupils to understand how they can improve.

107. The conscientious and enthusiastic co-ordinator manages the subject very effectively. She provides very good support for all her colleagues. The regular assessment system, together with rigorous analytical procedures, ensures the successful development of the subject. End-of-topic tests are used very well to plan for the next stage of the learning. Monitoring includes moderation of the work as well as lesson observations with verbal and written feedback to teachers. A detailed policy and comprehensive scheme of work are in place. The resources to support teaching and learning are generally satisfactory; they are maintained well and are easily accessible to pupils and teachers.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

108. The standards achieved by the time pupils reach Year 2 and Year 6 are above those expected for pupils' age and they achieve very well. This is a significant improvement from the previous inspection when standards were below average. All groups achieve very well, including those with special educational needs. This is a subject in which they can often operate on an equal footing with their peers. Pupils from a minority ethnic heritage bring a different dimension to art and design and achieve very well. For example, one pupil from the Far East in Year 6 showed great sensitivity and skill in painting a still-life of flowers in an oriental style.
109. Although no lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2, displays and samples of work show there is a very good progressive development of skills as pupils move through the school. They use a sketchbook effectively, in which they often experiment, drawing and designing before producing a finished piece of work. By Year 3, they produce detailed designs to decorate masks using fabric, beads and sequins to make very ornate and decorative pieces. They illustrate written work on winter weather with some good prints of fir trees in a winter scene. By Year 4, they develop a good understanding of perspective when they draw a picture of the scene from the school playground. Although none were seen during the inspection, they have the opportunity to work in three-dimensional materials – such as modelling clay – to produce sculptures of figures. A particular strength is the range of artists that pupils research. For example, there are examples of pupils studying the work of Klee, Miro, Braque, Matisse, Picasso, and Hockney. In discussion, pupils are knowledgeable about the work of these artists and there are many good examples of paintings in their style. In particular the work in Year 6 is sometimes of exceptional quality. The work in the style of JS Lowry, for example, shows great sensitivity and an understanding his unique style, reproduced most effectively. Information and communication technology is employed in art and design using commercial paint programs but is rather under-represented as a technique.
110. The quality of teaching ranges from good to excellent and is generally very good. In a good Year 4 outdoor sketching lessons, the teacher was effective in showing pupils how to keep the perspective needed to make a drawing of the outside area

and to make it look realistic. She developed their observational skills by pointing out when they were drawing from memory rather than observation. The management of pupils was very good and they remained on task for a long period: really enjoying the activity and learning well. In a very good Year 5 lesson, the teacher introduced the technique of collage, pointing out that it involves the application of different materials to make a picture. She showed the work of Picasso and Braque, concentrating in particular on one piece called *Opened by Customs* by George Braque and giving pupils the concept of expressing their ideas indirectly in an abstract collage. This was reinforced by showing Picasso's work *Violin with Fruit and Still-Life with Guitar*. The teacher built on the very good discussion that took place, and the pupils' good knowledge, to ensure that their practical work used similar techniques to the artists observed. In an excellent Year 6 lesson, the stimulating classroom with many examples of the work of famous artists, and of pupils' work in the same style, contributes to the atmosphere. The teacher began with a brief art history lesson, revisiting what pupils had learnt of the work and times of William Morris. Their knowledge was excellent and one pupil made a very effective comparison between the work of JS Lowry and William Morris showing great thought and reflection. The teacher then detailed the different techniques employed by Morris, Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Georgia O'Keeffe to draw and paint a still life of flowers. She had a range of still-life displays of flowers and pupils chose a style in which to paint. Many practised in their sketchbooks first. One talented pupil had a separate display of flowers and started drawing and painting immediately.

111. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has an interest in art and design. There are a number of teachers who are also enthusiasts, and as a result there are some very good displays around the school, especially of abstract art. The school uses national guidance to ensure the coverage of the Programmes of Study and for assessing pupils' work. This is effective and the co-ordinator is given occasional opportunities to monitor the quality of work and will eventually use this time to monitor teaching and learning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

112. Attainment in design and technology at the end of Years 2 and 6 meets the expectations for pupils' age. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was below the expected level at the end of Year 6. Due to timetabling arrangements only one lesson was observed during the inspection. However, discussion with teachers and pupils and evidence from planning and displays show that the pupils' skills in designing and making develop steadily as they get older. Their learning, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, is satisfactory across the school. A good feature of the subject is the greater attention to the pupils' own evaluation which has been introduced recently. That said, the opportunity to explore mechanisms and the use of control technology is limited.
113. In Year 1 pupils have planned, designed and constructed model houses from cardboard cartons, using disassembling and folding techniques, with glue and paperclips to stabilise joints. Other joining techniques to facilitate movement have involved designing and making models of people using card and paper fasteners. Pupils in Year 2 explain in detail how they have planned and chosen ingredients prior to making crispy-cakes during their food technology lessons. In preparation for Christmas they also designed and made greeting cards and tree decorations, using cotton wool balls, buttons, sequins and a variety of adhesives. Such activities

develop their manipulative skills while selecting, cutting out and measuring the appropriate resources.

114. In Year 3 the pupils have investigated the role of structures while designing and making drums, using a wide range of materials including fabric, wood and plastic. In relation to a history project about the Romans, the pupils in Year 4 investigated recipes and devised a menu for a feast that included stuffed dates, olives and oatcakes. In Years 5 and 6, the pupils further develop their technical skills as they measure, mark out, shape, fold, and score card and wood. They then choose appropriate adhesives to combine components for a finished product. Good examples include designing and making slippers, percussion and stringed musical instruments.
115. The pupils' attitudes are generally very good and they work sensibly together, sharing equipment and tools. For example, in the Year 2 lesson on designing and making a model house, they demonstrated how scissors and punches could be used safely. They also know the importance of hygiene during food preparation. They are interested in their work and strive to improve on it, as noted during a discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils about how they considered the role of appearance, comfort and safety prior to making a pair of slippers. Their behaviour is very good. They are polite, show respect for peers and adults, and are willing to talk about their work, in which they take pride.
116. In the only lesson observed the teaching was very good. The teacher's good knowledge of the subject allowed her to plan work that built sensibly on skills already learnt. As a result of this careful planning and her skilful questioning the pupils' understanding of the steps required to complete the task was enhanced. Praise and encouragement were used effectively to create a purposeful, calm atmosphere in which they felt secure. The good support of the volunteer parent contributed well to the success of the lesson.
117. The co-ordinator, who has only been in post for two months, provides satisfactory management and leadership. He is keen to promote the subject and has already observed teaching and learning, offering written and verbal feedback to the teachers. He monitors teachers' plans regularly, and has introduced recently a detailed evaluation system, which is already having a positive impact on standards. Resources are adequate, used well and are easily accessible.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

118. All of the evidence indicates that standards meet expectations by the end of Year 2 and are above expectations by the end of Year 6. This is due to good curriculum coverage and effective teaching. It also indicates that all pupils have full and equal access to all learning opportunities so that those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers. There was no difference noted between the attainment of girls and boys.
119. Teachers in Year 1 and Year 2 make good use of the local environment, and make good links between history and geography so that both are taught in sufficient depth. For example, in their work on holidays and journeys from the past in history, pupils develop their mapping skills by identifying holiday destinations and marking them on blank maps. They do the same with countries and principal cities of the United Kingdom. In this way, they gain an understanding of their position in the world and begin to recognise how places are linked to others worldwide. Imaginative teaching builds well on pupils' knowledge of their local area as they compare this with an imaginary island, making note of human and physical activities. Teachers recognise the importance of imparting the correct vocabulary such as *island*, *coast* and

*coastline*. In this respect, the subject makes a good contribution to reading skills. Occasionally opportunities to develop extended writing skills are missed because teachers use worksheets which limit pupils' opportunities to write.

120. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 show interest in learning about different countries. In Year 4, for example, they show a very good knowledge of the geography of Kenya, indicating very high quality teaching over a period of time. They retain their knowledge very well because they are given good opportunities to find information for themselves. Their work on Kenya was very well consolidated in an excellent lesson observed, in which the class teacher used very imaginative teaching methods: such as challenging pupils to plan and produce brochures to persuade tourists to visit Kenya. The importance of writing information in books was seen in this lesson as pupils referred to their well-presented previous work to help them with what they were doing. While researching topics, this insistence on their recording work in their own words is not a consistent practice, particularly in classes where teachers use the completion of worksheets as an activity. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning. Teachers have a clear understanding of what has been learnt in lessons through regular assessments after each topic. These assessments show that pupils make good progress in their learning. By the end of Year 6, pupils have been given a good understanding of mountain formations and of how to recognise and explain patterns produced by individual and human features within the environment. In a very good Year 6 lesson, in which pupils were learning about river systems and were confidently tracing rivers from source to estuary, the class teacher made very good use of questions such as *What is unusual about the source of the Nile?* and *In what direction does a river flow?* The careful questioning deepened pupils' understanding and made them think as they worked. They responded very well to the class teacher's very high expectations and worked with deep concentration throughout the afternoon. Year 6 pupils' visit to the Isle of Wight is a key factor in consolidating and extended their geographical learning. Some interesting work results from it, stimulated by their experiences on the various expeditions they made.
121. The subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their knowledge of the world and its peoples. The strong links the school has forged with the Ayeltige School in Ghana gives them a deeper understanding of life in a developing country. Pupils are encouraged to care for the environment as a result of their understanding of environmental problems at a local, regional and global level.

## HISTORY

122. Standards reached by pupils by the end of Year 2, match expectations, and by the end of Year 6 they are above those expected for pupils' age. These good standards have been well maintained since the time of the last inspection. Teachers and pupils have a strong interest in history, and pupils are offered an interesting curriculum that meets statutory requirements. However, the skills of historical enquiry are not always systematically developed as pupils move through the school. This is due in part to the school not having a library to support independent learning and research. In addition, an over-dependence on worksheets in some classes means that pupils sometimes have too few opportunities for extended writing and for independent research.
123. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are encouraged to find out about the past by talking to older people from the local community, such as parents, grandparents and visitors. They are provided with simple sources of information such as pictures and toys from

the past to stimulate their interest. This is an effective approach because of the combination of good resources and of insightful first hand experiences. However, pupils sometimes spend too much time sitting on the carpet listening to the teacher rather than being more actively engaged through an interesting range of teaching strategies, including independent learning and writing. Analysis of work in books and on display shows that pupils are taught effectively to recognise changes in their own lives as well as those in other members of their family and elsewhere as they compare seaside holidays past and present. For example, analysis of past work shows that they effectively learn about the lives of notable people, such as Queen Elizabeth I, Florence Nightingale and Louis Braille. Teachers are making increasing use of literacy lessons to teach different periods in history, as for example, when literacy is based on the life and times of Grace Darling. History is thus making a good contribution to the learning of literacy, and literacy is helping the pupils to learn more about history. By the end of Year 2, pupils show a good – and increasing – sense of chronology and start to perceive why people in the past acted as they did.

124. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to develop their sense of chronology and understand that the past can be divided into different and distinctive periods of time – such as Ancient Egypt and Tudor and Victorian England. They make good progress in their learning. Completed work is well presented, showing pupils' interest in the subject. Year 6 are given the freedom to research topics covering a range of subjects such as *Famous Victorian People*, the *History of Rugby*, *Fashion in Tudor Times*, and the *History of the Girl Guides*. The work on display demonstrates their ability to research these topics at home using a range of resources, including the Internet and the local library. It is very well presented showing the pride pupils take in their work. There is sometimes a lack of historical enquiry using a range of resources and artefacts in lessons. However, visits to places of interest such as Hampton Court, Gunnersbury Museum and historical sites on the Isle of Wight excite interest in the subject. History days in school, are very well used to enrich the curriculum.
125. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are prompted to reflect on the plight of working children during Victorian times and to consider what it was like for them and for children who were evacuated during the Second World War. As a result of their considerations, they increase their understanding of right and wrong and of the importance of treating all people with respect.
126. The scheme of work, linked to recent recommendations from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, guides teachers' planning. The co-ordinator, who provides enthusiastic leadership, has developed assessment procedures linked to this new guidance so that teachers can be more effective in determining what pupils' know, understand and can do. Recent improvements made in provision for information and communication technology is helping to support research skills. In the absence of a central library, teachers supplement the schools' own small range of history books with books borrowed from the local library. Teachers also provide pupils with interesting resources that they bring in from home.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

127. Attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 is in line with national expectations. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when attainment was judged as poor. Considering the increased learning and teaching demands that have been placed on this subject since then, this is even more notable. There is no significant

difference in the performance of boys and girls. Very good development reflects the vigour and enthusiasm with which the issue was tackled. The installation over a year

ago of a new computer suite, incorporating a full networking system, has had a positive impact. The pupils also have opportunities to develop further and practise their skills on other computers placed strategically throughout the school. This, together with overall good teaching and the pupils' eagerness to learn, ensures that they achieve well, especially when the pupils' prior knowledge, understanding and skills are considered. An improved feature since the last inspection is the regular timetabling for the learning of specific information and communication technology skills. Consequently, the pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, make consistently good progress. However, the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is not so well developed.

128. The pupils begin to use the computer as soon as they start school. In Year 1 they know how to use the space bar, the delete and the arrow keys. Higher-attainers use word-processing to write simple sentences, for example *I like to play*, thus developing their typing skills, identifying letters and capitalising. Pupils in Year 2 use programmable robotic toys to measure distances and degrees of turning, as observed in part of a control technology lesson. By the end of Year 2 the majority can save, retrieve and print their work. They also use *click and drag* skills well enough to create pictures and patterns.
129. By the end of Year 6, all the pupils are competent in a wide range of skills and are familiar with a variety of programmes. They have a good understanding of word-processing and higher-attainers use spreadsheets effectively, as noted during a discussion with a group of from Year 6 about costing items for a party. They use programmes to write stories, poems, and labels. The majority combine text with graphics, placing emphasis on the layout: this was well exemplified by Year 6 pupils giving a presentation about William Morris. In Years 5 and 6 they change text, import images, use a digital camera and develop the pictures, prior to printing them from the computer. The higher-attainers in these year groups show a good understanding of graphical modelling, as observed in a Year 5 work sample about designing a kitchen and dining room. Their control and modelling skills are less well developed. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 edit, save and retrieve text as well as changing font colour and size, as noted in a display of poems and party invitation cards. The Internet and CD-ROMs are used regularly to research topics in history and geography, and to select and print required extracts from texts. Examples include, projects by Year 5 on the Tudors, and by Year 6 on the Great Exhibition of 1851.
130. The pupils' attitudes to information and communication technology are good. They are enthusiastic and sustain concentration on task. They explain procedures well and the more experienced are able, and are eager, to help others. This was very noticeable in a Year 3 lesson on creating characters (fish) in a simulation programme. In the same lesson higher-attainers displayed pride when they were successful in resizing, changing and revising part of the image. These computer-based activities offer good opportunities to work with minimal supervision, to use initiative and often take control of pupils' own learning. This was observed in a Year 5 lesson about extending number sequences. The majority of pupils in Years 5 and 6 discuss the benefit of the Internet knowledgeably. Nearly all the pupils have access to computers at home, and send and receive E-mails on a regular basis to and from their friends.
131. The teaching is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and lessons are focused on the specific skill to be learned. This is another appreciable improvement since the last inspection. Information is presented clearly and tasks



are pitched to suit pupils' abilities, ensuring suitable challenge. This was seen to good effect in a Year 4 lesson using specific commands to construct different geometric shapes on the computer screen. Teachers use the interactive screen well to demonstrate techniques before, during and at the end of lessons. The demonstrations support the pupils' understanding well and increase the rate of learning. For example, in a good Year 3 lesson on simulation. Classes are managed effectively and good support from teachers and other adults ensures that the pupils' interest is maintained constantly. Where teaching is good or better, lessons are conducted at a brisk pace. On the odd occasion when introductions are too lengthy, the pupils lose interest and learning is restricted.

132. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. She provides effective support for colleagues and helps to raise standards through in-service training and helpful documents. A detailed policy and scheme of work are in place, and detailed plans ensure that there is appropriate coverage of all aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum. Assessment is ongoing during lessons and the recently introduced system to assess all the pupils against the attainment targets of the National Curriculum programmes of study is beginning to have a positive impact. The appointment of a part-time information and communication technology teacher (two days per week) has helped to raise standards. However, the best contribution occurs when the class teachers and specialist combine their expertise during lessons. Although resource provision has been much improved, control and modelling technology would benefit from more equipment. The school has worked very hard to improve provision in information and communication technology and this has led to a rise in pupils' standards, particularly in the past two years.

## MUSIC

133. Standards in music match those expected nationally in Year 2 and Year 6, as they did at the last inspection, but they are improving. Because of the comparatively recent employment of a part-time music specialist who teaches all classes, all pupils now make very good progress. They are actively encouraged to participate. In a lesson in Year 1, for example, they developed their ability to pitch their voices accurately to the notes C and G using a technique called *Addison Body Notation*. Year 2 pupils demonstrated increased pitch discrimination and vocal ability, and produced short melodies. Progress was evident in Year 3, as pupils improvised simple tunes based on the pentatonic scale and performed them as an accompaniment using a steady beat. Year 4 pupils used xylophones to compose tunes to songs that they wrote recently. There was evidence of very clear progression in knowledge, skills and understanding, as pupils in Year 6 performed and appraised songs consisting of several verses, which they had composed. As a result, they gained a clearer understanding of the criteria for writing a good song and were encouraged to continue with their own song writing.
134. Teaching in music is good and, in some lessons it is very good. The strengths of teaching are:
- the teacher's very good subject knowledge;
  - effective planning;
  - a strong emphasis on basic skills;
  - high expectations.

This good teaching leads to good learning throughout and to the progressive development of knowledge, understanding and skills. Class routines are well

established and most pupils apply a good level of creative effort to their work. They

show interest, concentrate well and work at a good pace. They are encouraged to assess their own work and the work of others and have a good knowledge of their own learning. Time and resources are used well to maximise learning.

135. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The curriculum is enriched by opportunities for pupils to learn the flute, oboe, trumpet, violin and guitar. Last year, pupils in Year 6 enjoyed a children's concert at Kneller Hall. All pupils are soon to see a performance by a visiting group of musicians called *Just Trombones*, a good musical experience. Pupils in Year 2 recently joined a Year 2 class from another local school and entered the Richmond Singing Festival, effectively extending their musical experiences. They sang in one of the regional groups and will shortly be singing their songs again at the Richmond Theatre where all 700 will sing *Deep Sea Diving* together. Good procedures are in place for assessing attainment and progress and the use of assessment to guide curriculum planning is good. Music actively promotes communication skills. Numeracy skills are developed through the rhythm and structure of music. Social development is encouraged through paired and group work. Cultural understanding is developed through the singing of songs such as *Tonga*, from the South Seas and *Kilele*, from South Africa. In assembly, pupils tunefully and reverently sing, *Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God* as a round in two parts. They are encouraged to reflect on music and its effect on people's senses.
136. Leadership and management are good. They ensure clear educational direction and reflect the school's aims and values well. The subject leader has produced a comprehensive policy and scheme of work. Her appointment is having a positive influence in improving standards and ensuring the progression of pupils' learning.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

137. This is a strong subject and pupils achieve standards that are above those expected for their age – both by Year 2 and by Year 6. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. There are many initiatives that the school has adopted to extend the provision for physical education, making pupils fitter in the process. A *sports wall* has been opened with targets, nets and goals for the whole school. The school belongs to *Sports England* and has achieved the award *Activemark*. This is in recognition of the school's commitment to promoting the benefits of physical activity and school sport. A good range of extra-curricular activities is offered such as swimming athletics, netball, athletics and football. There are also a Saturday morning football club held by parents. As part of its drive to improve fitness, the school has initiated, through its travel plan, several walking to school days in conjunction with the local education authority. It is very successful in competitive team games and sports and a number of pupils compete individually in swimming, athletics and gymnastics. The majority achieve the minimum requirement of swimming 25 metres and, during the inspection, one Year 2 pupil received a reward for swimming 400metres, a very good achievement. All pupils, regardless of background, are actively involved in physical activities and this is sometimes an opportunity for those with special educational needs to shine.
138. By Year 1, pupils change quickly and quietly into their kit and warm up by making star jumps as they come into the hall. Space is rather restricted as part of the hall is used for storage whilst the remodelling of part of the school takes place. It is however adequate for the activities. Pupils are active and well co-ordinated and show good spatial awareness as they move around. They go into long, narrow, wide and stretched shapes effectively jump well and move quietly. By Year 2, pupils learn to

twist in different ways, incorporating this into a sequence of movements, which they try hard to improve upon. Some of these are challenging but they persevere

until they have mastered them. By Year 4 pupils are developing ball control skills outside on Collis Field, a nearby municipal facility that is under threat of closure. Pupils show good levels of fitness as they warm up by running round the field and sprinting the last third of the distance. They show good skills in dribbling a ball – this includes the girls – and they work well collaboratively in team games. By Year 5, pupils are developing their skills of dribbling a basket ball showing very good skills improvement from their previous training.

139. The quality of teaching was good with some very good teaching seen, it is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure that pupils warm up before a lesson and warm down after it. They make pupils aware of their own bodies and teach the skills necessary for an activity progressively. For example, in a very good year 5 basketball lesson, the teacher used his own subject knowledge as a trained coach to extend pupils' knowledge, not only of the skills of dribbling and passing but also the rules of the game as they occurred. The very good dialogue between the teacher and pupils helped them develop knowledge of the sport. In a good games lesson in Year 4, the teacher used her very good management skills to ensure that pupils remained on task and followed the rules of the team games introduced. Whilst all pupils change for physical education, not all the teachers do and, in this instance, they do not set a good example.
140. The great enthusiasm of the teachers and a commitment to pupils' physical well-being gives this subject an additional facet and this shows in the good levels of fitness throughout the school and their commitment to sport. The subject is very well managed and the school follows the scheme of work given in national guidance – including monitoring standards to a satisfactory extent.