

INSPECTION REPORT

ST ELPHEGE'S RC JUNIOR SCHOOL

Wallington

LEA area: Sutton

Unique reference number: 102996

Headteacher: Miss T Fletcher

Reporting inspector: Mr J G F Parsons
22546

Dates of inspection: 6 – 9 May 2003

Inspection number: 246257

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mollison Drive Roundshaw Wallington
Postcode:	SM6 9HY
Telephone number:	020 8669 4130
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr T Tamplin
Date of previous inspection:	8 May 2001

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22546	Mr J F G Parsons	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Physical education English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? School's results and pupils' achievements What should the school do to improve further?
9770	Mr J Baker	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?
14806	Mr J Stevens	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology History Educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?
12394	Mrs C May	Team inspector	English Geography Music Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Elphege's is a Roman Catholic aided junior school which shares a site with an infant school of the same name. It is situated on the Roundshaw estate in Wallington which consists mostly of local authority housing but takes pupils from a much wider area and variety of backgrounds. It is of average size with 122 boys and 107 girls on roll, the majority of pupils are of the Catholic faith. Employment in the area is high and the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is average (21.4 per cent) but has increased since the previous inspection. The majority of pupils join this school from the adjacent infant school, which achieves high standards, so attainment on entry is above average. However, nearly a quarter of pupils have special educational needs, which is above the national average (24 per cent). Most of these pupils are at the early stages of support for learning difficulties but a few have emotional or behavioural needs. Two per cent have statements of special educational needs which is slightly above average. More than a third of pupils are from a minority ethnic heritage (36 per cent) which is high, the majority of these pupils are African, and six per cent are children of refugees. There is a nearby travellers' site and nearly eight per cent of pupils are children of Travellers. A higher than average percentage of pupils do not speak English as a first language (12.7 per cent) but as these are not at the early stages of learning English there is no additional specialist support. The headteacher has been in post for approximately two years and was appointed from the adjacent infant school where she was headteacher prior to this.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school; standards are rising because of the good teaching. The school has a strong vision for the future and high expectations. It is very well led by the headteacher, key staff and governors. It no longer has serious weaknesses and offers good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school has made very good progress since the previous inspection.
- Pupils learn well, standards are rising and were well above similar schools in English and mathematics and above in science in the 2002 national tests.
- The very good leadership and management of the headteacher, key staff and governing body have contributed very strongly to the school's development.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school.
- The relationship between teachers and pupils is very good, which results in children enjoying school and behaving well.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

What could be improved

- The development of assessment procedures in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.
- The library facilities.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement since the previous inspection in May 2001.

- Attainment of all pupils including the higher attainers has improved significantly in mathematics and science.
- The standards in design and technology, information and communication technology, music and art and design have improved and match those expected for pupils' age by the end of Year 6.

- The quality of teaching and learning is good, boys now achieve the standards expected for their age.

- The very good leadership and management of the school include the governing body who fulfil their statutory duties and hold the school to account.
- The assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science are good but do not extend to other subjects.
- The school has developed the curriculum in the light of national guidance, although the curriculum is not sufficiently practical in Years 3 and 4.
- All other minor issues in the previous report have been successfully addressed, attendance has improved significantly and is now broadly average but the library facilities remain inadequate.

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	E	C	C	A
Mathematics	D	C	C	A
Science	E	A	C	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In the 2002 national tests in English, mathematics and science, pupils achieved standards that match those expected for their age nationally but were well above those of schools with a similar intake of pupils in English and mathematics and above in science. The inspection confirms that standards match those expected nationally for pupils' age by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science and all other subjects and pupils make at least satisfactory often good progress especially in Years 5 and 6. Boys now achieve similar standards to girls. This is a significant improvement from a legacy of underachievement found in the previous inspection and indicates that standards are rising. The school has paid good attention to developing higher attainers and those pupils identified as gifted or talented. The good procedures in developing basic skills encourages pupils to achieve to their full potential. Both teachers' high expectations and the organisation of classes into groups according to attainment in mathematics and science are effective. The provision of additional help in English is also effective. Those who have special educational needs, progress satisfactorily overall from their prior levels of attainment. In Years 3 and 4, the development of lower attainers including those with special educational needs is slowed due to the use of too many unsuitable worksheets. The school is likely to achieve the targets set for future improvement in English, mathematics and science.

These results are considerably higher than those found during the previous inspection due to the improved teaching and learning and higher expectations. The attainment on entry is above average, the majority of pupils come from the adjacent infant school which achieves high standards. They make satisfactory progress, although the legacy of underachievement in previous years and a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, some of whom join the school from Year 3 onwards, impacts on overall progress by the end of Year 6 making it satisfactory rather than good. However, progress is improving and is more rapid in Years 5 and 6 due to the very strong teaching. This includes pupils in other groups, including those from a minority ethnic heritage, and/or with English as an additional language who achieve standards similar to those of their peers, due to good support. The effective introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies means that the quality of teaching in English and mathematics has improved, pupils learn better and expectations are higher. In particular, the standard of reading by the end of Year 6 is above average for pupils' age; they read fluently and have a good vocabulary. In science, the introduction of a more practical approach to the subject is effective and in the 2001 tests the standards rose significantly from well below average to well above and although

not sustained the following year standards are much improved. In all other subjects, standards match those expected for pupils' age by the end of Year 6.

This represents a significant improvement in the standards of art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, and music, which were unsatisfactory in the previous inspection. The development of the curriculum in these subjects, teachers' better subject knowledge and pupils' improved skills' development have been instrumental in improving standards. Geography, history, and physical education have been maintained at a similar, satisfactory standard to the previous inspection. The use of specialist expertise within the school in science, physical education, music and information and communication technology has had a good impact on standards. Improved facilities and resources in information and communication technology have also played their part in improving standards in this subject. Religious education is inspected separately under section 23 provision for voluntary aided schools.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well both in and out of class and only a very few show unsuitable or challenging behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good overall. Very good relationships between the pupils and teachers and good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility contribute to their learning.
Attendance	Satisfactory. This has improved since the previous inspection.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning in lessons was consistently good overall. This is a significant improvement from the previous inspection when some of the teaching was unsatisfactory and the quality of teaching and learning was inconsistent. In the majority of lessons, teachers have good subject knowledge, planning is effective, lessons well organised, the pace of lessons is brisk and pupils are productive. A very good feature of most of the teaching is the development of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Teachers are well trained in the national strategies and this has a very good impact on the quality of teaching of English and mathematics which is good and is a main factor in standards rising in these subjects. The teaching of spelling across the school is particularly effective. Similarly, the teaching of science is practical and effective giving pupils' 'hands on' experience, developing their skills in setting up experiments to ensure a fair test, and using scientific language with good recording afterwards. Less effective teaching occurs mostly in Years 3 and 4. Here, work for the least able pupils including those with special educational needs is not always presented in an accessible form and means pupils do not always progress well. Commercial worksheets are used extensively instead of the more effectively planned, thoroughly thought out practical activities, found in lessons higher up the school. Pupils who do not speak English as a first language learn as well as their colleagues and are well supported in the classroom by teaching assistants, some of whom have undergone training. Other groups such as Travellers, children of refugees and those from a minority ethnic heritage learn as well as their peers.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The school provides a curriculum with a good range of learning opportunities, which meet statutory requirements, and the interests and aptitudes of all groups of pupils successfully.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils are provided with a suitable range of activities but in Years 3 and 4 pupils would benefit from a more practical approach that would stimulate their interest in lessons and improve their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The use of effective assessment procedures and good support of teaching assistants ensures that these pupils progress at least at a similar rate to their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. School procedures and the Catholic ethos encourage high levels of respect for teachers and each other and good social and spiritual development. Honesty and fairness are promoted in lessons and other cultures including those represented in the school are celebrated.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. Child protection procedures are very good and careful assessment in basic subjects means teachers know their pupils well. However, there are few procedures for assessing pupils in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The very good leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff, the staff's shared commitment and very strong capacity to succeed have significantly raised standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors participate fully in the life of the school and hold it strongly to account.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has closely evaluated what needs to be done to raise standards and taken suitable action to achieve this.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The principles of best value are used to ensure wise expenditure and to ensure good value for money is obtained.

The school has a suitable range of experienced and well qualified staff who are constantly upgrading their skills. The accommodation is satisfactory overall although the library is inaccessible and inadequate. Resources are satisfactory overall but poor in history and geography.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

There were 229 questionnaires issued and 62 returned (27 per cent). The meeting held by the Registered Inspector was attended by 22 parents or carers.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All agreed that the teaching is good.• Most agreed that their children like school are making good progress, that they behave well and that their children are expected to work hard.• The majority would feel comfortable approaching the school, feel it is well led and manages to work closely with them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A few consider that their children do not receive the right amount of work to do at home and do not feel that their children get a good range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspectors agree with parents' positive views. They found the homework provision is good and consistently set. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the 2002 national tests in English, mathematics and science, pupils achieved standards that matched those expected for their age nationally. Standards were well above those of schools with a similar intake of pupils in English and mathematics and above in science. The inspection confirms that standards match those expected nationally for pupils' age by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science and in all other subjects and that they are rising. The majority of pupils come from the adjacent infant school which is high achieving. Evidence from the previous 2002 national tests indicate that pupils' progress from their prior attainment by the end of Year 6 compared to those nationally is below average in English and science and average in mathematics. The legacy of past underachievement found during the previous inspection two years ago and the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, some of whom joined the school from Year 3 onwards, has meant that pupils' progress from Year 3 to Year 6 is satisfactory overall rather than good. However, progress has accelerated recently in all subjects particularly in Years 5 and 6 due to the very good teaching in these age groups. The school is likely to achieve the future targets set in English, mathematics and science. This is a very good improvement from the previous inspection. In particular, the inspection found that unlike the findings of the previous inspection, boys now achieve at a similar level to girls, a very significant improvement in standards.
2. The school is working hard to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential and to overcome past underachievement. For example, it identifies those who are marginally below average in the optional national tests taken by pupils at the end of each year. In Year 6, those pupils achieving just below the national average and those who are just below the higher Level 5 in tests are given effective extra help to achieve the higher standard. The precise identification and targeting of such pupils is effective and enables help to be more focused and effective. The school has paid good attention to developing higher attainers and those pupils identified as gifted or talented. The school has good procedures in the basic skills to encourage them to achieve to their full potential both through teachers' high expectations and through the organisation of classes into groups according to attainment in mathematics and science and by providing additional help in English.
3. All pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress commensurate with their individual abilities. Everyone who works with the children with special educational needs is made aware of the nature of their individual difficulties and what help and support has been agreed upon. As a result, work is usually matched appropriately to pupil's individual needs. Those with statements of special educational needs have good individual education plans indicating how their needs will be met. The school keeps to this agreement meticulously. Careful records of each child's progress are kept by the class teachers and teaching assistants and updated regularly. As a result, all pupils, whatever the nature and severity of their specific need, learn at least satisfactorily in lessons. When the work they do is practical and 'hands on' such as found in Years 5 and 6 pupils with special educational needs are particularly successful. However, in Years 3 and 4 when work involves exercises using work sheets that are not always clear and explicit, lower attainers and those with special educational needs are less successful.

4. Pupils who do not speak English as their first language progress at least at a similar rate to their peers, this is because most are at the later stages of learning English and with good support from well trained teaching assistants. They achieve standards that match expectations for their age. Other various groups within the school including those from minority ethnic groups, Travellers and children of refugees achieve similar standards to their peers.
5. By the end of Year 6 in English, pupils achieve standards that match those expected for their age and some achieve above average standards in speaking and listening skills; speaking articulately and clearly during lessons. They progress at least satisfactorily and achieve standards in writing that at least match those expected for their age and are often above average. For example, higher ability pupils in Year 6 write in the style of a newspaper reporter using a story extract as the basis for their writing. They understand the use of speech marks, reported speech and a wide range of words such as 'geology', 'hydrology' and 'physiology'. In the accounts written they use words like 'horrific', 'traumatised' and 'outrageous incident'. Their vocabulary is very well developed and pupils make good progress in reading by the end of Year 6 and standards are above average.
6. In mathematics pupils are set, that is grouped into classes by attainment and these good arrangements mean they make at least satisfactory often good progress. In a high attaining set in Year 5 for example, pupils understand how to divide 60 by 7, 83 by 9 and 75 by 8 mentally. Not all get the right answer but they understand various methods, including rounding up numbers to estimate the answer. They use these skills to answer number problems later in the lesson. By Year 6, pupils multiply 37×5 mentally by saying $(30 \times 5) + (7 \times 5)$ or half of 37×10 . Higher attaining pupils use information and communication technology to develop their numeracy skills further. They are working towards the higher Level 5 in the national tests.
7. The practical approach to science is effective, pupils make at least satisfactory progress and achieve standards that match those expected nationally by the end of Year 6. For example, in Year 6 pupils understand that micro-organisms are living and need food, warmth and water. They know for example, that when yeast is activated by warm water it gives off a gas and design an experiment to show this, using a bottle and balloon. The gas given off blows up the balloon to demonstrate the effect. Pupils know that a fair test means keeping the experiment consistent, changing only one variable. Pupils are also set, as in mathematics and higher attainers are well organised and prepare the experiment efficiently, recording their findings accurately on a chart. The lower attaining set, work on a similar experiment; however, they are less well organised, need more help and the whole learning process is slower.
8. The school has worked hard to reverse the downward trend in standards which started in 1998 and since 2001 standards have been rising. Improvement has been particularly rapid since the appointment of a new headteacher two years ago, who has introduced effective procedures to track pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science. This means teachers know their pupils' capabilities more thoroughly and set challenging work based on this knowledge. The effective introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies means that the quality of teaching in English and mathematics has improved, pupils learn better and expectations are higher.

9. The rigorous monitoring by the headteacher and local education authority advisors and consequent training of teachers has significantly developed their skills and eliminated weaknesses in teaching. This has raised the quality of teaching, teachers' expectations, and resulted in improved standards in all subjects. There has been a significant improvement in the standards of art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, and music, which were unsatisfactory in the previous inspection. The development of the curriculum in these subjects, teachers' better subject knowledge and pupils' improved skills' development have been instrumental in improving standards, which now match those expected for pupils' age. In art and design and design technology for example, skills are taught more thoroughly and progressively, design is carefully executed and pupils use a broader range of media including digital photography to express themselves. The use of specialist expertise within the school in science, physical education, music and information and communication technology has also had a positive impact on standards. Improved facilities in information and communication technology have played their part in improving standards in this subject. In geography, history, and physical education, standards match those expected for pupils' age by the end of Year 6, similar to the previous inspection. Religious education is inspected separately under Section 23 provision for aided schools.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Since the previous inspection, relationships between pupils and staff have improved and are now very good. Good attitudes to the school, good standards of behaviour and good personal development have been maintained. Pupils are keen and eager to come to school.
11. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall and sometimes very good which is having a positive effect on their progress and attainment. Only occasionally do pupils show challenging or unsuitable behaviour and this is mostly concentrated in Year 3. The vast majority is interested, keen to contribute to lessons, undertake tasks enthusiastically and enjoy their work. For example, in a Year 3 physical education lesson pupils thoroughly enjoyed developing gymnastic sequences and were keen to demonstrate their work.
12. Behaviour is good overall in lessons and sometimes very good. It is also good in all other areas of the school. Pupils are aware of the high standards expected and respond well to discipline which creates an orderly environment conducive to learning. All pupils play harmoniously together in the playgrounds and there were no signs of aggressive behaviour, not even in the football games which were played with great commitment. The strong Catholic ethos and personal, social, health, and citizenship lessons ensure that pupils are in touch with their own feelings and explore them. They also develop a strong set of values and beliefs during these and other lessons such as English, music, and art. There have been two fixed term exclusions this year. These were fully justified and the current procedures were followed in each case.
13. Pupils care well for others and are aware of their feelings. This was clearly demonstrated in the playground when pupils came to comfort a girl who was sitting on her own looking quite tearful after having been accidentally hit in the face by a ball.

14. Pupils' personal development is good and is the result of undertaking duties in helping to run the school and taking responsibility for their own learning. Pupils mature as they progress through the school and willingly take on suitable responsibilities for their age. These range from simple duties in Year 3 such as taking the register to the office to whole-class duties in Year 5. Pupils in Year 6 take on a wide range of whole-school duties such as helping in the dining room and supervising younger pupils during wet playtimes. All classes have a representative on the school council who take their responsibilities very seriously and have recently suggested the re-introduction of the house points system. Pupils also take responsibility for their learning; for example, they are involved in setting their academic targets. Parents endorse these views and the vast majority consider that the school helps their children to mature.
15. Relationships between pupils are good. They play harmoniously, and work well together in the classroom when in pairs or groups. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good and pupils are secure and confident in their relationships with other adults. Staff give a very positive lead in establishing good relationships for example, by giving praise and encouragement at every opportunity as well as acting as good role models.
16. Attendance has improved and is now just above the national average. Nearly all pupils arrive on time. These factors make a positive contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. Registration is carried out in accordance with legal requirements.
17. All groups represented in the school, including those from a minority ethnic heritage, children of refugees and Travellers take a full part in school life. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are provided with additional and effective adult support in lessons to help them understand the tasks provided and to ensure they have full access to the curriculum. They enjoy school and try hard.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory to good and the needs of all pupils are generally met well. All the teaching was satisfactory or better and more than 90 per cent was good or better; a third of teaching was very good or better, and one lesson was excellent. Good and very good features were present in much of the teaching and there were relatively few weaknesses. The teaching of music, a weakness in the previous inspection, is now consistently good. Examples of good teaching were seen in all subjects and all year groups. The improved level of consistency is the result of teachers sharing their expertise and working closely together. Teachers also showed improved subject knowledge particularly in their understanding and implementation of the national Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Teamwork was seen to be particularly effective in science, physical education, music and information and communication technology leading to more consistent and improved quality of teaching and learning in these subjects.
19. In lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage them well, but sometimes, especially in Year 3 they have to use a full range of behaviour management strategies to ensure that pupils are learning. The very good relationships in school underpin the positive working environment. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support both teachers and pupils. Whole-class

teaching sessions are managed sensitively to involve all pupils, whose contributions are openly valued. Most pupils respond positively to the well-established routines and expectations, and they in turn value each other and their teachers. The strong focus on giving pupils opportunities to work in pairs and groups supports their independence and extends their social development.

20. Where teaching is good or better, the pace is brisk, pupils cover much ground, and work productively. This was particularly evident in the excellent quality of teaching and learning in an English lesson in Year 6 and in the very good teaching in two history lessons in Year 4. Teaching and learning is less effective, on occasion, when lessons are too long, the pace of teaching slackens and the lesson drifts along too slowly.
21. Teaching and learning is effective when teachers tell pupils what they will learn, and usually, but not always, return to the lesson's objectives at the end to review the extent to which pupils have developed new skills or strengthened existing ones. Good strategies for older pupils to evaluate each other's work were observed in an English lesson for the higher attaining Year 6 pupils. In English, mathematics and science especially in Years 5 and 6, these are now given work at a more advanced level that provides appropriate challenge. In other subjects, however, samples of pupils' past work show that they are frequently given the same tasks to complete and the main difference is the amount and quality of the written work completed.
22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs varies from satisfactory to very good and is satisfactory overall. Lesson plans are adapted to meet the learning needs of pupils of different abilities within the class in English, mathematics and science. The quality of support during lessons for pupils with special educational needs is good and teaching assistants foster pupils' self-confidence well so that they offer to answer questions and participate confidently. Time spent out of lessons working in small groups is of a more variable quality and worksheets are sometimes used where a more practical approach to teaching would enhance the rate of learning. Worksheets, which are sometimes too abstract and unclear particularly in Years 3 and 4 are used too much in English, and for example, in one lesson all pupils in the class were given work that entailed a great deal of copying out. These practices slow down the pace of learning. In subjects other than English, mathematics and science, teachers' plans show that work is the same for everyone and only occasionally adapted to pupils' needs. However, pupils are frequently well supported to complete the tasks.
23. Pupils who do not speak English as their first language have additional and effective support from the teaching assistants who have attended special training to help them meet the needs of these pupils. There is an appropriately high emphasis on developing and extending their vocabulary to provide the foundation for reading and writing. Teachers are careful to ensure that all groups represented in the school are treated equally and have full access to learning and the curriculum.
24. Pupils' work is marked well in the majority of classes. The system of marking is innovative, colourful and well designed to move pupils' learning forward. Very good quality marking was observed in English, mathematics, science and music where there were thoughtful comments that help pupils to know what to improve. Teachers have developed effective procedures to assess how well pupils have achieved the learning objectives of units of work in English, mathematics and science. However, as yet no formal systems have been developed for the rest of the curriculum.

25. Teachers' good subject knowledge showed in the way that they modelled the use of specific and technical vocabulary in subjects such as mathematics and science. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well and skilfully integrated into other activities. The teaching of spelling is good throughout the school and addressed appropriately in all subjects of the curriculum. Teachers make good links between subjects so that skills are reinforced in a relevant but interesting way. Computers are used effectively across a range of subjects to enhance and reinforce both skills in information and communication technology and pupils' knowledge in other subjects. This good practice has recently been enhanced by the purchase of laptop computers to use in class. Practical activities stimulate enthusiasm and teachers plan a good number of visits, visitors and first-hand experiences to bring learning to life. This practical and visual approach is beneficial for pupils who have special educational needs and those who do not speak English as their first language. Homework is given regularly. It is relevant to extending their learning, pupils' efforts to complete it are acknowledged, and it makes a good contribution to their personal development and independence.

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

26. The school provides a curriculum with a good range of learning opportunities which meet the interests, aptitudes of all groups of pupils successfully. The curriculum meets statutory requirements to teach all subjects in the National Curriculum. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. Policies are in place for all subjects and there are now suitable schemes of work which follow national guidance for all subjects. These provide for good consistent development of pupils' skills and learning and good guidance to teachers. The curriculum for music, art and design, information and communication technology and design technology have improved as a result and improved standards in these subjects. In particular, the use of information and communication technology in other subjects across the curriculum has been well developed and this is particularly effective in English, mathematics, art and design, and design and technology.
27. The length of the school day is very slightly below that recommended for this age group but has no significant effect on standards in the school. The headteacher and governors are aware of this shortfall and intend to address this in the near future.
28. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively. All elements of the literacy and numeracy hours are included regularly in the English and mathematics lessons, this has raised standards. Good use is made of literacy and numeracy in other subjects. Booster classes are used effectively to ensure that those pupils whose standard is slightly below the national average or marginally below the higher Level 5 in national tests achieve the level of which they are capable.
29. Whilst the school adapts the curriculum to suit the needs of pupils with special educational needs, sometimes, mostly in Years 3 and 4 commercial work sheets are used too often slowing pupils' progress. This is especially the case for those who are lower attainers or have special educational needs, where a practical approach to tasks planned have proved to be so much more effective in Years 5 and 6. An example of this was seen when a group of Year 3 pupils were learning about tens

and units, the tasks on worksheets were not clear and did not always fulfil the objectives of the lesson. Other examples were seen when looking at the work of pupils, the completion of repetitive tasks on worksheets did not improve pupils' learning.

30. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. There are football, athletics and netball clubs. Boys studying for a National Vocational Qualification from the John Fisher School effectively help with coaching in football, rugby and athletics. The school choir sings in 'Music for Youth' and is through to the second round to take place in the Royal Festival Hall, a good achievement. This choir, together with the infants' school and John Fisher School choirs participate together at the John Fisher School. The choir also sings in Fairfield Halls in Croydon and the local Roman Catholic and Anglican churches. There is a chess club in the winter and a homework club, once a week, exclusively for those who have difficulty in doing homework at home.
31. Good and regular provision is made for personal, social and health education and citizenship. In a well taught lesson in Year 4, pupils understood the differences between wants, needs and rights. Three firemen talked to Year 3 about fire safety at home and the possible causes of fire. In another well taught lesson with Year 5, pupils recognised that verbal abuse can be as hurtful as physical abuse. There are good drugs, health and sex education policies. Sex education is effectively taught in Years 5 and 6 when the school nurse is involved. Parents are shown a video before the pupils see it to ensure that they are comfortable with the contents. Year 6 pupils take part in junior citizenship working with the police and ambulance service. Each year in June, one day is taken up as a citizenship day making a good contribution to their personal development.
32. The school is careful to ensure that the various group represented in the school including those with special educational needs have full access to all the school has to offer. It has a strong ethos in this area and ethnic minority groups the children of Travellers and refugees are all fully integrated in all activities.
33. The links with the community are satisfactory. Visitors to the school include the fire service, artists and an actor who dresses up to talk on historical events during a Victorian day, a Tudor day or a Roman day. Visits by a Christian group help raise pupils' self-esteem with inspiring talks. Visits are made to the National and Tate galleries, the Heritage Centre, the Ecology Centre and Water Works, extending pupils' learning. There is a visit to Colourscape, a centre which enhances the art and music in the school. Five day residential visits are made by Year 6, and a shorter visit is planned for Year 4 to Canterbury. These all contribute to enriching the basic curriculum. Although the fire brigade, police and ambulance service visit the school, there are no links with local businesses.
34. There is a good relationship with partner institutions, particularly the adjacent infant school. In addition, there are strong links with St Philomena's School for Girls, John Fisher School for Boys and the Thomas Moore School. Pupils on work experience from all three schools visit St Elphege's and during the inspection two pupils from Wilson's Grammar School visited and made a good contribution to an art lesson on weaving. Secondary school pupils also help with sport and music and St Philomena's pupils give useful assistance with information and communication technology, science and design and technology. Pupils also visit these schools

during the year smoothing the transition from primary to secondary education. One teacher from Wilson's School visits the school once a fortnight to help with mathematics and information and communication technology for the higher attainers in Years 5 and 6, a good contribution to their development.

35. The arrangements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils in the school is good in all respects. The effective provision for spiritual development is embedded in a good Catholic ethos. This strong ethos of the school fosters care and self-esteem enabling pupils from different backgrounds to integrate into the life of the school. Assemblies help in raising this self-esteem and are of a good quality. The philosophy of spirituality is of great importance in the school and helps pupils to mature into sensible and responsible individuals. Pupils have the opportunity to appreciate the beauty of the world around them in subjects such as art and music.
36. Provision for moral development is good. The school has a strong moral ethos which sets bounds for acceptable behaviour. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and behaviour was mostly good during the inspection. Parent governors have effectively rewritten the mission statement which effectively promotes honesty, fairness and respect for truth. 'Circle time' is part of the personal, social and health education programme and is effective. All adults in the school are good role models. Any incidents between pupils are initially mediated by the class teachers and are only reported to the headteacher if serious enough. This procedure works well.
37. The provision for pupils' social development is good. There is a 'play squad' on a weekly rota where pupils effectively monitor others to ensure that there are no problems. There is an elected school council with one pupil elected from each class. Year 6 pupils show good levels of responsibility when they undertake jobs in the library, dining hall and answer the telephone in the school office at lunchtime. These Year 6 pupils change on a weekly rota. Pupils interact well with each other both in the playground and classroom. They listen to and respect other pupils' points of view in discussions. The visits and links with the local community contribute well to the pupils' education. This enables them to effectively learn to become good citizens.
38. Arrangements for cultural development are good and an improvement on the last inspection. In addition to Christianity in the religious education syllabus, there is an effective focus on another religion each term such as Sikhism, Judaism, Islam or Hinduism. Festivals are celebrated including Hindu festival 'Diwali' and the Chinese New Year. Pupils understand that across the world that people believe different things. They have good opportunities to develop an understanding and appreciation of their own cultural heritage through art and design, and music. For example, the school's scheme of work for music encompasses a different range of cultures including American and Chinese music. There are pupils with a black African heritage and their parents come into school to talk about African art making a very good contribution to all pupils awareness of cultural heritage. Great care is taken that all groups represented in the school are fully integrated in all aspects of school life.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance, good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour have all improved since the previous inspection and are good.

40. Health and Safety procedures and those for monitoring and reporting pupils' personal development have also improved and are good. Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics and science and have correctly been the priority of development in the school in the past two years. As yet they are not fully developed in other subjects, although informal assessment does take place, such as during the final session in lessons when teachers identify the rate of pupils' learning through effective questioning. Procedures are satisfactory overall. The very good child protection procedures have been maintained. The designated person keeps up-to-date through attending training courses and disseminates information to staff at staff meetings. All staff have a copy of the very good child protection policy which gives them a very clear picture of signs and symptoms, how to act and the procedures to be followed. Liaison with other agencies is good.
41. Effective assessment procedures make a significant contribution to pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science. Pupils are tested termly, their actual progress is compared with their predicted progress and additional support is given as necessary. If trends are shown across a particular group then planning is reviewed accordingly. Attainment is analysed by gender, for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language. To develop the informal assessment of other subjects further, the school is planning to introduce a computerised system for monitoring progress to develop more rigorous and recorded formalised procedures.
42. The school complies with the recommended Code of Practice for educating pupils who have special educational needs and has recently updated the policy to meet its requirements. The school complies with the provision and meet the objectives outlined in pupils' statements and the procedures for Annual Review are complied with. The targets identified for pupils to achieve in their individual education plans are clear, precise and easy to measure. Progress towards these targets is monitored continually and these plans are reviewed twice a year.
43. The teaching assistants who work with pupils with special educational needs are well trained and effective in the support they provide, both when working in the classroom and with small groups. For example, they help with such activities as reading and using computers in the information and communication technology suite. The school takes care to ensure all pupils are provided for effectively, and for example, well trained assistants help pupils who speak English as an additional language enabling them to keep up with their peers. High attainers and those who are gifted or talented benefit from the organisation of mathematics and science into sets, or groups of similar ability, and this makes a good contribution to their development. Specially selected groups in English enable pupils to achieve a higher standard in the national tests.
44. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are good. For instance, a child who has specific difficulties with handwriting has a specially designed raised platform to write on to make it easier. The needs of children with statements of special educational needs are clearly identified in their individual educational plans. These plans state exactly what teaching approaches should be used, any special resources required, and any additional adult support to be provided is clearly stated. Arrangements for communicating with parents are clear, and the dates for reviewing children's progress are noted. Details of the outcome of previous reviews are also noted.

45. Pupils are well supported and guided in their academic progress through very good marking and through good use of assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science. Pupils are also well supported and guided in their personal development. Looking after pupils' personal and emotional needs is the responsibility of class teachers who, together with support staff, know their pupils very well, are sensitive to their needs and thus able to provide good personal support and guidance. The very good relationships between pupils and staff encourage pupils to raise any concerns they may have knowing that they will be dealt with sympathetically.
46. Procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying are good and are consistently applied by all staff including lunchtime supervisors. The emphasis is on making pupils aware of the high standards expected and reinforcing this by praising good behaviour at every opportunity. The approach to discipline is based on Christian values and the 'Golden Rules' which have been developed from these values are displayed in all classrooms as well as at strategic points around the school. These rules are discussed with pupils at the start of the year and at other times as necessary. Good behaviour is rewarded with 'Golden Time', an opportunity to pursue an activity of choice, at the end of the week but this can be lost through misbehaviour. In Years 5 and 6, good behaviour is also promoted through a team points system. These procedures result in behaviour being good overall, a view shared by the majority of parents.
47. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and punctuality are good. Registers are checked daily and parents are contacted by mid morning if they haven't notified the school of the reason for their child's absence. The governor responsible for attendance carries out termly checks and the education welfare officer or Traveller Education Services are involved as necessary. Parents are reminded about the importance of regular attendance through newsletters.
48. Health and safety procedures are good and provide a safe working environment. All routine testing is up-to-date and health and safety checks are carried out annually. Any issues are rectified with appropriate urgency and the governing body is kept fully informed about health and safety matters. Risk assessments are carried out on a termly basis on specific areas of the school, the most recent being on playground safety. First aid arrangements are good and the medical room, which is linked to the office, offers ideal accommodation for pupils who are unwell. Pupils' personal safety, hygiene and general well-being are covered effectively through the personal, social and health education curriculum and through the science curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Since the last inspection the partnership with parents has improved significantly and is now good overall. The most noteworthy improvement has been in the information provided to parents about their children's progress which was previously unsatisfactory and is now very good. Parents have positive views about the school. Virtually all consider that teaching is good, confirm that they would feel comfortable approaching the school with problems and consider that the school expects their children to work hard. The vast majority confirm that their children like school, considers that the school is well led and managed and that it helps their children to become mature. They are satisfied with all other aspects of the school with the exception of homework and the provision of extra-curricular activities. The inspection team supports parents' positive views of the school but considers the use of homework and the provision of extra-curricular activities to be good.

50. Parents are very well informed about the school through the prospectus, the governors' annual report, weekly newsletters and other correspondence. Information to parents about the curriculum is very good. Parents receive termly information on the work to be covered and in Year 6 parents receive details of the national tests well in advance. In addition, a mathematics workshop was held in the spring term on 'keeping up with the children'.
51. Information to parents about their children's progress is very good. At consultation evenings in the autumn and spring terms, the results of termly tests are discussed and targets set. Consultation is also available in the summer term after the annual reports have been issued. These reports are very good and include attainment levels and targets in English, mathematics and science and effort grades in other subjects.
52. Parents of children with special educational needs are invited to discuss their child's progress at the twice-yearly consultation evenings and their views about their child's needs sought and helps pupils' development. However, teachers do not record these views on the pupils' individual education plans, which would help track pupils' progress. Further help is provided where necessary either within the school, or with the parents' agreement, from outside agencies. Parents are invited to meet any outside professional the school consults regarding their child. Copies of all correspondence from other professionals are shared with parents and they are involved in decisions made about their children which helps pupils' learning. Sometimes however, parents of pupils with special educational needs do not attend the two parents' meetings per year, which makes it difficult for them to fully participate in their children's development.
53. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning at school and at home and this has a positive effect on attainment and progress. There is good, much valued parental help in the classroom and very good support on trips and visits. Parents raise substantial funds for the school through the Parents' Association. They also help with school productions and with music, including playing the piano for the choir.
54. The vast majority of parents help their children with their homework and their good attendance at parents' evenings and other events demonstrates to their children the importance they place on education. This helps to instill pupils' good attitudes to learning and to the school.
55. The school is very vigorous in involving parents in the life of the school and regularly seeks their views through questionnaires as well as consulting them on specific matters. For example, parents are about to be consulted on the revised behaviour policy.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. Leadership and management of the school is very good and this includes the contribution of key staff and the governing body. The last report stated that leadership and management lacked educational direction and the senior management team was ineffective. The governors were not aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Overall leadership and management of the school and governing body were unsatisfactory and a key issue in the last report. Because of this the school was regarded as having serious weaknesses. All this has

significantly improved. The headteacher provides very strong and purposeful leadership and management and together with key staff has helped to raise standards in the school. The governing body has much greater involvement in the school and holds it strongly to account.

57. The headteacher, who had been acting headteacher for only five weeks at the time of the previous inspection, gives clear direction to the staff and pupils. The staff is very committed and have willingly incorporated all the initiatives introduced. The senior management team, including the deputy headteacher, work well together. The co-ordinators are very good at managing subjects in the National Curriculum and have produced policies, plans and schemes of work since the previous inspection. There are now co-ordinators for all subjects and they have developed their role well. At the time of the previous inspection, the school was drifting without a sense of purpose but it has now been given a new focus with drive and direction to take the school forward. Delegation of responsibility ensures the effective contribution of staff. All are aware of their roles. Effective performance management procedures help them to focus on the improvements they need to make.
58. The governors fulfil their statutory duties and have become critical friends. At the time of the previous inspection, they were unsure of their roles and what to ask the headteacher and staff. Their roles are now clearly defined. For example, parent governors monitors lunch behaviour. Others have rewritten the mission statement. The governing body has the right balance of skills and commitment and has helped to shape the direction of the school and is involved in the school improvement plan and strategic planning. They have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have responded well to the previous inspection. They meet co-ordinators on a termly basis and write brief reports. There are governors for literacy, numeracy, religious education, special educational needs and attendance. Governors have been on training for 'educational inclusion' to ensure the integration of all pupils in the school and some on 'the principles of best value' when dealing with school finance which ensures wise expenditure. One of the major aspects in which they are involved is monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. The combination of this training and greater involvement in the life of the school has been instrumental in making them more effective. The governors' annual reports to parents are well written and informative but do not have a section on the school's provision for those attending school who may have disabilities, for example that the school is single storey only and has ramps to allow wheel-chair access.
59. Checking teaching and learning through observation and evaluation has ensured an improvement since the last inspection and involves the headteacher, the senior management team and sometimes the local education authority advisers. Monitoring of teaching is good. The headteacher frequently works as a support in classes and is able to effectively see at first hand the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, all staff are aware of their strengths and weaknesses. The evaluation report is given to the teachers and governors at the end of the year. They look at the evidence to ensure that the criteria for good teaching and learning are met. The information from this is used for the next school development plan. Appraisal, or performance management, which was not in place at the time of the previous inspection, is now in its second cycle. The headteacher is also appraised by an external adviser and two governors, and targets for pupil progress and leadership and management are agreed. The systems for performance management and developing staff are very good. The headteacher appraises all teaching staff and challenging targets for development are set, based on their strengths and

weaknesses. There is a clear programme to carry out the actions and a very strong shared commitment to improve. In the school's priorities for development, it has adopted a basic skills curriculum and is now moving at an increasing rate towards adopting a very practical curriculum which has proved so successful recently.

60. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory. The money allocated for these pupils is used efficiently to provide additional adult help and appropriate learning resources. The records and paperwork relating to pupils with special educational needs are kept very carefully. The class teachers have their own files and a second copy of all records are kept centrally.
61. The governor responsible for pupils who have special educational needs supports the co-ordinator very well. They have been on courses about the new Code of Practice for Pupils with Special Educational Needs, and about the most recent Disabilities Act. However, at present the co-ordinator is not sufficiently involved in offering help and advice to class teachers about adapting lesson plans to meet the needs of pupils with individual education plans. She does not work within the classrooms supporting pupils or teaching whole classes. This means that opportunities for the class teacher to work specifically with pupils who have special educational needs are reduced. The teaching assistants have been trained to support pupils with difficulties in reading and writing and this is generally carried out very well. Resources are generally satisfactory although there is a need for more practical resources to support the younger and least able pupils including those who have special educational needs. The new 'electronic library' on the computer is being used very well to help improve pupils' reading and writing skills. The money and resources provided especially to support pupils with special educational needs is used effectively and often supplemented by the school's own budget.
62. There is a good development system in place for the induction of new staff by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The senior management team is also involved with a programme of observation and discussion with newly qualified teachers. The one newly qualified teacher is very pleased with the help and support which he has been given.
63. The administrative officer is effective. She undertakes systematic budgeting with an allocation from the local education authority and the standards fund. She applies the principles of best value and for example, obtains three quotations when buying articles for the school. On occasions, she liaises with the infants' school to buy common articles at a cheaper rate. The accounts are audited yearly with a full report to the headteacher and chair of governors. An action plan is drawn up in response to the points made by the auditors. For security, the administrator is not a signatory on cheques. These are signed by two of the three members of the senior management team. There are regular finance meetings where any concerns are discussed. The school effectively uses a commercial software package for accounting and data analysis but not for registration. The administrator effectively bids for specific grants and the funds from the National Grid for Learning were used to purchase computers for the information and communication technology suite. Money allocated for special educational needs is used satisfactorily. The principles of best value are used effectively to ensure that money is well spent and targeted to the needs of the school. This includes a comparison with other schools on expenditure, some consultation with parents, challenging by the governing body on

whether expenditure is necessary and ensuring the competition between companies who provide goods and services. The substantial financial carry forward is to enable the school to continue to upgrade its premises and retain staff and will be significantly less in the coming year.

64. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum and teachers are used specifically and effectively for their expertise in science, information and communication technology, physical education and music.
65. The accommodation in the school is satisfactory although many areas are rather dowdy and unattractive. One area for concern is the library and its deficiencies have been mentioned in the previous two inspections. The situation is unsatisfactory. It is very small with many books kept in boxes, which are labelled but not classified. There are no steps for pupils to reach the high shelves. Although the books are in reasonable condition there is insufficient stock for the size of the school. Many books are inaccessible for the pupils. The library is so small that no more than six pupils at a time can use it. It is unsuitable for teaching library skills. The area is also used for the teaching of pupils who have special educational needs. It is very cramped and unsuitable for these lessons.
66. Learning resources are adequate for most subjects with the exception of geography and history where they remain weak.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. The governing body, headteacher and staff should continue to raise standards by:

- developing the good assessment procedures found in English, mathematics and science and applying them to other subjects.
(paragraphs: 40,41, 94,111 and 119)

The governing body and headteacher should:

- as soon as practicable address the outstanding lack of library facilities.
(paragraphs: 65,70 and 75)

Minor issue:

The headteacher and staff should consider:

- Improving the teachers' planning in Years 3 and 4 by:
 - incorporating a greater range of practical activities in all subjects especially for those pupils who are lower attaining or have special educational needs.
(paragraphs: 3,7,22, 29,72,74 and 102)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
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	1	14	26	4	0	0	0
Percentage	2	31	58	9	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	229
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	49

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	55

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	29

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	5.6	School data	0.1

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	21	33	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	18	21
	Girls	26	24	27
	Total	43	42	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (82)	78 (78)	89 (92)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	19	20
	Girls	28	24	30
	Total	45	43	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (82)	80 (88)	93 (92)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	134	0	0
White – Irish	30	0	0
White – any other White background	12	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	6	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	7	0	0
Black or Black British – African	16	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	6	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	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: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	30

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	125

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
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/a

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	583,303
Total expenditure	512,707
Expenditure per pupil	2,259
Balance brought forward from previous year	51,838
Balance carried forward to next year	70,596

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.6

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	229
Number of questionnaires returned	62

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	45	48	3	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	40	47	6	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	52	8	3	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	55	18	0	3
The teaching is good.	52	47	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	48	10	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	37	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	35	0	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	37	52	6	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	53	40	5	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	40	2	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	37	23	5	3

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

ENGLISH

68. The inspection found standards in English match those expected for pupils' age by the end of Year 6. There has been a significant improvement over the past two years since the previous inspection and in 2002 standards matched the national average. The results in national tests were well above average when compared with pupils in schools in a similar context. Many pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well but overall progress is satisfactory rather than good as there is legacy of past underachievement identified in the previous inspection and a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. In the recent past there was a lack of challenge and expectations in the teaching and learning, which has been addressed, and as a result standards are rising. As yet, this improvement is not sufficient to raise standards to the high level to which the school aspires given the above average standards on entry, but it is on course to achieve the targets it has set for 2003. The underachievement of the higher attainers that was identified in the previous inspection is being addressed well. The school's good assessment procedures identify gifted or talented pupils in this subject and the systems of support encourage them to achieve their potential. Those with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress overall from their prior attainment, but progress is more rapid in Year 5 and 6 than in Year 3 and 4 due to more effective planning by teachers and a more practical approach to teaching.
69. Both boys and girls achieve similar levels of attainment and show very good attitudes to their work, a significant improvement in boys' performance. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive good support from trained assistants and progress well. They make good gains in developing speaking and listening skills and achieve well in reading and writing.
70. By the end of Year 6, speaking and listening skills match those expected for pupils' age. They have many opportunities within lessons to share ideas with partners or in small groups. They listen carefully, and respond to each other's ideas and suggestions. Pupils are given the opportunity to act out passages from stories studied in their literacy lessons. For example, in Year 3 the lower attaining half of the class worked in threes to plan short dramatic scenes based on the story *The Toad Tunnel*. All pupils joined in, spoke clearly and took turns to act out the story. All did this with humour and realism showing good understanding of the story line, the motives and personalities of the characters. Teachers also give pupils' opportunities to use spoken language regularly such as in 'hot seating' where pupils take on the roles of characters from books and stories and the rest of the class ask them questions about their motives and actions. A very good example of this was seen in the excellent teaching in Year 6 where, the skilled and thoughtful questioning by the teacher and the high quality responses from the pupils made it clear that the higher attaining pupils 'read between the lines' and understand the implications of complex text. When reading out loud, they read with good understanding, phrasing, fluency and expression. When researching in books, they read the text and the lines rapidly to find what they are looking for quickly. Standards in reading are generally above average. Most pupils have good strategies for reading and know how to use text to help them understand meanings. Lower attaining pupils occasionally misread or omit words and are less skilled in phrasing and paraphrasing. The higher attaining pupils compare and contrast different styles of writing expressing preferences, such as for

'real life' rather than 'fantasy'. The lack of adequate library facilities in school limits the opportunities for independent research skills, although pupils in Years 5 and 6 effectively use the texts that are available in classrooms. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are less secure in their library skills as the main school library facilities are inadequate.

71. Standards in writing in Years 3 to 6 are average overall. The quality of handwriting and presentation is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. In these classes, the challenge and expectations are not as high as in Years 5 and 6 where the quality of handwriting and presentation is good, teachers have consistently high expectations and pupils take pride in their work. In Year 5, pupils learn to edit their writing by redrafting, for example when expressing their opinions of planned changes to the environment. By Year 6, pupils note key words, make notes, plan, draft and redraft in a range of styles. The higher attainers use a wide range of interesting vocabulary. They have a good knowledge of formal writing features, and write in a neat joined hand. Punctuation is usually used correctly and their spelling is generally accurate.
72. The quality of teaching and learning in English is good overall, but ranges from satisfactory to excellent. Most teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour with the result that most pupils are diligent and hardworking. The exceptions seen were when pupils had to sit for too long in introductory sessions and became restless, and when teachers provided tasks that required a great deal of copying out. Sometimes commercial worksheets are used which are not sufficiently precise and do not aid pupils' learning, especially in Years 3 and 4 for the least able pupils including those with special educational needs. The most successful lessons were those that had a brisk pace, involved a great deal of active pupil participation and, where written tasks were provided. These were pitched at the right level for the different abilities of the pupils, made them think hard and use their imagination. Teachers teach basic skills well throughout the school and this is evident in the good progress pupils make in acquiring them.
73. In Year 5, teachers make sure pupils have a good knowledge of connectives to link sentences. Pupils give many examples of them such as 'then' and 'when' to show time passing and the higher attaining pupils use them in their work across all areas of the curriculum. By Year 6, pupils jot key ideas for paragraphs, and plan newspaper reports, writing in a journalistic style. Teaching assistants are well informed and provide good support for pupils with special educational needs both within class and in small groups. Teachers make good use of assessment, recording progress towards the learning targets, and keep detailed reading records. Pupils are clear about their learning goals. Marking is done in an innovative and interesting way. Teachers give helpful and constructive comments sometimes using computerised sticky labels with advice that guides pupils towards improving their work. Pupils have regular set homework tasks linked to their work in class. English makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development because peer and pupil-teacher relationships are good. Pupils express their feelings in their work and are enthusiastic about tasks. Sometimes they act as critical readers and when they do, they show sensitivity to the feelings of others.
74. The National Literacy Strategy has now been well implemented but is generally more effective in Years 5 and 6 than in Years 3 and 4 where the teachers' planning is less practical and effective. Learning about sounds and spelling patterns is particularly successful. The support procedures are effective in helping pupils with special educational needs, giving them good opportunities in small groups to have extra practice and support where it is most needed. Since the last inspection, consistent

approaches to teaching of literacy skills, and recording progress have led to rising standards by the end of Year 6. The current focus on raising standards in spelling and writing is appropriate. Literacy skills are used well in other subjects such as history, geography and personal and social education. The use of information and communication technology has recently been given a higher profile with the purchase of laptops to use in class and the 'electronic library' software on the computer to support pupils with special educational needs. Activities involving the use of information and communication technology are now planned for in lessons for small groups of pupils several times each week.

75. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. There is a practical, well-organised plan for developing English, with a current review and clear aims for raising standards within an appropriate time-scale. The co-ordinator is very aware of standards across the school and monitors planning and pupils' work regularly. She has also had the opportunity to monitor teaching in English. The co-ordinator is a very skilled and knowledgeable and has been recommended as a leading literacy teacher for the local education authority. The quality of resources is generally satisfactory and used well on the whole. There are good procedures for assessing the learning of individual pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and those developing skills in English, have small targets to meet, which are assessed twice a year. Targets for groups of pupils ensure that they meet the required national standards. Teachers' evaluations of pupils' learning are used well in planning following lessons. Library facilities are inadequate, many books are inaccessible especially to younger pupils and the cramped facilities are not suitable for independent learning.

MATHEMATICS

76. In the Year 6 national tests 2002, pupils' standards matched those found nationally and were well above average compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 results, was above the national average. The previous inspection stated that the standards were average when compared with similar schools but the higher attainers underachieved. There has, therefore, been a very significant improvement since the previous inspection, and inspection findings support this. In particular, higher attainers are identified through the good assessment procedures. This includes those who are gifted or talented, and good arrangements are made to ensure that they achieve the standards of which they are capable; both through organisation into ability groups or sets, and through high expectations. Good progress in raising standards has been made and the school is on course to meet its targets in 2003.
77. The last report stated that boys in particular underachieved in mathematics but tests in the last two years and inspection evidence indicate that this is no longer the case. The school has been effective in raising the standards of boys to a similar level to the girls. Pupils enter the school, the majority from the infants' school, with above average attainment. Progress is satisfactory rather than good, after a legacy of past underachievement and because of a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. However, the school's target is to obtain at least 100 per cent at the national Level 4 in the next few years, which should be achieved. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs and by pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. Pupils have a good attitude to the subject and behave well in lessons. The very good attention that all adults give to pupils' personal development is effective in encouraging them to learn.

78. All pupils in Year 3 know basic fractions of shapes, properties of shapes and multiply by 2, 5 and 10. The higher attaining pupils investigate and sequence numbers. They find areas of rectangles. They also know how to divide sums and give a remainder. In a very well taught lesson with the higher attaining pupils, they used various strategies to add several small numbers together.
79. Year 4 pupils tell the time and draw and interpret bar charts. The higher attaining pupils use special method for organising shapes called Carroll diagrams, they use word problems to subtract money and know some equivalent fractions. In a good lesson also to the higher attaining pupils, they understood the strategies to multiply numbers and decimals by 10, 100 and 1000. In a well taught lesson to the lower attaining pupils, for the first time they sort articles in order in a Carroll diagram.
80. Pupils in Year 5 convert fractions to decimals and know the properties of rectangles. The higher attainers draw and measure angles and find the area and perimeter of rectangles. In another good lesson, the majority of higher attaining pupils developed strategies for solving word problems using division.
81. The pupils in Year 6 were practising the type of questions they would expect in the national tests the following week with the higher attainers practising various strategies for long multiplication. In a very good lesson with the lower attaining pupils, the quality of teaching was very good and the teacher was able to hold the pupils' keen interest. They multiplied whole numbers by a single digit and then were able to place the correct decimal point with the numbers in the same order using decimals, they worked well in this lesson.
82. The school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. The mental starter at the beginning of a lesson sets a good pace before the main part of the lesson is introduced. Towards the end of each lesson an effective review session takes place in which the teacher finds out how much pupils have learnt and understood.
83. Teaching and learning varies from good to very good but is good overall. Teachers are more secure and competent in the subject and their confidence has developed since the previous inspection. Where teaching is good or better it provides opportunities for pupils to investigate and solve challenging mathematical problems, which is an improvement on the previous inspection. For example, the highest attaining group in Year 5 use division to solve word problems and Year 6 pupils solve problems using graphs and other forms of recording. Teachers set a good pace to their lessons. They know their pupils well and set questions both orally and in writing to suit their needs. What is to be learnt in lessons is shared with pupils when the lesson begins. The organisation of classes contributes to the progress made by the higher attaining pupils as they are now placed in sets, this is grouped according to ability in each year. This enables the higher attainers to work at a faster pace. In addition, a teacher from Wilson's Grammar School, teaches one lesson per fortnight in Years 5 and 6, to high attaining or gifted or talented pupils, using information and communication technology, these lessons are challenging and effective. For example, Year 5 pupils understand the use of Napier's Bones in long multiplication. Pupils in Year 6 use information and communication technology to obtain answers for more advanced questions, similar to those expected the following week in the national tests.

84. The quality of leadership and management is good. The co-ordinator is a leading mathematics teacher for the local education authority and gives model lessons in other schools. She has improved the documentation and ensured that the policies and schemes of work, follow the National Numeracy Strategy and are up-to-date. An improvement since the last inspection is the good use of assessment which now takes place on a termly basis throughout the school. As a result, pupils' progress can be effectively tracked from Year 3 to Year 6. In addition to the national tests taken by Year 6, pupils take optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 in the summer term, which provides very useful data for assessing pupils' progress. All lower attaining groups are well supported by teacher assistants. There are voluntary booster classes after school which help raise the standard of those pupils who are identified at marginally below the national average or below the higher Level 5, with the intention of ensuring that these pupils achieve the standard of which they are capable. Pupils use the information and communication technology suite effectively for mathematics but the use of information and communication technology in mathematics during most lessons is an area for further development.

SCIENCE

85. By the end of Year 6, in the 2002 national tests standards matched the national average and compared to schools in a similar context they were above average. The inspection confirmed these standards, which represents a very good improvement since the previous inspection when they were well below average. In particular, the school has been successful in raising the standards of boys to virtually match those of girls. There has been a marked improvement in standards since 2000 with the adoption of the national guidance and a more practical 'hands on' approach to the subject. The organisation of classes into ability groups or sets is effective and together with the higher expectations of teachers, allows higher attainers or those who are gifted or talented to achieve the standards of which they are capable. The school is on course to achieve its targets for 2003.
86. The good assessment and setting for science in Year 6 have had a positive impact on standards. In particular, there has been a focus on the use of scientific language during lessons and the development of written recording and expressing conclusions verbally. This contributes to pupils' literacy development and the collection of data and its interpretation, the measurement, reading and drawing of scales and graphs contributes to numeracy. Standards are rising due to the improved curriculum and teaching. Pupils' progress is satisfactory rather than good, the combination of a legacy of past low achievement and a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs has slowed development. However, given the strong development made in recent years they are on course to achieve the higher standards to which the school aspires. Pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress and in practical work, with effective support, they progress well, learning by doing. However, where the approach is not as practical progress is not as strong, often involving completing commercial worksheets, which fills in time rather than takes the learning forward. Other groups of pupils including those who do not speak English as their first language, those from minority ethnic groups, travellers and refugees attain similar standards to their peers.
87. By the end of Year 6, pupils study micro-organisms. They know that such organisms are living and fall into various categories such as fungi and bacteria. They know that some bacteria, for example, are harmful while others are necessary for human good

health. They understand that micro-organisms need moisture, air, warmth and food to survive. They prepare an effective experiment to determine that yeast is a micro-organism and gives off gas when it is active. Higher attaining pupils, in the upper set or group, efficiently prepare an experiment putting carefully measured ingredients in a series of labelled bottles with balloons on the top to demonstrate the effect of gas being given off by active yeast. Lower attaining pupils in another set work on the same experiment but need more assistance to organise it and although they grasp the ideas, they do so less quickly and with greater assistance from the teacher. Both sets progress well during this lesson and are aware that in order for the experiment to be meaningful, it has to be a fair test and strict parameters for setting it up have to be adhered to. There is great excitement when the gas given off by the active yeast blows up the balloon on top of the bottle. This practical work is effectively followed by recording findings on a chart.

88. Such practical work motivates pupils to learn and keeps their interest in the scientific process. In a Year 4 lesson, for example, the pupils predict which materials will cause the greatest friction and placing such materials as rubber and a pan scrubber glued to discs of card they experiment with a fixed weight pulling the card off a desk. When they find their prediction is not accurate, they discuss why and one pupil says, 'the surface area of a pan scrubber is not as great as other materials, therefore it moves more quickly'. A good feature of pupils' knowledge is the use of scientific words and they talk about 'fair testing' and 'surface area', and the use of words like 'decomposition' when talking about micro-organisms and their good knowledge of fungi and bacteria.
89. The quality of teaching is good overall and often very good in Years 5 and 6. It is never less than satisfactory. The teachers have very good subject knowledge, lessons are well planned, and work is practical and 'hands on', where teaching is most effective. Teachers manage pupils well during practical sessions. They keep pupils on task by constant questioning of what they are doing and ensuring that lessons are stimulating and exciting. In one very well taught Year 6 lesson to determine whether micro-organisms are living, in this instance yeast, through open ended questioning the teacher was able to determine pupils' prior knowledge very effectively. This was then used to formulate a relevant experiment using plastic bottles, which had been previously prepared. In a less effective, but satisfactory, Year 3 lesson on the use of different types of teeth, although pupils knew the names of the different types, for example, canine, incisor and molar, the cursory practical work did not fully challenge pupils or extend their learning greatly.
90. The quality of leadership and management is very good. The co-ordinator is an enthusiastic teacher and very good leader of the subject. She is a very good role model with very good subject knowledge. She has vigorously adopted the practical approach to the subject, which has been particularly successful in Years 5 and 6. In particular setting, or grouping by ability in Year 6 is effective. There is a strong commitment to raising standards. Assessment procedures are effective and are used to track individual pupils to ensure that they achieve to the maximum of their ability. Resources bought in are adequate, but the use of home-made resources is creative and very good. The school lacks space for some of the more ambitious whole class experiments, but teachers manage very well.

ART AND DESIGN

91. The standards achieved by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6 match those expected for their age and they make satisfactory rather than good progress due to a legacy of past underachievement and high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below average. The adoption of national guidance in the subject has had a positive impact. Pupils use a broader range of media to express themselves, artistic skills are taught more consistently across the school and the design element is much more important in lessons. Pupils enjoy art and design and participate fully including those with special educational needs who often work at a similar standard to their peers although sometimes with help. Pupils from minority ethnic groups, Travellers, and children of refugees all work at a similar level to their peers. Planning shows work is set to meet the interests of different pupils and makes a good contribution to their cultural development. For example, looking at and reproducing the patterns in Indian art and studying the work of black artists some parents being helpfully involved in this.
92. In Year 6, pupils design a box to carry an important secret. They have brought different types of boxes from home as an example and discuss the relative merits of them using words like 'translucent', and 'concealed'. Good discussion takes place and they effectively use a digital camera to photograph the boxes they have brought. In some instances they use the photograph as a basis for a computerised picture which they alter and decorate on the computer. The limited amount of work available for analysis shows good use of digital techniques using the computer to compose pictures. For example, pupils combine the heads, legs and bodies of different people to make a picture of one person, sometimes with amusing results. There are some good links with other subjects such as designing masks to be used in drama lessons, and work in the style of the Ancient Egyptians and illustrating Greek mythology. Pupils observantly draw still life in Year 5 using crayon and felt pen and three-dimensional shapes in charcoal. There are some good examples of Indian art and pupils study and reproduce paisley patterns and 'mehandi', and 'rangoli' decorative designs contributing to their awareness of other cultures. There are few examples of three-dimensional work on display although this does occur. Pupils' self-portraits in Year 4 show that their observational skills are satisfactorily developed, although there was little work done in the style of great artist on display. However, the work with the art adviser in a Year 6 lesson using a wax resist techniques showed some good examples of pupils' skills developing with specialist teaching.
93. Only a few lessons were seen but the quality of teaching and learning in these was consistently good. Teachers planned the lessons well with clear learning objectives that were communicated to the pupils, often objectives were put onto the whiteboard for pupils to refer to, which is good practice. During lessons there was good dialogue between the pupils and the teacher. For example, in a good Year 3 lesson there was a wide ranging discussion about the role and a purpose of art and crafts. Pupils were taught the use of the weft and warp in weaving and had the opportunity to weave a pattern using coloured paper strips. A student from the local Wilson's Grammar School on a work experience visit was helping effectively with this activity. In Year 6, good discussion takes pupils learning forward and they were for example, able to use a digital camera to take a photograph and transfer it to a computer for modification and decoration. The teacher managed the many and various practical activities happening in the classroom well. The work with parents on black African art makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of the techniques used.

94. The subject is efficiently and effectively led and managed, although it does not play a very important part in the curriculum which in recent years has concentrated on basic skills. There is ongoing assessment of pupils' work during lessons but full evaluation of work does not occur. This is currently being reserved for English, mathematics and science. Resources are adequate and pupils keep a sketch book in which they record their artistic ideas.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

95. Standards by Year 6 match the standard expected for pupils' age. In the previous inspection standards were below average, so there has been good improvement since then.
96. Pupils in Year 6 design and make good quality masks and hats for a school performance. They also make a fairground with a control box connected to the computer. Year 5 pupils research the Internet before designing slippers they produced. Pupils in Year 3 design, make and evaluate some photograph frames which are of good quality and on display. Year 4 pupils use various mechanisms – pop-up, moving and sliding – to make a pop-up book. They also make a juggling gorilla, a talking chicken and a moving rabbit which are well designed and make the project attractive and fun.
97. In the one lesson observed with half a class in the information and communication technology suite, pupils in Year 3 designed a net with tabs on the computer, in order to make a box. The teaching and learning in this lesson was good. Pupils click on to the various icons with confidence and accuracy. They worked in pairs and as a result they all produced the correct nets, with tabs, for their cuboids which they coloured on the computer before printing onto thin cardboard.
98. No overall judgement can be made about teaching as so few lessons were seen. However, in the Year 3 lesson observed the teaching was good. The teacher had good subject knowledge and there was good use of a commercial computer program enabling pupils to design a box or cuboid. The lesson was well organised and the pupils learned well. All teachers plan according to the nationally agreed scheme of work. Resources are adequate and the use of information and communication technology is being well developed in this subject. Since the previous inspection pupils now plan their work better and have learnt to evaluate what they have made. There are good ongoing links to literacy in speaking and listening when pupils discuss their projects, and in writing when they plan their work and evaluate it at the end of the lesson. Pupils use their measuring skills, which contributes to their numeracy development.
99. The subject is well co-ordinated. The co-ordinator was appointed after the previous inspection when there was no post-holder, and has been effective at drawing up the policy and scheme of work. She has been on an eight day course and is able to help staff with their plans. Tasks for pupils with special educational needs are pitched according to their needs, building on their prior attainment. All other groups of pupils represented in the school achieve similar standards to their peers. There are, as yet, no systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and this is an area for further development. Resources are adequate.

GEOGRAPHY

100. Standards in geography have been maintained and, as at the time of the previous inspection, pupils achieve the standards expected for their age. All pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils' work is neatly presented and well organised especially in Years 5 and 6. When studying the changes being made to their local area as part of a rejuvenation programme, pupils in Year 5 talk knowledgeably, identifying what has changed and how that change might have an impact on the local residents. They have a secure understanding of how people affect and change the environment and recognise that different people have different views based on their personal circumstances. However, these well-expressed views that are drawn out by good questioning from their teacher during class discussions, were not always reflected in pupils' written work. All groups of pupils make similar progress to their peers and most of those with special educational needs progress satisfactorily when they have additional help.
101. Pupils in Year 6 have good recall of their previous experiences in geography. For example, when talking about rivers, they use specific geographical vocabulary confidently and demonstrate a sound knowledge of the physical processes involved. Their geographical skills of drawing plans, finding places on maps from grid references, labelling diagrams and use of scale are developing well. Most pupils are confident in using the Internet for research. This supports their teaching and learning well.
102. Teaching was good during the inspection. However, taking into account the work observed from pupils across the school, and from the discussions with pupils the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. During discussions in lessons teachers build well on pupils' responses to extend their ideas and encourage pupils to work together, share ideas and to learn from one another. There is a good emphasis on ensuring that pupils explain their views and this contributes well to opportunities for speaking and listening and to literacy. Pupils are articulate and show interest, but they become restless when discussions are overlong. For example, one lesson extended across most of the afternoon. The pace of the lesson was slow and pupils' interest waned somewhat, despite the interesting topic being studied. In this lesson, the teacher supported the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs well to help them succeed. However, the work provided was the same for all the class. This was also the case in the work in pupil's books in most year groups. As a result, the higher attaining pupils generally produce completed work with full and comprehensive responses, whilst the lower attainers write less and often leave work unfinished. There is scope to increase the variety of work provided for pupils of different abilities in order to raise standards further.
103. The curriculum is well structured into units of work and taught in blocks of time. This ensures that pupils' geographical skills and knowledge develop in a systematic way. It is clear from talking to pupils that they have a rich experience of well-chosen visits, including residential visits, and interesting activities within the geography curriculum that make a good contribution to their personal development. Each unit of work is planned well to encompass many geographical ideas and skills, and to use first-hand activities where possible to increase the relevance for pupils. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by fieldwork and visits out of school for Years 4 to 6. There is a good emphasis on key geographical vocabulary and explanation of physical and human processes. Mathematical skills are reinforced well when pupils undertake surveys, find different ways of presenting information in tables and graphs, and interpret the results.

104. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and provides a good role model as a teacher for the rest of the staff. He is confident in providing staff with the advice they need to teach the subject. The long-term curriculum plan for the subject is thorough and addresses all aspects of geography systematically. He monitors planning regularly and the teachers in each year group work closely together to share expertise when planning units of work. However, there are no formal methods of assessing and evaluating the standards pupils attain to identify areas for improvement. Resources are inadequate and in need of an audit and review as some of the atlases are out of date.

HISTORY

105. Standards that pupils attain by the end of Year 6 match expectations for their age. This is similar to the standards in the previous inspection. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. All groups of pupils including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
106. Pupils in Year 3 gain knowledge and understanding of the Romans and Anglo Saxon settlements. They know about the Roman legions, the clothes and armour they wore and the weapons they carried. They investigate evidence of the Anglo Saxon settlements and in particular Sutton Hoo. They have a good knowledge of some of the artefacts found such as a silver plate for serving food, a shoulder clasp and a gold plated buckle. They study a map of the local area discovering old Anglo Saxon names such as Wimbledon, Croydon and Westerham.
107. Year 4 pupils have study the Tudor dynasty and in particular the lives of Henry VIII and the religious changes in his reign and that of Elizabeth I. In two very good lessons with both Year 4 classes, the teachers were able to bring alive life in Ancient Sparta. Twelve pupils in each class were dressed in white tunics and described in a few short sentences their part in Spartan society. The teachers plan together and in a short time they were able to convey to the pupils about the life of soldiers, citizens, wives, children, freemen and slaves in Ancient Sparta.
108. Pupils in Year 5 study Britain since the 1930s including entertainment, communications, schooling and home life. They visit the 'Britain at War' museum which gives them a good understanding of the Blitz and life as an evacuee. In two well taught lessons on the same theme with one class, pupils looked at photographs of Egyptian artefacts and learnt how to obtain evidence. The teacher had already taught the pupils how to make judgements by showing artefacts, one at a time, of a person from the 1970s which enabled the pupils to build up their evidence and then use similar techniques when studying Egyptian artefacts.
109. As a result of some good teaching in Year 6, pupils find out numerous facts about the Great Exhibition of 1851 which they put into a diary or write as a newspaper report. This was part of an ongoing study of the Victorians. In discussion with the pupils, they had obviously learnt a great deal about life in Victorian times and about some of the pioneers such as Alexander Graham Bell, Joseph Lister and Hubert Booth.
110. Teaching is never less than good and sometimes very good. Teachers show good subject knowledge and use the time in lessons effectively. The use of probing

questioning is effective for example in discussions about the culture and society of ancient Sparta in Year 4. Teachers also use role play effectively to develop pupils understanding of the society, for instance dressing in clothing worn at this period and arguing about the practice of leaving babies to die on the hillside. Pupils are motivated and keen to learn. They show great interest in their work and the practical approach in lessons is effective. Literacy skills, including speaking and listening and writing skills, especially amongst the higher attainers are good in Year 6. They behave well and work well together.

111. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator. He checks the planning and gives feed back to the staff but as yet he has been unable to monitor lessons. He has drawn up a policy and scheme of work which is based on national guidance. Assessment is one area for further development, although it is beginning to be introduced at the end of each topic. Information and communication technology is used when pupils look for evidence on the internet or use CD ROMs. Each year group makes historical visits to reinforce the topics the pupils are learning about. For instance, Year 3 go to Lullingstone Roman Villa, Year 4 to a Tudor Experience and Hever Castle, Year 5 to the 'Britain at War' museum and Year 6 to the Victorian Experience. This is good reinforcement of the history they study. On their residential visit to Broadstairs, Year 6 also visit Dover Castle and the Battle of Britain Museum at RAF Manston. However, resources and artefacts are insufficient and unsatisfactory and make little contribution to pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected for their age. Standards in control, monitoring, modelling and database work, weaknesses in the last report, match those expected for their age. This is an improvement overall since the previous inspection, when standards were below those expected for their age. This is still a developing subject and pupils' skills are in the process of becoming well established. The pupils' level of achievement is satisfactory. All groups of pupils including those who have special educational needs or English as an additional language generally achieve similar standards to their peers.
113. Since the last inspection, all staff have completed training in skills under the New Opportunities Fund. More resources have been purchased including five laptops, with seven more on order, a digital camera and multi-media projector. All this has helped to improve standards.
114. Pupils in Year 3 very effectively search a database to find out various statistics about the various colour of eyes and birthdays of girls and boys in their class. In another very well taught lesson, in Year 3, they learnt how to repeat colourful patterns from a commercial painting program.
115. Pupils in Year 4 change the font, size and colour on a word processing program. They open and save a document, drag a shape and insert a picture. They accurately command a screen turtle using the keyboard making complex shapes and patterns. In another very good lesson, with the lower attainers in Year 4, pupils learn effectively how to enter information into a database using a questionnaire. The teacher demonstrated how they put their information into 'fields' grouping it for entry onto the database. The pupils confidently followed instructions and entered the information correctly.

116. Most pupils in Year 5 can change the alignment of a document on the screen if needed. They know how to open an already saved document and insert and use the thesaurus on the computer. They use spreadsheets such as those used for accounts or for tabulating information effectively and with confidence. Pupils in Year 6 have produced interactive stories from a program that combines text and illustration. They accurately draw graphs and pie charts and handle data with confidence. They have increased knowledge of spreadsheets and produce graphs and charts to illustrate their work.
117. The majority of teaching in the computer suite is by a part-time specialist who also co-ordinates the subject. She has very good subject knowledge, and acts as a very good resource for other teachers. The quality of teaching in specialist taught lessons is very good and pupils learn very well. In classroom lessons, when teachers use the computers to support other subjects, the teaching is at least good overall. For example, in a very well taught Year 6 art and design lesson the teacher effectively taught pupils to decorate their digitally photographed designs of a box using a commercial paint program. In a Year 4 science lesson, pupils are very effectively taught to chart the results of their experiments on friction using a spreadsheet. Teachers manage pupils well and use probing questioning and practical activities to develop their skills in a consistent and effective way.
118. There are many good opportunities to use information and communication technology in other subjects. In a well taught lesson in Year 3 for example, pupils drew nets for a box which was part of a design and technology lesson to produce a box or cuboid for storing materials. In the corridor by the information and communication technology suite, there were good examples of literacy work where pupils had written the front page of a newspaper. The internet is effectively used for research in history and geography.
119. The co-ordinator is effective and has significantly improved standards and the provision in the school. The subject is well led and managed. Resources are satisfactory. She has drawn up a policy and an Internet safety policy. She has based the scheme of work on national guidance but has adapted it. Informal assessment takes place at present, but more rigorous assessment is planned. The subject is monitored by the headteacher but the co-ordinator is available to give help to staff when they use this subject in other lessons.

MUSIC

120. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain the standard expected for their age. This represents an improvement from the previous two inspections when the attainment was below expectations. Pupils throughout the school thoroughly enjoy their music making activities and rise to the challenges posed by the teachers. As a result, they make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and pupils from all groups represented in the school are fully integrated and participate well.
121. The good progress made is particularly evident in Year 6 where pupils build on good work in Year 5 and acted as composers and lyric writers of Blues music. Pupils rose to the teacher's high expectations very well as they learnt about 'root chords' and improvisation. Although they found this hard at first and took a while to realise that improvisation takes place within a structured framework, by the end of the lesson the composers had achieved a good level of success. This success extended to a group

of pupils with special educational needs because they were helped and supported well by the class teacher. Indeed all groups of pupils are fully integrated into lessons and achieve similar standards to their peers. The effective ongoing assessment identified that the lyric writers were not as successful as some of the pupils did not understand the task. All teachers assess the work done in lessons and gave the pupils good feedback.

122. The quality of teaching is good. Teaching has improved because the teachers with more musical ability than the rest now share the teaching of music to ensure consistently high quality lessons. The pace is good, teachers have high but realistic expectations for the age of the pupils and resources are chosen well. For example, in one Year 3 lesson, the class was split into two differing ability groups with half the class having a lesson in information and communication technology whilst the rest had music. This worked particularly well the class teacher involved all pupils effectively in the lesson including those with behaviour difficulties. Pupils learnt well in this lesson about the opera of Hansel and Gretel and identify when a duet, bass a chorus are singing. In Year 5, the teacher handled difficult pupils with patience and good humour. She made the lesson fun by asking pupils to try to identify the instruments being played and drew one of the Chinese instruments on the board and children listen out for when it was being 'bowed' and when 'plucked'. This moved pupils' musical appreciation forward well. A learning support assistant gave very valuable help in guiding the pupils in singing and playing a Chinese song that was difficult to follow because of its unfamiliar form. The higher attaining pupils explain that it was hard to play because 'the beats are close together and shorter, and there are frequent rhythm changes'.
123. All aspects of music are taught well. Pupils are provided with musical notebooks in which they record their ideas about composition and write what they have learnt about different composers. Pupils use these notebooks thoughtfully and after listening to 'soul' music, one pupil wrote 'He's letting all his badness out and healing his soul.' This makes an effective impact on pupils' spiritual development. Pupils' work is marked regularly in a manner that inspires improvement. Where appropriate, homework is given to support and reinforce what has been taught in school. Although the co-ordinator has screened all Year 5 and Year 6 pupils to assess their ability to sing at the correct pitch and to maintain a steady pulse, these results have not yet been analysed and at present there is no formal process for evaluating and monitoring pupils' progress.
124. The knowledgeable co-ordinator gives good leadership in music and manages the subject well. Each class has a weekly music lesson and all pupils have the opportunity to join a choir. The curriculum for music is good and based on nationally recognised guidance supported by a very good published scheme of work. The co-ordinator has taken both documents and drawn up a tailored-made curriculum for the school. This meets the requirements of the National Curriculum well. The statutory curriculum is extended well by participation in concerts and local festivals. Resources are good. All classes have a selection of musical instruments in their rooms and access to a wide range of instruments stored centrally. However, there are too few books available about famous composers.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. Pupils reach standards which match those expected for their age, and are at a similar to those found during the previous inspection. This subject has had a low priority while the school has been raising standards in the basic skills. However,

progress is satisfactory and there are some links with other schools that are a good feature. For example, all pupils have the opportunity to swim during the year using the local grammar school's pool. The syllabus is provided by the Amateur Swimming Association. Most pupils swim 25 metres by Year 6 with varying degrees of confidence. The school also participates in the English Schools' Athletics Award Scheme. Football and netball are effectively catered for as part of extra-curricular activities as well as the skills being taught in lessons.

126. In Year 3 gymnastics, pupils learn to improve their balancing skills using different parts of the body, sometimes they work well collaboratively in pairs and pupils demonstrate to each other good examples of balancing. In all lessons pupils learn the importance of warming up properly to avoid injury and they will often stretch and move quickly sometimes running on the spot. In athletics, Year 4 pupils develop their throwing skills effectively using bean bags and recording the distance. They play various games, developing basket ball skills, evaluating their own performance, and suggesting ways of improving it. In Year 5, they effectively develop the skills in athletics of starting quickly in a sprint race to launch themselves from the start line, pumping their arms to give maximum speed. At this stage, they are learning controlled actions and show a competitive edge in their work. Pupils understand that vigorous exercise has an effect on the heart and lungs and that regular exercise is important to good health. In Year 6, pupils discuss the most effective way to perform standing jump in athletics. They know that it is important to intersperse very vigorous activity with some that is less vigorous to avoid exhaustion. They learn to throw lightweight javelins effectively and take part in hurdle practises. During one lesson non-participants were effectively used to record and evaluate other pupils' work.
127. The quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers plan their lessons effectively. They take care to ensure that pupils are dressed appropriately and that, for example, when pupils move large heavy mats they do so carefully. Teachers all make sure that pupils have the opportunity to warm-up at the beginning of the lesson and warm-down afterwards. There is good use of probing questioning to develop pupils' skills. In a well taught Year 6 athletics lesson for example, the teacher constantly reinforced pupils' work by asking them to evaluate their movements and how to improve them when running, throwing the javelin or hurdling. In all lessons, pupils are kept active and are asked to evaluate their movements, developing their skills. Pupils are well managed and they enjoy physical education. Pupils from all backgrounds are fully involved in physical education and it is an opportunity for lower attainers or those with special educational needs to achieve similar standards to their peers and sometimes exceed them. Teachers take great care to ensure that such examples are recognised by asking them to demonstrate for example, in gymnastics.
128. The subject is well co-ordinated by an enthusiastic subject leader. The curriculum is due for review to ensure that national guidance is followed, but the inspection found that all aspects of physical education are taught. The school has a satisfactory level of resources for the subject and benefits from a playing field which enables games and athletics to be taught effectively.