

INSPECTION REPORT

LANGLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Olton

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104080

Headteacher: Anne Devrell

Reporting inspector: Michael Best
10413

Dates of inspection: 17th – 20th March 2003

Inspection number: 246350
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: St. Bernard's Road
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Solihull

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Sue P Stocks

Date of previous inspection: 2nd February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Michael Best 10413	Registered inspector	Music	Characteristics of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
Patricia Edwards 10965	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values & personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
William Gale 21317	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
Trudy Cotton 3751	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Inclusion Special educational needs	
Angela Wilkinson- Tilbrook 10068	Team inspector	Foundation Stage History	The school's provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development
Clive Lewis 22831	Team inspector	Science Physical education	
Alison Storey 32172	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Religious education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Langley Primary is a much larger than average sized school with 516 pupils on the school roll (483 full-time, 33 part-time). There are 272 boys and 244 girls aged between 3 and 11 years. Children in the nursery attend for either morning or afternoon sessions. All children in the reception classes attend on a full-time basis. The school serves a mixture of owned and rented homes. Very few pupils live close to the school. Many come from across the local authority border in Acocks Green and Hall Green. The proportion of pupils taking free school meals was similar to the national average until this year when it has fallen significantly to below average. Employment is high but many parents work part-time, unsocial hours in the service industries. The local authority looks after one pupil. The school is subject to the local education authority's reorganisation arrangements. Two-thirds of pupils in some Year 6 classes have joined the school other than at the usual time, which is very high.

Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is broadly average, but the school attracts a high proportion of pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties who join at other times. It has put in place the new Code of Practice¹. Nearly a quarter of pupils have special educational needs, which is above the national average. They have a wide range of learning needs. Four pupils have Statements, which is average for the number on roll. A further 13 pupils are currently undergoing statutory assessment. Higher than average numbers of pupils have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Nearly a third of pupils come from minority ethnic groups and a fifth speak English as an additional language. These proportions are above the national averages. Four pupils are at the early stages of learning English.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school. Standards in English, mathematics and science are rising as a result of recent improvements in the quality of the curriculum and in teaching and learning. The governing body and senior managers strongly demonstrate both the commitment and capacity to meet the challenges arising from significant changes in the school's pupil intake and staffing. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The governing body and senior managers have a good understanding of the school's shortcomings and a clear vision of how to address them.
- Pupils' attitudes to school, their relationships with staff and each other, and their respect for each other's values and beliefs reflect the school's good provision for social development.
- Teaching is good in Reception and Years 2, 4, 5 and 6.
- Links with parents are good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English and science are not high enough.
- Standards in art are below national expectations, particularly in drawing.
- Inconsistencies in teaching and learning between and within some year groups.
- The provision for outdoor play for children in the nursery.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1998. There have been considerable changes since that time. There has been a big increase in the number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The number of pupils with special educational needs has also risen sharply. Many of these pupils join the school other than at the usual time. As a result, the school is now less favourably placed and test scores at the end of Year 6 fell in 2002. The school has since worked hard to meet the increased challenge, and inspection evidence indicates an upturn in standards in the present year. The school has satisfactorily addressed the key issues identified in the last inspection report. It now has effective policies and procedures in place for supporting and monitoring teaching and the curriculum. Plans for the future are regularly discussed, monitored and reviewed, although some success criteria are not sharp enough. The needs of more able

¹ The new special educational needs Code of Practice was introduced during the school year 2001-2. There are now four stages of support – School Action, School Action Plus, Statutory Assessment and Statemented.

pupils are better recognised. Home-school communication has improved. The quality, content and presentation of written work have improved in English lessons but not across the whole curriculum. The provision for information and communication technology is much improved and standards are now similar to those expected nationally. Similarly, standards in religious education at the end of Year 6 are now in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

STANDARDS

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

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

Compared with all schools, in 2002 standards were well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools, standards were average in mathematics and science and below average in English. The school's changing pupil profile has affected the trend in its results. Test results in 2002 at the end of Year 2 show that standards were well below the national average in reading, very low in writing and below the national average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, standards were well below average in reading, very low in writing and average in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science indicate below average results. These results are lower than those achieved in earlier years.

By the end of the reception year, the majority of children meet the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning and many exceed them in their personal, social and emotional development, in their communication, language and literacy development, and in their creative development. In English, current standards are average in speaking and listening but below the national averages in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in mathematics are similar to the national averages at the end of Years 2 and 6. In science, standards are similar to the national average in science at the end of Year 2 but below average at the end of Year 6. Pupils' investigative, enquiry and thinking skills are not sufficiently developed. Standards in art and design are below those expected nationally at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in religious education are similar to those outlined in the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In all other subjects, standards are similar to those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress because the school's provision has recently improved. The school successfully identifies abler pupils and makes suitable provision for them to achieve their potential. Pupils with statements outlining their special educational needs make good progress. Other pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to other pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The great majority of pupils enjoy coming to school. They are interested in activities and respond well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils are well behaved. A small minority of pupils display challenging behaviour that affects the learning of others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good and this has a positive impact on the way pupils treat one another. Personal development is satisfactory. Pupils are keen to accept responsibility when given the opportunity.
Attendance	Attendance and punctuality are both good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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 is satisfactory. It is improving in response to good quality planning and the school's commitment to raising standards. However, teachers' use of assessment information to pinpoint the next step in pupils' learning is not yet consistent enough. Most teachers provide a suitable level of challenge for the most and least able. Teaching is good in English because of the new arrangements for teaching and learning introduced at the start of this school year. Staff are successfully developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. Target setting and detailed marking are helping to raise pupils' standards in writing. In mathematics, teaching is satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 3 and good in Years 4 to 6. Teachers are working hard to develop pupils' skills in applying their knowledge to problem solving situations. Support staff give good support to those pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The quality of teaching and learning in the reception classes is good. The new staff team work well together. Staff manage pupils well and make effective use of assessment information to develop children's skills and knowledge in the areas of learning leading to the Early Learning Goals. Over time, teaching and learning in the nursery are at least satisfactory but the teaching during the inspection by supply teachers was unsatisfactory. In Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are satisfactory; some teachers do not readily seize and develop pupils' ideas and suggestions. In Years 4, 5 and 6, teaching is good; staff work very hard to harness pupils' enthusiasm and energies, and standards of attainment are rising. There are weaknesses in teaching and learning in Year 3 where some teachers' expectations are too low and class management is weak.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a wide range of learning opportunities for its pupils, especially in Years 4 to 6. These are enriched by a good variety of additional activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The school makes good provision for pupils with statements. The provision for other pupils is sound.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school makes satisfactory provision for the high number of pupils on roll. Its provision for those pupils at the early stages of learning English is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. The provision for social and moral development is good. Spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Assessment procedures are sound but insufficient use is made of the information gathered to inform teachers' planning.

The school's partnership with parents is good. Parents are kept well informed about school events and are welcomed into the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads and manages the school well. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff, who make an important contribution to the school's work. Subject management is good and this is helping to move the school forward.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are well led and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. There are sound procedures in place to monitor teaching and learning. The school development plan is a comprehensive document but success criteria are not always sharp enough.
The strategic use of resources	Educational priorities are well supported through financial planning. The governing body and senior management team soundly apply <i>best value</i> principles in their decision-making.

The considerable turnover of staff in the last two years has been pivotal in addressing the changing needs and aspirations of the school. Learning resources are satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Three hundred and fifty four parent questionnaires (71 per cent) were returned and 30 parents attended a meeting with inspectors.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children are happy in school. They say that <i>the school has a real buzz</i>. • The support for pupils with special needs. • The commitment of the headteacher and staff and the improvements since the last inspection. • The information they receive from the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistency in the setting of homework.

Inspectors agree with the positive points raised by parents. The headteacher leads the school well. Parents are kept well informed about events and pupils have good attitudes to school. There are some inconsistencies in the setting of homework, particularly at half terms, and these have been brought to the school's attention.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Results of the National Curriculum tests at the end Year 2 and Year 6 in 2002 were much lower than those of 2001. However, because the school has taken firm action, standards noted during the inspection are better than indicated by the most recent test results. This is against a background of significant changes in the pupil profile since the time of the last inspection. These are now presenting the school with considerable challenges.
2. Since the school was last inspected in 1998, the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups for whom English is an additional language has doubled and there has been an almost four-fold increase in the number of pupils identified as having special educational needs. The number of statemented pupils has risen from none to four, and there are another 13 pupils whose needs are in the process of being statutorily assessed. Although the number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual time has fallen to 12 per cent in the last year, it remains higher than that found in most primary schools. In some of the current Years 5 and 6 classes, over two-thirds of pupils joined the school other than at the usual time, especially after Year 3. The school is in a period of transition as part of the local education authority's reorganisation arrangements. The number of pupils on roll has now peaked and is reducing. Very few pupils come from the area around the school.
3. Many pupils who join the school other than at the usual time have limited skills and often the school is unable to obtain assessment records from their previous schools. For some pupils, their difficulties mask their true academic potential and it takes time for teachers to ascertain what these pupils know and can do. A significant number of pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and others with a variety of learning difficulties, join the school in Years 4, 5 and 6 from other schools within and beyond the Solihull authority area. With pupils also leaving the school, the mix of abilities in each year group is constantly changing. The evidence from the inspection indicates that most pupils make sound and many make good progress. Significant improvements in the curriculum and in teaching are working through the school. These strategies are raising the standards achieved by pupils.
4. Analysis of the 2002 National Curriculum statutory tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 2 shows that the proportions of pupils gaining Level 2² or above are well below the national average in reading, very low in writing and below the national average in mathematics. The proportions of pupils gaining Level 3 are well below the national average in reading and below the national averages in writing and mathematics. Compared with similar schools (on the basis of free school meal entitlement), standards are well below average in reading, very low in writing and average in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science indicated below average results. These results represent a significant drop in standards in reading and writing compared with previous years. Some of this can be attributed to the overall ability of year group, but there are other issues, to do with staffing and the accuracy of teachers' assessments, that the school has now resolved.

² The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils are expected to reach Level 2 by the end of Year 2. If a pupil is attaining Level 3 then he or she is reaching standards above those expected for a child of his or her age.

5. Analysis of the 2002 National Curriculum statutory tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 6 shows that the proportions of pupils gaining Level 4³ or above are well below the national average in English and below the national averages in mathematics and science. The proportions of pupils gaining Level 5 are below the national average in mathematics and science and well below the national averages in English. Compared with similar schools (on the basis of free school meal entitlement), standards are average in mathematics and science and below average in English. The trend in the school's results at the end of Year 6 is below that found nationally. It is this lack of higher levels and the higher proportion of pupils achieving below the average that is dragging the school's results down in comparison with other schools nationally. This is, however, a fair reflection of the ability range in the present Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. The proportion of the ablest pupils is lower than that found in most schools. The proportion of least able is about average. The proportion of pupils in the middle group is particularly large and their needs are very diverse. Some have low self-esteem, but many lack the breadth and depth of vocabulary to express themselves fully.

6. In the past, the school has not responded rapidly enough to these differing and changing needs of its new pupils. This is no longer the case. The considerable turnover of staff in the last two years has been pivotal in addressing the changing needs and aspirations of the school. Good strategies are now in place to support pupils and build up their confidence as learners, and this is reflected in the progress they make. The school has looked hard at why standards have fallen and has implemented, for example, a planned programme for raising levels in speaking, reading and writing. This closer attention to specific learning targets, based on the primary strategies and other nationally available planning documents⁴, is enabling pupils to make better progress with their learning.

7. In conjunction with the local education authority, the school set targets for the proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving Level 4 or above in the statutory tests. The targets, set in 2000 for 2002, were not met. The higher than average turnover of pupils contributed to the original targets being no longer practicable. For the same reasons, current targets set in 2001 are unlikely to be met. The school has revised its own targets, based on assessment information available about its current pupils, and these are a more accurate reflection of what is achievable. In 2002, the gap between teachers' assessments of pupils' potential and their actual performance in the tests was wider than it should have been. Inspection findings indicate that pupils' performance in lessons is higher when they have adult support to interpret and shape their thinking. The school has already recognised – and inspectors endorse – the need to develop further pupils' investigative, enquiry, thinking and interpretative skills. This is necessary to help pupils to more confidently adapt their knowledge and skills to achieve a better understanding and solution to the problems and scenarios they meet in real life, and under test conditions.

8. Children enter the nursery with a wide range of skills and experiences. Although the attainment on entry is average, the range of ability varies from very high to very low. Assessments in the reading and mathematical areas of learning administered soon after children enter the reception class also indicate a wide range of ability. The majority of children meet the Early Learning Goals⁵ in all areas of learning by the end of their year in the reception classes. Inspection findings indicate that many children are likely to exceed these in their personal, social and emotional development; in the communication, language and literacy area of learning; and in their creative development. The

³ The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils are expected to reach Level 4 by the end of Year 6 when they are aged 11. If a pupil is attaining Level 5 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

⁴ The national strategies for literacy and numeracy, and the curriculum plans published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

⁵ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and finishes at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling, based on six areas of learning. These are communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development. The stages of learning at the Foundation Stage are referred to as *Stepping Stones* and lead to the Early Learning Goals.

improvements in children's communication, language and literary skills are the result of more rigorous teaching and learning.

9. In English, standards are average in speaking and listening but below the national averages in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The National Literacy Strategy is firmly established in the school, but teachers are less proficient at matching work to pupils' needs in the independent working sessions than they are when directly teaching pupils in class or group situations. This has a particular impact on the standard of pupils' writing. The National Numeracy Strategy is also soundly established in the school. Standards in mathematics are similar to the national averages at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils make the best progress in number, shape and measure. As a result of teachers' increased emphasis on mental and oral work, pupils are developing confidence in their understanding and use of mathematical language. Although improving, their application of skills is still insecure. In science, standards are similar to the national average at the end of Year 2 but below average at the end of Year 6 because of pupils' prior lack of training in independent thinking and scientific enquiry skills. The school has adopted nationally recommended arrangements for teaching science from Years 1 to 6. These place considerably more attention than hitherto on investigative science at all ages, and the quality of teaching and learning in science throughout the school is improving as a result.
10. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are similar to those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The use of the new technologies has improved since the last inspection and standards are higher. Pupils increasingly apply their ICT skills and knowledge in different subjects of the curriculum. Standards in religious education are similar to those outlined in the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is also an improvement. In design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education, standards are similar to those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in art and design are below those expected nationally at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 because teachers do not systematically develop pupils' skills as they move through the school.
11. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress from the Foundation Stage to the end of Year 6 but that this progress is not always even. Overall, pupils make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress in lessons. Pupils in Year 3 are not making consistent progress. There are weaknesses in teaching and learning in this year group.
12. In English, mathematics and science the school collects useful information from tests and other assessments. It undertakes some analyses of pupils' attainment and progress and this data is helping to raise standards. The school is now gathering helpful assessment information about pupils' work in the non-core⁶ subjects and religious education. At present, this information is not being used as well as it could be to inform teaching. Analysis of test results indicates some minor differences in the attainment of boys and girls from year to year, but these are not particularly significant. The school effectively tracks the progress of different groups in the school. It successfully identifies pupils who are gifted or talented and those who have learning difficulties.
13. The special educational needs co-ordinator targets and monitors progress and support. This is effective for pupils with statements of need and satisfactory for pupils identified at School Action Plus. Pupils with learning difficulties benefit from the regular support of well-qualified support staff, either on a one-to-one basis or within small groups. Success motivates pupils and they invariably make good progress in these settings. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need make good progress because of the regular help they receive in lessons from support staff who have the expertise to respond to their

⁶ The non-core subjects of the National Curriculum are art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and physical education.

specific, individual needs. Work is carefully planned and follows the targets set for learning in pupils' individual plans. Other pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. This is because most pupils receive extra targeted support for difficulties with reading, writing and mathematics. The school draws on the expertise of specialists from outside school for guidance with pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. In some classes, such as Year 3, the progress of the majority of pupils is checked by the inappropriate behaviour of a small minority.

14. Pupils learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. They work in a range of different groups, for instance, when receiving extra help with their spelling and writing or working in a *guided reading* group. All pupils are fully included into school life. There are minority ethnic group pupils in all ability groups, including those working at the higher levels.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. The attitudes of the majority of pupils to their work are good. They enjoy coming to school and are interested in the activities provided by the teachers. This is in line with the findings of the previous report. In the best lessons, pupils are enthusiastic and try their best. For instance, reception class children were eager to take part in their swimming lesson and listened carefully to the instructions given them. Parents agree that the school promotes positive attitudes and values.
16. In both the nursery and reception classes, children generally work and play well together. Occasionally, the large number of boys in the nursery, twice as many as girls, results in noisy and boisterous behaviour. In the reception classes, behaviour is very good. Children are knowledgeable about, and proud of, their achievements. They have made up their own class rules and have a clear understanding of right and wrong; they consistently demonstrate care and consideration for others. In Years 1 to 6, standards of behaviour are satisfactory. Although pupils' behaviour in the majority of lessons is good, a minority display challenging behaviour. Where teachers' behaviour management is not always consistent or effective, this hinders the learning of other pupils.
17. Pupils' behaviour in the playground is good. Some older pupils act as buddies for those needing a playmate. The majority of pupils move around the school calmly and politely. They show respect for the environment, the school's and each other's property. Pupils are courteous and treat staff, parents and visitors politely. They demonstrate their acceptance of a clear moral code and they know whom to approach if incidents of bullying occur. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem in the school and parents endorse this. Pupils say that the headteacher deals swiftly and effectively with any such incidents. There were 12 fixed-term exclusions, mainly of boys for bad behaviour in lessons, during the last reporting year. This is above the national average.
18. Pupils with special educational needs are keen to learn but at times they lack confidence when faced with new experiences. However, with the encouragement and expertise of supporting adults, many are willing to *have a go*. For instance, when working in small groups, pupils learn how to listen more carefully and answer questions specifically; when back in class, they successfully apply these skills.
19. Relationships between all members of the school community are good. The majority of pupils know that all the adults want what is best for them. This has a positive impact on the way pupils treat each other. Boys and girls of all ages mix freely. They work and play well together and thoughtfully care for each other. They consider each other's feelings and beliefs, as seen in a Year 5 religious education lesson where pupils were discussing feelings while studying the Stations of the Cross.

20. The personal development of pupils is satisfactory. They willingly accept responsibilities and enjoy helping with the routines of class and school, such as register monitors and serving on the school council. Pupils' ability to use their own initiative and take responsibility for their own learning in lessons and when completing their homework is satisfactory. In the past, pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to plan their own work. Teachers are successfully addressing this and pupils are responding positively to these changes.
21. The published figure of 93.3 per cent attendance for the last reporting year was below the national average and lower than found at the previous inspection. This figure has subsequently been discovered to be incorrect as the result of a clerical error in recording the attendance of a pupil who also received tuition at another establishment. Attendance for the current academic year is over 95 per cent, which is above the national average. Punctuality is good and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

22. The overall quality of teaching and learning in the school is satisfactory. These judgements draw upon a wide range of evidence gathered during the inspection, including the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning as well as inspectors' classroom observations. Key elements of teaching are improving; notably the quality of lesson planning and the better account being taken of the needs of different groups of pupils, even though there is further to go in this dimension. The quality of pupils' learning is also improving because they are increasingly more involved in the process of understanding the relevance of what they learn, as well as the more systematic acquisition of skills and knowledge. These improvements stem from recent changes in staffing and organisation. The impact of these on standards in the current school year is particularly evident in English where writing is improving; in mathematics where pupils' confidence in using and understanding mathematical language is improving; and in science where pupils are taking increasing responsibility for designing their own investigations.
23. During the inspection, 103 whole or part lessons were observed. In these, teaching was satisfactory or better in 95 per cent. This is similar to that reported at the time of the last inspection. In 61 per cent, teaching was good or better, with 13 per cent judged very good and 2 per cent excellent. In four lessons, teaching was unsatisfactory (4 per cent) and it was poor in one lesson (1 per cent). The proportion of good and better teaching is just below the average reported in HMCI's latest annual report.
24. Teaching and learning in the reception classes are good. The new staff team successfully promotes a happy and supportive atmosphere in which children feel secure and enjoy the varied and interesting activities their teachers provide for them. Staff manage pupils well and make effective use of assessment information to develop children's skills and knowledge in the areas of learning leading to the Early Learning Goals. The recent introduction of new arrangements for teaching phonics is providing children with a good foundation in literacy skills. Scrutiny of teachers' planning and children's work indicates that, over time, teaching and learning in the nursery are at least satisfactory. However, teaching during the inspection was unsatisfactory. Both the permanent staff - teacher and nursery nurse - are absent due to serious illness. Temporary staff are currently running the nursery. On the first day of the inspection, the temporary teacher was called into hospital and a supply teacher came in at short notice. The school has great difficulty in securing supply staff with experience and training for this age group, particularly in the areas of learning leading to the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals. Despite teachers' willingness and best intentions, the quality of teaching, and in consequence children's learning, was unsatisfactory in most of the lessons observed.

25. In Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Two-thirds of lessons in Year 2 and half the lessons in Year 1 were judged good or better. An excellent literary lesson in a Year 1 class provided a high level of challenge for pupils of a wide ability range. The quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy is better than in other subjects. Although satisfactory overall, teaching in some lessons in these year groups is too directed; teachers do not readily seize and develop pupils' ideas and suggestions. In these lessons, pupils are not sufficiently inspired to develop their thinking, or explore and investigate what they are learning.
26. In Year 3, a third of lessons seen were unsatisfactory or poor and the remaining lessons were no better than satisfactory. There are important issues for the school to address in this year group with regard to teachers' expectations, their organisation and management of pupils, and the use of assessment information to challenge pupils' learning effectively. In Years 4, 5 and 6, teaching is good. In each of these year groups, teaching was good or better in seven out of ten lessons, and over a third of the lessons seen in Year 5 were very good. An excellent music lesson in Year 4 instantly captured pupils' imagination and enabled them to successfully bring together a number of different skills in listening, composing and performing, and achieve high standards in their work. Similarly, in a gymnastics lesson in Year 5, good relationships, the systematic development of different skills and the judicious use of praise, examples and guidance enabled pupils to achieve standards beyond which they felt themselves capable. In these year groups, staff are working very hard to harness pupils' enthusiasm and energies. The quality of pupils' learning is improving and standards are starting to rise.
27. Teaching is good in English and music and satisfactory in science, information and communication technology, design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education. In mathematics, teaching is satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 3 and good in Years 4 to 6. In art and design, although the lessons seen were satisfactory, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are not systematically developed and this is having an adverse effect on pupils' learning over time.
28. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are satisfactory. Individual teachers have specific strengths in certain subject areas. A growing strength of the school's subject co-ordination is the guidance and support available to classroom teachers. Help from outside experts is used effectively to focus the way forward, notably in literacy. As a result, teachers' confidence is growing and they are willing to take pupils' learning that important step further. Teachers know who to ask for advice and, in the best practice, discuss with subject co-ordinators the preparations for and the outcomes of their lessons. Support staff play an important part in promoting pupils' learning. They work effectively with pupils both in class and in small group settings. A strength of their work is the good relationships they have with pupils. Support staff keep helpful records of the work pupils cover and regularly discuss pupils' progress with class teachers.
29. Teachers plan together in year groups for the week ahead and draw upon a suitable range of teaching methods to deliver their lessons. Most lessons have three parts - an introduction, independent and guided activities and a plenary (review) session where pupils have the opportunity to discuss what they have learnt. Teachers identify learning activities for groups of pupils of differing abilities. Their expectations of what pupils can achieve are satisfactory overall. Where teaching is of high quality, teachers do not impose a ceiling on learning. However, teachers' use of the information they gather about pupils' attainment and progress is not yet consistent enough to pinpoint what individuals and groups of pupils need to do to successfully achieve the next step in learning. Most teachers provide a suitable level of challenge for the most and least able.
30. In some lessons, such as numeracy in Years 1, 2 and 3, teachers set similar work to that already successfully completed rather than providing challenges that widen pupils'

understanding and application of familiar skills and knowledge. In many instances, pupils' lack confidence in interpreting the question or applying alternative solutions to a problem. A common feature of the high quality teaching in the school is the emphasis on encouraging pupils to think about what they are learning and to take the initiative to try out their ideas and hunches, even if these are later found to be wanting. Developments, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6, to more actively promote pupils' investigative and experimental understanding in science, their application of skills and knowledge in mathematics and the quality and range of their reading and writing, are successfully raising standards.

31. Lessons usually start with teachers identifying what pupils are going to learn and what they will be looking for as evidence that they have been successful. In the best lessons, teachers share these learning outcomes at the beginning of the lesson, remind pupils of them during the lesson, and review them with the pupils at the end to decide if they have been achieved. The quality of teachers' ongoing assessment is satisfactory but it is not used well enough. The school's policy whereby daily lesson plans are annotated to show whether the majority of pupils achieved the learning outcomes, or whether further reinforcement is needed, is not consistently applied. The procedures are sound but the practice requires some adjustment to more accurately target the learning of those pupils who are within sight of the next level of attainment.
32. Many lessons start off promisingly at a good pace, but often this slows when pupils are working independently and it is not restored in the review (plenary) session. Some teaching sessions, particularly for literacy and numeracy, exceed the recommended times with no obvious benefit. Teachers have sound expectations of pupils' behaviour. Most manage their classes successfully. There are, however, a number of pupils with significant behavioural difficulties who are, at times, particularly challenging, and teachers are not always consistent or effective in their handling of these situations. In particular, where lessons get off to a slow start, these pupils take advantage of the situation and this affects the learning of all pupils in the class. Pupils returning from small group and individual work outside the classroom sometimes disrupt the learning of the whole class.
33. Most pupils co-operate well with each other and, when asked, collaborate well. The majority of pupils are interested and willing learners and keen to take on some responsibility for their own learning. However, teachers do not consistently provide them with sufficient opportunities for this. On occasions, teachers do not sufficiently value the initiative taken by different groups of pupils, for example in offering different interpretations of an experiment's findings or in suggesting different ways of solving a problem. Pupils own knowledge of their learning is satisfactory. In Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils have a clear understanding of how they can improve their work as a result of good quality marking and feedback from their teachers.
34. The school has an agreed homework policy and this is satisfactorily followed. Parents would like to see better consistency between classes and year groups in the setting of homework. Although they value the research projects set for half-term holidays, they say they would like more notice of the subject matter in order to have more time to source information. This is particularly important to parents who are following the school's requests not to take their holidays during term time.

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

35. The school provides a good range of opportunities for learning. Teachers have spent a considerable amount of time and thought in considering the curriculum since the last inspection. A wide range of discussions has taken place about the nature of pupils' learning and the problems that may be causing the disappointing standards in some

subjects. As a result of this, the school has introduced substantial curriculum improvements, especially for older pupils. There has been satisfactory improvement in the overall balance of the curriculum, with better opportunities for pupils to learn in all subjects. Co-ordinators have developed policies and schemes that cover each element of subjects, except in art and design where planning is still being developed. There is improved planning for the development of enquiry skills and extended writing, although this has so far only had a limited effect on pupils' attainment in these areas.

36. Planning for learning in the Foundation Stage is well organised. It includes a good range of activities to develop children's understanding in all areas. Staff base their planning on the recommended *Stepping Stones* in the development of skills and knowledge. The range of planning ensures that children of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, are included in learning. There is clear planning for progression through the nursery and reception classes leading to the Early Learning Goals. This provides children with a suitable basis for learning during the next stage of their education. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 covers all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.
37. There is a satisfactory range of opportunities for learning in Years 1 and 2. Over the course of the school year, the school provides a satisfactory amount of time for each subject and this enables teachers to plan to cover the key elements in each area. Morning lessons in literacy and numeracy are sometimes over an hour in length. Teachers do not always make the best use of the extended time and this adversely affects the level of pupils' attention and concentration during lessons. Overall, there is a good range of opportunities for learning in Years 3 to 6. Subject planning is especially strong in Years 5 and 6 where teachers and subject co-ordinators have begun to take rigorous action to raise standards. The impact of this improved planning is becoming evident in the quality of pupils' work. There is increased evidence of systematic planning to develop pupils' thinking, questioning and investigative skills, which are still relatively weak. This planning includes consideration of important issues, such as how pupils' literacy skills affect their learning in other subjects, or when they are tackling problems involving substantial reading in mathematics.
38. The school has a clear rationale for *booster* sessions in literacy and numeracy to improve the learning of those with the potential to reach a higher level in their work. These sessions have only been relatively recently introduced, but they form a good basis for further development which is targeted at the specific needs of pupils. Subject co-ordinators are beginning to use the data teachers collect on pupils' performance to identify notable weaknesses in learning and adjust their planning accordingly. This area needs further development for pupils to make the best possible progress in their learning.
39. Subject policies and schemes include suitable recommendations for planning of teaching and learning. The joint planning by teachers in each year group leads to consistency in the application of subject policies. In most subjects, teachers plan activities to meet the needs of three different levels of ability. Whilst pupils who are above average or below average are suitably challenged, some average ability pupils repeat skills that they have previously mastered. The school has yet to more accurately identify and meet the needs of these pupils, particularly in those parts of lessons where pupils are working independently without direct adult intervention.
40. The school's arrangements for teaching the skills of literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. Policies follow the recommendations of the literacy and numeracy strategies. Teachers plan lessons to provide sufficient time for whole class and group work. Since the last inspection, the school has abandoned its previous policy of ability groups in literacy and numeracy and has introduced classes with the full range of pupil ability. This enables pupils of lower ability to benefit from working with the more able. There are signs that

pairing pupils of different abilities for subjects, such as reading, is beginning to bear fruit, but the practice requires teachers to be more precise in their planning. There is a suitable emphasis on the basic skills of reading, writing and number, which is resulting in pupils developing skills well in areas such as their knowledge of phonics and use of addition and subtraction. The planning is not as effective in developing pupils' skills in reading comprehension and the application of number. Many teachers have a tendency to adhere rigidly to prescribed units in literacy and numeracy and are only just beginning to amend planning to meet the specific needs of pupils in classes. Where greater flexibility in planning is evident, as in Years 5 and 6, pupils make better progress in developing more advanced skills in literacy and numeracy.

41. The arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. The school responds successfully to the diverse needs of pupils with statements of special educational need. It consults with professionals with relevant specialist knowledge and uses their skills and guidance to assess, guide and monitor its provision. This means that pupils with statements have specific, focused help with their learning and so make good progress. The targets for literacy in pupils' individual education plans are particularly relevant, specific and measurable. Most other pupils identified as having special educational needs have difficulties with their reading, writing and mathematics. Provision is either through work within the class or in small groups outside. Although pupils make steady to good progress in small withdrawal groups, they sometimes miss out on work in class lessons. Co-ordinators and teachers' planning takes account of pupils' individual education plans in lessons in literacy and numeracy, and this allows pupils to be fully included in most activities. There is less evidence of the use of individual education plan targets in planning in other subject areas and pupils sometimes find it difficult to cope with work in these lessons. Provision for extra support for pupils with special educational needs and peripatetic music is often in small groups outside the classroom. The school has a rolling programme for this provision, but occasionally pupils miss the same subject each week. The school makes satisfactory arrangements for the small number of pupils with English as an additional language. They receive a reasonable amount of specialist support and, in literacy lessons, teachers plan to take account of their lower levels of comprehension.
42. Teachers provide a satisfactory range of learning opportunities in personal, social and health education. The school's policy covers all major elements of learning and teachers plan in line with this policy for specific sessions. There is less evidence of linking learning to opportunities in other subject areas. The school has developed satisfactory policies in sex education and drug misuse awareness to supplement its main policy. These meet national requirements.
43. The school provides a good range of additional activities, especially at lunchtime. Teachers organise a good mix of activities, ranging from sports teams, such as football, netball and mini-tennis, to choir and recorder practice. The activities provide good opportunities for pupils to develop social skills and the less confident are provided with specific help through participating in the *Shy Club*. Many of the clubs exist because of pupils' suggestions and, in some instances, pupils lead activities. There is good encouragement for pupils to develop a more structured approach to homework through the provision of a homework club on three days of the week. The school makes satisfactory use of the facilities in the local community. The local area, the shopping centre, roads and natural features are used in geography and the development of local housing and jobs are included in history. The school contributes to significant local events and is proud of its record in local competitions. There are suitable links with the neighbouring secondary school, which includes arrangements for the use of its theatre and sporting facilities. Pupils in Year 6 experience the environment of the secondary school as part of their transfer programme. Links with other nurseries and primary schools are less well developed, despite the fact that a significant proportion of pupils join the school after the

age of five. This is particularly important as many come from across the local authority boundary. The school often has insufficient information about pupils' progress from their previous primary schools.

44. The school makes satisfactory provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. All pupils are fully included and integrated into all aspects of school life. Social development is well promoted through the school's provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Many subject documents provide guidance about opportunities to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in design and technology the school aims to encourage pupils' spiritual development through helping them to recognise their own creativity and the creativity of others. However, there was limited emphasis on this in lessons seen.
45. Collective worship meets statutory requirements and there is good provision for pupils to learn about the beliefs and celebrations of other faiths in assemblies and religious education lessons. Pupils are encouraged to be proud of their own religious beliefs and feel confident in expressing their views. In music lessons, pupils are encouraged to thoughtfully appraise and reflect on pieces of music. In a very good lesson in Year 5 on the Stations of the Cross, the teacher used music sensitively and communicated the story very effectively. This enabled pupils of all beliefs to demonstrate thoughtful appreciation of how Jesus might feel. However, in many other lessons and assemblies, there are missed opportunities for pupils to reflect quietly and to consider their feelings and those of others.
46. The provision for moral education is satisfactory. There is an appropriate code of conduct and pupils help to develop their own classroom rules. The curriculum for personal and social education contributes well to the development of the school's ethos and the *Discipline for Learning* policy identifies the establishing of an appropriate climate for learning. The school expects children to be truthful and honest and tries to ensure that all pupils become valued members of the community. In personal and social education lessons on self-esteem and bullying, pupils in Year 6 consider their own and others' attitudes and values and how to behave responsibly, both as an individual and as a member of a group. Pupils learn effectively about the difference between right and wrong and displays around the school emphasise care and consideration for others. However, there are missed opportunities in history lessons where pupils are studying the Second World War, where there is limited emphasis on considering the wider moral issues of war and its outcomes.
47. Social development is promoted well. There is a very good range of policies in the school for establishing and developing good behaviour. The development of understanding and empathy for others is an essential component of personal and social education. The school aims to help children to manage their relationships confidently and effectively. Every attempt is made to ensure that pupils work collaboratively and co-operatively and there are good procedures for handling and resolving conflict. There is a useful social skills group for identified pupils across the school that focuses on improving listening, sitting still in class and appropriate classroom behaviour. In Year 5 pupils consider the positive and negative consequences of behaviour and how people deal with situations differently. Good social development is encouraged through out of school activities, and especially in taking part in residential education visits where the emphasis is on team building and problem solving. There are opportunities for pupils to contribute more to the school life, for example the school council and clubs established by pupils themselves such as *The shy club* and *The homework club*.
48. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The school attempts to prepare pupils for a culturally diverse life in religious education lessons and through the respect shown to different religious beliefs and cultures in assemblies. The equal opportunities policy sets out the importance of understanding and valuing all pupils. It encourages the

full range of learning styles, including the use of flexible pupil grouping to enable access to and participation in the curriculum. In assembly pupils listen to music from their own and other cultures, for example African drums and English traditional music, but no reference is made to this to encourage an awareness of the style of music or different composers. There are opportunities for pupils to compare their own lives with those living in an Indian village in geography and pupils have studied the Tudors in history. In the reception classes the children celebrate the Chinese New Year and Divali and, through visitors, have learnt about how people from other cultures live. A theatre group has visited the school, but overall there are limited opportunities for pupils to explore and consider the work of different artists and authors.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. The school has maintained its effective care of pupils reported at the time of the previous inspection. It provides a caring environment where all adults working in the school know the pupils well and value them as individuals. Parents are proud of the ethos of the school and have a high level of confidence in the ability of the staff to meet the needs of their children. Teachers closely monitor pupils' personal development. The school places good emphasis on raising their esteem by making them aware of their individual achievements and positively celebrates pupils' academic achievements and successes in activities outside school.
50. The school's agreed behaviour policy is sound. Most staff apply the procedures consistently. Staff, pupils and parents are well aware of the school's procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying. Staff deal swiftly and effectively with any reported incidents of bullying or inappropriate behaviour. The monitoring of attendance is good. Parents complete a leave of absence form when requesting time off for their children. The education welfare officer visits school regularly and works closely with staff where there is perceived to be a problem with attendance. The home-school agreement successfully supports the school's policies on attendance and behaviour. Occasionally, registers are not called promptly at the start of the afternoon session.
51. The child protection policy effectively follows the procedures laid down by the area child protection committee. All members of staff are familiar with the necessary procedures and have undertaken recent training. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy and undertakes regular risk assessments. The necessary checks on equipment are up-to-date. The school maintains appropriate links with outside agencies and the arrangements for first aid, including the recording of accidents and informing parents, are good.
52. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. The school is welcoming to newcomers and provides good support for them as they settle down into the daily routine. Staff identify pupils with particular needs as quickly as possible. They respond effectively to the diverse needs of pupils with statements of special educational needs by calling upon the guidance and support of outside experts as well as providing good support within school. Pupils with special educational needs have very positive relationships with teachers and support staff. They gain in confidence and make good progress because of this welcoming and supportive environment.
53. The school's arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. It makes suitable arrangements to administer the statutory National Curriculum tests and assessments. The school also administers the non-statutory tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. The school is beginning to computerise the assessment data it collects to improve its ability to track pupils' progress over time and to inform the setting of targets for pupils in English, mathematics and science. The system is being developed to record pupils'

attainment at the end of each year group and to set targets for the end of the following year.

54. The school has introduced some elements of good assessment practice, although the application of these is not yet consistent across the school. Pupils have individual targets in English and mathematics and, in some cases, for personal and social development. Teachers discuss these with parents and pupils. In the best practice, the targets are clear, prominently displayed and regularly reviewed. However, in some instances, targets such as *to get better at maths* are not clear enough. There is some emerging good practice in terms of using assessment for learning in writing. Targets are written in pupils' writing books. They know what they have to do to improve their writing. Marking is specific to these points, making it clear to pupils what they have achieved and why, and where they need to improve. As a result, pupils are developing an awareness of their own progress over time and some confidently talked to inspectors about how they had improved in writing.
55. In the core subjects of mathematics and science, pupils are assessed each half term against the key objectives, whilst in English each half term's writing assessment has a different focus. This information successfully informs the next half term's planning and provides a means of monitoring pupil progress across the subject and identifying any gaps in learning. For the non-core subjects and religious education, the school has developed a system to record pupils' attainment at the end of each unit of work. This is in place for all subjects, with the exception of art and design. The information recorded is based on national schemes of work and what is expected of pupils in each year group. Where this recording is good, teachers identify what else those pupils who are working above expectations can do or what those working below have difficulty with. At the moment, subject co-ordinators do not moderate these assessments across the school to ensure accurate assessment and levelling of pupils' work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

56. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to develop its positive links with parents. The majority of parents are pleased with the way the school is educating their children. They find it easy to approach the school and feel well informed regarding the progress their children make. They appreciate the range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school.
57. The quality of information provided for parents is good. The regular newsletters provide parents with useful information about developments. The prospectus folder contains the governors' annual report to parents and the results of statutory tests as well as providing a useful practical guide to the school. Pupils' annual progress reports are satisfactory. They detail work covered and progress made with some broad areas for development, but give limited information as to how parents can help their children at home. There are termly parents' evenings to discuss children's work and progress. A key issue from the last inspection was the use of the home-school book. At the time, this was the main vehicle for communication between teachers and parents. Since then, the school has successfully promoted an *open door* policy. Teachers are willing to talk to parents at any reasonable time, either in person or by telephone. Parents say that the headteacher is very approachable and deals with their concerns promptly. The home-school books are still used, particularly in the younger classes, for the exchange of information. The school has good links with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Staff undertake regular reviews of its provision and share targets for learning with pupils and their parents. Parents are happy with the provision the school makes for their children.
58. Parental involvement in the school and their contribution to learning at home is satisfactory. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school and a

small number of parents help regularly in classes and with swimming. Staff much appreciate this help. The school holds workshops for parents to help them better support their children's learning at home. The Friends' Association is active in organising fund raising and social events such as a film club, discos and summer fair. Support for these activities is good and helps raise funds, which benefit the pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The leadership of the school is good. The headteacher knows what needs to be done to raise standards, and the success of her strategy is starting to be reflected in improving standards. She is highly committed to the school; this is very much appreciated by parents and, under her leadership, the school's capacity for improvement is good. The deputy headteacher gives good support to the headteacher and shares her vision for the future. The school is well managed. Day-to-day routines are well established and the school runs smoothly. The administrative staff give valuable support to the headteacher and teaching staff.
60. In the period since the last inspection, the school has seen considerable changes in the number, background and needs of its pupils as a result of the local education authority's re-organisation plans and demographic changes in the area. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs has risen from under 8 per cent to over 25 per cent. The school has a much richer ethnic mix than at the time of the last inspection. Significantly, the school has admitted many pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties other than at the usual time of admission. In some classes, two-thirds of pupils have joined the school other than in the reception year.
61. The headteacher was new to the school at the time of the last inspection. The action plan drawn up after that inspection was successful in securing major changes to established practice, notably to improve the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. With the help of the local education authority's advisory staff, the headteacher identified strengths and shortcomings in teaching and learning, together with the action required to secure improvements. There has been a considerable turnover of staff in the last two years. This has been pivotal in addressing the changing needs and aspirations of the school. Important aspects of the school's work, notably the development of the curriculum, teaching and learning, have developed rapidly because the headteacher has appointed staff with enthusiasm and expertise to fill co-ordinator posts. As a team, they are working hard to improve the quality of what the school provides for its pupils. Subject co-ordinators provide good leadership. They effectively support year group planning and monitor teachers' planning. They see pupils' completed work and oversee agreed assessment procedures. Co-ordinators are shortly to receive training and guidance in monitoring teaching and learning in order to help them to identify and share good practice more systematically throughout the school. These developments are helping the school to achieve the high standards to which it aspires.
62. The headteacher has, thus far, taken a prominent role in bringing about change and improvement. Now that there is an established management structure, the headteacher is aware that she needs to develop further her role and that of her managers, in the more detailed monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school. Adjustments to teaching, assessment and the curriculum are required, for example, to enable staff to meet more accurately the wide-ranging needs of the significant proportion of pupils of middle ability. The headteacher and chair of governors are aware of the importance of reflecting on what has been achieved and what still needs to be done. Performance management for teachers is successfully established in the school. The governors set annual performance objectives for the headteacher with the help of an external adviser. The headteacher

regularly reviews and revises teachers' job descriptions and team leaders undertake regular classroom observations as part of the review process. This is helping to move the school forward.

63. Provision for special educational needs is well led and managed, and the school has made significant improvements since last inspection. At that time there were few systems in place. The new manager found that the identification of and provision for pupils with special educational needs was not good enough. Staff have worked well as a team to bring the school's provision up to strength. They have audited needs, reviews and resources, reorganised the help given to pupils and monitored the work of the learning support assistants. The current provision is a mixture of in-class support and work in small groups outside the classroom. Statemented pupils and those identified at School Action Plus are set clear targets for their learning in their individual plans. Class teachers and support staff have access to these targets, though they need to make more specific reference to them in planning literacy and numeracy lessons.
64. The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the key issues identified in the previous inspection in 1998. The school has put effective policies and procedures in place for supporting and monitoring teaching and the curriculum. Development planning now involves all members of the school community. Senior managers and governors regularly monitor the progress made towards the targets set. However, some success criteria lack a sharp enough focus. There is now a member of staff responsible for the more able, gifted and talented pupils and their needs are better recognised in teachers' planning, although there is further work to be done in this dimension. Home-school communication has been improved by establishing an *open door* policy whereby parents are welcome to talk to the headteacher and staff at any reasonable time, either in person or by telephone. This is a two-way process, with staff making prompt contact with parents if there is a problem to resolve. The quality, content and presentation of written work have improved in English lessons but not across the whole curriculum as yet. Although not a key issue, the provision for information and communication technology is much improved and standards are now similar to those expected nationally. Similarly, standards in religious education at the end of Year 6 are now in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
65. Governors effectively fulfil their statutory responsibilities and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The chair of governors has valuable professional experience, particularly in human resource management, which she puts to good use in her role in the school. She works well with the school's senior managers, providing a constructively critical sounding board for initiatives. She stresses the importance of the governors' role in evaluating the work of the school and this is a strength of her approach. Many governors are new to the school but, as a group, they have wide and relevant experience in industry and other fields. They are representative of the communities from which the school's pupils are drawn. Recent changes to the committee structure are being well handled, with experienced governors helping to train and inform new members. The governors' role in shaping the direction of the school is good because of the information they have available and the leadership given by the chairperson. The governors are effectively developing their role as the school's critical friend. They have secure understanding of how to improve their knowledge of the school's work so that their decisions are not only informed and monitored but also rigorously evaluated.
66. The school improvement plan is a carefully structured and detailed document prepared by the headteacher with the close involvement of the curriculum co-ordinators. It provides a firm foundation for improvement and the format is accessible to all members of the school community, including parents. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Nevertheless, there are two shortcomings in the current development plan; one is that it does not identify clearly enough the key, over-arching areas for improvement; and the other is that the focus of some of the success criteria are not sharp enough. Staff are well

involved in the development of the school's policies and practices. Governors receive useful background information to inform their decisions. The headteacher keeps parents well informed about the work of the school through regular newsletters. Pupils have their say in the day-to-day running of the school through their elected school council.

67. The school has clear aims and values and these are reviewed annually. The headteacher has a strong commitment to full equal opportunity for all and is working with staff to ensure that this is reflected in the daily life of the school. Pupils' good attitudes demonstrate the successful promotion of a positive school ethos. The school is successfully implementing recent legislation concerning racial equality and the discrimination of people with disabilities.
68. Careful financial planning supports educational priorities well. For example, the school has bought in expert help to assist the literacy, numeracy and science co-ordinators to improve the curriculum and raise standards. Where it is possible to do so, the school budgets systematically for expenditure, is clear about costings, and the pupils benefit from these wisely targeted spending decisions. The school has identified relevant priorities for improvement and spending decisions clearly relate to these priorities. Systems for financial control are unobtrusive and efficient and keep the way clear for classroom teachers to concentrate on their work. The headteacher reports to the governing body on a regular basis and provides the finance sub-committee with very useful, detailed, up-to-date costings and analyses of the school budget. The school makes satisfactory use of new technologies and has recently begun to make good use of database programs to illustrate budget progress and priorities, for example. The school makes effective use of specific grants for their intended purpose, such as funding for *booster classes* and for additional special educational needs support.
69. The governing body and senior management team of the school are aware of the *best value* principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition and, where practicable, effectively apply these principles in their decision-making. The headteacher and governing body actively consider alternative providers for school services, comparing charges from a range of providers and considering alternative solutions. The school consults appropriately both with local education authority financial and curriculum advisors and with parents, keeping them informed about any significant changes to the school curriculum.
70. The school has a suitable number of well-qualified teaching and support staff with a satisfactory balance of experience and expertise. The lunchtime staff make an important and valued contribution to the work of the school. The site manager and his staff work hard to provide a clean, tidy and well-maintained site. Although the school usually has little difficulty in filling permanent teaching posts, it has considerable difficulty in obtaining experienced temporary and supply staff to cover unexpected vacancies arising due to illness. The school is working closely with the local education authority to resolve this issue. The school has agreed a policy for the induction of new staff and this is awaiting ratification by governors. The school is a recognised provider of initial teacher training and offers placements to further and higher education students training to work with children.
71. The accommodation is adequate for the delivery of the curriculum. The provision of two suites for information and communication technology is good. There are good outdoor facilities and a heated indoor swimming pool. However, the lack of outdoor play facilities directly accessible to the nursery is a weakness. Staff provide attractive displays celebrating pupils' achievements in classrooms and in the public areas of the school. The junior library and study areas are attractive and pleasant rooms, but these are not used sufficiently by pupils for independent study and research. The quality and range of resources to support learning are satisfactory overall. There are shortages, for example in geography and history. Since the last inspection, the school has invested well in

resources for the teaching of information and communication technology, and these are now of a good standard.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

72. The governing body, headteacher and staff should:

(1) improve standards in English, science and art and design ** by:

(i) ensuring that:

- ◆ a consistent policy for handwriting and presentation is implemented through the school;
- ◆ the results of teachers' marking are used to guide subsequent work for individuals and groups with similar needs;
- ◆ pupils are given more responsibility for improving and proof-reading their own writing;
- ◆ teachers' planning in other subjects identifies opportunities to develop reading and writing skills;

(paragraphs 94-106)

(ii) systematically planning for the development of pupils' scientific enquiry, investigative and thinking skills;

(paragraphs 116-122)

(iii) ensuring that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of art and the design process are systematically developed, particularly in drawing;

(paragraphs 123-126)

(2) strengthen the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school ** by:

(i) using day-to-day assessment about what pupils know, understand and can do to increase teachers' expectations and inform their planning of the next steps in learning, particularly for those pupils who have the capacity to reach the next level of attainment in their work;

(ii) providing pupils with regular opportunities to take responsibility for their learning, show initiative and become involved in measuring their own progress;

(iii) improving, where necessary, teachers' management of pupils and the pace at which lessons are conducted;

(iv) ensuring that inconsistencies in teaching, both between and within year groups, are identified and addressed through regular monitoring and evaluation of lessons, teachers' planning and pupils' work;

(paragraphs 7, 9, 20, 24-33, 54-55, 61-62)

(3) work with the local educational authority to ensure that there is suitable provision for outdoor activities for children in the nursery. *(paragraphs 71, 89)*

**** The school has already identified these areas in its current development plan.**

The governors should also ensure that:

- pupils who receive additional help either individually or in small groups do not miss the same class lesson each week; *(paragraph 41)*

- the school development plan identifies key, over-arching priorities for improvement and that success criteria are more sharply focused; (*paragraph 66*)
- there is provision for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to reach the nationally expected standard in swimming by the end of Year 6; (*paragraph 155*)
- registers are called promptly at the start of the afternoon session. (*paragraph 50*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	103
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	63

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	2	13	46	34	4	1	0
Percentage	2	13	46	34	4	1	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Teaching was not graded in three lessons where observations were made of pupils' independent learning and achievement.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	17	483
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	48

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	130

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	93

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	34

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year. These are the published figures, which, when audited, were found to be incorrect. See paragraph 21 of the report for further information.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	33	24	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	20	14	27
	Girls	19	19	24
	Total	39	33	51
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	68 (94)	58 (91)	89 (96)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	18	23	25
	Girls	19	21	21
	Total	37	44	46
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	65 (94)	77 (94)	81 (93)
	National	85 (85)	89 (88)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	44	46	90

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	27	28	40
	Girls	33	31	37
	Total	60	59	77
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	67 (69)	66 (69)	86 (88)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	34	34	37
	Girls	36	37	36
	Total	70	71	73
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	78 (81)	79 (82)	81 (87)
	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	304	11	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	13	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	8	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	8	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	43	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	18	1	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	5	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	9	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	8	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	21.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	336

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	11
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	1,129,053
Total expenditure	1,155,759
Expenditure per pupil	2,056
Balance brought forward from previous year	49,727
Balance carried forward to next year	23,021

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 68.6%

Number of questionnaires sent out	516
Number of questionnaires returned	354

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	39	4	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	47	3	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	60	6	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	52	16	5	1
The teaching is good.	51	45	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	42	10	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	31	3	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	36	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	51	41	7	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	63	34	2	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	42	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	45	10	3	7

Other issues raised by parents

- Inconsistencies in setting homework

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

73. The education that children receive in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. In the reception classes, it is consistently good. During the inspection, there were considerable difficulties in staffing in the nursery. The permanent staff were both absent due to serious illness and the most recent temporary teacher was unable to continue after the first morning of the inspection due to being called into hospital. Curriculum planning in the nursery is of high quality and inspection evidence indicates that the normal provision is good. Current supply staff do not have a secure knowledge and understanding of the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals and this has resulted in unsatisfactory teaching. Children know the nursery routines and cope well with new faces. However, the present situation requires urgent resolution.
74. Children enter the nursery with average levels of attainment but demonstrate a wide range of skills. Staff make individual assessments of each child soon after they start school. Teachers make further assessments when children enter the reception classes and just before their transfer to Year 1. The considerable progress made by children in the reception classes is the result of a very good range of activities, well matched to children's needs, together with good, and sometimes very good, teaching.
75. By the end of their year in the reception classes, the majority of children meet - and many exceed - the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and creative development. In mathematics, they meet the Early Learning Goals. They make good progress in the activities staff provide but lack a daily, focused mathematics lesson. In knowledge and understanding of the world they meet the Early Learning Goals; teaching is sometimes in large groups and children make satisfactory progress. Children make good progress in swimming where they attain above the level expected for this age group. However, they only meet the Early Learning Goals overall in physical development due to the lack of a suitable outdoor area for children in the nursery to have daily, easy access to a range of large wheeled toys and adventurous play equipment.
76. Curriculum planning is good. It is shared across the Foundation Stage and all the Early Learning Goals are covered. Assessment procedures are effective and give a useful overview of children's progress. Teachers use this information very well to inform their planning in the reception classes. Whilst this practice is not currently in place in the nursery, it is clear that it has been in the past. The provision for children with special educational needs is good. Staff identify children as soon as possible and those with the most significant difficulties are given useful individual learning programmes. Effective teaching and very good support from classroom assistants ensure that children with special educational needs make good progress in all the areas of learning. The provision for children with English as an additional language is also good. Sensitive support and encouragement from all staff enables them also to make good progress in all areas of the curriculum.
77. Staff work well together as a team and are consistently well deployed. Parents and carers are actively encouraged to take part in their children's learning. There are regular newsletters with information on the activities to be covered and ways to help children to learn at home. Staff are readily available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. In the reception classes, staff and parents use home-school books well to share information about children's learning and behaviour.

Personal, social and emotional development

78. Although children enter the nursery with a wide range of personal and social skills, many exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. In both year groups, children generally work and play well together, although the large number of boys in the nursery, twice as many as girls, sometimes results in noisy and boisterous behaviour. In the reception classes, behaviour is very good because of the good teaching and very good use of praise and rewards. Children are proud of their achievements and know when they are doing *really well*. They have made up their own class rules and have a clear understanding of right and wrong; they consistently demonstrate care and consideration for others. The nursery and reception classes are suitably organised so that children can access equipment easily and readily and make choices of activity and resources.
79. In the nursery, the current emphasis on one-to-one teaching means that in other activities there is a lack of appropriate adult interaction and children do not concentrate sufficiently. The good teaching in the reception classes ensures that children are interested in all activities. They are confident in talking to adults and eager to try out new activities. Children work very well both independently and co-operatively and show good concentration; they listen quietly to adults at the end of a session when the teacher reads out their work. They respond to songs and stories showing feelings and emotions, for example when they describe the troll in the *Three Billy Goats Gruff*. In both year groups, adults provide good role models for the children by treating each other and all the children with respect and consideration. Circle time and personal and social education lessons in the reception classes enable the children to consider the needs of others; for example, they have explored what bullying means, using puppets to illustrate this very effectively. The theme of *red letter days* in assemblies helps them understand and respect the beliefs of different people and how they celebrate their festivals.

Communication, Language and Literacy

80. In the one-to-one situation, teaching in the nursery is satisfactory. Teachers give clear guidance when children are writing their name. Children are starting to shape their letters correctly. Teaching is unsatisfactory when activities lack structure. There are many missed opportunities to develop children's vocabulary; for example, although staff had put out Irish soda bread for children to try, they did not encourage them to do so. There is currently too little emphasis on helping children to explore real and imagined experiences. This impedes children's progress.
81. Teaching is very good in the reception classes due to the imaginative use of space, high expectations of work and behaviour and very good organisation and classroom management. There is easy access to a safe outdoor area. Children take part with enthusiasm and enjoyment in many different activities to support their literacy and language development. For example, children have been reading *The Enormous Turnip*; on the outdoor tables there was a range of different vegetables for children to examine, talk about, draw and paint. Because of the very effective way the teachers read and tell stories, children listen well. They are confident in talking to adults as well as each other.
82. There is a strong emphasis in the reception classes on reading and writing. Children readily use writing incidentally, for example by making shopping lists and labelling the items in the shop. There is very good use of the *Jolly Phonics* program to support children's knowledge of letters and sounds. All children write their own name and simple words; many are able to write in simple sentences and know about the use of the full stop. This good progress ensures that many children exceed the Early Learning Goals before they leave the reception classes.

Mathematical development

83. Although there is a range of activities in the nursery to support children's mathematical development, teaching is currently unsatisfactory. All the elements of the Early Learning Goals are evident in the planning, but the lack of focused teaching and appropriate adult intervention means that children do not make satisfactory progress. Teachers occasionally question children, encouraging them to count to ten. Children successfully undertake number jigsaws, number games, patterns and shape work. They use the mouse independently to operate number programs on the computer.
84. When children move into the reception classes, they make satisfactory progress. There are a number of incidental mathematical activities for children to choose every day, but the lack of a focused lesson three days each week has an adverse effect on their progress. Some very good teaching, with imaginative and well thought out activities, successfully develops children's mathematical language and problem-solving skills in lessons and their progress is often good. For example, children have been learning about money and the different value of coins. A bank and a snack shop were set up outside the classroom where children estimated how much money they would need, collected this from the bank and then purchased the snack of their choice. Children added the number of coins to the correct amount and learnt to subtract as they got change from a larger coin.
85. Children know the names of two-dimensional and some three-dimensional shapes and use these confidently as they talk about different objects, for example describing leaves and flowers. They create patterns with beads and pegs, and have painted pictures of the animals going into Noah's Arc two by two. Children count to 10 reliably and many recognise and count numbers to twenty. They say and use numbers securely as they price up and sell different items in the class toy shop, although they price some of the videos at up to £1,000!

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

86. Planning for this Early Learning Goal in the nursery is comprehensive. Children confidently use the mouse at the computer to operate the number program. However, the majority of activities seen during the inspection were unsupervised. For example, there was no support for children when playing with the sand or the water to enable them to explore and investigate the different materials. Children know about the shape of a shamrock and that there are no snakes in Ireland because St Patrick got rid of them. There were missed opportunities to explore this further or to find out more about living plants and creatures. At present, progress is unsatisfactory.
87. In the reception classes, teaching is good overall. Staff provide a rich range of activities to support pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world. They actively encourage children to think about why and how things happen and what could be done better. For example, when making a flower, the children explored different ways of sticking the materials. When the flower fell off its stalk the teacher prompted them to question if the glue was strong enough and what could they use instead. Progress is satisfactory but some whole-class lessons go on for too long and children's concentration falters.
88. Teachers plan well to ensure that children learn to care for and enjoy the environment. As part of their topic on spring, a visitor from a local garden centre talked to them about spring flowers and helped them sow seeds. Children handle tools correctly and safely and are confident in using the computer. They use a *Roamer*, a wheeled toy that children can program to move in any direction, as part of their work on maps and journeys. Through the focus on special occasions, like Divali and the Chinese New Year, teachers provide good opportunities for children to learn about different cultures and beliefs.

Physical development

89. The lack of a safe outdoor play area for the nursery children means that each time they go outside to play they have to walk through the school building to get to the infant playground. In the playground, children wait in line to receive a wheeled toy and there is limited staff intervention to ensure that children develop good control and co-ordination. There are insufficient toys for all children to use at the same time and only one physical development lesson each week. As a result, children make unsatisfactory progress.
90. In the reception classes, progress is good. Children run, jump and dance with confidence, using space well, and show good awareness of others. They use the apparatus, climb and balance safely and with confidence. In a music and movement lesson, they showed an imaginative use of movement, *wriggling as tadpoles* and *squatting as rabbits*. There is good teaching of skills such as cutting, sticking and sewing, and children show enjoyment and enthusiasm in all physical activities. The school nurse provides very good opportunities for children to learn about their bodies and the importance of a healthy diet and keeping clean.

Creative development

91. Planning in the nursery covers all aspects of creative development but progress is unsatisfactory as, in some activities, staff supervise the children too closely. There are limited opportunities for children to show imagination or express and communicate their ideas and feelings.
92. In the reception classes, the teaching is good and often very good, with teachers promoting children's learning through very effective planned experiences that are challenging and achievable. This results in good progress with many children exceeding the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the time they move into Year 1. Using conversation and carefully framed questions, teachers encourage children to develop their imaginative thinking in stories and role-play, for example in the story of the *Enormous Turnip*. Children are very keen to take part and especially enthusiastic when the teachers join in, taking on the role of different characters to support children's learning.
93. Teachers encourage children to listen to music and talk about how it makes them feel. They link this activity with painting very effectively as children listen to *water music*, exploring colour mixing to design pictures in the style of Monet. Staff actively encourage children to explore different media and materials. For example, each child has made a brick for the wall of *Sleeping Beauty's Castle* using feathers, shells, material and straws. Children know a range of nursery rhymes and explore sound using musical instruments. Often a group of children will spontaneously make up their own music and happily put on a concert for the rest of the class.

ENGLISH

94. Over time, standards across the school have been very variable, dipping to below average in the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 and very low in writing at the end of Year 2. Present inspection findings indicate that whilst standards are rising, attainment in reading and writing is still below average. Skills in speaking and listening are broadly average. The quality, content and presentation of written work, a key issue in the previous report, has improved in English lessons but not across the whole curriculum as yet.
95. Since the last inspection, a change in the pupil profile of the school has influenced this shift in standards. In most classes, close to a third of pupils need extra support and this lowers overall results in the national tests. A high number of pupils join the school during the school year and many are in need of extra help with their learning. The proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language has doubled. Whilst the majority of these pupils speak and write English competently, many lack breadth and depth in their vocabulary to express their ideas clearly and succinctly. A small number of pupils are at the early stages of language acquisition and they receive extra help from a specialist language teacher in order to improve their English skills.
96. The school has looked hard at why standards have fallen and has implemented a planned programme for raising levels in speaking, reading and writing. This is enabling pupils to make better progress with their learning. There is marked improvement in English, particularly in Years 1, 4, 5 and 6, because:
- narrative and non-fictional writing is developed well in most year groups;
 - there is a wider range of provision for reading experiences and more time to read in *reading time* in class; and
 - a clear programme for teaching skills with letters and their sounds (phonics) is helping to improve reading skills in the reception and Years 1 and 2 classes.
97. Whilst these new initiatives work particularly well in reading time and in class lessons in the literacy hour, work in independent and guided groups is not planned specifically enough to meet the wide range of ability levels found in each class. For instance, pupils reaching close to average levels and those capable of reaching higher levels are not consistently set challenging enough work.
98. Speaking and listening skills are broadly average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils are more confident when co-operating in small groups than when talking to the whole class. Teachers encourage pupils to work in pairs to develop their talk. Effective work in Year 1 enables pupils to discuss what will happen next in their class story. In Year 5, pupils collaborate well and use a wider range of vocabulary to describe and explain with greater clarity; for instance, when suggesting, *Beowulf stormed towards the dragon he was about to slaughter and bellowed*. However, in class lessons it is usually the more confident and competent speakers who take the lead, despite teachers' inclusion of all class groups.
99. Standards in reading are below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Nevertheless, discussions with pupils show they enjoy reading and that a growing number choose to read for pleasure. Parents are very supportive of reading shared at home. Average and more capable readers in Year 2 read with understanding. They recall words by sight and link letters with their sounds (phonics) and so read with greater fluency and confidence. New reading resources and a structured scheme for reading ensure that pupils choose from a range of books at an appropriate level. Less capable readers benefit from extra targeted support from adults in small groups outside the classroom.
100. By Year 6, pupils read accurately and with growing expression. More capable readers read in a mature way and find hidden meaning in the text. This comment about the mood

of a story is an example: *'It's a boring day really - a day when you might drag your feet'*. Average attaining readers make good progress as they begin to empathise with different characters and refer to the text to justify their opinion. Good teaching in *reading time* encourages pupils to explore fiction and non-fiction books; for instance, researching information for a history topic about the Victorians. However, pupils lack the skills to write in a critical way about their books and tend to include chunks of copied text in their writing. Some less capable readers also find it a struggle to read independently in *reading time* sessions because there is not enough adult support.

101. Standards in writing are below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, over the last six months standards and progress have improved in most year groups. This is because teachers have gained in expertise and confidence in the subject and now provide a range of purposeful writing. Assessment of pupils' work and high quality marking is helping to move learning on, especially in Years 1, 4, 5 and 6, where pupils and teachers have raised their expectations.
102. The structure of fiction and non-fictional writing is taught well in most classes and this enables pupils to shape their ideas and thoughts successfully and to hold the interest of the reader. This is evident in this formal piece of writing produced by a pupil with special educational needs. *'Last Saturday, my three friends and I visited your café to celebrate my birthday.... In my opinion it is a poor café because the waiter did not speak and we were treated differently because we were children'*. In a similar way, in Year 1, very good modelling of a class story by the teacher enables pupils to sequence and structure their own ideas independently, *'The feriz wur neva sin agen and the bakka was rich and they live happily eva ouvda'*.
103. The school teaches handwriting and spelling skills in a consistent way and a new programme linking letters with their sounds is helping pupils in Years 1 and 2 to develop their spelling skills effectively. As yet, however, standards in spelling at the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average. In Years 4 to 6, teachers encourage pupils to read through, edit and alter their work. The standard of presentation of finished pieces varies throughout the school; it is not consistently high enough.
104. Most pupils are keen to learn and concentrate well in lessons. On occasions, the poor behaviour of a small number of boys interrupts the flow of learning in Year 3. The school works hard to be inclusive and provides extra language support for four pupils learning English as an additional language. Along with other minority ethnic group pupils, they make steady progress in their learning. Pupils with statements for their need and those identified at School Action Plus receive extra targeted support for their reading and writing. Often this work is undertaken outside the classroom and, despite a rolling programme, involves pupils missing some lessons. Whilst pupils make steady to good progress with their learning, teachers are keen to link this specific help more closely with work in the literacy and *reading time*. During the inspection, there was no marked difference between the learning of boys and girls, and both groups contribute equally in literacy lessons.
105. Teaching is good in English. In the best lessons, teachers build effectively on their pupils' ideas and initiative. They have very good subject knowledge and clear expectations of what is to be taught and learned. In ineffective lessons, class management is poor and there is a lack of expectation and challenge in the work set. Good modelling by teachers is helping to raise standards in writing. However, some teachers' writing is too small for all pupils to see. Furthermore, the amount of writing can confuse some younger pupils, who are just starting to link the spoken and written word.
106. The management of the subject is very good because of the drive and expertise of the two co-ordinators. The focus for raising standards in reading and writing is working well in most year groups. Good use is made of the guidance from specialists from inside and

outside of school to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Work on compiling portfolios of pupils' work and the analysis of assessment information is put to good use to identify the next step in learning. Pupils use their information and communication technology skills to develop effectively skills with reading and writing. Resources for reading are appropriate, but are sometimes stretched because of the larger number of pupils in Years 5 and 6. The library is not used well enough as a learning resource. Year 6 pupils suggest they do not use it regularly enough.

MATHEMATICS

107. Attainment at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6 is in line with national averages. This contrasts with the results in National Curriculum tests in 2002, where pupils' attainment was below average in Year 2 and Year 6. Over a longer period of time, pupils' results in national tests have fluctuated from above to below average in Year 2, but they have been consistently below average in Year 6.
108. The difference in pupils' attainment observed during the inspection and the results of national tests indicates that improvements in the curriculum and teaching are beginning to have a positive effect on standards. In the period immediately after the last inspection, the school took insufficient action to sustain the previous standards and pupils' attainment declined. More recently, there is a wide range of evidence to indicate that the school is taking concerted action to address the weaknesses:
- whole-class teaching at the start of each numeracy sessions is effective;
 - pupils' knowledge of number, shape and measure is secure;
 - teachers successfully model, and encourage pupils to use, the correct mathematical language and terms.
- On the basis of this, the school has made satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection.
109. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. They make the most rapid progress in Years 4 to 6 where teaching is most effective in addressing their specific learning needs. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Where pupils have specific mathematics targets in their individual education plans, they often make better than satisfactory progress, especially in their understanding of number. Pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress to other pupils.
110. Pupils make the best achievements in developing their knowledge of number, shape and measure. By the end of Year 2, nearly all pupils add two-digit numbers and recognise odd and even numbers. More able pupils can break down large numbers into units, tens and hundreds. Pupils with special educational needs complete simple addition sums and have a good knowledge of numbers up to twenty. Most pupils know the names of common geometric shapes, such as rectangles, and more able pupils describe the nature of the sides and corners of shapes. Pupils complete simple measurements and several use two comparable scales, such as centimetres and metres.
111. In Year 6, pupils multiply numbers by simple units and recall multiplication tables accurately. Nearly all pupils, including those with special educational needs, calculate fractions of total amounts. More able pupils recognise several lines of symmetry in shapes, but the less able have difficulty in recognising more than one line. All pupils measure perimeters and the more able convert units of measurement, such as metres into kilometres. A substantial number of pupils are aware of the relationship between standard and imperial measures. There is less evidence of pupils' work in handling data, but pupils make satisfactory progress in this area of the subject. In Year 2, pupils create tally charts and read the information from them. Most pupils know the purpose of a Venn diagram and can draw one with reasonable accuracy. Most pupils in Year 6 construct simple line graphs and read information from them.

112. Pupils throughout the school find it difficult to apply their mathematical knowledge, particularly with number problems set in everyday contexts. They often make mistakes over the key words in questions. They are reluctant to use alternative strategies for problem solving, preferring to stay with their accustomed method even when the nature of the question means that an alternative is more suitable. Some pupils do not write down the stages of their calculation in a consistent way, which results in the increased likelihood of making mistakes, such as mixing up tens and units in the same column. This has an impact on their performance in national tests, where pupils find it difficult to demonstrate their full potential.
113. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 3. Teachers have a good understanding of the basics of the National Numeracy Strategy and plan in line with the recommended units. Whole-class sessions at the beginning of lessons are effective, with the majority of pupils paying close attention. Teachers make effective use of the board and flip chart to demonstrate calculations. There is increasing use of number lines and squares to help pupils with their counting and to give them a better idea of number patterns. Number work is well matched to the development of an understanding of shapes by the demonstration of shaded halves and quarters. Occasionally, whole-class sessions go on too long and some pupils begin to lose attention, start to fidget and become reluctant to answer questions. The work planned for groups is usually of a suitable level of difficulty for the less able and pupils with special educational needs, and builds upon their previous learning. For more able pupils, there is often a lack of variety in the tasks and some pupils repeat tasks that they have already fully understood. This restricts the progress pupils make. Teachers carry out marking thoroughly, but do not make the best use of the information about the level of pupils' understanding to adapt the nature of future lessons. In some classes, particularly in Year 3, the planning of group work is not yet strong enough to meet the needs of the full range of ability and teachers have relatively low expectations of more able pupils.
114. Teaching in Years 4 to 6 is good. It is strongest in Year 6, where teachers are making strenuous efforts to improve pupils' levels of achievement. Teachers' frequent and accurate use of mathematics terminology reflects their good knowledge of the subject. Whole-class sessions at the beginning and end of lessons are well managed, with teachers taking care to include all pupils in answering questions and offering suggestions. They give particular attention to pupils with special educational needs, helping them to gain confidence in answering questions and encouraging them to be less wary of making mistakes. Pupils enjoy whole-class sessions, often responding with enthusiasm and keen to demonstrate the skills they have learnt. Teachers plan for these sessions well, preparing flip charts or boards in advance to help pupils to visualise significant features. Particularly good use is made of information technology in Year 6 to project shapes and their angles, and to help pupils become more proficient in measuring angles. Some pupils who have struggled with protractors find measuring on screen easier and show substantially better progress. In Year 6, teachers work hard to identify particular weaknesses in pupils' learning. There is an emphasis, for example, on helping pupils to become more effective in using alternative strategies and making estimates of their expected answers in order to check their calculations. These strategies are developing in other year groups, although they are not yet present in every class.
115. There has been a steady improvement in the planning of the subject in recent times. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of areas of weakness and has sought to address these by concentrating on strategies that should help pupils to improve. This has been particularly effective in Year 6, where the co-ordinator herself teaches, but the impact in the rest of the school is more varied and often depends on the relative strengths of the year planning groups. The co-ordinator has conducted a good analysis of the success of initiatives in the subject and the level of implementation across the school. She has

acquired suitable learning resources to strengthen teaching in these areas. She is aware of the major priorities for raising pupils' attainment and this is helping staff to achieve the school's targets.

SCIENCE

116. Attainment in science by the end of Year 2 is similar to the national average. At the end of Year 6, attainment is below the national average. The school has adopted nationally recommended arrangements for teaching science from Years 1 to 6. These place considerably more attention than hitherto on investigative science at all ages, and the quality of teaching and learning in science throughout the school is improving as a result. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school due to these significant improvements to the curriculum. However, these changes have not been in place for sufficient time to overcome fully the gaps in Year 6 pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding. A scrutiny of work undertaken during the school year indicates that pupils have undertaken a range of appropriate science activities covering all attainment targets, studying life processes and living things, materials and physical processes.
117. Year 1 pupils are keeping a *plant diary* to record the progress of their bean seed. They make careful drawings and accurately label each part, such as the *stem* and *root*, for example. They understand that the roots keep the plant anchored in the soil and collect water and food. In a parallel Year 1 class, pupils have grown cress seeds, keeping one set of pots in the dark and another set in the sun. They successfully make simple comparisons and identify simple patterns and relationships, such as the cress grown in the dark is *yellower* and *skinnier*. They too successfully communicate their findings simply in discussions and in their drawings. In Year 2, pupils complete an electrical circuit using a battery, wires and bulbs. They draw and label the circuit correctly. Pupils make accurate observations about their work and use this as evidence to discuss what they have discovered. They understand that certain day-to-day appliances use electricity as a power source.
118. Year 3 pupils studying rocks and soils understand that sieving will separate large and small solids from mixtures of materials. They record the original state of a soil sample, sieve it and draw the result, recording their findings in table form and using appropriate vocabulary such as *particles*, *pebbles* and *sandy*. Year 4 pupils studying solids and liquids understand that both solids and liquids can be poured and that '*When a solid melts it acts like a liquid*'. They recognise differences through such behaviour as maintenance of shape and ease of flow. In Year 5, pupils make detailed drawings of a flower with all the parts labelled, readily using such terminology as *stamen* and *stigma*. They effectively employ simple equipment to carry out systematic observations to help them consider similarities and differences between an iris and a narcissus flower. They successfully use information and communication technology to develop their investigation by using an electronic microscope attached to a laptop computer.
119. Pupils in Year 6, having planned the investigation in a previous lesson, move an object between a light source (a torch) and a screen and record changes in the size of the shadow. They make generalisations such as the nearer the object is to the torch, the bigger the shadow formed. They also make sensible predictions, present measurements in tables and demonstrate how to alter one variable without affecting the others. In their next lesson, pupils planned to use a computer program to produce graphic representations of their data.
120. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. During the inspection, it ranged from satisfactory to good. In the best lessons, pupils make very good progress due to well-planned and well-paced lessons with plenty of opportunities for practical, *hands-on* work. Such experiences are pushing up standards. In these lessons, teachers give clear explanations

and are confident in their subject knowledge. They plan lessons well, with clear links to the National Curriculum requirements and make good links with other curriculum areas such as English and mathematics. Teachers have appropriately high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and they provide suitably matched work and support for the range of abilities within their classes. There is good use of information and communication technology equipment in science lessons in the older classes.

121. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' attitudes and behaviour range from good to satisfactory and are good overall. Most pupils enjoy their science lessons, work together appropriately and try their best. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory. In a number of otherwise satisfactory lessons, the pace of learning slowed considerably after the teacher's introduction. In some cases, this led to a loss of concentration amongst a significant minority of pupils who did not pay sufficient attention to the teacher. They required regular and repeated attention during the lesson, which affected the quality of learning for all pupils. Staff successfully support pupils with special educational needs in science lessons and include all pupils in all activities. This enables them to make similar progress to others in their class.
122. The subject co-ordinator has a scientific background and has effectively modified the curriculum to more fully meet the needs of pupils, particularly in respect of the development of investigative and enquiry skills. He has also introduced an assessment system that gathers clear information about pupils' achievements as they move through the school. National test and assessment results are analysed to identify weaknesses in teaching and learning to improve further attainment and progress. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

123. Standards in art and design are below those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils do not build sufficiently on the skills that they develop in the nursery and reception classes, and progress is unsatisfactory as they move through the school. This is not as good as at the time of the last inspection when standards were in line with those expected nationally.
124. In Years 1 and 2, pupils mix darker and lighter shades by adding black or white paint. They use their art and design skills in other curriculum areas. For example, in religious education, Year 1 pupils draw pictures to illustrate the story of Moses and Year 2 pupils use their observation skills to paint portraits of key Victorian characters. Pupils in Year 3 make observational drawings from photographs focusing on emotions. In Year 5, they mix colours to create skin tones and use information and communication technology to create logos. In religious education, Year 6 pupils draw the scene they would likely see if they were held in captivity. Current work shows limited development of skills as pupils move through the school, particularly in drawing skills, which are immature in Years 3 to 6. There is little evidence of pupils working in three dimensions or evaluating and developing their work. In most activities, the work produced by all pupils is very similar and there is little evidence that pupils develop secure skills of creativity and independence. Pupils do not use sketchbooks effectively or regularly to record information, collect ideas and work out possible approaches. There is limited evidence of looking at the art of other cultures or making use of visits to galleries.
125. Teaching and learning were satisfactory in the lessons seen during the inspection. There are, however, gaps in teachers' subject knowledge and understanding, and their expectations of the work pupils are capable of achieving are too low. At present, teachers use artwork to illustrate learning in other subjects rather than teaching it as a subject in its own right. In addition, too much art is *done* rather than *taught*. There is not regular assessment of pupils' attainment or monitoring of standards in each year group.

126. The school has an art and design policy, which is currently under review. The subject leader is relatively new in post and has already drafted new arrangements for teaching and learning. He is aware of the need to ensure a balanced art curriculum across the school and for pupils to develop skills, knowledge and understanding from year to year. The co-ordinator is working with the adviser from the local education authority to develop units of work to support teachers in their planning and teaching in the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

127. Standards are similar to national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This reflects the findings of the last inspection. Photographic evidence and displays show that pupils in Years 1 and 2 have designed and made model houses and moving vehicles using cardboard boxes. In Year 2, pupils plan and make puppets. They look at commercial puppets to help them plan their designs, and use felt and a running stitch to make their own puppets. Teachers encourage them to evaluate the things that they make. In Years 3 and 4, pupils design and make packages, pop-up books and money containers. Pupils' booklets show that they investigate and plan before making, and evaluate their designs afterwards, including thinking about what they would do differently next time to improve their finished product. In Year 5, pupils make masks. Before they begin, they think about types and purposes of masks, identifying that some are used for entertainment, some for jobs and others for ceremonies. They then design their own, plan the tools and materials they need and record what they do. Year 6 pupils make slippers. In designing their slippers, they consider whom they are for and when they will wear them. Pupils are aware of the need for accurate measurement when making. They also evaluate the finished product against their design brief.
128. Pupils study design and technology for half of each term, either in weekly lessons or as a block of time. This nearly always takes the form of mini-projects where pupils systematically work through a plan, design, make and evaluate routine. Pupils record their work clearly using their writing skills and sometimes their word processing skills. They apply what they have learnt in mathematics, for example in activities that require measurement. Pupils use the library to find out more at the planning stage, for example about masks, and use the Internet for research. The school has established links with a local supermarket for making bread and with a local vehicle firm for controlling devices.
129. It was not possible to observe any lessons of design and technology during the inspection. However, evidence of pupils' previous work together with discussion with the co-ordinator, scrutiny of teachers' planning and their assessments of what pupils know, understand and can do indicate that teaching and learning are sound. Activities successfully contribute towards pupils' personal development. They give pupils opportunities to demonstrate their creativity and to work collaboratively with others. Pupils also reflect on their work and how they might improve it. Pupils are keen to talk about the things that they have made and can give reasons for choices, for example in choosing the ingredients for making sandwiches.
130. The co-ordinator has organised the design and technology curriculum across the school to ensure that it systematically develops pupils' skills. Planning files have been put together for staff and include additional information to support the teaching of skills and identification of suitable resources. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as a result of working in mixed ability groups or pairs or because work is planned at an appropriate level for them. The co-ordinator has developed assessment sheets for each unit of work, identifying what most pupils should be able to do. The co-ordinator is clear about further improvements, for example moderating teachers' assessments and purchasing additional books for the library.

GEOGRAPHY

131. Attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with national expectations. Pupils' greatest strength is in their ability to describe the features of different localities. They show less understanding of the reasons for location and have relatively weak skills in investigating themes and places. Pupils say that they enjoy geography, especially when they have access to interesting books or go out to observe geographical features. They enjoy looking at maps, atlases and globes.
132. At the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils identify the countries of the British Isles on a map and locate the main Scottish islands, related to their island study topic concerning the *Isle of Struay*. Less able pupils point out the main features of the British Isles on maps, but their labelling of their own maps lacks accuracy. Pupils compare climates in different parts of the world and give one or two examples of the impact of climate on human activity. All pupils know the manufacturing process uses natural materials such as food and wool. They correctly name some examples of natural and man-made items. Pupils draw simple plans of their local area, such as their journey to school. Nearly all pupils, including most of those with special educational needs, draw buildings and roads along their route in the correct order. The majority identify features they like and do not like, but a substantial minority find it difficult to form a view on the geographical features around them.
133. At the end of Year 6, pupils compile neat diagrams of the water cycle and the cross section of a river. They know the importance of rivers for transportation and explain how dredging and other works make shallow sections of rivers more navigable. The majority of pupils talk about some of the differences between a large river, such as the Severn, and a small river, such as the River Cole. They record the differences in water flow in tables and graphs. Pupils find it more difficult to explain the impact of rivers on settlement and human attempts to control the power of rivers. All pupils explain some of the most important differences between the lifestyles of people in other parts of the world and their own. There are good explanations of some of the main differences in St Lucia and Chembakoli. Throughout Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils' recording of the most important factual information is reliable, but when called upon to develop their own ideas based on these facts, pupils find the work much more difficult.
134. During the period of inspection, it was not possible to observe any lessons in the subject. Scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils indicate that teaching and learning are satisfactory. The organisation of the school's timetable, where geography has double time in one half term and history in the other, helps teachers to reinforce learning about geographical themes. The school bases the topics studied on national recommendations, and these form an effective foundation for developing pupils' knowledge about their locality and far-off places. The range of resources to support pupils' learning is satisfactory overall, but there are shortages of books for some topics.

HISTORY

135. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. This maintains the position reported at the time of the previous inspection. In the meantime, the co-ordinator has revised the school's policy and teaching plans by adapting national guidelines. The school's strong focus on enquiry and research skills, together with detailed plans for teachers, is beginning to impact favourably on pupils' achievement in historical skills.
136. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a wide range of historical skills and understanding. They use photographs, illustrations, videos, books and artefacts confidently and demonstrate a secure knowledge of time lines to show their knowledge of old and new, and now and

then. Pupils in Year 1 talk confidently about the differences between the toys they play with now and those of their parents and grandparents. Following a visit to a Victorian museum, Year 2 pupils examined a range of Victorian household artefacts and compared them with those used today. They have taken on the role of the servants in the house and written about how they lived. They have a secure knowledge of the differences in the lives of rich and poor families.

137. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a secure grasp of events in historical contexts including the Romans, Tudor and Victorian England. They have studied the Jarrow Marches; they know where and when these took place, and why and how difficult it was for people to live at this time. They know about the events leading up to the Second World War and considered the effects of the Blitz. Pupils have taken on the role of an evacuee and have written letters home to their parents. They have examined a range of posters from the 1940s and are aware of the impact that these can make on influencing opinion. In Year 3, pupils describe what houses were like as part of their work on Ancient Egypt. Year 5 pupils know why and how people invaded this country. They relate this to their own experience of moving home.
138. There are suitable links with literacy as, for example, many pupils in Year 6 recognise the effects of propaganda and censorship in wartime. However, there are missed opportunities in some classes for pupils to explore moral concepts and values or to examine changes in society. They have not, for example, looked at some of the reasons why societies go to war or why many of the posters had messages aimed specifically at women. There are links with information and communication technology in Year 6 as pupils access websites for information, but there is limited evidence of this in other classes across the school.
139. Pupils make satisfactory progress in history. Although pupils with special educational needs are included in all activities in history lessons and make similar progress to others, there are times when they are withdrawn for additional support. This results in difficulties when they return to class having missed much of the content of the lesson. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress and supportive teaching enables them to make an effective contribution to the discussion at the end of the history session.
140. The teaching of history is satisfactory. In a good lesson seen in Year 6, the teacher was very well organised and managed the class very effectively. This enabled pupils to learn well and to share their ideas in pairs with commitment and enthusiasm. The fast pace of the lesson ensured that pupils were keen to take part. For example, the teacher gave them one minute to find the meaning of the words *propaganda* and *censorship* and be prepared to give their definition to the class. She actively encouraged pupils with English as an additional language to offer a response and highly valued their contribution.
141. The leadership and management of history are good. The co-ordinator has a clear vision of how to take the subject forward. She has worked very hard to support teachers by providing comprehensive long term and short planning for each year group. This enables teachers to spend more time gathering appropriate resources and artefacts for their lessons. The co-ordinator monitors and reviews pupils' work closely in each year group and ensures that there is suitable coverage of the curriculum. She has recently devised an effective written assessment task for the end of each topic, which is then marked specifically on its historical content. She manages the resources well. Although the school has a good range of historical artefacts, the range of good CD ROM-based materials is limited.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

142. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are similar to those expected of pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below expectations. Pupils in Year 1 use computers to support their work in science on plants. With some initial support, they access the correct program and correctly name the main parts of a flower. Good deployment of the classroom assistant ensures that there is one adult for each half of the class to provide support and to assess pupils' knowledge and skills. Year 2 pupils successfully use a new program, controlling a pen moving up, down, left and right. They apply their previous learning to grasp quickly how to control the pen to make a variety of shapes and how to change the colour of the pen.
143. Teachers plan lessons in Year 3 to use ICT to support pupils' learning in English. Although the lesson planning is clear, a lack of teacher knowledge and confidence in the use of computers means that resources are not thoroughly prepared and instructions to pupils are unclear. In such circumstances, learning is unsatisfactory in both subject areas. Pupils in Year 4 send e-mails and readily discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this form of communication. Good use is made of ICT to enhance their learning in other subjects, as seen in a mathematics lesson on fractions. The use of the interactive whiteboard provides an accurate visual representation of fractions when pupils in the class are taught together. When using the same program in pairs, pupils make good progress in recognising the equivalence of simple fractions.
144. In Year 5, pupils identify opportunities to use databases outside the school. They discover that, sometimes, databases may contain errors that can affect the results. They successfully create a new database and enjoy thinking of incorrect data to enter to prove their point. Year 6 pupils use PowerPoint to create presentations in history on the Second World War. They are confident in their use of ICT and successfully retrieve the work they have started in an earlier lesson. They have put together presentations using a variety of texts, backgrounds and images. Some pupils have imported photographs from the Internet. They correctly recall the instructions given at the beginning of the lesson to access sound files and import appropriate sounds into their presentations.
145. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The lessons seen in the Years 1 and 2 classes during the inspection were good. Those seen in Years 3 to 6 ranged from unsatisfactory to good. Where teaching is good, teachers are confident in their own subject knowledge. This enables them to share clearly with the pupils what they will learn during the lesson, give clear instructions and use questioning well to develop pupils' skills and understanding. As a result, pupils concentrate and apply themselves to their tasks and make good progress. Another good feature is the way in which teachers use ICT to enhance the teaching of another subject, for example in a Year 4 mathematics lesson.
146. Most pupils have good attitudes to ICT. They are confident in their use of computers and often enthusiastic. This helps them to make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Pupils co-operate well in paired work at computers. Pupils with special educational needs are supported in making satisfactory progress by working with pupils of higher ability during paired activities. A good example of this was seen in a Year 1 lesson; two pupils who joined the lesson part-way through were paired with pupils who explained the task to them, demonstrated what to do and then talked them through doing it themselves. ICT is used to support work in other lessons; for example, Year 5 pupils were observed working with an electronic microscope during the inspection and a Year 6 pupil using a laptop in literacy. Extra-curricular activities are provided for older pupils at lunchtimes. There is a *Grid Club* where pupils can choose a variety of activities such as quizzes or sending e-mails, and a second club that offers opportunities to develop PowerPoint presentations or to take part in music mixing.

147. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable co-ordinator who has a clear vision for its future development. She supports staff in their planning and provides some support for developing teaching. The curriculum covers all aspects of ICT. There is a clear policy on Internet use. Teachers assess pupils at the end of each unit of work. The school has significantly improved its provision since the last inspection and now has two well-equipped computer suites. Resources are good and the school exceeds the current national recommended ratio of computers to pupils.

MUSIC

148. Standards in music meet national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in Year 1 correctly name a range of untuned percussion instruments. They identify the *short* sound made by a wood block and the *long* sound of a triangle. Pupils maintain a steady beat when performing repeated vocal rhythm patterns such as *tick tock* and *ticker tocker*. Year 4 perform African and Mexican songs tunefully, with good regard for tempo and dynamics. When using tuned percussion instruments, they quickly develop *ostinati* patterns using a pentatonic scale. A strength of their work is the way in which they constructively – but thoughtfully – appraise how they and their fellow pupils can improve and extend their compositions. When following a score, pupils concentrate carefully so that they do not miss their cue to play.
149. The school has recently adopted national guidelines for teaching music. Pupils study a unit of work over a period of half a term. They make good progress because they develop skills in composing, performing and appraising in a systematic way. A strong feature of this approach is the time teachers devote to practical work. Pupils enjoy their music lessons and work well with each other. Those with special educational needs play a full part in lessons, with adults and other pupils supporting them in their work. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to others because of the attention teachers and support staff pay to expanding and explaining instructions.
150. The quality of teaching is good. Staff are working hard to develop their subject knowledge. With the good support of the co-ordinator and a member of the local education authority's advisory service, their skills and confidence are improving. This good leadership has a positive effect on pupils' learning, particularly when it comes to working with instruments because everyone is keen to explore, experiment and improve their performance. In an excellent lesson seen, the teacher had planned a sequence of events based on a repeated rhythm. She built very well on pupils' earlier learning and experience, making very good use of questions and discussion to lead the pupils to the next steps in learning. The lesson moved at a brisk pace and pupils were totally absorbed in what they were doing. What made this lesson so successful was the way in which pupils' developing skills came together in performance. The teacher's choice of *Mars* from Holst's *Planets Suite* was just right to demonstrate the powerful imagery of a rhythmic *ostinato*. Some pupils instantly recognised the music. One pupil swiftly - and accurately - picked up and taught the repeated pattern to others in the class. The high quality of this teaching enabled pupils in the closing part of the lesson (the plenary) to confidently reflect on what they had achieved and identify what they needed to do to improve their work further.
151. The quality of singing is better in classes than it is in collective worship. There are missed opportunities to extend and develop pupils' knowledge of a range of secular and sacred songs and to sing as part of a large group. Although pupils listen to music from a range of cultures as they join and leave assemblies, valuable opportunities are missed for quiet concentration and reflection. The school has a suitable range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. At present, there is little use of information and communication technology in the subject. Pupils benefit from instrumental lessons provided by visiting teachers.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

152. Standards of attainment meet national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. In a Year 1 gymnastics lesson, pupils successfully run, stop, sit, kneel, lie and roll on the teacher's command. They carefully select and link skills and actions in short movement phrases, such as running around, towards and away from each other, jumping, landing on two feet and rolling onto a mat. Pupils in Year 3 travel across the floor and on apparatus, soundly joining together two movements which involve changing direction.
153. Year 5 pupils in an outdoor football skills lesson pass, trap and dribble the ball to a partner, successfully adopting the basic tactics for attack and defence. They demonstrate satisfactory skills for their age. In an indoor gymnastics lesson on the theme of *bridges*, pupils demonstrated a good awareness of space, shape and purpose. When devising innovative bridges, such as moving backwards and sideways, pupils attain above expectations for their age. This was due to the very good quality of teaching which inspired their efforts and influenced their thinking and planning. Pupils show genuine appreciation of others' efforts and an awareness of the effects of exercise. In a Year 6 gymnastics lesson, pupils worked effectively with partners to develop counter-balance positions. They devised and performed fluent sequences for floor and apparatus, incorporating variations in speed and level.
154. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Due to timetabling, it was not possible to see any lessons in Year 2. Where teaching is good or very good, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use praise appropriately and consistently. They have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, give very clear instructions and maintain a good pace of learning throughout their lessons. In the best lessons, teachers change activities frequently to maintain pupils' interest and enthusiasm. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, poor classroom management by the teacher and unsatisfactory behaviour from the pupils led to unsatisfactory progress during the lesson. The quality of pupils' learning during lessons ranged from very good to unsatisfactory and was satisfactory overall.
155. The great majority of pupils can swim 25 metres by the end of Year 2, which is the national expectation for pupils at the end of Year 6. Pupils make very good progress due to regular swimming lessons in the school's learner pool from when they are in the reception classes. However, the pool is not suitable for older pupils and there is no other provision for swimming lessons. As high numbers of pupils join the school in or after Year 3, the school does not have an accurate picture of pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6.
156. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in their physical education lessons are satisfactory. Most pupils participate enthusiastically, work together well and appreciate the performances of others. In most lessons, pupils take part in the activities confidently and with clear enjoyment.
157. The subject co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has a clear vision of improvements she wants to make in the subject. The school provides a good range of well-attended extra-curricular physical education activities throughout the year. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

158. Standards of pupils' knowledge and understanding at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement on the last inspection when standards at the end of Year 2 were satisfactory but those at the end of Year 6 were below expectations. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' books and classroom displays show that pupils are studying elements of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. They retell key stories, such as Moses and the *Feeding of the Five Thousand*, and are beginning to understand the meaning of symbols. Staff encourage pupils to relate what they learn to their own behaviour; for example, the story of the Last Supper prompts work about what they would leave behind for their friends to remember them by. There is also evidence of pupils relating what they learnt to their own life - in learning about the Five Pillars of Islam, one pupil wrote, *'I have fasted ten times in my whole life'*.
159. In a good Year 2 lesson, pupils effectively considered the symbolism of the cross and the bread for Christians. The lesson built on previous learning about the Last Supper. The teacher asked the children to look at a loaf of bread and a cross and to think about why these are important. She made good use of questioning to encourage pupils to explain their answers and sensitively involved those who did not readily contribute. After listening to the ideas of the class, pupils talked in pairs to decide what their response would be. They then made good use of their writing skills to record their work, with the majority understanding that the cross is important because Jesus died on it and that bread reminds us of his body.
160. Written work and displays show that pupils in Year 6 have recently focused on human rights and considered people such as John Bunyan and Martin Luther King, and organisations such as Amnesty International. Discussions confirm that pupils have clearly thought about and can express their views as to what such terms as captivity, persecution and freedom mean. Some reflect on how they would feel if a member of their family were to be persecuted. There is a growing awareness that people are treated badly at times because of prejudice or racism. Pupils express their thoughts in words, both prose and poetry, through pictures and sometimes through images. To show that everyone is created equal, one pupil drew a globe with alternate black and white people around it.
161. In a very good lesson in Year 5, probing questions led pupils to think for themselves how Jesus may have felt when facing crucifixion. Pupils listened carefully to each other's ideas. They imagined they were there at the time and produced some thoughtful work speaking of *the blood, lots of people, soldiers, people crying, people shouting*. In this lesson, the teacher made very good use of music to create a reflective ethos and pupils worked well. In particular, pupils of other religions demonstrated their respect for each other's feelings and beliefs by their thoughtful appreciation of the discussion.
162. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the lessons observed, it ranged from satisfactory to very good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are at least satisfactory. Lessons make a suitable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils show a genuine interest in religious ideas and are keen to contribute to discussion. They use their speaking, listening and writing skills successfully to convey ideas and work with others. Teachers have plans for pupils to use their research skills more widely, both through books and information and communication technology. Teachers regularly assess their pupils' learning. The school is building up its level of resources and teachers use music well to support learning.