

INSPECTION REPORT

**ROBINS LANE COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

St Helens

LEA area: St Helens

Unique reference number: 104762

Headteacher: Mrs D Bate

Reporting inspector: Mrs M Ward
21118

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 6th February 2003

Inspection number: 246404

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Kinmel Street Robins Lane St Helens
Postcode:	WA9 3NF
Telephone number:	(01744) 678503
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Stephen Agger
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2118	Mrs M Ward	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music	How well is the school led and managed?
13452	Mr H Meggitt	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parent?
24027	Mrs J Lawson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Design and technology Geography Equal opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
20708	Mr K Sainty	Team inspector	English Physical education Religious education SEN	How well are pupils taught?
32397	Mr J Sturt	Team inspector	Science Art and design History	How high are standards? : The school's results and achievements

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Robins Lane Primary School is a community primary school situated in the Marshall's Cross ward of St Helens. The school is of average size, with 251 pupils (142 boys and 109 girls), plus 36 part-time pupils in the nursery, and provides education for the 3 to 11 age range. The number on roll has declined since the last inspection owing to a drop in the local birth rate. Since the last inspection, the number of pupils entering and leaving the school at times other than the usual point has increased. A small number of pupils from the Travelling Community have also joined the school. The school draws most of its pupils from the area local to the school, but a few parents elect to bring their children from further away. The attainment of pupils coming into the school is below expectations and well below what might be expected in language and social development. The proportion of pupils from an ethnic minority background is very low and all pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, at 26.8 per cent, is above average and the proportion with statements, at 3.6 per cent, is twice the national average. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, at 37 per cent, is also above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a caring school that provides a sound education for its pupils. From a low entry level pupils make good progress through the Foundation Stage and satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2, but standards in English and mathematics remain below average by the age of seven. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make at least satisfactory progress and standards by the age of 11 are broadly in line with national expectations. Good teaching ensures that pupils achieve appropriately. The school is well led and managed. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in art and design, information and communication technology and physical education by the end of Year 6.
- Good leadership and management have created an effective learning community in which good teaching makes a positive contribution.
- Provision and teaching in the Foundation Stage are good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and these pupils achieve well.
- Very good relationships with all staff and each other result in pupils having a positive attitude to school.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development.
- The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The school has established good links with parents and the community it serves.

What could be improved

- Some boys underachieve and standards in English and mathematics by the age of seven are below average.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.
- Insufficient opportunity is given for teachers to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning.
- Assessment procedures are not sufficiently rigorous to measure and track pupils' progress.
- The school makes insufficient use of data to measure the impact of initiatives and decisions taken.
- The balance and organisation of the curriculum sometimes have an adverse impact on learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, since the last inspection the school has made satisfactory progress. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and standards in English and mathematics

are beginning to show signs of improvement in Years 3 to 6. Standards in Years 1 and 2 are less secure. Further work remains to be done to increase the pace of learning, particularly for boys. Good progress has been made in developing the school's capacity to deliver information and communication technology, resulting in improved standards. The school has introduced new programmes of work for all subjects that take suitable account of national guidance. The role of subject leaders has been clarified and enhanced. Assessment procedures have been improved. Good progress has been made in improving provision for pupils with special educational needs and for children in the Foundation Stage. The school has made strenuous efforts to improve rates of attendance and has had some success, but despite the school's best endeavours some parents continue to remove their children for holidays during term time. The school is suitably placed to improve further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	E	E	E
mathematics	C	D	E	E
science	D	D	E	E

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

Children enter the nursery with attainment below that expected for this age group. Attainment is well below expectations in language and social skills. Following recent changes, they make good progress in the Foundation Stage and, by the end of reception, many are likely to reach the national average. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress across the school. Overall, pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress, but as they did not benefit from the good provision now evident in the Foundation Stage, they started in Year 1 at a level that was below average and consequently standards at the end of Year 2 are below average in English and mathematics. However, they are in line with expectations in science. Standards in all other subjects are as expected. Over the last three years, results have declined, reflecting a slight change in skill levels as children enter the school, but some pupils' progress is hampered by absence. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make satisfactory progress and standards at the end of Year 6 are average in most subjects, but in art and design, information and communication technology and physical education they are above expectations. Results of the National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science, taken by Year 6 pupils last year (2002), were well below both the national average and that for similar schools. Results were skewed by some pupils not taking the tests owing to absence and by a larger than average number of pupils with special educational needs. Nevertheless, in the three years 2000-2002 the performance of pupils in tests has increasingly fallen below the national average and the gap between the school's results and those in all schools nationally has widened. Factors that have had an impact on results have included pupil movement in and out of the school and an increase in the numbers of pupils with special educational needs or with a history of poor attendance. In recent years the school has failed to achieve its published targets. However, the targets for 2003, although suitably challenging, are likely to be met by Year 6 pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes towards school are good. They clearly enjoy the experiences provided and take pride in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good throughout the school, both in lessons and during less structured times of the day. However, occasional, a few boys cause low-level disruption in some classes.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils gladly take responsibility and this is respected and valued by others.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory, but recent initiatives have secured a marked improvement. Parents taking their children on holiday during term time adversely affect attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Almost all lessons are at least satisfactory and the needs of all pupils are met appropriately. Pupils with special educational needs are served well by teachers and support staff. Teaching is good overall in the Foundation Stage and often very good in the nursery. In Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are generally satisfactory, but they are sometimes good in English and mathematics and often good in science and physical education. In Years 3 to 6 teaching and learning are good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach, plan thoroughly and prepare well for lessons. The teaching of English and mathematics is good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils develop their literacy and numeracy skills effectively across the school. Occasionally, the pace of learning dips when sessions are too long. Good use is made of homework throughout the school to support learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. The curriculum is well planned and good use is made of the local environment and visitors to enrich the pupils' experiences. However, the organisation of the timetable sometimes leads to missed opportunities and lessons that are too long. The provision of extra-curricular activities is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There are effective identification and monitoring systems and effective support from teachers and support assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Personal development is good overall. Social development is very good. The caring atmosphere and very good relationships help pupils to take responsibility. Moral and cultural development is good. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong, respect everyone's rights, and appreciate and value their cultural heritage and that of others. Spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies contribute well, but opportunities are sometimes missed during lessons.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good procedures for ensuring the wellbeing of pupils. Attendance patterns are monitored well. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall, but procedures for tracking pupils' progress need some improvement, particularly in

	foundation subjects.
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The school makes good links with parents and opportunities for them to become involved in the work of the school are both useful and appreciated. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Curriculum plans are soundly based on nationally recommended schemes. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good and addresses all areas of learning well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is an effective and well-respected leader. She is well supported by the deputy and other key staff. Leadership of most subjects is satisfactory, but it is good in mathematics, music and physical education.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body, led by a very capable chair, is fully involved in shaping the direction of the school and governors are beginning to hold the headteacher and staff more rigorously to account. However, not enough attention is given to evaluating the impact of decisions taken.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance and initiatives are developing appropriately, but there is not enough clarity in defining the intended outcomes of improvement strategies.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Educational priorities are supported appropriately through careful financial planning. Specific grants are used effectively. The principles of best value are followed, but information is not used effectively to make comparisons. At times teachers are left to manage too many pupils.

There are sufficient, suitably qualified teachers and a good number of support staff. The school has a strong commitment to professional development. Resources to support the curriculum are generally of good quality and have improved since the last inspection. The building and grounds are well maintained. All members of the school community show a strong commitment to school improvement.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children like coming to school. • The school expects children to work hard and they make good progress. • Behaviour is good and the school helps children to act maturely and take responsibility. • The school is approachable. • Teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps pupils with their particular needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents would like to be better informed about their children's progress. • A few parents would like the opportunity to be more involved in their children's education.

Parents, responding to the questionnaire and at the meeting for them, spoke highly of the school. Positive comments by far outweighed any negative views. All parents indicated that their children enjoyed coming to school and this was evident during the inspection in the positive attitudes displayed by the pupils. The work of the headteacher and staff is valued by most parents and the inspection team noted how committed and hard-working the staff were, ensuring that their pupils were cared for and provided with worthwhile lessons. Teaching was found to be good and the school is well led and

managed. In general, links with parents are good and they are provided with good opportunities to learn about their children's progress and become involved in their learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. At the last inspection pupils entered the nursery and reception classes with below average skills. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment was judged to be broadly in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. By the age of 11, the attainment of pupils was below national averages in English and mathematics and was in line with national expectations in science. Evidence from the current inspection indicates that attainment on entry to the nursery has declined slightly. Although it remains below expectations in many aspects, it is now well below in spoken language and in social development. Standards in Years 1 and 2 have fallen slightly in English and mathematics and are slightly below national expectations, but by Year 6 standards are average. Across the school, standards in all other subjects have been maintained, except in art and design, and information and communication technology, where they have risen above national expectation by the age of 11, and in geography, where they have fallen in both Year 2 and Year 6¹ to be in line with national expectations.
2. Since the last inspection there has been a slight decline in the attainment of children entering the nursery. Most children now start in the nursery class with attainment that is below the expected level for their age. Many children lack experience of practical and social activities, resulting in communication and social skills that are well below expectations. Inspection evidence shows that after only a short time in the nursery class, where these experiences and opportunities are provided, children make very good progress and most quickly develop these skills. Children continue to make rapid progress during their time in the nursery class and make good progress in their reception year. Children with special educational needs make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. Provision in the Foundation Stage has improved markedly in the last two years and children currently in the reception class are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the Foundation Stage. The pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 and beyond did not benefit from this good provision and consequently they entered Year 1 with below average skills.

Key Stage 1 National Curriculum test results for 2002

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools		Similar schools		
	Level 2 or above	Level 3 or above	Level 2 or above	Level 3 or above	
Reading	E	E	E	E	Well above average A Above average B Average C Below average D Well below average E Lowest 5% E* Nationally
Writing	E	C	E	C	
Mathematics	E	E	E	D	
Science (Teacher Assessment)	E	E	E	E	

¹ The nationally expected level for seven year olds is Level 2. Higher levels for this age group would be Level 3 or above. At Robins Lane no pupils achieved above Level 3.

3. Overall, in the three years 2000-2002, results in National Curriculum tests at age seven show a decline in reading, writing and mathematics that reflects the slight change to skill levels as children begin school. The difference between the results in the National Curriculum tests and the standards seen during the inspection is, in part, due to the significant number of pupils with special educational needs in the 2002 class and the high rates of absence that make it difficult for some pupils to achieve as well as they could. However, the introduction of additional support for groups of pupils funded through the National Strategies and increased teacher confidence in teaching literacy and numeracy following intensive support from the local authority are also having a positive impact.

Key Stage 2 National Curriculum test results for 2002

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools		Similar schools	
	Level 4 or above	Level 5 or above	Level 4 or above	Level 5 or above
English	E	E	E	E
Mathematics	E	E*	E	E
Science (Teacher Assessment)	E	E	E	E

Key

Well above average A

Above average B

Average C

Below average D

Well below average E

Lowest 5% E*

Nationally

4. In the three years 2000-2002 the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science has increasingly fallen below the national average and the gap between the school's results and those in all schools nationally has widened.
5. A detailed comparison of the 2002 national test results for pupils aged 11 with their results when they were aged seven in 1998 suggests that a significant number of pupils in that group did not make the expected progress. The school presented evidence during the inspection that showed factors that affected progress and made an impact on the results, including:
- Poor attendance of individual pupils seriously affected their progress. Indeed, a sixth of the pupils were absent at the time the tests were taken and this skewed the results, making standards appear lower than was the case.
 - Pupil movement between schools at Robins Lane Primary is higher than average, and this too adversely affected the results in Year 6. Fifteen out of 48 pupils joined the school during Key Stage 2 and many of these were lower attainers.
 - The percentage of pupils with special educational needs was above average and a significant minority presented challenging behaviour.
6. All of these factors have contributed to poor results in the past. However, the inspection team's analysis of statistics, a scrutiny of pupils' work, observations in lessons and discussions with subject co-ordinators indicate that progress overall is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The progress of more-able pupils is satisfactory. The pattern of attainment at the age of 11 in the three years 2000-2002 shows that boys' attainment is significantly below that of girls in all subjects and by a greater amount than is found nationally. The school has rightly identified this issue and is beginning to introduce suitable strategies to combat it.
7. The school has introduced a number of measures since the last inspection that are beginning to affect standards. Attendance has improved significantly, homework is effectively set and

completed by pupils and the behaviour observed during the inspection was good. In addition, through intensive training the quality of teaching has improved. An extensive programme of extra classes for groups of pupils needing additional help has enabled more to do well. The school has been setting targets for individual pupils since 1999, but the procedures for doing this have recently been refined and improved. When pupils were interviewed, their understanding of what they need to do to improve, and thereby achieve their targets, was good. In Year 6, pupils are able to talk with confidence and say what their targets are and how they are going to achieve them. However, expectations and targets do not take sufficient account of the progress made by individuals and specific groups of pupils. The whole-school targets set with the local authority are generally realistic but challenging and take appropriate account of the differences in year groups. In recent years the school has failed to achieve its published targets. However, the targets for 2002, although suitably challenging, are likely to be met by Year 6 pupils.

8. The National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy are soundly established in the school and have had a positive impact on the basic skills of pupils. Although by the end of Year 2 pupils achieve standards that are below average in reading, writing and mathematics, progress is satisfactory in the light of the below-average levels of attainment with which these pupils entered Year 1. By Year 2 most pupils read suitable material with an appropriate level of fluency, expression and understanding. They write independently, spell common words correctly and use simple punctuation accurately in their sentences most of the time. A significant number of less able pupils have yet to develop independent reading skills or to write legibly. In mathematics the majority of Year 2 pupils are developing mental strategies for adding and subtracting numbers to 20, can count forwards and backwards with confidence and record numbers to 100 with reasonable accuracy, but few are confident in the use of larger numbers.
9. By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations in English and mathematics. Pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in English and mathematics. In Year 6 most pupils use a fluent, joined script and all writing is well presented. Pupils are able to appreciate how to write for different purposes. Most are capable readers and read suitable material with an appropriate level of accuracy, fluency, expression and understanding. In mathematics, Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of place value and work confidently with two-, three- and four-digit numbers. They can use a range of strategies to solve problems and can suggest ways of checking the reasonableness of their answers by estimating and using a variety of mental calculations. Good use is made of additional staff to implement the various intervention strategies for literacy and numeracy for pupils who may be falling behind.
10. In science, standards seen during the inspection are in line with national standards at the ages of seven and 11. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. At the age of seven, pupils have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of science. They know about materials and their uses, and how heat can cause change, can identify the major parts of the body and are able to construct simple electrical circuits. By the age of 11, a significant number of pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding in all areas of science. They are familiar with how to plan their own experiments, consider the implications of fair testing and record their findings, often using graphs and charts.
11. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with expectations by the age of seven and slightly above by the age of 11. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 to 6.
12. Due to timetable arrangements, the opportunities to observe some subjects, such as design and technology, geography, history, music and religious education, were limited. However, evidence from the lessons seen, samples of pupils' work, the school's documentation, displays and discussions with pupils indicates that standards are at least in line with national expectations in these subjects by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is a similar picture to that at the last inspection, although previously standards in geography were judged to be above average. In art and design and physical education standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 but above by Year 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The children's attitudes to school are good and they clearly enjoy the experiences provided. They are enthusiastic and happy to come to school; they settle quickly and behave well, arriving in their classrooms ready to learn. Pupils develop very good relationships with each other and with adults, and many children are happy to take responsibility, to share and to help each other. This creates a good climate for learning in which all pupils feel confident to 'have a go' and consequently most pupils participate fully in lessons. Attendance, however, is unsatisfactory and very low in comparison with that in other schools. Time away from school interrupts pupils' learning and there was evidence to show that those who are absent frequently make less progress than those with good attendance records.
14. The nursery and foundation pupils have their own entrance and parents are encouraged to come into school with their children. This has helped develop successful links between home and school and makes a positive contribution to the children's learning. The good teaching in the Foundation Stage helps the younger pupils to develop a good attitude to school and builds well their confidence and self-esteem.
15. This positive attitude continues throughout the school. All parents responding to the questionnaire indicated that their children liked school and this was evident from discussions with pupils and in their response to the activities provided. Pupils clearly take an interest in their work and learning and try hard in all they do, resulting in carefully presented work and good levels of involvement in lessons. They take pride in their work and the many displays in the classrooms and throughout the school demonstrate this.
16. Pupils willingly take responsibility and this is respected and valued by the others. Some pupils act as 'Playground Pals' and are very visible by their yellow caps. They support and help other children when at play and instances of this successfully contributing to harmonious break times were observed during the inspection. Pupils generally show respect for the feelings of others and demonstrate a desire to include and support everyone in their work and play. Most pupils appreciate how their actions affect others and are sensitive to their needs. The School Council exists for the children to present the issues and views of pupils to the school management and those that wish to serve must stand for election. This activity is encouraged and provides further stimulation for pupils to enhance their personal development and wider understanding of civic and democratic processes.
17. Behaviour remains good throughout the school, both in lessons and during break times, and as pupils move around the school buildings. Children move about the school in an orderly and caring way with little supervision or guidance needed. Behaviour and attitudes are sometimes very good in lessons. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson pupils settled quickly, applied themselves very well and showed willingness to help and collaborate with each other whilst maintaining excellent behaviour throughout. However, there were occasional outbreaks of low-level disruption in some classes, which tended to occur when the pace of a lesson began to decline or the teacher was less skilled in organising the class. Pupils and their parents report few instances of bullying, but they express confidence in the school's ability to deal with these appropriately should they occur.
18. The levels of attendance are low; this is an issue of which the school is well aware. With the help of the local authority and through the Neighbourhood Renewal Scheme the school now has the help of a School Attendance Improvement Officer. Together they are working strenuously and collaboratively to tackle the problem and there are early signs of improvement. Between September 2002 and the end of January 2003 attendance has risen significantly from 90.7 per cent in 2001/02 to 93.4 per cent. This is also an improvement on the same period last year (90.6 per cent). This is a commendable effort, but the school recognised that there is more to be done. Many new initiatives have been successfully introduced and the Improvement Officer regularly attends year-group assemblies to present awards for good and improved attendance. The regular Newsletter to parents always includes the current attendance levels and reminders of the importance of good and regular attendance at school.

19. The punctuality of pupils arriving for lessons appears to be at least satisfactory, but some severe weather conditions during the inspection meant that a clear assessment was not possible.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. At the last inspection teaching was found to be good. More than nine in every ten lessons were at least satisfactory and six in every ten were good or very good. In the current inspection the quality of teaching is still good overall, but there has been improvement since the last inspection. The large number of lessons that are at least satisfactory remains the same, but the number of lessons that are good or very good has increased to seven in every ten. The quality of teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good or better in over nine in every ten lessons and very good or excellent in two in every ten lessons. In Years 1 and 2 the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons, good or better in nearly six out of every ten lessons and very good in two lessons in every ten. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory in almost all lessons. One lesson was judged to be unsatisfactory in physical education. Nearly seven in every ten lessons are good or better and three in every ten are very good or excellent. One excellent lesson was observed in physical education in Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and from the traveller community are taught well. Targets for Individual Education Plans are written jointly by the class teacher and support staff. Targets are specific and state clearly what the pupils should know, understand or be able to do. Reviews clearly record progress against each target. Teaching assistants, the Learning Mentor and the Traveller Education Service provide good support for individuals and groups of pupils. Resources are differentiated to meet individual and group needs.
21. Throughout the school the quality of teaching is good in science and physical education, and is at least satisfactory in all other subjects. However, it was not possible to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching in history or music in Years 1 and 2, as there was insufficient opportunity to observe lessons, owing to the organisation of the timetable. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 in English, mathematics, design and technology, history and art and design.
22. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum requirements. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are firmly in place and teachers are confident in teaching to the requirements. The teaching of basic skills is good throughout the school and literacy and numeracy skills are applied and developed well in other subjects. There are good opportunities for speaking and listening in all subjects when pupils recap on previous lessons, and in religious education and personal, social and health education, where pupils discuss issues, problems and dilemmas. In physical education, pupils are given good opportunities to evaluate and comment on the work of other pupils. In science they make good use of mathematical knowledge and skills to produce graphs from data on investigations. All teachers provide their pupils with an attractive and stimulating environment that supports their learning. Strategies to raise the attainment of boys are having an impact on teaching through the use of resources and tasks chosen to have more appeal for boys. Good use is made of homework throughout the school to support learning.
23. Where teaching is good or better, teachers have very clear targets for learning that are well matched to the pupils' capabilities and that the pupils fully understand. Teachers demonstrate high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. They use technical vocabulary appropriately. Previous lessons and homework are used as starting points to tune the pupils into the work that follows. Written comments on pupils' work give them a clear idea of how well they have done and how they can improve their work. Displays in classrooms provide prompts to help pupils with their work and also provide good examples of pupils' work as models for them. Good use is made of resources such as whiteboards for pupils to make notes during discussions and to enable the teacher to assess easily their level of understanding. In literacy lessons there are good links between the work done in whole-class sessions and the tasks set for pupils in the group work so that they can practise the skills they have been learning. Pupils are praised for their efforts and encouraged to share ideas on how the work could be improved further.

Teaching assistants are clear about the focus of their work and are used well to support individuals or groups in all parts of the lesson, including prompting and encouraging pupils in whole-class sessions. Good use is made of a variety of questions to develop the pupils' understanding and improve the quality of their work. A good pace is maintained in lessons by the use of timed activities and there is a good balance between teacher talk and pupil activity. The final parts of lessons are used effectively to engage the pupils in a discussion about how successful they have been in learning what they set out to learn, how they learned it and how they could use their knowledge or skills in another situation.

24. Where teaching is less successful one or more of the following features are present. Parts of some lessons have a mismatch between the task and the needs of the pupils. For example, in one lesson a group of pupils had difficulty with a task because the instructions were too difficult for them. In some books the written comments from the teacher do not give sufficient feedback to the pupils often enough about how well they are doing in relation to their targets or how to improve their work. Weaknesses in class organisation and the resources provided for the pupils sometimes result in a small minority of boys becoming easily distracted and engaging in minor off-task behaviour. They quickly get back on task when these issues are resolved. Occasionally the tasks provided for group work have no link to the work done in whole-class sessions and do not provide the pupils with opportunities to practise the skills they have just learned. The final parts of lessons are weak when pupils merely read out what they have written and are not involved in a discussion about the quality of their work or how to improve it. On some occasions teaching assistants merely observe whole-class sessions and are not engaged in supporting individuals or groups by explaining words, helping them to answer questions and ensuring that they remain on task.
25. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, build on their previous learning and develop well new knowledge, understanding and skills. The progress that pupils make in lessons is good in the nursery and reception classes, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who need regular support from a learning assistant, make good progress throughout the school as a result of the early identification of needs, specific targets for improvement, good support from teachers and teaching assistants and regular monitoring of the progress they are making. The quality and use of assessment to track the progress of pupils and inform what they do next are satisfactory overall and good in the nursery and reception classes.
26. Generally pupils apply themselves well in lessons. The level of their interest, concentration and independence are good and help most of them to achieve well in the time they have available. Pupils are managed well by most teachers and usually work productively and with a sense of pride in what they do. They have a satisfactory understanding of how well they are doing and know what their targets for improvement are. However, teachers do not review the progress being made towards the targets set with sufficient frequency to allow them to have a clear overview of where the school is in relation to its targets at any point in time.

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

27. The curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory overall and this represents a balance of strengths and shortcomings. Particular emphasis is rightly given to English, mathematics and science and improvements in these subjects have been satisfactory since the last inspection.
28. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and medium- and short-term plans are well linked to the frameworks. Planning in all subjects clearly identifies the learning objectives for each lesson, and all subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education are provided within the recommended number of taught hours. However, in some subjects the length of lessons are too long, resulting in a dip in pace and a loss of concentration by some children.

29. The school has introduced new strategies for curriculum implementation and it is now the responsibility of the classroom teacher to determine when some foundation subjects are taught. There is insufficient monitoring of this individual choice or to ensure appropriate coverage of all areas of the curriculum. The role of subject leaders in ensuring that the curriculum is adequately covered by all classes is inconsistent.
30. The school has made very good progress in developing its curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. It is broad and there are very good links made between the areas of learning for this age group. For example, in the reception class children celebrate birthdays through role play, make cakes in technology and write invitations as part of their writing task. The curriculum is enhanced through the very good use of outside areas. Children have opportunities to explore sand and water, to experiment with a range of musical instruments and to play imaginatively with small-world equipment such as cars, roadways and a dolls' house. They learn about the natural world from small-group activities and from planting in the garden. The school has plans for developing the Foundation Stage outdoor play area; the current provision is used well by nursery and reception children for riding, climbing and balancing.
31. There have been good improvements in the provision for information and communication technology since the last inspection. The introduction of a new computer suite has given greater access and the adoption of the national scheme of work has improved coverage.
32. In addition to the taught curriculum, a wide range of activities outside lessons are available for children throughout the school and this is a strength of the school. They are well attended and provide children with opportunities to broaden their experiences; for example, they participate in a variety of after-school clubs, go to the theatre, participate in sporting competitions and tournaments and perform in a range of productions. Some older pupils in the previous year were given the opportunity to attend a successful 'Easter School' organised in partnership with two other schools under the auspices of the 'Neighbourhood Renewal' programme.
33. The school grounds are appropriately used for physical education and the local environment is used well to extend pupils' learning in a range of subjects; for example, they study their local area in geography. The local community broadens pupils' experiences through visits from the school nurse and community members who talk about aspects of their lives. In addition, the school has developed good links with local businesses, which support children's learning; for example, B&Q visit as part of the nursery topic 'Bob the Builder'. Pupils visit places in the locality, and older pupils benefit from a residential visit. Links with the local high school are satisfactory. Year 6 pupils spend two days at the local secondary school as part of their induction and their new teachers visit before their admission.
34. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. Pupils have opportunities for health education and appropriate visits and visitors are used to support this teaching. They learn about personal hygiene and caring for themselves and design litter posters. An appropriate programme for sex education is being prepared and a new policy has recently been formulated. There is a range of planned opportunities to enable pupils to recognise their worth and value the contributions of others during 'circle time'. Staff have undertaken training for this and there are a range of good resources available; further development is identified in the school improvement plan. Considerable emphasis is given to promoting pupils' self-esteem through rewards such as merits and certificates, and responsibilities within the school. The school council, the ECO council and 'playground pals' initiatives provide pupils with opportunities to take responsibility by discussing school issues and making decisions that will affect others.
35. The school works very hard to ensure that all pupils are fully included in the life of the school. Staff have a good understanding of the diverse backgrounds of their pupils and provide support for parents and children through a range of joint workshops and personal contacts. The school has appropriate plans for developing resources that reflect the traveller culture. There is a shared commitment to equality of opportunity evident in many aspects of the school, which is reflected in the detailed and useful policy. Teachers plan for different needs within the class and use a range of teaching styles, which benefit all children. Very good use is made of additional staff to support individuals and small groups, ensuring that all pupils have full access to the curriculum. The school

is aware of the attainment differences between boys and girls and has identified this area as a priority. There are clear guidelines for supporting boys through different teaching approaches, through assessment and marking and by rewarding achievement. An 'Equal Opportunities Group' meets regularly to monitor this issue.

36. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory overall. Collective worship is well organised and there are planned opportunities for pupils to engage in spiritual activity during this time. In assemblies pupils are given time to reflect and pray, which they do with reverence and sincerity. Pupils contribute to assembly by singing hymns, sharing their experiences and opinions and reading prayers. Some displays around the school reinforce the mission statement 'Striving for excellence'; for example, Year 5 pupils list individual goals. Not enough emphasis is placed on exploring the spiritual elements in curriculum subjects to enhance the good experiences found in collective worship and assembly.
37. The provision for moral development is good. Children in the Foundation Stage are introduced from an early age to concepts of right and wrong and teachers provide opportunities for pupils to talk about positive attitudes and values that help them to take responsibility for their own actions. This is reinforced further through the work of the 'playground pals', the school council and monitors who support their peers in school.
38. Pupils' social development is very good. Many opportunities are provided for them to work collaboratively in subjects such as English, mathematics and science. Through working with others they learn to respect and value the views of others, and through their involvement in activities outside lessons, including residential trips, pupils learn how to respond to each other in different settings. The caring atmosphere throughout the school and the high quality of relationships contribute effectively to pupils' social development. The school fosters a sense of citizenship by supporting charity collections and through the work of the school council. Pupils comply with school policies and appreciate the opportunities provided for their social development.
39. The cultural development of pupils is good and has improved since the last inspection. Religious education, art and design, music and literacy, school performances, and visitors and visits, make significant contributions to pupils' knowledge of their own faith and culture and those of others. The main festivals of Christianity are celebrated and pupils learn about other cultures in their study of Divali and Chinese New Year. During 'World Week' pupils learn about other countries through a good range of artefacts, books and pictures. The school is in the process of identifying links with other subjects and further links have been planned to celebrate music from the Romany culture.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school provides a safe and caring environment for its pupils and this reflects its stated aims. The overall procedures and provision for pupils' safety, behaviour and wellbeing, including child protection, are good, but arrangements for monitoring their attainment and progress are satisfactory.
41. The school is a safe place for pupils to work in and develop the friendly and respectful relationships they have with each other. The staff are courteous and know the pupils well, and this friendly and caring aspect contributes positively to the pupils' enthusiasm for school. There is good discipline and behaviour, which demonstrate the effectiveness of the policies in place. Attitudes and relationships in the classroom are good and there were a significant number of examples of very good and exemplary behaviour in a range of lessons. Although supervision at lunchtime is low key it is effective owing to the good levels of self-discipline demonstrated by the pupils. The school has clear procedures for dealing with and checking on instances of bullying that are understood by all.
42. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance have been enhanced by the appointment of an Attendance Improvement Officer and they are now good. Innovative strategies have been put in place to promote and reward good and improved attendance and there are positive indications that they will be successful. The computerised registration system is rigorously monitored and used to its full extent. Attendance patterns for year groups and individuals are carefully monitored, with

the 'First Day Absence Response' systematically adhered to. The attendance officer has on occasions been to homes to collect pupils, for example, after a mother rang to say she could not escort her child to school. Parents are regularly reminded of the importance of good attendance and the need to minimise absences, particularly the taking of holidays during term time. The regular Newsletter highlights the current attendance levels and trends. More parents are beginning to appreciate the importance of ensuring their child's regular attendance and for those children attending more regularly performance is better.

43. The Child Protection Policy is well written and all the staff receive full training in its implementation from the headteacher. In addition, four members of staff are further trained in restraint and the law. The school policy embodies the procedures and instructions issued by the local authority. The school has access to the Internet for the use of pupils. This is via the local authority's computer system and the necessary precautions are in place for its safe use.
44. The governors regularly review the health-and-safety policy and a programme of risk assessments is currently being undertaken. The premises are in good order, clean and well cared for. The fire alarm is tested weekly and full fire drill is practised at least once per term. There is also a clear and concise premises-and-maintenance programme that is regularly reviewed.
45. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. A recently introduced system for recording pupils' achievements is in place and being used appropriately to keep details of teachers' assessments. There are sound policies for target setting, assessment and marking that provide suitable guidance for teachers. During the Foundation Stage assessments effectively derived from observations of children at play are made against the recently introduced Stepping Stones. National Curriculum tests are administered at the ages of seven and 11, in accordance with national requirements. In addition to the statutory assessments, pupils are tested in English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6 using standardised tests and the school has used national non-statutory test materials. The headteacher and subject leaders have analysed the test results to identify curriculum areas that need to be improved. This analysis has been too superficial, in some instances, to measure the impact of teaching and learning strategies on distinct groups of pupils or to compare pupils' progress with that of pupils in other schools. The school has an electronic system of storing pupils' test data. A considerable amount of data is stored, but analysis is restricted as there is a lack of information about teachers' assessments and pupils' individual targets. Subject leaders recognise the need to improve procedures for the frequent assessment of pupils to enable more effective tracking of progress in all subjects.
46. Teachers make suitable use of assessment information to inform the planning of future lessons. They use their assessments when completing weekly evaluations before determining what to teach next. During lessons, what is to be learned is usually made clear to pupils. In the good lessons observed, teachers use time at the end to evaluate effectively what has been learned. The support and advice provided for pupils about their progress have improved since the last inspection. In reading, writing and mathematics teachers set individual curriculum targets with the pupils and share this information with parents. Pupils strive to achieve their targets, which are reviewed appropriately through the year, but teachers do not consistently feed back to pupils the progress they are making through the marking of work. The use of assessment data to record the level of pupils' achievements and share this with them is satisfactory. The marking policy provides helpful guidance for teachers and contains a clear key for teachers to follow when marking pupils' work. Many good examples of teachers' marking that give good direction and guidance to pupils in a consistently positive way were observed. Since the last report the school has made satisfactory progress in developing assessment procedures and has addressed well the issues raised in the previous report.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Parents hold the school in high regard for what it offers and achieves for their children. It has developed good links with parents and carers and offers many opportunities for them to become involved in their children's learning. The positive partnership between many parents and the school

helps to create constructive communication that gives pupils confidence, which in turn, encourages them to value their school and work hard.

48. Parents are pleased with the progress their children make and agree that behaviour is good. All those that returned the questionnaire said their children like school and were pleased with the high expectations the school promotes. A few parents did not feel that the school works closely enough with them, and a similar minority were unhappy with the amount of information they receive about their children's progress but the team felt these views were unjustified. Parents feel that the school is well led and managed and that teaching is good. They also feel comfortable in approaching the school and find the staff welcoming and friendly. Many parents come into the playground to bring and collect their children and they greet teachers and other parents with ease.
49. The level of information given to parents is consistently good. There is a clear and attractive school prospectus available to all parents and in addition the policy for family-school partnerships emphasises the aims and objectives of both the school and the parents as educators. This policy is embedded in the home-school agreement that has now been introduced. Parents also get a handbook summarising many of the school's policies and procedures, term dates and other useful information. In addition they receive a regular newsletter communicating interesting activities and features of school life. This newsletter also indicates the current levels of attendance, which the school is constantly trying to improve. Many other letters go to parents from the school regarding school trips, activities and parents' evenings and to give them other general information.
50. Information for parents about what their children will learn and study in the year ahead is presented to parents at year-group curriculum meetings. Parents are provided with more-specific information about their children's progress at parents' evenings in the autumn and spring terms and in an annual written report at the end of the school year. The opportunity to discuss any issues and concerns parents may have regarding the report is made available to them. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are regularly contacted and appropriately involved in discussions related to their children's development. In conjunction with the Basic Skills Agency the school has formed a family literacy group, which is a good example of the school's commitment to shared learning. Opportunities are also provided for parents to attend a computer club with their children to help them develop skills together. Parents see the value of the homework set for their children and agree that it is usually appropriate to their children's needs and consistent with the policy published by the school.
51. There are good links with the local community, and the school has an active parents' and friends' association. They organise social and fund-raising events and parents and carers are welcomed as volunteers, with a small number helping with school outings, as well as in the classroom and in other general tasks.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. Since the last inspection a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed. The new headteacher has sensibly reviewed and revised roles and responsibilities to ensure that all areas are suitably managed and an effective senior leadership team has been established. The headteacher made the agreement of shared aims and values for the school an early priority. The school values all members of the school community and this has successfully underpinned the life of the school over the last four years, leading to a harmonious community that is appreciated by parents and acknowledged as good by colleagues within the local authority. The headteacher, staff and governors have also strived to raise standards. However, the school's commitment to inclusion for all has made this more difficult to achieve. The good relationships evident throughout the school, the good teaching, the rich curriculum and the pupils' positive attitudes to learning provide a solid foundation for the school to further improve standards, but it is far from complacent and recognises that much remains to be done to secure the high standards to which it aspires. Overall, satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection and the school is now well placed to make further improvements.

53. The governing body, led by a very capable chair, is clearly determined to support the school in its drive for improvement. Governors are fully involved in shaping the direction the school takes and are beginning to hold the headteacher and staff more rigorously to account for the school's achievements through the setting of performance targets derived appropriately from the improvement programme. Governors are well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses and many are regular visitors to school. They support the school well, take their responsibilities seriously and fulfil their statutory duties. The governing body conducts its business efficiently through a committee system. The school improvement plan is a very thorough document that details suitable priorities and appropriately identifies responsibilities for action and the resources needed. However, greater clarity is needed in defining the intended outcomes to assist governors and staff to evaluate more closely the impact of the actions taken.
54. The headteacher is an effective and well-respected leader. She has set a clear course for the school and has skilfully involved staff and governors in a programme of change to create a learning community in which pupils realise the value of learning and staff are given ample opportunity to develop their expertise. Through careful delegation of responsibilities and thoughtful deployment of staff she has ensured that all members of the team are able to work to their strengths and have appropriate opportunity to extend their experience. This has been supported effectively through the successful introduction of performance management. The deputy headteacher has been a close partner in developing the school and has, along with the headteacher, set a good model for others, for example, in leading a subject and encouraging the involvement of parents. The headteacher has assumed the role of co-ordinator for special educational needs and has worked closely with colleagues to monitor and track the progress of these pupils, liaising effectively with outside agencies. Her leadership of this area has ensured that the previously sound provision has improved and is now good. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has similarly used her personal skills to improve the provision for the youngest pupils and to successfully introduce the new Foundation Stage curriculum.
55. The headteacher and senior leaders have conscientiously developed a wide range of policies that comprehensively inform practice and the work of the school. These have been regularly reviewed and have had a positive impact on classroom practice. Test data has been analysed and the information gleaned has been used appropriately to target additional support for pupils. Planned actions have been regularly revisited to ensure that progress is made and obstacles are overcome. However, insufficient attention has sometimes been given to measuring the impact of initiatives and decisions taken. Although the school has a reasonably clear view of its strengths and weaknesses, the view represented in the self-review document prepared for the inspection is too generous and fails to fully recognise the school's position in relation to other schools.
56. Responsibilities for the leadership of subjects are delegated appropriately. All subject leaders work in a consistent manner to write annual reports, highlighting emerging strengths and weaknesses, and subsequently to prepare detailed action plans to address any issues identified. Subject leaders bid for and then manage a budget to supplement resources and to support developments within their subject. Each subject leader has been provided with some time to fulfil the planned actions, but few foundation-subject leaders have yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning with sufficient rigour. Most subject leaders are aware of the national expectations in their subject and know broadly what needs to be done to develop the subject further, but without more-precise information gained at first hand they cannot always identify the specific developments required to raise standards across the school. Leadership is satisfactory in most subjects, but it is good in mathematics, music and physical education.
57. The school has a declining population and therefore a reducing budget, but it enjoys a substantial reserve from previous years. The headteacher and governors have consistently spent above the annual allocation each year to gradually reduce this surplus for the benefit of the pupils. Resources have been purchased and are now good in all subjects. The building has in parts been refurbished to create a good learning environment. In setting the budget, governors have wisely been cautious about making long-term commitments to staffing when the pupil population is reducing and the number of classes will inevitably decrease. However, in the short term some classes are too large and, although the adult to pupil ratio is, for much of the day, at an

appropriate level, there are times when one teacher is left to manage a large number of pupils. When this happens learning is sometimes adversely affected. Governors regularly monitor expenditure, but too little information has been made available to the governing body to enable it to evaluate with sufficient rigour the impact of spending decisions. The governors are committed to getting the best value for money when buying goods and services. Information from National Curriculum tests is used appropriately to compare the school's performance with that of other schools and the findings are rightly used to set challenging targets. However, other benchmark data is not used effectively to provide a context in which comparisons can be made. Parents and pupils have been consulted on aspects of school life and their views have been taken into account when management decisions are made, for example, in preparing the homework policy. Competitive prices are sought when purchases are made or services are acquired. The school's allocation of the Standards Fund grant has been spent properly for the purposes designated. Well-targeted professional development opportunities are having a positive impact on standards and have led to improvements in the quality of teaching. The school was audited in 2002. The minor issues raised within the report have now been addressed. The headteacher is very well supported by experienced and highly committed administrative staff who help to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the school.

58. The school makes effective use of new technology. Computerised administrative systems are used to manage the school's finances, attendance data, pupils' personal information and more recently to help with the analysis of assessment data. The school has developed an award-winning website that provides parents and pupils with a window into the life of the school. Teachers increasingly turn to a computer when undertaking planning and preparing reports for parents or as part of the subject leadership role.
59. The school is staffed by suitably qualified teachers and there is an appropriate balance between experienced and more-recently qualified staff. Performance management is fully in place and is well linked to staff-development needs and the school's priorities. The school has a strong commitment to the professional development of teachers and support staff. It employs a higher-than-average number of support staff. These members of staff are generally deployed effectively and make a valuable contribution to the learning opportunities provided for pupils with special educational needs and in general during class lessons. The induction arrangements and training of new staff have been modified since the last inspection and are now good. The school is appropriately placed to provide initial teacher training.
60. Resources to support the curriculum are generally of good quality and adequate to meet the demands of each subject. Subject leaders organise resources well and make them easily accessible for their colleagues.
61. The building and grounds are well maintained. The school's accommodation is on two floors and governors are properly seeking to improve access for the disabled. Recently modifications have been made to create a Foundation Stage unit with access to the outdoors. This has had a very positive impact on provision for the youngest pupils. Other areas are used effectively to create a variety of teaching areas including a number of inviting spaces for small groups to work. Displays in classrooms and public areas are used effectively to celebrate pupils' work, provide a wealth of interesting information and present useful prompts to aid their learning. The school has appropriate security arrangements in place to monitor the arrival of visitors at the main entrance.
62. Overall, since the last inspection the school has made satisfactory progress. The issues raised in the previous report have mostly been addressed satisfactorily. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and standards in English and mathematics are beginning to show signs of improvement in Key Stage 2 but are less secure in Key Stage 1 and further work remains to be done to increase the pace of learning, particularly for boys. Good progress has been made in developing the school's capacity to deliver information and communication technology, resulting in improved standards. The school has introduced new programmes of work for all subjects. The role of subject leaders has been clarified and a more-structured approach has been adopted for monitoring and evaluating classroom practice. Assessment procedures have been improved. All pupils have targets set which help them and

their parents to understand what is to be learned. Good progress has been made in improving provision for pupils with special educational needs. Arrangements for the induction of new teachers are now at least satisfactory. Good progress has been made in improving provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage. The school has made strenuous efforts to improve rates of attendance and some improvement to attendance rates has been achieved, but, despite the school's best endeavours, some parents continue to remove their children for holidays during term time.

63. Taking account of the careful use of financial resources, which are slightly above average for a school of this size, the good provision made for pupils, the satisfactory progress pupils make during their time at the school and the satisfactory progress made since the last inspection, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. In order to further improve the quality of education and raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (i) improve standards in English and mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 1 and for boys throughout the school by:

- ensuring that the pace of lessons and the length of tasks meet the needs of all pupils;
- ensuring effective links between whole-class work and the work pupils do independently;
- ensuring that support assistants are fully engaged during whole-class sessions;
- ensuring that pupils understand what is to be learned and become involved in assessing their progress in all lessons;
- ensuring that pupils are given sufficient feedback on their work and on their progress towards targets; and
- improving the behaviour of a small minority of boys.

(paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 25)

- (ii) increase opportunities for subject leaders to monitor teaching and learning and share best practice by:

- providing more opportunity for them to observe in lessons;
- establishing a more regular pattern of work scrutiny and the review of teachers' planning; and
- providing more opportunity for teachers to work alongside each other and discuss pedagogy.

(paragraphs 57, 113, 133, 161)

- (iii) improve the quality of teachers' assessments and use this information more regularly to track pupils' progress by:

- ensuring that teachers regularly work together to review pupils' achievements and to agree standards using criteria identified in the National Curriculum;
- developing efficient systems for recording attainment and progress;
- analysing results with greater precision and greater regularity to evaluate the value added to individual performance; and
- using the analysis of assessments to consider the extent to which initiatives have been successful.

(paragraphs 27, 46, 96, 125, 139, 145)

(iv) improve the use of school, local and national data to measure the impact of initiatives, provision and decisions taken by:

- identifying clearly the intended outcomes of actions within the school improvement plan and key milestones against which progress can be measured; and
- providing governors with more comparative data to help them evaluate more closely the work of the school.

(paragraphs 54,56,58,96)

(v) improve the balance and organisation of the curriculum by:

- restructuring the school day to make more efficient use of teaching time;
- ensuring that lessons are of the right length to secure a good pace to learning;
- ensuring that opportunities are not missed to link learning across the curriculum when subject specialist teaching is taking place;
- ensuring that curriculum coverage is adequately monitored; and
- ensuring that teachers are not required to teach groups that are too large without adequate support.

(paragraphs 29,30,113,132)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	47

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	2	15	22	18	1	0	0
Percentage	3.4	25.9	37.9	31.0	1.7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	17.5	281
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	94

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	67

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2202	24	18	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	10	19
	Girls	17	15	17
	Total	31	25	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (79)	60 (82)	86 (89)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	18
	Girls	17	17	16
	Total	34	34	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (75)	81 (86)	81 (64)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	22	24	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	16
	Girls	17	16	23
	Total	28	28	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (58)	61 (58)	85 (84)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	15
	Girls	15	14	19
	Total	26	25	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (64)	54 (71)	74 (87)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
136	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
141	3	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)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.1
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR - Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	737,581
Total expenditure	714,904
Expenditure per pupil	261.90
Balance brought forward from previous year	51,700
Balance carried forward to next year	74,377

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	287
Number of questionnaires returned	112

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	33	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	35	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	41	2	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	49	7	0	5
The teaching is good.	65	32	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	36	11	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	37	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	38	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	43	43	10	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	54	38	5	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	48	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	43	5	2	7

Other issues raised by parents

The positive comments made by parents far outweigh any negative views. Parents of traveller pupils and of pupils with special educational needs commented on how supportive the school is of them and of their children. A few parents feel that, although they are well informed about their children's academic progress, they would appreciate more information about their personal development.

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

65. Children start in the nursery with skills that are generally below those expected for their age, but attainment is well below expectations in spoken language and social development. By the end of their reception year all children, including those with special educational needs and those from the traveller community, make good progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of learning, and their attainment is average overall. Children make good progress in their nursery and reception years because all staff work well together by planning for a range of learning opportunities and by targeting individuals through small-group teaching. The school has worked hard to improve the outdoor learning opportunities offered to nursery and reception children since the last inspection and as a result they now make good progress in their physical development. Children quickly become established in school routines. They enjoy the experiences offered and are eager to learn. They form good relationships with the adults who support them and with each other, and consequently learn how they are expected to behave in a range of situations and try hard to comply.
66. The Foundation Stage coordinator leads the work of the Foundation Stage very well and has secured good progress since the last inspection. She has very successfully implemented the Foundation Stage curriculum, providing enriching experiences and allowing children sufficient opportunities to practise and consolidate their skills. She carefully monitors the work of this area by sharing plans, observing teaching and meeting regularly with the reception teacher. The nursery and reception classes are now well resourced and provide a stimulating and lively environment in which children learn effectively.
67. The quality of teaching is mostly good and sometimes very good. The best teaching captures the imagination of children through appropriate pace and lesson development, and sustains their interest through stimulating resources and very good relationships. This was particularly evident in music, where nursery children learned about percussion instruments in a fun and exciting way. The nursery staff use every opportunity to support children in their learning. For example, in the home area children learn about procedures and routines by sequencing events for making the tea and getting the baby ready for bed and during registration explore different ways of greeting one another such as 'Hello', 'I'm here' or simply by waving for those reluctant to speak. Reception children sustain very good levels of concentration when making puppets because there are a wide range of interesting materials that vary in shape, texture and colour. However, they do not always sustain interest when engaged in independent tasks. Teachers' plans are detailed and relate well to the Foundation Stage Stepping Stones. Short-term planning clearly identifies learning objectives that allow for the different needs of children in the class and, as a result, all children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their nursery and reception years. In the reception class there are no procedures for monitoring children's choice of activity during independent work, and some children were observed selecting the same activities repeatedly, as there is no system in place to check that they all access the range of activities available. For example, some pupils were less inclined to look at books, therefore missing opportunities to develop their literacy skills. At times, the activities provided in the reception class do not have enough structure to sufficiently extend the children's learning.
68. The school has worked hard to develop its procedures for assessing children's progress throughout the Foundation Stage and is well prepared for the introduction of the new pupil profiling. Staff make good use of their on-going assessments to identify the next stage of learning and use this information to vary work to meet the needs of particular children. They maintain records of children's progress by collecting evidence of their achievements. Parents are kept regularly updated about the progress of their children and are informed about the curriculum through 'Home/School books' and regular curriculum workshops. This helps parents to support their children's learning at home.

Personal, social and emotional development

69. Children start nursery with limited personal, social and emotional skills and make very good progress by the end of their reception year. Staff have worked hard to develop children's independence by providing well-planned activities, secure routines and good support. As a result children use both their indoor and outdoor environments with confidence, choose areas to work in and select their own equipment, displaying good levels of independence. For example, in the nursery one little girl was observed fulfilling a sorting activity on her own, and in the reception class two children selected a book to share and returned when they had finished. Reception children are familiar with the morning routines, confidently register themselves and play quietly and calmly until the class register is held. In the nursery children are learning to plan their initial choice of activity by using photographs of the areas available, but this is not further developed in the reception class, where there are no opportunities for them to take responsibility for planning their choice of independent tasks.
70. The organisation of the learning environment provides opportunities for children to work together and to develop their co-operative skills. In the nursery children co-operate in their roles by washing and drying the dishes together and in reception children take turns to operate the computer and show their completed puppets to one another. All staff are caring and sensitive to the needs of young children and make good use of their time to join in with children's activities; this contributes to the very good learning that takes place in this area.

Communication, language and literacy

71. Very good use is made of all learning opportunities to develop and extend children's vocabulary and, as a result, they make very good progress in this area. In the nursery, children eagerly talk about the photographs on display; for example, 'Is that me?' and 'Look! There's Carl', and staff use questions effectively to encourage children to talk about what they are doing, such as 'How can we test to see if tea is ready?'. In the reception class, staff make time for children to talk about items brought from home and make good use of registration time to talk about the snowy weather. Staff in both classes plan for the development of language skills by using correct language themselves and by repeating new vocabulary. For example, through effective displays in reception children learn words to describe cold and warm colours. As a result, children in both classes talk enthusiastically about what they have been doing and are developing confidence when contributing to discussions in small or large groups.
72. As soon as they enter nursery, children are made aware of books and have planned opportunities to share them with each other or an adult at home. Well-chosen storybooks with rhyming patterns and flaps hold children's interest during story time and their attention is sustained through appropriate questioning and discussion about the story. In the reception class, children are learning to recall the story of the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff' by sequencing events. They eagerly join in with the repetitive elements of the story by chanting the trolls' responses and as a result they learn about the effects of different print for the reader. Children respond well to the story and are starting to explore the feeling of characters by suggesting how they may feel; for example, 'He looks angry'. All reception children share their reading books at home and enjoy talking about the pictures and the characters in their books. They are beginning to recognise familiar words, but most children have limited knowledge of individual letter sounds to support them in their reading.
73. Both classes have stimulating 'book areas' which are used well by children throughout the day. There is a range of good-quality books and nursery children particularly enjoy sharing a selection of well-chosen comics with one another.
74. A scrutiny of children's writing shows good progress. All children in the reception class have made good progress in writing their own names and are starting to write with independence, giving meaning to their work. Children attaining above the average are beginning to use their knowledge of letter sounds to write simple words, but others require additional structure to support their development. Nursery children make good attempts at writing their own names and all children are

able to ascribe meaning to their marks. They willingly participate in writing because there is a range of stimulating materials and papers to use, and their attempts are celebrated.

Mathematical development

75. In the nursery children are beginning to recognise numerals to ten by counting and matching activities. They count candles for a birthday cake and explore capacity by filling and emptying containers in the sand and water. Children are making good progress in their mathematical development because staff plan for small focus groups and use every opportunity to help children to develop their mathematical awareness. For example, during registration children practise counting, use 'tally marks' to count the number of children present and are able to identify that there are more boys present than girls.
76. In the reception class children learn 'taking away' by playing skittles in the outdoor area and use tallies to record the number of skittles knocked down. They reinforce their understanding of 'taking away' through the use of interactive displays within class. Children can devise simple repeating patterns using shape, and explore the properties and learn the names of 3D shapes when wrapping presents. Children benefit from individual and small group support, and from well-planned activities that sustain their interest.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

77. Children are making good progress towards reaching the Early Learning Goals in this area. This is because the Foundation Stage curriculum is greatly enhanced by visitors who provide them with a range of first-hand experiences that help them to make sense of the world. For example, reception children are learning about how we used to live from 'Victorian visitors' and from exploring artefacts from the nineteenth century. Children can remember features such as 'the metal bath' and 'maypole', and readily use the photographic evidence of this visit to recall other features such as clothing and toys used.
78. Nursery children learn about the needs of other living things from veterinary staff who visit during the inspection to explain how to care for animals. They make very good links with caring for themselves and are provided with opportunities to observe at first hand a dog, cat and guinea pig. This visit provided a very good introduction to the new 'veterinary surgery' which has been set up to provide children with opportunities to engage in role play.
79. Children show an interest in computers. They enjoy using the computer and are developing their control over the mouse to operate simple counting games. Reception children can target and drag images to make repeating patterns and in the nursery children work with independence to pop bubbles with a wand.
80. Children learn about cultures different from their own through well-chosen stories, which provide opportunities for them to talk about their own culture and those of others. For example, in the reception class children respond very well to the experiences of others and look for similarities in routines and family life in their story 'Different Kinds of Beliefs'. In the nursery, children in the home corner talk about themselves and their families by re-enacting their daily routines and activities.
81. Children in both classes use their senses to explore a range of different materials and textures. Nursery children use sand, pebbles, sticks and twigs as a home for their animals and reception children confidently use simple tools and show good levels of control. This is because they have many opportunities to learn how to use equipment and as a result they can manipulate tapes, adhesives and scissors carefully and with growing precision.

Physical development

82. Good progress is made in this area of learning. All children benefit from the use of an enclosed, partly-covered outdoor area, which provides opportunities for them to engage in a range of physical activities such as climbing, balancing, sliding and riding. Children confidently ride tricycles and negotiate trailers along a pathway and balance along a circuit made from large wooden bricks. Reception children ride with control in and out of cones and build pathways with large connecting

shapes.

83. In addition, nursery and reception children regularly use the main school hall for more-focused physical activity. Younger children are learning to hold 'star' and 'pencil' shapes and respond appropriately to instructions. They are well supported by enthusiastic staff who enhance their learning by joining in with their activity. In their dance activities reception children are learning to sequence movements about the weather; they make good use of space and consider level and speed in their movements. The very good standards observed in this area have resulted from visiting dance specialists who worked with children, parents and staff to introduce a programme for dance. Children are making good progress in making simple evaluations of their work by identifying the things they liked. All children make very good progress in dressing and undressing themselves. This is because staff spend time supporting and encouraging independence.

Creative development

84. Children make good progress in this area because they have a range of well-planned activities that allow them to work creatively, developing a variety of skills. In the nursery, children have experimented with colour mixing and used printing to make patterns. In the reception class children's creativity is stimulated through the story of the 'Bear Hunt', where they create different textures such as 'thick mud' and 'swishy grass' by colour mixing and collage.
85. In music children tap out simple, repeated rhythms and learn how to change sound through vocal patterns such as chanting. In the nursery, children are learning to identify instruments and to describe the sounds they make. The teacher expertly stimulates children and holds their interest through actions such as 'roaring like a tiger to the drum beat'.
86. Children's imagination is very well developed in the Foundation Stage. There are opportunities for them all to engage in role-play. In the nursery, children bath the baby and learn to care for its needs, and in the reception class they celebrate parties. Staff have worked hard to provide interesting resources to support play in this area.

ENGLISH

87. At the time of the last inspection standards in English were in line with the national average in Year 2 and below the national average in Year 6. Progress was satisfactory throughout the school. Since the last inspection, the school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy, provided training for teachers and support staff and improved resources. However, attainment in Year 2 has declined and is now slightly below the national average in reading and writing. Attainment in Year 6 has remained in line with the national average, but test results have not consistently reflected this. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school compared to satisfactory progress at the time of the last inspection. Girls outperform boys in Year 2 and Year 6 by more than the national average. The school has appropriately identified this as an area for development and has introduced a range of strategies that are beginning to make some impact. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory.
88. During the inspection, evidence confirmed standards to be slightly below average in reading and writing in Year 2 and in line with national expectations in speaking and listening. Taking into account their below-average starting point in Year 1 pupils achieve appropriately in reading, writing, speaking and listening and the school is likely to meet its targets for 2003.
89. During the inspection, evidence showed that the standards overall are in line with the national average. They are in line with national expectations in reading and writing and above in speaking and listening and pupils make sound progress. The school is likely to meet its targets for 2003. The National Literacy Strategy and programmes such as Early Literacy Support, Additional Literacy Support, the Better Reading Partnership and Family Literacy are having a positive impact on standards and this is particularly evident in Year 6. The Traveller Education Service and teaching assistants also contribute positively to the raising of standards by providing good support for groups of pupils and individuals.

90. By Year 2 most pupils read suitable material with an appropriate level of fluency, expression and understanding. They are able to talk about stories and retell them in sequence, talk about the main characters and events in a story and predict what might happen next. To read unfamiliar words pupils use their knowledge of the relationship between sounds and letters, look at illustrations and consider the text of the story. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction. Pupils know how to use contents and index pages and dictionaries to find the information they need but sometimes fail to use these skills independently and resort to looking through a book randomly. By Year 6, pupils of all capabilities read suitable material with an appropriate level of accuracy, fluency, expression and understanding. They can retrieve information from a variety of library sources and the Internet. Pupils show an enjoyment of literature and express their preferences. They can discuss the ways in which authors choose words and the structure of writing to achieve an effect. They express strong opinions about events and characters with references to the text they have read but also take account of the views of others. In class discussions they show empathy with characters in the text they are studying.
91. By Year 2 most pupils write independently, spell common words correctly and use simple punctuation accurately in their sentences most of the time. Most pupils form their letters correctly and achieve a reasonable consistency in the size of their writing. The writing of pupils of lower ability is sometimes illegible. Few pupils join their writing. Pupils of average and higher ability are beginning to use a greater range of punctuation such as speech marks and question marks. Pupils of higher ability are beginning to write more sophisticated sentences and include more description. Simple stories are written with a sequence of events. An appropriate range of writing is provided and includes stories with familiar settings, description, instructions, poetry, invitations, letters, lists, diaries and book reviews. By Year 6 most pupils use a fluent, joined script and all writing is well presented. Pupils of all capabilities, including those with special educational needs, add sufficient variety to the structure of their writing to gain the interest of the reader and they organise their writing into paragraphs. Spelling and the use of a range of punctuation are mostly correct. More-able pupils vary the choice of descriptive language and use metaphors and similes to achieve the desired effect. A good range of writing experiences is offered to the pupils and includes Shakespeare in modern language, screenplays, story plans, biography and autobiography, persuasive argument, reports, instructions, letters, fact and opinion, film and book reviews, poetry, summaries, legends and character description.
92. Other subjects make a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. In a Year 4 physical education lesson pupils used their descriptions from their class poem about Harry Potter to produce a dance sequence. Pupils took notes during a discussion in a Year 5 religious education lesson to use in their writing task. A science lesson for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 provided an opportunity to discuss fair testing. Speaking and listening skills are used and developed well in all classes and subjects through such activities as paired talk to develop a response to a question. Pupils are asked to justify their opinions when expressing preferences and evaluating the work of authors and other pupils. They are given good opportunities to read out their work to the whole class individually or in pairs and groups. Writing is developed well in other subjects as pupils are expected to record in a variety of forms and for a variety of purposes. The moral education of pupils is developed effectively through the study of characters in texts and the discussions on their actions. Opportunities for discussing and working in pairs or small groups contribute to the social development of pupils. Information and communication technology is used to practise and develop the pupils' skills of researching for information and presenting their work in a variety of forms for different audiences. Year 6 pupils make good use of information technology to produce the Rocking Robins newsletter.
93. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils in lessons are very good throughout the school. Generally, pupils are very attentive, keen to answer questions and enjoy taking part in discussions. They show an enjoyment of the subject, ask questions to clarify points and express clearly their preferences of stories and poems. Pupils generally respond positively to the teachers and have very good relationships with all adults and each other. Pupils co-operate well, work together when given the opportunity and sustain their concentration and effort when working independently of the teacher. They are able to select resources for themselves, record information for later use and

evaluate material and their own work. However, a very small number of boys easily become distracted from their work when the content of the lesson is not appealing or they lack suitable resources. The pupils quickly get back on track when these issues are addressed. Pupils show a pride in their work, discuss it sensibly with adults and each other, show a genuine interest in the work of other pupils and show appreciation of their efforts.

94. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have a good knowledge of the English National Curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy. Planning is good and pupils are very clear about what they are expected to learn. Work is matched appropriately to the needs of all pupils. Teaching assistants are well directed and well prepared and provide good support for individuals, groups and pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to make good progress. Sometimes, however, teaching assistants merely observe whole-class sessions and are not fully employed in providing support for individuals through explaining or prompting or in assessing the pupils' contributions to discussions. Good support is provided for pupils on programmes such as Early Literacy Support, Additional Literacy Support and the Better Reading Partnership. Classrooms are well organised and enable pupils to use dictionaries and other reference material independently. Displays feature pupils' work, and support learning and progress towards targets by providing prompts on reading and writing. Teachers respond positively to the pupils, value the contribution they make to lessons and encourage them to build their confidence. Teachers demonstrate reading and writing for the pupils to show what they are trying to achieve. Most lessons have good links between whole-class work and the tasks set for group work to provide pupils with opportunities to practise the skills they are learning. Where teaching is less effective there is no link between the whole-class work and the work pupils do independently. This results in some pupils being unsure of what to do. Questioning is often used effectively to involve all pupils and to develop understanding. Where teaching is most successful, lessons maintain a good pace, there is a good balance between teacher talk and pupil tasks, and pupils are given time limits to complete their work. The final parts of lessons are more effective when the teacher involves the pupils in discussion about how successful they have been in their tasks, whether they have achieved what they set out to do and how they could use their knowledge or skills in a different context or in future lessons. Occasionally this part of the lesson is too brief and merely involves the pupils reading out their work without any discussion about it. Marking of work is used to give feedback to pupils on how well they have done and what they need to do to improve, but this is not consistent across all classes. There are good links between the work done in lessons and homework.
95. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has observed parts of lessons and has undertaken an analysis of test results. There have been insufficient opportunities to observe independent group work and the ends of lessons. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of standards and of the issue concerning the attainment of boys and has introduced strategies to address this, including working with a beacon school. The progress of individual pupils is recorded but is not reviewed at sufficiently frequent intervals to track progress as effectively as possible. There is no overall evaluation of the various literacy programmes such as Early Literacy Support, Additional Literacy Support and the Better Reading Partnership to determine whether they are achieving the desired results and providing value for money.
96. Classroom resources are well organised, of good quality and appropriate for the age range. Good use is made of whiteboards for the pupils to make notes and for the teacher to assess their understanding. Pupils have ready access to a good range of information sources, including the Internet and the school's library, and they use these independently.

MATHEMATICS

97. At the time of the last inspection standards in mathematics were in line with the national average in Year 2 and below the national average in Year 6. Progress was satisfactory throughout the school. Since the last inspection, the school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy, including intervention programmes targeting pupils in need of additional help, there has been extensive training for staff, resources have been improved and the deputy headteacher has become the mathematics co-ordinator. However, attainment at the age of seven has declined and

is now slightly below average. Attainment by the age of 11 years has been sustained in line with the national average, but in the intervening period there has been some variation in test results. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school compared to satisfactory progress at the last inspection. Girls outperform boys in Year 2 and Year 6 by more than the national average, but the school is beginning to address this by adapting the ways in which teachers present lessons and by adopting a more practical approach to mathematics. Overall, progress since the last inspection is satisfactory.

98. In the national tests for mathematics in Year 2 in 2002, pupils' performance was well below the national average and that of similar schools. However, the school's context has declined slightly in the recent past and, if its results are compared with those in schools in the next socio-economic group, performance is seen to be below rather than well below that of similar schools. Performance at the higher levels was well below the national average and below that in similar schools. Trends over time show that results in mathematics have declined. During the inspection, evidence from teacher assessments, the analysis of pupils' progress, lesson observations, pupils' work and discussions with pupils showed that standards are slightly below average in mathematics. However, progress is sound and the school is on line to meet its targets for 2003.
99. During the inspection, evidence showed that the standards overall are in line with the national average. Progress is at least satisfactory and it is good in Years 4 and 6. The school is on line to meet its targets for 2003. The National Numeracy Strategy and intervention programmes such as 'Springboard Maths' are having a positive impact on standards, and the Traveller Education Service and teaching assistants provide good support for groups of pupils and individuals.
100. By Year 2 most pupils can work confidently with numbers up to 100 and know what each digit represents. They know addition and subtraction facts up to 10 and can count forwards and backwards in ones, twos and tens. Pupils use mathematical vocabulary related to time, money, measurement and direction. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were able to weigh themselves and their friends, reading from a scale to calculate their weight in kilograms. They used this information to make comparisons. Many are able to choose an appropriate method to record addition and subtraction problems, but few can work confidently with larger numbers.
101. By Year 6, pupils use addition, subtraction, multiplication and division with whole numbers and occasionally with decimals. Pupils have a good understanding of place value and work confidently with two-, three- and four-digit numbers. They can use a range of strategies to solve problems and can suggest ways of checking the reasonableness of their answers by estimating and using a variety of mental calculations. Most understand percentage as parts in every 100. They are able to reduce fractions to their simplest form. Some pupils know that 360 degrees is the angle at a point and at a whole turn, and that 180 degrees is the angle on a straight line and within a triangle. In a very good Year 6 lesson, pupils enjoyed the challenge of using this information to calculate angles in a given shape.
102. Across the school appropriate emphasis is placed on linking mathematical development to other subjects. Pupils used their mathematical understanding in information and communication technology lessons in Years 1 and 2 to work out how to navigate a space ship around the planets. In a Year 6 science lesson, pupils used careful measuring skills to record the stretch in their elastic when testing the pull of different weights and then recorded their findings on a line graph. Younger pupils in Year 3 prepared bar charts as part of an information and communication technology lesson about databases. As the school is in the process of updating the computers in the classrooms there were few opportunities to observe pupils using information and communication technology to support their learning within a mathematics lesson. However, in a Year 6 lesson one pupil made good use of a program to develop her skills in reading an angle from a protractor. Older pupils all work independently on a mathematics program designed to develop their mathematical knowledge and skills. This contributes well to their learning and encourages them to work independently, which they do in a mature and sensible manner.
103. Pupils throughout the school respond very well in mathematic lessons. They enjoy the practical approach to the subject and generally behave well, but in a few instances where teachers are less skilled at managing these situations or where the pace of the lesson slows, a small minority of

boys can become over-excited or lose concentration. In most lessons, pupils remain on task, work productively and show enthusiasm for the activities given to them. They work co-operatively in pairs or small groups, handle resources with care and mostly take a pride in presenting their work neatly. Pupils listen attentively to adults and participate fully, as seen when they are given the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding by displaying answers on individual whiteboards. In discussion with pupils it is evident that they enjoy this subject and older pupils speak with enthusiasm about the teaching methods used as they make lessons more interesting.

104. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. In both key stages some lessons are very good. Teachers prepare lively and interesting learning environments in their classrooms that provide pupils with useful prompts to aid their learning. These are referred to regularly and assist those who are working independently. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and are very familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy. Planning is good and teachers are making effective use of the units of work prepared nationally. Work is pitched appropriately to meet the differing needs of all pupils and considerable thought is given to the modification of tasks to make them accessible to all. For example, in a Year 1 lesson in which pupils were comparing the weight of two and three objects, the teacher made the difference in weight more extreme for a pupil with special educational needs. Most teachers manage their pupils well and use praise skilfully to encourage and motivate. Some introduce a good range of teaching techniques that give pupils a variety of opportunities to learn by seeing and doing. In most lessons, teachers urge pupils to explain their thinking, encouraging the use of the correct terminology and the sharing of ideas. Good support is provided for pupils taking part in the 'Springboard Maths' programme, and teaching assistants also provide well for pupils with special educational needs and for those from the traveller community. Good links are often made between the starter and main activities, giving pupils suitable opportunities to practise the skills that will be required in the main part of the lesson. In the best lessons, teachers maintain a brisk pace and use their time efficiently to support a particular group whilst maintaining an overview of the others who are working independently. However, where lessons are too long this sometimes adversely affects the pace and in some cases the pupils' capacity to sustain concentration. Learning is most evident in lessons where teachers clearly explain what is to be learned at the outset and where at the end pupils are encouraged to assess how well they have achieved. This practice is not consistent in all lessons. Teachers set targets for pupils in mathematics, and these feature in all books, but few teachers refer to these when marking work or give sufficient guidance to their pupils on how they might improve. Homework is set regularly and followed up appropriately in lessons.
105. The deputy headteacher is the subject leader for mathematics and she fulfils this role well. She has organised training for staff, prepared a helpful policy, reviewed all aspects of the subject and prepared a suitable action plan to address emerging issues. She has observed lessons across the school, providing colleagues with useful feedback on what went well and how the lesson could be improved. She has undertaken an analysis of test results and used this information to check the progress of pupils receiving additional support. However, she has not used teachers' assessments to track progress more regularly through the year limiting her capacity to judge progress towards targets. A successful curriculum meeting was held for parents and more recently she has arranged for mathematics games to be made available for pupils to take home to help them learn with their parents. These strategies are helping parents to be better informed and more able to support their children's learn at home. The deputy headteacher has a clear overview of standards and of the issue concerning the attainment of boys and has introduced strategies to address this that are beginning to have a positive impact.

SCIENCE

106. At the time of the last inspection standards were in line with national expectations at the ages of seven and 11, and pupils achieved appropriately throughout the school. In contrast to the 2002 results, evidence from the current inspection indicates that standards in science are in line with national expectations at the ages of seven and 11, and pupils throughout the school continue to achieve appropriately. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of careful planning and effective support from teaching assistants. Good teaching and a well-planned

curriculum contribute to the sound progress made by pupils. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

107. At the age of seven, pupils have a suitable knowledge and understanding of science. They know about materials and their uses, as well as physical processes. They compare different materials in many ways, and know the changes, which can or cannot be reversed if substances like chocolate or bread are heated. Most pupils have an understanding of simple circuits and materials that conduct electricity through first-hand experience of experimenting with bulbs, batteries, wires and switches. Pupils' knowledge of living processes is not as advanced. They are able to identify the major parts of the body and have knowledge of what plants and animals need to sustain life. By Year 2, pupils are beginning to develop their skills of scientific enquiry.
108. At the age of 11, pupils have covered an appropriate range of science topics. They show a good understanding of materials and their properties, which is supported by interactive displays of rocks and minerals for pupils to investigate. Pupils' knowledge of life processes and living things is appropriate. In Year 3 this was supported by a cross-curricular project on health. During the inspection, dental health visitors who worked with small groups of pupils teaching basic dental health enhanced their learning. In Year 4, pupils gained a sound understanding of the human skeleton through an investigation into the length of bones. In Year 5, less-able pupils were observed recalling what they had learned about the effect of exercise on the body. The study of physical processes is well represented in pupils' workbooks with diagrams showing investigations of simple series and the production of circuits with wires, batteries, bulbs and switches. During a Year 6 lesson pupils investigated the rate of stretch in elastic and were able to discuss, using the correct scientific vocabulary, the forces involved. Most pupils know how an enquiry should be carried out, what factors need to be controlled and which can be measured. More-able pupils are able to make predictions based on evidence and represent data in tables and on accurately drawn line graphs.
109. Pupils have good attitudes towards science and behave well in these lessons throughout the school. They handle resources with care and enjoy the opportunities provided to take part in practical sessions. Pupils co-operate well and are used to working in-groups or pairs during science lessons. They usually listen well, contribute sensibly to class discussions and follow instructions carefully. Where some lessons were rather long the concentration of a minority of pupils wavered; this was usually well managed by the teacher.
110. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and pupils learn well throughout the school. Teachers give pupils the opportunity to think for themselves and they respond with enthusiasm. For example, in a Year 2 lesson on change, the teacher asked pupils to suggest what might happen when chocolate was heated and how this was different from bread. The pupils had many sensible ideas, and the teacher was careful to include all of them in the discussion. This led to the more able pupils already beginning to understand what constitutes a fair test. Teachers expect pupils to write careful explanations to accompany diagrams and observational drawings. Consequently, they develop an advanced understanding, for example, of what happens when a switch is closed in an electrical circuit. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they ensure that science is well represented in their displays. A good range of scientific vocabulary displayed alongside attractively mounted pupil work, interesting items, photographs, posters and books enhances pupils' learning. Teachers use thoughtful questioning of pupils and manage them very well to involve them in scientific enquiry. Marking of pupils' work is thorough, with positive and informative comments helping them to understand their achievements.
111. Pupils' literacy skills are developed through the subject as they discuss investigations, seek information from books, write notes and record experiments. Pupils practise mathematical skills when measuring, recording and interpreting data. Very little information and communication technology was observed during the inspection week as class computers had only recently been upgraded and were not working properly, but there was some evidence of previous work on data handling and information retrieval from the Internet. The subject enhances the pupils' social development as they are often called upon to work collaboratively. Discussions sometimes create

opportunities for them to think about ethical issues and to search for meaning and purpose in nature.

112. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There is a good policy and long-term curriculum plan based on national guidance. The subject leader has completed a thorough audit of resources, which are of good quality and sufficiency, and are used well by teachers. She has produced a very useful action plan. Recent improvements, initiated through the plan, include end-of-unit tests to support teacher assessments and a new system of recording teachers' assessments against key learning objectives. The subject leader has begun to monitor provision through the review of planning and scrutiny of pupils' work, but the planned monitoring of lessons has not materialised. This has limited the detail of her knowledge of particular strengths and weaknesses across the school and has therefore restricted her ability to share the very good practice that can be seen in some classes. Sufficient teaching time is allocated to science, but this is not always organised to maximise pupils' learning, as some lessons are too long.

ART AND DESIGN

113. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in art was judged to be in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Evidence from the current inspection shows that attainment has remained satisfactory and is in line with national expectations at the age of seven. In Years 3 to 6 pupils make good progress and attainment by the age of 11 is above average. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. Improvement has been satisfactory since the last inspection.
114. By the age of seven, pupils are able to use a variety of media to produce sketches, observational drawings and pictures involving a variety of techniques. A substantial amount of work was seen that involved the use of batik techniques on silk, cotton and a variety of papers. In a lesson on weaving for Years 1 and 2 pupils were able to explore the qualities of a range of materials. Higher-attaining pupils work with greater skill, producing more detail and demonstrating greater control of the media used. Sketchbooks are used, but some work lacks appropriate levels of detail. There was little evidence of 3D work available during the inspection.
115. By the age of 11, most pupils can collect information and review the features of the work of an adult artist, discussing the similarities and differences between their work and the original. Some pupils are able to compare and contrast the work of different adult artists in relation to the style, subject matter and medium employed. Most pupils can use a range of media to produce an image of an everyday object. Pupils are able to design and make artefacts that they then evaluate, using their developing knowledge of the relative qualities of materials. Increasingly pupils make use of sketchbooks to compile visual information and to assist with the development of their ideas. Information and communication technology is used effectively to research the life and works of famous artists and pupils are given some opportunities to create pictures using a "Paint" program, but their skills in this medium are limited.
116. Most pupils thoroughly enjoy this subject. They listen intently to their teachers, respond enthusiastically to questions and follow instructions appropriately. When provided with opportunities to work independently or in co-operation with others they remain on task and work hard. Overall, behaviour is good. Pupils are well motivated and work hard.
117. The quality of teaching in art and design is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and good for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Teachers work from plans drawn appropriately from national guidance that clearly identify the intended learning. They make suitable links to other subjects such as history, design and technology, mathematics and religious education that give relevance and purpose to the tasks undertaken. Activities match the age and different abilities of all pupils. Teachers are well prepared and resources are readily available and presented in a stimulating way. For example, in a Year 4 lesson the teacher used a very interesting literacy display on "Harry Potter" to encourage pupils to design a chair for Hogwarts School. She introduced paintings by Van Gogh and examples of Tudor furniture to influence their creative designs. The lesson inspired pupils to be creative and also allowed them to demonstrate good technical expertise in producing well-

constructed models. Resources used in lessons are adequate for the task but not always sufficient to provide pupils with enough variety to make independent choices. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and introduce techniques confidently. Where it is available, teachers deploy additional adult support well to offer guidance and encouragement. This ensures that pupils remain on task and give attention to detail. During lessons teachers ensure that the correct technical vocabulary is used, as in a Year 3 lesson, when pupils talked in detail about the plaits, swirls and repeating patterns of a Viking design.

118. The quality of work displayed about the school greatly enhances the learning environment and adds to the ethos of the school. The subject contributes well to the pupils' cultural development by raising their awareness of their own and others' heritage, for example, through the study of art from Africa and Asia. The school effectively involves local artists in working alongside pupils and parents to produce work of high quality, such as the pieces of batik proudly displayed in the school. Pupils appropriately use a paint program on computers to create pictures and designs, but this work was not seen during the inspection as several computers were out of commission.
119. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The headteacher has recently taken on the co-ordination of art following the retirement of the previous subject leader. Curriculum progression and resources have been audited and a suitable action plan is in place. The plan appropriately focuses on improving assessment through the development of art portfolios of pupils' work and developing teachers' knowledge and understanding of working in 3D.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

120. By Year 2 and Year 6 standards in design and technology meet those expected for pupils of this age. Standards have been maintained at this level since the last inspection and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Improvement has been satisfactory since the last inspection.
121. As part of their work on Joseph's coat, pupils in Years 1 and 2 explore pattern and investigate different ways of joining materials. Pupils show increasing control when using glue, tape and staplers and are making good progress in sewing because they are well supported by adults. Good use is made of the end of lessons to help pupils to make judgments about the most suitable joins in terms of appearance, strength and comfort, but pupils now require further support to help them to refine their evaluations and give reasons for their judgments. A scrutiny of pupils' work in Key Stage 1 indicates that they have investigated fruits through observational drawings, through using tools such as a grater, peeler and knife to record the changes that occur and by introducing appropriate vocabulary to describe their observations. Pupils' work is well presented and marking is positive.
122. In Year 6 pupils extend their understanding of the design process by making shelters from their plans. They take into account their previous learning and use a range of techniques to strengthen their structures, such as introducing cross sections and reinforcing corners. Pupils competently join materials together and talk confidently about the decisions they have made with regard to designing and making. In Year 5, pupils learn how to use a 'G-cramp' and drill because the teacher demonstrates clearly and makes opportunities for all children to receive small-group tuition. Very good attention is given to the safety aspects involved and as a result pupils use this equipment with confidence. Good explanations and well-planned work mean that all pupils have developed a good understanding of their task. They make sensible estimates and provide good explanations of how different-shaped cams will affect the movement of their models.
123. In the few lessons observed during the inspection the quality of teaching was satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers display good subject knowledge, use their time well to circulate and to support pupils, and use probing questions to encourage pupils to consider their work. As a result, pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in their lessons. When lessons are not as good, too much is planned and some pupils require additional support to complete the task. Pupils enjoy their work in design and technology. They are keen to participate in practical tasks

and in Key Stage 2 pupils work at a good pace. Pupils co-operate well; for example, in Year 6 they share responsibilities for making structures and therefore make good progress in completing their task. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are sufficiently engaged when involved in practical tasks, but some are unable to sustain this focus during whole-class sessions. Pupils make appropriate use of information and communication technology to create designs and plans.

124. The leadership and management of design and technology are satisfactory. The new coordinator for this area has worked hard to improve the teaching of this subject by coordinating curricular plans, increasing the range of resources available and providing guidance for areas such as display and assessment. As a result, the teaching of design and technology has improved since the last inspection and is now judged to be good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers plan for a sufficiently balanced programme of work, which provides pupils with an interesting range of opportunities for designing, making and evaluating their work. There are good systems for pupils to evaluate their own work at the end of each unit of study. This helps them to identify ways of making improvements and provides useful evidence of their attainment. However, there are no procedures for assessing pupils' work against national standards and there are no systems for identifying standards throughout the school.

GEOGRAPHY

125. By Year 2 and Year 6 standards in geography meet those expected for pupils of this age. Standards have dropped since the last inspection, when they were seen to be above national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school.
126. An appropriate programme of work has been introduced for all year groups, but it is not sufficiently integrated into the school's long-term plans to ensure adequate coverage throughout the year and to plan for links with other subjects. The current 'flexibility' in planning when geography is taught is the responsibility of each teacher and there are no systems in place for monitoring when this takes place leading to some missed opportunities. The coordinator is currently trialling self-evaluations with Year 2 pupils, which are completed at the end of each unit of study but it is too soon to assess the value of these. At present teachers maintain records of pupils' achievements in geography. However, there is no whole-school approach to assessment and there are no agreed procedures for recording pupils' attainment in relation to national standards and this limits the coordinator's capacity to maintain an overview across the school.
127. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are learning about their local environment through maps and photographic evidence. They use ICT to locate and print their own maps of the area and can locate where they live. Pupils develop their mapping skills by planning a route from home to school, noting main features on the way, and use directional language to explain their route. They are starting to distinguish between human and physical features in their immediate area and in a contrasting location.
128. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are learning about the different mountain regions and can identify the features of a mountain environment such as glaciers, ribbon lakes and u-shaped valleys. Pupils understand the weather conditions of these areas and recognise the need for specialist clothing and equipment. They learn about what is required for this climate through first-hand observations of a range of very well chosen pieces of equipment such as footwear, survival bags and snow chains. In Year 5 pupils are showing increasing knowledge of the socio-economic and geographical features of two localities and can recognise the differences in land use and employment in the two areas.
129. Only two lessons were observed in geography, but these, along with evidence from the scrutiny of teachers' plans and pupils' work, indicate that teaching is at least satisfactory throughout the school. Lessons are generally well planned and organised, but there is insufficient differentiation for children in mixed-age classes in Years 1 and 2. Good use is made of resources to support pupils in their learning; for example, they are able to make secure deductions about their own and other environments based on good photographic evidence and the use made of maps. Teachers

make good use of appropriate vocabulary and questions to remind pupils of work they have covered previously and to encourage them to share their ideas. For example, Year 5 pupils learn the meaning of 'conurbation', 'hamlet' and 'settlement' and in Year 6 pupils are targeted to ensure that all have contributed to the class discussion. Lessons generally have good pace, which enables pupils to remain focused throughout the lesson and complete their work. Teachers consistently use praise and make positive comments on pupils' work. There is a consistent approach to the awarding of merits throughout the school.

130. Across the school, educational visits make a valuable contribution to the teaching of geography. Year 6 pupils prepare for a field trip to the Lake District by researching the area on the computer and pupils in Years 1 and 2 visit a different location to observe the features of that area.
131. Pupils make good contributions to their work in geography. They listen to the views of others, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, participate fully in extended discussions and display positive attitudes towards the subject.
132. The leadership and management of geography are satisfactory. The coordinator manages resources well and has clearly identified areas for further development in geography. She is beginning to review provision, but as yet there has been insufficient opportunity to monitor standards and subject coverage throughout the school and record the outcomes.

HISTORY

133. Since the previous inspection standards have been maintained and remain in line with national expectation for pupils aged seven and eleven. The curriculum has been reviewed in the light of national guidance and provides a very full programme that at Key Stage 2 covers more than the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. Overall, satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection.
134. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress. Those with special educational needs often make good progress, especially where additional adult support is available. During the inspection it was not possible to observe lessons in Years 1 and 2. However, on the basis of the work seen, discussions with pupils and evidence from teachers' planning, it is evident that pupils make sound progress in developing their understanding of the past. Younger pupils study old and new toys and can identify similarities and differences between them. During a topic on 'homes' they were able to compare Victorian artefacts with those used today. By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of people and events in the past and are beginning to appreciate the passage of time.
135. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils are working at the nationally expected level. Most can describe characteristics of key periods in the past and of different societies, showing a developing factual knowledge and understanding. They can suggest a variety of historical sources and appreciate that these might be interpreted differently. In Year 4, pupils studying Tudor Britain are able to deduce key information from artefacts about how people lived and relate it to known facts about the period. Pupils in Year 6 speak knowledgeably about working on the theme of Britain since 1948 and about how their study of the Egyptians helped to develop their research skills. Pupils regularly access information from the Internet to support their work in history. Pupils in Year 4 download pictures relating to the Tudor period, which they then used as a stimulus for factual writing. Teachers often make appropriate links with other subjects, such as in Year 3, where work in history is linked to art and design as pupils make Viking brooches, copying their style.
136. Most pupils are enthusiastic and show interest in the past. This was particularly noticeable where homework activities were set and pupils responded by completing independent research. Sometimes they use their initiative well to add interest to their lessons, as in the case of a pupil who made a quill pen from a feather to show the class. Following some research undertaken as homework, one group of pupils had learned by heart the names of the wives of King Henry VIII. In the lessons observed pupils applied themselves appropriately to the tasks given and often were

eager to learn. Pupils are able to work co-operatively and lessons are often enhanced by their ability to participate maturely in discussions about events. Presentation in most books is at least satisfactory.

137. It was not possible to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 as no lessons were observed, but teachers' planning is good and work is pitched at an appropriate level; pupils can recall well the work they have done and what they have learned. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. Lesson plans are clear and all pupils are made aware of what they are expected to learn. Tasks are appropriately adjusted to make them accessible to all pupils, and in most classes the more able are challenged appropriately. Teachers generally manage pupils well, provide interesting activities in lessons and occasionally they enrich the curriculum with visits to museums and by introducing visitors who are able to share experiences or show artefacts. Some teachers skilfully question pupils to stimulate debate. These teachers maintain a good pace and pupils are kept alert and interested. Suitable use is made of information and communication technology to research topics on the Internet and to record findings.
138. The subject leader has provided sound leadership for the subject. Resources have been audited and enhanced and are now of good quality, well organised and readily available for use. The subject leader has prepared an informative report on the subject and has produced an action plan incorporating suitable developments. These sensibly include the need for a review of the time available to teach the subject and the content of the curriculum to ensure that sufficient time is available to cover the required topics in appropriate depth. The subject leader has a good understanding of the history curriculum and provides effective support for colleagues when asked to do so. Opportunities for the subject leader to monitor teaching and learning and to review pupils' work have been limited and this restricts her capacity to identify and share the good practice evident in some classes. However, photographs of school educational visits and portfolios of work on display indicate that the subject leader is actively involved in promoting the subject. Recently, a new system for assessing and recording has been introduced, but as yet this information has not been collected to allow the subject leader to evaluate standards across the school or track the progress made by pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

139. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment was satisfactory and in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 but unsatisfactory and below national expectations at the end of Year 6. Evidence from the current inspection shows that this position has improved. Attainment remains satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, with pupils working in line with national expectations. However, in Years 3 to 6, standards have risen and by Year 6 attainment is slightly above average. Since the last inspection, resources for information and communication technology have significantly improved. A computer suite has been developed and software has been enhanced. During the inspection new computers were being installed in all classrooms as a wireless network, but were only partially set up for the inspection. Teaching staff have undertaken government funded training and the school has reviewed what is taught in line with national guidance. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been good. The school has given information and communication technology a high profile and pupils confidently use new technology to support their learning across the curriculum. The school has recently received notification of additional funding to be available in 2004 and there are suitable plans in place to update the computer suite with this money. Computers are in great demand throughout the day and older pupils access them independently at lunchtimes, break times and other designated times.
140. On the basis of the work seen, discussions with pupils and the taught sessions observed, pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress and those in Years 3 to 6 make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress through the use of carefully-selected programs designed to support literacy and numeracy. The school is well poised to further improve standards in this subject.
141. In Year 1, pupils are able to program a spacecraft on screen to follow a prescribed route. They direct the spacecraft forwards, backwards, left and right and gradually refine its movements to

increase accuracy. They use the keyboard to enter words and show growing control of the mouse. By the age of seven, pupils can use a word processor, changing the colour and size of the font, and use a paint program to create patterns and pictures. Only limited opportunities are provided for pupils to use a computer to classify information and few are able to recall how this is done. By the age of 11 pupils are able to work confidently with a range of programs. Year 5 pupils use a spreadsheet, entering data and a suitable formula to calculate a total. Higher-attaining pupils are able to create their own formulae to solve a range of problems, to edit their work on a word processor and incorporate pictures from clipart or the Internet. In Year 6, pupils have developed a procedure to operate a light using sensors. They have accessed information from CDs and the Internet to inform their work in other subjects and have used a spreadsheet to plan and adjust the requirements for a party. Higher-attaining pupils regularly use Publisher and Power Point as they produce the weekly newsletter. These pupils structure, refine and present information with skill and confidence to make their publication accessible to all pupils. They are able to integrate information from a variety of Internet sources as they prepare a presentation using Power Point software, incorporating pictures, sounds and animations.

142. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy using computers and have positive attitudes towards their work. They mostly concentrate and respond well in class or group sessions and get on with their work responsibly when they have specific tasks to complete. Occasionally, a small number of boys lose concentration and distract themselves from the task in hand, when not directly supervised by an adult. However, in general pupils are keen to learn and want to improve their skills. Pupils with special educational needs gain success and achieve well because they are enthusiastic about information and communication technology and are supported well by their peers and adult assistants. Throughout the school, pupils co-operate well and help each other willingly; they like to demonstrate what they can do. They recognise that computers are an important feature in everyday life and that they are used extensively in shops, businesses and hospitals for a variety of purposes.
143. The quality of teaching is sound in lessons across the age groups. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Other adults working in the school contribute well to the teaching of information and communication technology as they support groups and individuals in their learning, but some assistants would appreciate further training to help them to do this more confidently. Direct teaching methods are used to teach skills and routines and to introduce programs; pupils then are given suitable opportunities to practise these. The recent acquisition of an interactive whiteboard in the computer suite is making the introductions to lessons more interesting. Planning clearly identifies what pupils are to learn and in most lessons this is shared appropriately with them. Teachers give clear instructions and have reasonable expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers are beginning to make good use of the pupils' developing information and communication technology skills to support learning in other subjects, including word-processing work in English, collecting and recording information in history, and drawing pictures and diagrams in art and design. However, there is scope for some specific information and communication technology lessons to be linked more closely to topics of immediate relevance rather than being presented as an exercise to develop specific skills. Learning is enhanced, particularly for older pupils, by the good extra-curricular opportunities provided.
144. The subject leader provides satisfactory leadership. He has a clear vision for future developments in this subject and has effectively overseen improvements to resources. He has ensured that national guidance has been taken into account and suitably adjusted to meet the needs of the school. There is a clear policy that provides good guidance for teachers. In the current year, the subject leader has taken responsibility for teaching information and communication technology to all five- to seven-year-olds. This ensures that all these pupils receive lessons from a teacher with appropriate expertise, but it was not possible to fully assess the extent to which the other teachers in this phase are able to successfully follow up work in their classrooms as, at the time of the inspection, computers in the younger pupils' classrooms were not operational. In the previous year the subject leader taught across the school and this contributed to the increased pace of learning in Years 3 to 6. It also provided him with a sound knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in this subject. The subject leader inspires pupils and gives a high level of commitment to the regular production of a pupils' newspaper and to extra-curricular clubs for

pupils and their parents. Arrangements for assessing pupils' work in information and communication technology are satisfactory. Teachers assess the progress made during lessons and record it in their mark books. They evaluate their delivery of the planned units and use this information appropriately as they plan the next unit of work. However, there have been few opportunities for teachers to discuss pupils' work or the standards they achieve, and this reduces their capacity to track pupils' progress over time.

MUSIC

145. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment was in line with national expectations throughout the school and all made satisfactory progress. During this inspection, in classes for five- to seven-year-olds, no full lessons were observed, but some parts of lessons and two music and dance sessions were seen. In addition, pupils' singing was heard in assemblies and a discussion took place with a representative number of pupils from Year 2. A broader view of pupils' work at the age of 11 was provided by Year 6 lesson, three dance lessons with elements of music, singing in assembly, a visit to a lesson on key boards provided by the Schools' Music Service, recorded evidence on audio tape and a discussion with pupils from Year 6. This evidence shows that standards in Years 2 and 6 have been maintained at a satisfactory level and pupils throughout the school continue to make satisfactory progress. The good use made of a teacher and a nursery nurse with expertise in music and the good range of extra-curricular activities contribute positively to the standards achieved. Since the last inspection, the subject leader has provided specialist teaching and staff training in Years 3 to 6, resources have been significantly improved, a new teaching programme has been introduced in line with national guidance and the range of extra-curricular activities has increased. Overall, satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection.
146. At the age of seven, pupils sing well with a good sense of melody and clear diction, and maintain a steady beat. In a dance lesson, pupils in Years 1 and 2 showed a good sense of rhythm and were able to describe how the different elements of the music 'Peter and the Wolf' created different moods and effects. Most pupils know the names of common instruments and are aware that they can be plucked, beaten or shaken. The singing of seven- to eleven-year-olds is also good. Although there are variations in accuracy of intonation, most pupils sing with expression and show good control of volume and rhythm. Most Year 6 pupils are able to maintain their own part when singing. For example, in a Year 6 lesson pupils sang 'When the Saints go Marching in' against 'She'll be Coming Round the Mountain', with a fair degree of success. By the age of 11, many pupils are able to use symbols to note their compositions and read these to perform. Higher-attaining pupils are familiar with standard notation. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are provided with equal access. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress.
147. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. In the part lessons seen, the nursery nurse had appropriate expectations and a good rapport with the pupils, and planning shows a suitable range of activities pitched at a suitable level, including useful opportunities for pupils to work together and to experience a variety of instruments. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Non-specialist teachers gain confidence from the opportunity to discuss lesson content with the subject leader, who is a music specialist, and from the well-structured commercial scheme with linked resources of good quality. The subject knowledge of non-specialist teachers is at least satisfactory and adequate to meet the needs of most pupils. However, at times, the needs of the more able are not fully met. Good relationships are a feature throughout the school and pupils act maturely and respond very positively to the musical activities presented. They are given suitable opportunities to rehearse and improve their work, and consequently gain confidence and enjoyment from the opportunities provided to perform. For example, pupils talk enthusiastically about their composition of advertising 'jingles' performed for the rest of school in assembly. From an early stage, pupils are encouraged to handle audio equipment and consequently are able to take responsibility for playing and recording music independently, but opportunities are missed to involve pupils in using computer programs to compose or explore musical themes.

148. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader provides good support for teachers through her willingness to demonstrate lessons and through the provision of a scheme of work, which recognises the needs of non-specialists. She has a good understanding of the subject's strengths and points for development, and has ensured that there is a wide range of good resources. Arrangements have been made for pupils to have access to instrumental lessons through the Schools' Music Service and these opportunities are well supplemented by a good range of extra-curricular activities including infant and junior choirs, recorder clubs and a music and drama club. Visiting musicians, including an African Drumming Group, have added an interesting dimension to the school's music provision. During the inspection there was very little evidence of pupils being given access to information and communication technology as a means of developing their musical skills or appreciation.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

149. At the time of the last inspection attainment was in line with national expectations in Years 1 and 2 and above in Years 3 to 6. During the current inspection observations of lessons, a scrutiny of school documentation and discussions with pupils show that standards are in line with national expectations in Years 1 and 2 and pupils achieve appropriately. In Years 3 to 6 standards have remained above average and pupils continue to achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they are given equal access to activities and are often supported effectively by teaching assistants.
150. Pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 did not benefit from the good provision now evident in the Foundation Stage and consequently started in Year 1 with below-average physical skills. By the end of Year 2 pupils know the importance of a safe warm-up before exercise. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have experienced a range of activities including gymnastics, dance, games and swimming. They have developed appropriate skills of control and co-ordination and can change pace and direction safely. In dance they are able independently to select rhythm, shape and speed of movement to build a sequence that is appropriate for a piece of music. They can recall and repeat simple skills. Pupils observe and evaluate the performance of others and offer constructive criticism to help them improve their level of skill. They are able to improve the quality of their work by using the advice they are given by the teacher and other pupils.
151. By the end of Year 6 pupils, including those with special educational needs, demonstrate a high level of confidence, precision, control and fluency in their activities when working independently, in pairs or in groups. They warm up and cool down sensibly and safely, suggest exercises and can describe the effect it has on their bodies. Pupils of all capabilities, including those not taking part in the physical activities, observe and evaluate the performance of others and offer suggestions to help them improve their skills. In dance they show an understanding of composition when performing to music. They have experienced a good range of activities during school and in the extensive after-school provision, including football, tennis, cricket, athletics, basketball, rugby and swimming. After-school activities are inclusive of pupils of all ages and capabilities, are well attended and make a very positive contribution to the achievement of above average standards.
152. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Most pupils respond promptly to instructions. They enjoy lessons, and participate fully and with enjoyment. They work well independently in pairs or in a group and listen to advice from the teacher or each other to improve their level of skill. They perform with confidence and are eager to demonstrate their skills. They support each other and achieve a healthy, balanced attitude to competition.
153. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers and pupils are clear about the purpose of the lessons and skills are developed well through a sequence of well-planned activities. Equipment is well organised and of good quality, and the teachers ensure that it is handled safely. They encourage pupils to offer suggestions about warm-up exercises. Teachers demonstrate the skills to be practised and throughout the lessons give feedback to pupils to help them improve. Pupils are also involved in the demonstration of skills for the benefit of others. There is a good balance in lessons between teacher talk, pupil activity, observation and evaluation of performance, and lessons proceed at a good pace. In one lesson the involvement of pupils and the pace

suffered as a result of organisational problems with a large class. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good, and this results in full participation, enthusiasm and enjoyment for all pupils. There is a good balance between individual activity and teamwork. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities. Many activities require the pupils to co-operate and support each other, and this makes a good contribution to their personal and social development. Links with poetry in a lesson in Year 4 and with music in lessons in Years 1, 2 and 6 show the subject making a good contribution to the cultural development of pupils.

154. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The school has achieved a national sports award. The co-ordinator has a thorough overview of standards and provision, has monitored teachers' plans and has observed lessons, but not recently as a result of taking on a new age group. Thorough guidance is provided for teachers on teaching strategies, health and safety, assessment and recording, cross-curricular issues, inclusion and equipment. Discussions with staff take place to identify areas for development. An annual report is produced that identifies strengths in the subject and areas for further development. There are good opportunities for teachers to receive professional development. Teachers plan according to the nationally recommended scheme of work and this ensures that all elements of the National Curriculum are covered fully. Assessment of the progress of pupils is satisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

155. Standards of attainment at the time of the last inspection were in line with national expectations and pupils made satisfactory progress. Evidence from a small number of lesson observations, school documentation, displays, pupils' work and discussions with pupils shows that attainment is still in line with national expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection.
156. By the end of Year 2 pupils, including those with special educational needs, can write and talk about celebrations such as birthdays and weddings and know how important such events as Christmas and Easter are to Christians. They are familiar with Bible stories such as Joseph and his coat of many colours and the message it gives. Pupils know about different ceremonies that take place in a church and understand the symbolism of features such as the cross. Some pupils know what a temple is. Pupils can discuss sensibly such concepts as right and wrong, and jealousy. They know what to do if someone is unkind to them and can identify people who are special to them both in and outside school. They relate this to people such as the school's Playground Pals and how important it is to help each other.
157. By the end of Year 6 pupils have done further study on Christianity and have also studied Islam and Hinduism. They know about the Koran and the importance of Mohammed. Pupils can talk about the many gods in the Hindu faith, the Festival of Light and the importance of cleanliness to Hindus. They are aware of the meaning of ceremonies such as confirmation and christening. When studying Bible stories all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are able sensibly to discuss wider issues. For example, a Year 5 class had a mature discussion about whether Bible stories such as that of Adam and Eve could be taken literally or were symbolic. Pupils expressed different views but respected other points of view and related their personal experiences when discussing feelings of disappointment or shame. They have opportunities to act out rituals from different faiths, obtain information from a variety of library sources and use the Internet in the computer suite for research. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of the pupils.
158. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. They are attentive in lessons, keen to take part in discussions and show a real interest in the subject. Pupils in Year 6 said they liked religious education and found it interesting to learn about different faiths. They think it is important to study different faiths to obtain a better understanding of the world and to prepare them for the future. They enjoy comparing religions and are aware of the similarities and differences between them. When consulted by the co-ordinator, pupils in Years 2, 4 and 6 made constructive suggestions on how to improve religious education in the school.
159. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. This judgement is based on a small number of lesson observations, evidence from pupils' work and discussion with them. Good teaching was observed in a Year 5 lesson. The teacher made good use of the interest of the pupils to develop a series of lessons and used questioning effectively to stimulate a mature discussion about Bible stories. Planning is related appropriately to the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education and national guidance. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs through discussion and questioning. Pupils are given opportunities to work in pairs to develop their ideas and good use is made of literacy skills to take notes and to present work in different formats. Links are made to the pupils' own experiences to stimulate discussion. Pupils in Year 6 recently visited a Hindu temple, but opportunities to visit places of interest or to receive visits from representatives of different faiths are, in general, limited.
160. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has sampled pupils' work from every class and monitored teachers' planning. No lesson observations have been undertaken recently. The assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress are satisfactory. Pupils have been consulted on how religious education might be improved. The co-ordinator has a satisfactory overview of the subject and has identified appropriate priorities for development that are included in the annual report on the subject.

