

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST THOMAS' CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Newhey

LEA area: Rochdale

Unique reference number: 105824

Headteacher: Mr S Tunnicliffe

Reporting inspector: Mr T Elston
20704

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 6th March 2003

Inspection number: 246527

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:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Huddersfield Road Newhey Rochdale
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr L Bagshaw
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Terry Elston 20704	Registered inspector	Mathematics information and communication technology pupils with special educational needs pupils with English as an additional language educational inclusion	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Jaqueline Darrington 13418	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
David Mathews 18505	Team inspector	Children in the Foundation Stage science design and technology art and design music	
Paul Spray 32186	Team inspector	English physical education history geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Thomas' is a voluntary aided Church of England primary school in the small town of Newhey, not far from Rochdale. It is a small school, with 143 pupils on roll, and similar numbers of boys and girls. Very few pupils are from ethnic minority groups, and none has English as an additional language. Fewer than seven per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Around 20 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, mostly with moderate learning difficulties, and one has a statement of these needs; these figures are broadly in line with those found nationally. Very few pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual times. The school gained an Achievement Award in 2001 for its improved national test results. The attainment of pupils on entry is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a happy and successful school, where pupils make good progress. The good quality of the school's leadership and management and the good teaching help to explain why, by Year 6, standards are above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Pupils love school and behave well. Parents speak very highly of the provision for their children, and have a good involvement in the school's work. The funds are managed capably, and the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- By Year 6, pupils' standards are well above the national average in mathematics and science, and above average in English.
- The good leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher is an important reason for the school's success.
- The good quality of teaching ensures that pupils learn quickly.
- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning contribute much to their success in lessons and the national tests.
- The school has used funds very effectively to maintain single age classes in the mornings in order to raise standards in literacy and numeracy.
- Parents have very positive views of the school, and are made to feel welcome at all times.

What could be improved

- Boys' results in the national tests in Year 2, which have been significantly lower than those of girls in reading, writing and mathematics over the past five years.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) by Year 6 are too low, because the school has lagged behind others in the provision of computers, software and staff training.
- Governors do not provide sufficient direction to the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998, and has made good progress since then by working to a clear Action Plan. There have been good improvements in the issues to do with the planning of the curriculum, provision for children in the Foundation Stage and the school's leadership. Governors have recently become more involved in the monitoring of the provision, but they still rely too much on the headteacher for guidance. While the school now has most of the required equipment to teach ICT, standards attained by the oldest pupils remain below those expected of eleven year olds. The quality of teaching is significantly better, and pupils attain higher standards in English, mathematics, science, physical education and art and design compared with those reported in the last inspection. Other significant improvements include the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, the support for pupils with special educational needs and pupils' rates of attendance. In view of the strengths in the teaching and leadership, the school is well 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	B	B	A
Mathematics	C	B	A	A
Science	B	B	A	A

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A B
above average	
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

These results show how well pupils attain by the time they leave, especially in mathematics and science, and the marked upward trend since 2000 shows a higher level of improvement than is found nationally. When matched against pupils' average standards on entry to the school, and the results compared with pupils from similar schools, it is clear that pupils achieve very well in the national tests at the end of Year 6. The school achieved its very challenging targets last year in mathematics, but missed them narrowly in English. Pupils did particularly well in science, and all attained at least the national standard for the second year running. The results in 2002 for pupils in Year 2 were not so impressive, but were in line with those found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. While there are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls by Year 6, there are by the end of Year 2, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. This inspection finds that children in the Foundation Stage achieve well, and nearly all attain the nationally agreed targets in all areas of learning by the time they leave the Reception class. Their physical, language, personal and social skills are especially well developed. Pupils achieve sound standards in Years 1 and 2, and their attainment is above average in physical education, and average in all other subjects. By Year 6, pupils achieve well, and their standards remain well above average in mathematics and science and above average in English. They are also above average in physical education and art and design, and average in all other subjects except ICT where they are below. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and nearly all attain or come close to national standards in the national tests by Year 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very proud of their school, and are enthusiastic about their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. However, some boys soon lose concentration if required to sit still for too long. Lessons take place in a calm and busy atmosphere, and pupils play very happily together outside.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility when given the chance, and the relationships between all members of the school community are very good.
Attendance	Very good. This has a significant effect on the standards that pupils attain.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	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.

The quality of teaching is good, and promotes pupils' learning well. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage; children have a rich variety of experiences and learn quickly. In Years 1 and 2, the lessons are planned well, and teachers have good ways of managing pupils' behaviour so that they make the most of their time in class. In these classes, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory, and ensures that nearly all pupils are confident in their reading and number work by the end of Year 2. The excessive use of worksheets, however, sometimes holds back more able pupils who are ready to work at their own pace. In Years 3 to 6, the pace of teaching is very brisk, and pupils learn new skills quickly. The very good teaching in mathematics and science explains why pupils do so well in the national tests by Year 6. Teachers' very thorough understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and their good focus on experimental science give pupils the skills and confidence to learn new work quickly and work independently. Good teaching of literacy develops pupils' reading and writing skills well, although here, the lack of opportunities to research topics using the library or computers restricts the development of pupils' independent learning. Throughout the school, teachers make lessons very interesting by including lots of practical activities, and this involves pupils very well in their own learning. The teaching of creative skills is good, and much of the art and design is of a high quality. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Work is planned well to meet pupils' individual needs, and they are supported very well by skilled classroom assistants who make sure that they take a full part in all activities.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. This is a well-planned, interesting curriculum. The literacy and numeracy strategies are working well, and have done much to raise standards in reading and number. The weakness lies in ICT, where the school misses many opportunities to use computers in other subjects, and teachers make too little use of the Internet for pupils to research topics. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities to extend the curriculum for older pupils but not much for younger ones.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. This is organised well by the co-ordinator, and pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	This provision is good. The school does much to teach pupils about the importance of God in their lives and how to behave well. Satisfactory social provision shows pupils how to work together, but there are limited opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. There is a sound range of activities to develop pupils' understanding of their own culture, as well as that of other people in the world.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well. The staff know the pupils very well, and monitor their personal development informally but effectively. The good assessment procedures enable the teachers to track pupils' progress carefully, and set challenging targets to raise standards further.

Parents are well informed about their children's progress, and their links with the school are strong. They have too little information, however, about the topics that their children are studying, and this limits the amount that they can help at home.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good, and important reasons for the continued improvement in standards in the national tests. The headteacher leads well, with a very strong commitment to high standards in all the school's work. There is very good support by the deputy headteacher, who takes an important part in the school's leadership and management.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body supports the school well. Governors do not, however, get sufficiently involved in setting targets for the school's future development. All statutory requirements are met with the exception of the provision for ICT in Years 3 to 6.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Sound. Some good evaluation of pupils' work and teachers' lessons ensures that shortcomings are rectified quickly. A weakness, however, is in the lack of action taken to raise boys' standards in Years 1 and 2, even though the school has identified their underachievement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The use of funding to create small, single-age classes for literacy and numeracy has helped to raise standards significantly over the last two years. The school has sound procedures for gaining the best value from its funds, evaluating the quality of its own provision effectively, and making useful comparisons between the performance of this school and others.

The school's accommodation is satisfactory, but some areas are cramped. The library, for example, is tucked away in a corridor, and the headteacher's office is too small to accommodate more than two people. The staff are well qualified, and improve their skills effectively by good in-service training. The supply of learning resources is satisfactory, and they make a sound contribution to pupils' learning.

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 good quality of the headteacher's leadership. • The consistently good teaching. • Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to work. • The very good progress made by their children. • The school's high expectations of their children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few feel that the younger pupils are provided with too few extra-curricular activities. • They would like more information about the topics their children will be studying.

The inspection team agrees with parents' very positive views. It is true that younger pupils do not have so many extra-curricular activities and there is too little sent home about the topics to be studied.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The analysis of pupils' national test results shows that standards in Year 6 have improved well over the past three years, and at a higher rate than that found nationally. This shows the school's commitment to high standards of work. Between 2000 and 2002, for example, Year 6 pupils' results have risen from:
 - below average to above average in English;
 - average to well above average in mathematics; and
 - above average to well above average in science.
2. In all three subjects, their results in 2002 were well above those of similar schools. In science, all pupils attained at least the national standard in 2001 and 2002. Boys and girls do equally well at this stage. Pupils' improvement shows the benefits of good assessment, rigorous analysis of their test results and well-focused teaching to rectify their weaknesses. In this way, for example, teachers have improved the quality and quantity of pupils' writing, developed the problem-solving skills in mathematics and enhanced their investigative work in science. More demanding work provided for the most able pupils has raised their standards significantly; in the 2002 national tests the percentage of pupils who exceeded the national standards was above the national average in English and well above in mathematics and science. The use of funds to create small, single-age classes in the mornings has also made a big difference, and teachers find that they are able to cover much more work in these sessions.
3. Pupils' national test results in Year 2 are less impressive, but in 2002 were still in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Since 2000, they have remained at a similar level in reading, but have improved in writing and mathematics. Teachers' extra focus on writing has yielded very good rewards as pupils' results have risen from well below average in 2000 to average in 2002. Girls perform significantly better than boys in all three subjects. Over the last five years, girls' results have been consistently higher than the national average, while those of boys have been consistently below average. Boys are significantly less mature than girls, and they lose concentration more easily. The school is aware of the issue of boys' underachievement, but has yet to put in place strategies to rectify the problem.
4. Children enter the Foundation Stage with average levels of attainment, but girls tend to be more mature than boys and have better social, language and mathematical skills. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage, and nearly all attain the nationally agreed targets in all areas of learning by the time they leave the Reception class. With good teaching and support, children's physical, language, personal and social skills develop particularly well, and are of a higher standard than is normally found. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved significantly since the last inspection, particularly the planning to cover all of the areas of learning, and children's skills have improved as a result. Their physical skills have benefited from the provision of a stimulating outdoor area and better equipment; these have provided children with regular, challenging activities that do much to improve their confidence and agility.
5. The current standards of pupils in Year 2 are average in all aspects of English, mathematics and science. Boys' standards, however, are still below those of girls in English and mathematics. Boys' language is still immature, they tend to write less than girls and they are slower to grasp mathematical facts. Pupils' standards are average in art and design, history, geography, design and technology, ICT and music. Standards are above average in physical education, where particularly good teaching stimulates pupils and gives them the confidence to attempt difficult tasks. Standards are higher than those reported in the last inspection in

physical education and ICT. Pupils' standards in ICT have been improved by more regular practice on computers and better equipment.

6. By Year 6, standards are above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. By this time, boys and girls attain equally well; the style of teaching in Years 3 to 6 provides a wealth of games and challenges that motivate boys as well as girls, and both groups learn quickly. Standards are above average in physical education and in art and design where the quality of teaching is good. Much of pupils' art and design work is of a high quality. Standards are average in all other subjects except ICT where they are below average. Pupils in Year 6 have suffered most from the delay in equipping the school with sufficient computers and programs over recent years and, while they are now starting to catch up, they are still a year behind pupils in most schools.
7. By the time they leave, pupils achieve well given their attainment on entry to the school, and very well overall in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. They respond well to the consistently good quality of teaching, and learn new skills quickly. They make steady progress in Years 1 and 2, and nearly all pupils attain nationally expected levels in all subjects by the end of Year 2. Their progress accelerates in Years 3 to 6 because of the demanding teaching; the analysis of pupils' results in last year's national tests at Year 6 compared with their scores when taking the tests in Year 2 shows good progress in English and very good progress in mathematics and science. Pupils' physical and creative skills develop well because teachers are good at inspiring pupils to experiment with new techniques. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets, and their reading skills progress very well as the result of good assessment of their needs and well-focused support by teachers and teaching assistants. By Year 6, nearly all pupils with special educational needs attain at, or close to, the national standards in most subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The school has improved upon the positive attitudes evident in pupils at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are very eager to attend school with almost all arriving punctually and starting the day in a very purposeful manner. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards lessons and learning and as a result, they make very good progress, particularly during Years 5 and 6.
9. The behaviour of almost all pupils continues to be good. Instances of bullying or oppressive behaviour are rare. Pupils have a clear understanding of the school rules and of the expected standard of behaviour. They are courteous and trustworthy, and demonstrate respect for both their own and the school's property. Almost all pupils are polite, caring and very friendly towards one another, staff and other adults. They enjoy attending school and look forward to taking part in lessons. As one pupil said, "Everyone is very friendly and kind here. Everyone helps each other." Pupils have a good awareness of moral issues. They are clear about the difference between right and wrong and are shocked if they hear about someone acting unkindly towards others. During the inspection there was no evidence of bullying, sexism or racism, and parents and pupils feel that if bullying occurs it is taken seriously and dealt with effectively. Pupils generally concentrate well, but younger boys sometimes lose concentration in lessons and miss what the teacher tells them to do. There have been no fixed term or permanent exclusions during the last reporting year.
10. Pupils respond well to the satisfactory range of opportunities to take responsibility, as they move through the school. All pupils, including the very youngest, perform tasks such as the return of attendance registers and dinner money payments to the school office. Opportunities for older pupils to take roles of progressively greater responsibility are more limited, and this restricts their social development.
11. The relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils are very caring towards each other and in lessons mostly work together very well, sharing equipment when required. Pupils

respond well to the good spiritual provision. They think deeply about issues that affect people in the world, such as the poverty in parts of Africa, and learn to understand some of their own feelings. In a personal, social and health education lesson, for example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were considering the things that worried them and some of the strategies that might help their worries 'disappear'.

12. Rates of attendance are very good and well above the average. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Unauthorised absence is less than half the national average. Pupils are punctual and this enables a prompt start to the school day. The pupils' regular and punctual attendance contributes to the positive outcomes in attitudes towards learning and in their attainment and progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching and learning is good, and parents agree that this is an important strength of the school's provision. One lesson was unsatisfactory. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when the quality of teaching was satisfactory, and shows the benefits of the regular evaluation of lessons and clear guidance as to how teachers can improve their practice.
14. Overall, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. Teachers are confident with the national strategies, and pupils' standards by the time they leave are improving year by year. Teachers value the system that divides classes into year groups in the mornings for English and mathematics lessons. This works well because the groups are small, and teachers are able to provide work to extend pupils of all abilities.
15. The quality of teaching is good in the Foundation Stage, and children make good progress. The teacher and the nursery nurse work in close partnership to provide a wide and stimulating range of activities for children to enjoy. They share a detailed understanding of what each child can and cannot do, particularly in the areas of mathematical development and their communication, language and literacy. This enables them to plan work for individual children, which helps them to make good progress in their reading, writing, speaking and number work. There is a very good balance between structured tasks that teach children important basic skills, and opportunities for them to choose activities that develop their independence. Adults work hard to teach children the rules for behaviour at this early stage. Children learn quickly what is expected of them, and there is always a calm and busy working atmosphere in the room.
16. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons well, and provide a good balance of whole-class teaching and independent or group work. Teachers make it clear to pupils what learning is expected of them. As a result, pupils know precisely what to do and develop the ability to assess their own learning. Teachers make good use of teaching assistants, who support individual pupils well in whole-class sessions and take responsibility for groups in practical activities. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, with a firm but kind approach, and this makes the most of the time in class. Teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement are generally high, but an over-reliance on commercial schemes and worksheets sometimes holds back more able pupils.
17. Teachers do not do enough to accelerate the learning of boys in Years 1 and 2. While the school has identified the issue of boys' underachievement, there is too little in the planning or organisation to specifically capture boys' attention. In addition, boys nearly always fill the back two rows when pupils are taught together on the carpet, and girls automatically sit at the front. This means that girls have the teacher's full attention and learn quickly, while boys tend to chat among themselves, particularly when they have been sat down for a long time. In one lesson, for example, the teacher sat pupils on the carpet for a numeracy lesson and, as usual, girls sat at the front and the back row of seven pupils were all boys. After 30 minutes, boys were losing concentration and started whispering to one another. When they were sent to their

groups, it was these boys who were unsure of what to do, and they lost time waiting to be helped. In a lesson that did help boys achieve well, the teacher had boys and girls competing to answer a question, and this worked very well. The teacher said, "I've got seven – how many more to make 20?" and the boys were just as good as girls at firing back the answer.

18. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good in physical education, and satisfactory in all other subjects. Teachers are particularly confident in teaching physical education, and their constant encouragement makes pupils try very hard.
19. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching and learning is good, and pupils make rapid progress. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils, and constantly set them challenges by, for example, warning them that "this work is going to be very difficult, and I'm not sure how well you will manage it!" Pupils, especially boys, respond very well to this approach, and try desperately to succeed. Teachers make lessons very interesting by using exciting resources and teaching at a brisk pace. They have a very good knowledge of the subjects they teach, and this gives pupils the confidence to ask questions. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, but when these are not made clear pupils quickly lose concentration and their learning suffers as a result. Teachers are good at giving pupils the right degree of help without taking over; this makes pupils think for themselves and they are delighted when they arrive at the correct answer. In an example of one of the best lessons, the teacher was working with pupils in Year 6 to improve their uncertain knowledge of problem solving in mathematics. He began by using questions very well to assess pupils' understanding, and then explained clearly, and at just the right level, how problems can be solved in different ways. His very high expectations were evident when pupils gave the answer to a problem, and he asked them to explain how they had got there. This made pupils think very carefully and, while they struggled at first, by the end all were giving clear explanations of their strategies. Pupils had enjoyed the challenge, worked feverishly and no one wanted the lesson to end.
20. The quality of teaching is very good in mathematics and science, good in English, art and design and physical education, and satisfactory in all other subjects. In ICT, evidence shows that the quality of teaching is satisfactory, but while teachers teach valuable skills in dedicated ICT lessons, they make too little use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects. Pupils therefore miss many opportunities to become familiar with computers, and use them too rarely to research their topics. Teachers' knowledge is variable and, while some have reasonable skills, others lack the confidence to use ICT as an everyday tool. The provision of additional training for teachers is one of the school's immediate priorities.
21. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. The teachers are skilled at preparing material at the right level for these pupils, and match this work closely to their individual targets. These targets are well constructed, and provide good guidance to pupils, teachers and the skilled classroom assistants. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs works closely with all staff to ensure pupils are given appropriate support, and as a result, pupils make good progress, whether it be in their reading, writing or behaviour.

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

22. The school offers a sound curriculum that is generally broad and balanced. However, the provision for ICT is underdeveloped; computers in particular are not sufficiently used to support pupils' learning in all subjects, and this leads to a lack of opportunities to raise standards in this subject. The curriculum provides adequately for pupils' academic and personal needs. With the exception of ICT, it meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage. The school provides equal opportunities for all its pupils, and ensures that all pupils have the chance to take part in the full range of activities provided. However, there is a significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys by the

end of Year 2, with girls performing much better than boys. The school has been slow to rectify this.

23. The time allocated to subjects is broadly in line with that found in most schools. Subjects such as geography and history are taught in blocks of time, and while this generally works well, it can sometimes mean that the pupils go several months without studying a subject and their standards slip. The school makes good use of National Curriculum guidelines for planning, and these provide a good basis for teachers' planning of lessons.
24. The school provides a good, stimulating curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. At the time of the last inspection, teachers' planning did not match the areas of learning for children under five. The school has effectively addressed this so that planning for the six areas of learning helps children to make good progress in the Reception class. Plans for children's mathematical development and for their learning in communication, language and literacy are particularly detailed. This means that children learn securely the basic skills that they will need in later stages of their school lives. Planning for other areas of children's learning is satisfactory, but it lacks the rigour to help children to make even better progress in these areas of learning. It does not take full account, for example, of the national guidance that outlines the small steps in young children's learning.
25. The deputy headteacher, who has the overall responsibility for planning the curriculum, co-ordinates the planning arrangements effectively, and meets with other subject co-ordinators on a regular basis to check on coverage of the programmes of study. There are now schemes of work for all subjects; this is an improvement since the previous inspection when some subjects had no long-term planning.
26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers' planning ensures that these pupils are included in all aspects of the curriculum, and the work in lessons is matched well to their individual needs. Pupils' targets are clear, challenging and achievable. As a result, they enjoy their successes and make good progress.
27. The National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies are fully in place, and the school makes good provision of special programmes such as 'booster groups' in Year 6, to raise standards of those pupils who need extra support to attain national standards. The school has done much to develop good links between subjects, and this makes learning more effective. Geography, for example, is linked with citizenship to illustrate the impact of changes to the environment, and teachers use the techniques taught in literacy lessons to enhance pupils' extended writing in history.
28. A good programme of personal, social and health education provides many opportunities for pupils to discuss issues that affect their lives; this is often done through 'circle time' when pupils sit and discuss issues such as bullying, or caring for those who are upset. A good example of this was seen in a Year 1 lesson, where the pupils were discussing things that they worry about in school. The school nurse gives good guidance on sex education, and the dangers and misuse of drugs are covered adequately as part of the science curriculum. Science also provides good links to the school's provision for pupils' personal, social and health education through work on nutrition, a balanced diet, the need for exercise and how to look after your teeth.
29. An annual residential visit for pupils in Years 5 and 6 provides a good range of additional activities for pupils to participate in problem solving, ICT presentations, climbing, walking and swimming. These help pupils develop the skills of co-operation and show them how to work as a team. The curriculum is enhanced by a good number of other visits to broaden their experiences; these include museums and an art gallery. There is a good range of sporting and musical after-school clubs, although these are restricted to the older pupils; this is a concern of some parents who feel, with justification, that there are not enough opportunities for younger ones.

30. The school makes satisfactory use of the local community to enrich learning, with some good opportunities in geography and history to learn about the local area. There are useful links with the local playgroup to establish initial contact with children who will be entering the school. Arrangements for Year 6 pupils moving on to secondary school are well established, and make for a smooth transfer. The school has good links with a number of local schools through its sporting fixtures. There are many visitors to school who add to the quality of the curriculum; a local artist, for example, works with pupils very effectively to enhance their skills in art and design.
31. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good, and has improved since the last inspection. The provision for pupils' spiritual and moral education is stronger than the provision for their social and cultural education.
32. The school makes good provision for its pupils' spiritual development and there are many examples in the daily life of the school. Through many aspects of the curriculum, such as art and design, geography and physical education, pupils gain a sense of wonder at life. For example, in a piece of written work describing a special object (a bracelet), a pupil in Year 5 wrote, "It is special to me because it belonged to my mum." Classrooms and other areas around the school have very attractive displays that celebrate and inspire pupils' work. The displays of artwork are particularly inspirational. This creates a climate within the school where pupils learn to respect their own and others' achievements. Moments of stillness and quiet are included in many assemblies. Pupils also develop a sound awareness of their own and others' beliefs in their religious education lessons.
33. The provision for the moral development of pupils is good. The ethos of the school is firmly based on respect and care for others, and teachers make it very clear to pupils that they value all of their contributions. Adults teach moral values well through discussions, and explore ideas about 'caring' and 'telling the truth' effectively through their own experiences. Such issues are specifically planned for in assemblies and the personal and social education programme.
34. The provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory. There are many occasions when teachers have pupils working together as a whole class, giving them good opportunities to discuss, listen and respond to each other. Teachers are good at using discussions at the end of lessons for pupils to share each other's achievements, and this develops their social understanding well. Some opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility, for example, to return the class registers and dinner money payments to the school office. The opportunities for older pupils for further responsibilities, beyond monitor roles such as tidying the library, are more limited. Pupils' social development is supported well by the good examples provided by the teachers and other adults in the school.
35. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Through lessons and in assemblies, pupils develop a sound awareness of the local culture. They are provided with a reasonable range of literature from popular authors, and study classical texts in English. Teachers provide some good opportunities for pupils to study the culture of other countries, and pupils' work inspired by famous painters such as Lowry, Van Gogh and Monet is often of a high quality. There are satisfactory planned opportunities to learn about different cultures of the world. For example, the younger pupils learn about the Chinese New Year and older pupils study life in Kenya in some depth. Pupils have good opportunities to study world faiths, such as Christianity, Judaism and Islam. They learn, for example, of the symbolism associated with the artefacts from the Jewish faith.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school cares for its pupils well. Teachers are very sensitive to pupils' needs, and are supported well in this by classroom assistants, midday supervisors and administrative staff. The headteacher's influence is strong here, and parents speak very highly of the way he knows all pupils and supports them when they are upset. The school's procedures for child protection are good. All staff are regularly advised of procedures to follow in the event of any concerns. Good liaison and support arrangements with welfare, education and health services enable all pupils to be appropriately supported.
37. There are adequate systems and procedures in place for the regular monitoring and maintenance of health and safety requirements. Most equipment, including physical education and fire-fighting equipment, is routinely tested and very well maintained. Teachers make sure that pupils know how to use equipment safely.
38. The school's approach to monitoring and promoting positive behaviour is generally effective and, as a result, nearly all pupils behave well. Where there are occasional problems with behaviour, it is due to inconsistencies in teachers' expectations, and older boys in particular take advantage of this. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good, and acts of bullying are rare. The procedures for promoting, monitoring and recording attendance are very effective, and have resulted in pupils' attendance during the last reporting year being well above the national average.
39. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. These systems are mainly informal, but as staff know pupils so well, they work well enough. In the Reception class, there are good systems to monitor and support children's personal development, and these help them to settle quickly into school.
40. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good, and are much improved since the last inspection. A significant reason for this improvement is the role played by the deputy headteacher who, as the assessment co-ordinator, has introduced the use of a computer program that plots each pupil's level of attainment in English and mathematics each year, sets challenging targets for the next year and then tracks their progress. This information is used well by teachers to make adjustments to the curriculum. The school uses another system to analyse pupils' National Curriculum test results, and this generally works well. When a weakness in pupils' attainment is found, teachers plan work to rectify it. In this way, for example, the school found that younger pupils were making unnecessary mistakes in mathematics, and by encouraging them to show their working out in their books, teachers found that pupils were far more accurate. A weakness in the use of assessment lies in the lack of action by the school to raise standards attained by the younger boys. Their standards have lagged behind the girls' over the past five years, but there are no initiatives in place to help them catch up.
41. On a day-to-day basis, in English and mathematics the school has detailed procedures for measuring pupils' progress and attainment. In English for example, pupils have short-term writing and reading targets that are in the front of their books and/or on laminated card on the desks. Teachers assess very carefully against these targets and have detailed information on each pupil. This system contributes well to the standards achieved by the end of Year 6. As pupils move through the school they are increasingly expected to check progress against their individual targets and make comments against them. This is useful, and gives pupils a clear idea of their own learning. In science, the systems are less formal, but in practice they work well because teachers assess in their own way and make very good use of the information to plan future lessons. The benefits of these systems are clear in pupils' improved results in the national tests over the last two years. In other subjects, assessment is based mainly on the systems of the nationally recommended schemes of work; while this lacks the sharp focus of assessment in English and mathematics, it provides a workable system for teachers to evaluate pupils' standards and to plan lessons.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Parents have very positive views of the school. They feel that the school is well led and managed, that teaching is very good and that children are expected to work hard. As a result, they feel that their children make good progress and achieve their potential. Almost all parents feel that the behaviour of children in school is good and that there are very few disruptive pupils. Pupils enjoy attending school, and there is a very happy environment. Parents particularly value the work that teachers do in teaching respect for others, and feel that there is a very consistent school approach to the management of children's behaviour.
43. Parents are divided, almost equally, in their opinion about the amounts of homework that children receive. Slightly over half feel that pupils receive about the right amount of homework, whilst the remainder disagree or are unsure. In practice, the arrangements for homework are satisfactory, and ensure that pupils' learning at school is supported adequately by that done at home. Nearly all parents feel that the school works closely with them and that members of staff and the headteacher listen carefully to any concerns or enquiries that they may have. A very small minority of parents does not feel that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside school, and this is true for the younger pupils.
44. The inspection finds that the school has maintained its strong partnership with parents, which was evident at the last inspection. There are regular, detailed and informative letters and newsletters, written in a friendly and accessible style. These provide a good source of information for parents and carers in order that they may support their children's learning. Parents receive very detailed information on how to support their children's learning in the Reception class, during comprehensive induction arrangements for both children and parents. The amount of information received about most topics to be studied during each term is very limited throughout the rest of the school. However, the school provides detailed information leaflets about numeracy and literacy, including targets for each pupil in the term ahead and suggested activities in order that parents may support their children's learning at home. The school has plans to extend this system to other subjects to enable parents to fully support their children's learning and to work in full partnership with the school. The governors' annual report to parents and the school brochure are informative and useful and comply with legal requirements.
45. A small number of parents and volunteers help regularly in the school in a range of ways, some listening to pupils read, others helping with practical activities. A parent who is also an artist helps very regularly as a volunteer in school, contributing significantly towards the high standard of pupils' achievement in art and design in the school. The Parent Teacher Association raises a considerable amount of money to extend and enhance resources through a range of social and fund-raising events. Parents are very supportive of school productions and events.
46. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory. Although generated by a computer program, they are detailed and specific to each pupil. However, the reports do not always make clear judgements on pupils' attainment and progress, and neither do they contain targets for pupils to work towards. The school provides good opportunities each term for parents to discuss pupils' progress. It works hard to maintain a very close relationship with the parents and carers of its pupils, and provides a wide range of opportunities for them to be well informed both formally and informally.
47. Parents are fully involved when their children are identified as having special needs and they have regular opportunities to discuss progress, both formally and informally. They are fully involved in reviews of statements of special educational need, as well as in reviews of their children's individual targets.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The good quality of the leadership and management is an important reason for the school's success. The headteacher has a very clear vision of what sort of school this should be, and communicates this effectively to the staff. A significant strength is the headteacher's demanding expectations of staff coupled with a sensitive awareness of their needs. This has created a very good team spirit in the school where all staff work closely together. These important foundations account for the continued improvement of the school, and ensure that pupils make good progress. Parents feel strongly that the headteacher's leadership is a significant reason for the school's success.
49. The headteacher has done much to develop a culture of self-evaluation over recent years; this helps to explain the improved standards in the national tests year by year, and was recognised in 2001 by a School Achievement Award. Rigorous monitoring of pupils' performance in the national tests has identified shortcomings in their skills, and the school has acted well on this information by improving teachers' planning. The system to set pupils individual targets is proving very effective, and their standards are rising as a consequence. A weakness, however, lies in the continued underachievement of the younger boys. This has been identified, but no measures have been put in place to raise their standards to match those of girls.
50. The school's leadership has used these principles of self-evaluation well to address the main issues from the previous inspection. There have been good improvements in the issues to do with the planning of the curriculum, and all subjects now have clear schemes of work. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is much improved, and children benefit from a good start to school. The quality of leadership has improved, particularly in terms of the evaluation of teaching; this is now well established, and provides teachers with regular and helpful guidance on their performance. Teachers value this process because it is done constructively, and helps them teach better. Governors have recently become more involved in the monitoring of the provision, but they still rely too much on the headteacher for guidance. The school has invested a significant sum of money recently on computers but standards by the oldest pupils have yet to benefit.
51. The deputy headteacher supports the headteacher and other staff very well. Importantly, the deputy headteacher sets a very good example through his own teaching, and this gives him credibility when advising staff. The deputy headteacher has appropriate responsibilities delegated to him, and this is a good improvement from the last inspection when this role was not developed well enough. The school has strengthened the role of subject co-ordinators since the last inspection, and they provide sound support to colleagues through advice about curricular planning, and evaluations of teaching. Only in English and mathematics, though, do co-ordinators have the opportunity to monitor teachers' teaching regularly in the classroom. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs supports pupils and staff well. She is very knowledgeable, and works closely with teachers to set targets for pupils and evaluate their progress.
52. The governors, well led by the enthusiastic chairperson, provide sound support to the staff. In the past, governors had a limited understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses but a good recent initiative was to give them responsibility for monitoring a subject of the curriculum. This is working well, and governors have observed some lessons, had useful discussions with subject co-ordinators and fed back their findings to the governing body. This largely new governing body, however, does not provide sufficient direction to the school; they rely heavily on the very experienced headteacher for this, and play little part in the setting of targets in the school's improvement plan. The school is aware of this shortcoming, and has the development of the role of governors as a priority on the current improvement plan.

53. The school manages its funds well, and a recent audit praised the systems for their accuracy and compliance to regulations. Spending is matched well to the school's priorities, and is tied closely to the raising of pupils' standards. For example, the splitting of classes into single age year groups in the mornings has proved a very effective way of raising standards in English and mathematics, and has been a good use of funds. The school has satisfactory procedures for gaining the best value from its funds. The headteacher and governing body compare the school's performance with similar schools, and this helps them set challenging targets. Fundraising provides a good source of funding, and is directed well into areas of need, including computers and resources. The administrator plays a key role in this process, ensuring that materials are bought at the best price, and keeping everyone well informed about the state of the school's finances.
54. The school is well staffed with a good, well-qualified supply of teachers and support assistants. Teachers new to the school benefit from very good induction procedures, including valuable support from experienced mentors. The accommodation is satisfactory, and very well maintained. The library, tucked away in a corridor, is unsuitable for pupils to conduct research, and helps to explain pupils' relatively weak research skills. The headteacher's office is very small, and it is difficult to accommodate more than two people.
55. The supply of learning resources is satisfactory, but the school lacks sufficient computer programs to make full use of ICT across all subjects of the curriculum.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. To continue the school's improvement and raise standards further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) raise the standards attained by the younger boys by**
 - a. using methods to capture their attention and interest more effectively;
 - b. monitoring their attainment and progress more rigorously.
(Paragraphs 2, 3, 5, 9, 17, 39, 48, 68, 70, 75, 80, 88, 94)

- (2) raise standards attained by the oldest pupils in ICT by:**
 - a. boosting the supply of computer programs to support their learning in all subjects;
 - b. more rigorous monitoring by subject co-ordinators on the use of ICT in their area of responsibility;
 - c. ensuring that staff have the necessary training to develop their confidence in ICT; (and) making better use of the Internet for pupils to research their topics.
(Paragraphs 6, 21, 54, 79, 83, 98, 109, 114-120, 124)

- (3) enhance the role of governors by including them at the start when setting priorities for the school's future development.** (Paragraph 51)

Other issues that the school may wish to include in its future planning are to:

1. Give parents more information on the topics their children are studying; (Paragraphs 43, 45)
2. Give older pupils more responsibility to develop their social skills. (Paragraphs 33, 85)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	54

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	17	20	2	1	0	0
Percentage	0	42	50	5	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	143
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	29

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	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	12	10	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	11
	Girls	10	10	9
	Total	21	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (95)	91 (75)	91 (95)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	11	12
	Girls	10	9	9
	Total	22	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (85)	91 (100)	95 (95)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	12	12	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	12
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	21	22	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (90)	92 (86)	100 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	10	12
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	20	22	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (90)	92 (90)	100 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	141	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR-Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	102

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	355416
Total expenditure	355990
Expenditure per pupil	2472
Balance brought forward from previous year	16204
Balance carried forward to next year	15630

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	2

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	143
Number of questionnaires returned	138

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	29	1	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	70	27	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	82	17	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	54	37	7	0	3
The teaching is good.	83	14	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	36	6	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	22	4	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	83	17	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	61	33	3	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	74	23	1	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	78	22	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	38	22	4	20

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

57. The provision for the youngest children in the school has improved since the last inspection, when the satisfactory teaching gave children an effective introduction to school. Teaching is now good, and as a result children make a brisk start to their education. Parents receive very detailed information on how to support their children's learning in the Reception class, during comprehensive induction arrangements for both children and parents. The assessment of how well children are progressing is effective. The teacher and the nursery nurse work in close partnership to foster children's learning well. They share a detailed understanding of what each child can and cannot do, particularly in the areas of mathematical development and their communication, language and literacy. This enables them to plan work for individual children, which helps them to make good progress. The effective system of assessment does not extend to systematic records across all areas of learning to help in planning accurately what children need to do next. As a result, adults sometimes miss opportunities to develop learning further. For example, there is no rigorous system for recording children's developing physical skills during outdoor play to help staff to plan in more detail what they need to do next to improve their learning.
58. The classroom is bright and stimulating with a wide range of purposeful activities from which the children can choose. This provision contributes well to their rapidly developing independence and confidence. The attractive surroundings extend into the toilets where the children's own pictures have been enlarged and colourfully reproduced to contribute to an environment where the children feel happy and secure. The stimulating opportunities include areas where children can try out their writing skills, pretend to be adults as in a garden centre and explore by touching such materials as sand, compost and water.
59. Although children enter the Reception class with average levels of attainment they soon make good progress, particularly in reading. Some boys lack maturity when they enter the Reception class. Staff are quick to spot these children, and those who have special educational needs, and they regularly give them the support that they need to make good progress in their learning and their social skills.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. This area of learning is taught well. Children make good progress, and most exceed the goals in this area of learning by the time they begin Year 1. The teacher and nursery nurse have high expectations of children's behaviour. As a result, children quickly learn to listen carefully to what the teacher and other children say, and to contribute to discussions. The teacher expects the children to sit still for only short lengths of time, so most of them learn to listen with good levels of concentration during these periods. There is a good range of enjoyable activities for children to choose from, and so they work happily and independently for long periods. This, in turn, enables the adults to focus effectively on teaching basic skills to individuals and groups. The teaching of other areas of learning contributes well to children's personal, social and emotional development. For example, in one lesson the teacher encouraged the children to praise one another when they used apparatus well in the hall for developing physical skills. This raised the esteem of all the children. The teacher encourages the children to become independent when dressing and undressing for physical activities. Children behave well in all activities; they are happy at school and enjoy learning. They co-operate well with one another, such as when sharing construction equipment or pretending to be 'teacher' and 'pupil' in the reading area.

Communication, language and literacy

61. Children's communication skills are broadly as expected when they enter the Reception class. However, some children, mainly boys, find it difficult to express themselves clearly when speaking. The more mature children soon begin to make progress in recognising letters sounds, letter names and whole words. The teaching in this area of learning is good because it systematically teaches the skills that children need to develop their speaking, writing and reading. The adults provide good opportunities for children to develop their speaking in class discussions, in small groups and in informal situations as when playing together. The teacher focuses effectively on holding the pencil with the correct grip so that the children are able to form their letters carefully and correctly. Most children soon write words neatly and independently. One girl, for example, proudly read the word 'cat' that she had very carefully written on her own in the writing corner. Boys tend to take longer to understand how letters are grouped to make words. One boy, for example, wrote three letters and said, "I have written monster". The teaching of reading skills is good. When adults teach children actions to accompany letter sounds it works well, and helps children learn new sounds quickly. Most children recognise a wide range of simple words, although some struggle with the initial letter in words. Adults have built up good relationships with parents, and provide useful written guidance about how they can help their children at home with their reading and writing. This contributes effectively to children's good progress so that, by the time they reach the end of their time in the Reception class, most achieve the targets identified for their age in this area of learning.
62. Children enjoy books. They are often found engrossed in books in the reading area. There is a range of exciting books with pictures that attract the children. However, there are not enough books of a suitable level to make the most of children's enthusiasm when they choose books independently. Many of the books on offer are too difficult for most of the children because they have too many difficult words on each page. There are not enough simple books to extend the learning of children at the early stages of reading.

Mathematical development

63. Children make good progress in their mathematical development, and nearly all meet the targets by the end of the Reception year. The quality of teaching is good because the planning shows clearly how children's skills will progress and the teacher's strategies motivate children well. The teacher uses resources effectively to grab children's attention and to develop their secure understanding of mathematics. For example, the teacher made pictures of flowers that had petals that children could easily take off and put back. The children took away and added petals up to ten so that they quickly developed their understanding of subtraction and addition. Learning was fun, and children made very good progress. The teaching makes the most of the opportunities that happen during the day to extend children's mathematical skills. When the register was taken at the start of the school day, for example, the teacher said, "There are 25 children in Reception. One is away. How many are here today?"
64. Children are confident recognising and using numbers, and they count reliably up to ten objects. A few are still unsure of numbers less than ten. Most have a clear grasp of mathematical terms such as 'more', 'less', 'greater' and 'smaller'. They recognise common two-dimensional shapes, and gain a good concept of capacity as they fill containers with water.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Children make satisfactory progress in this area, and most meet the targets by the end of the Reception year. Satisfactory teaching enables all children to begin to understand how things such as seeds grow. The teacher makes effective use of large books to show children what

happens when seeds germinate, and learning is extended through the class 'garden centre' and enjoyable opportunities are provided for children to handle compost and plant seeds. Children develop good mouse skills when they use the computer for mathematical challenges. There is a stimulating 'construction' area where children can experiment with building blocks, but this equipment is limited in range and restricts what children can make. Children develop an average awareness of history through looking at photographs of their families, and gain a good grasp of seasonal changes when they discuss the weather at the start of the day.

Creative development

66. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is satisfactory. Children make sound progress and most attain the targets identified for their age by the end of the Reception year. Most children use materials and tools such as paint, glue and scissors competently, and are keen to try out their own ideas, particularly when mixing paint to create a desired effect or choosing different sized brushes to make broad or fine strokes. Imaginative use of soft plastic material enabled children in one lesson to create flower arrangements by placing artificial flowers into it. The children were delighted because it gave them the chance to re-organise their arranged flowers to produce the effect that they wanted. Some opportunities were missed here to develop children's use of initiative, for example when the teacher drew the outline of flowers rather than allowing children to try it out for themselves. They work well with malleable materials, and concentrate hard so as to make their models sturdy.

Physical development

67. The quality of teaching is good in this area. Children make good progress and nearly all meet the targets by the time they leave the Reception year. The teaching is particularly effective in developing children's skills when holding and using writing tools such as pencils, and when cutting with scissors. Most children hold pencils correctly and cut carefully and accurately, turning the paper to make it easier. The teacher provides a wide range of activities in which the children can work independently to develop their physical skills. In one lesson, for example, this led to some girls developing their physical skills well when using a small shovel to fill plant pots with compost. Large equipment is used effectively in the hall to enable children to develop good balancing skills. Children use outside space well, selecting their own resources such as balls, skipping ropes and small wheeled toys. The teacher improves children's throwing and catching skills effectively through providing regular practice, and some girls develop very good skipping skills. Occasionally, children choose to 'paint the school' with large brushes and water, and this makes learning fun. Children enjoy all these activities, and this area of learning makes a strong contribution to their good social development.

ENGLISH

68. At the time of the last inspection standards were average by Year 2 and Year 6. While they remain in line with national expectations by Year 2, standards by Year 6 are now above average. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection, and reflects the work done by the school to improve assessment and use the information more effectively to target pupils' areas of weakness. These findings are similar to pupils' results in last year's national test results. Given pupils' average standards in English on entry to the school, these findings show that pupils achieve well over time. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and make good progress, especially in their reading. The extra help provided for these pupils by the co-ordinator for special educational needs and teaching assistants is particularly effective in improving their strategies for reading unfamiliar words. This increases pupils' confidence, and helps them in their learning of all subjects.
69. By Year 2, pupils' standards are average in speaking and listening. They listen attentively to the teachers and each other, and their responses show a sound understanding of what they hear. In a Year 1 'sharing' session, the teacher brought in some musical instruments and

asked the pupils how they worked. By careful encouragement, the teacher was able to get pupils to give clear explanations of what the buttons did. In a lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher asked them whether they worried about learning their spelling list, and her sensitive style encouraged pupils to respond with answers such as “I have a go” and “I use my brains”. Pupils talk easily about the work they do and what they enjoy most about the school. Most speak clearly with a wide vocabulary, and show good confidence when speaking. Boys’ language is generally less mature than that of girls, and they are less likely to express their opinions in class discussions.

70. By Year 6, pupils’ listening skills are above average. They concentrate hard in discussions, and are keen and eager to express their viewpoint. The use of whole-class discussions has sharpened pupils’ responses, and developed their confidence to speak in front of an audience. In a Year 6 lesson on ‘balanced arguments’, pupils produced persuasive phrases such as ‘no one could deny,’ and ‘on the other hand’. In group discussions, pupils show great maturity when listening to each other and responding with well thought-out questions. In a lesson for pupils in Year 6, there was a good example when two pupils put forward valid reasons for whether pupils should be allowed mobile phones, suggesting that “it will improve our use of technology”.
71. By Year 2 pupils’ standards are average in reading. Most are accurate and fluent readers, and are confident to express their opinions about the books they read. They take due notice of punctuation when reading, and pause when meeting a comma or full stop. They have a reasonable understanding of letter sounds, and build words such as ‘skill’ and ‘skin’ by changing the end letters. The reading record books, for comments to be made by parents and adults who hear pupils read in school, work well, and are a valuable way for teachers and parents to see how pupils are progressing. Girls read more fluently than boys, and enjoy reading more.
72. Pupils read well by Year 6. Nearly all, including boys, read accurately and with good expression. They show a good understanding of why events have occurred in stories, and offer plausible explanations of what is likely to happen next. They are good at identifying phrases to justify their own viewpoint when discussing the merits of a book. They have a good understanding of the main characters and events in a story, and are skilled at relating books to others written by the same author. Pupils show considerable maturity when talking about books. This was illustrated well by one who was justifying her view of a poem and explained with disarming clarity: “I like the humour because it is inventive; it invents things that don’t really exist, such as a lovely monkey with lollipop paws.”
73. By Year 2, most pupils reach the expected level for their age in writing but no pupils exceed this level. Almost all form letters correctly, mostly of a consistent size. They punctuate sentences accurately by using capital letters and full stops. Pupils use a good range of adjectives to make their writing more interesting; one pupil in Year 2, for example, wrote, “I fell down a deep, dark hole.”
74. Teachers place a strong emphasis in the literacy hour on how English is structured, and focus well on spelling patterns and how to write clear sentences. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to transfer this knowledge to their independent writing, and many struggle when required to write unaided. Progress is satisfactory by Year 2, but boys do not achieve as well as girls.
75. By Year 6 pupils have made good progress in their writing, and standards are above the national average. Their stories and factual accounts are interesting and comprehensive. Nearly all choose words imaginatively and with precision. For example, a pupil in Year 6, when writing a historical account, set the scene very well at the beginning: “Once on a dark winter’s day, when the yellow fog hung so thick and heavy in the streets of London....” They make good use of a wide range of words to join sentences, and this makes their work interesting to read. A pupil in Year 5, for example, turned “The man was waiting in a queue. He was a sailor.”

into "The man, who was a sailor, was waiting in a queue." Pupils use punctuation well, and their spelling is usually accurate. The handwriting of nearly all pupils is joined, clear and fluent.

76. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Teachers miss some opportunities, however, to extend the writing skills of more able pupils, and this explains why so few attain higher levels in their work. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the literacy strategy and, in their lessons, make good use of the recommended structure to teach skills, put them into practice and review pupils' progress at the end. Teachers' planning generally takes good account of the different abilities in the class, and this ensures that pupils understand the work. They use questioning well to assess pupils' learning and determine what they need to do next. Teachers do too little to boost the learning of boys, either by their organisation of where they sit or by the range of teaching styles to capture their interest.
77. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning from Year 3 to Year 6 is good, and often very good. This is because teachers are constantly challenging pupils to extend their skills. Lessons move at a brisk pace so that pupils enjoy the work and learn quickly. Teachers are good at extending more able pupils by giving them more open-ended tasks to make them think deeply about their work. They make it clear that work will be demanding at the start, and boys in particular are quick to take up the challenge. In one lesson, for example, the teacher began by warning, "This is going to be a difficult topic, but in this class we don't do things because they're easy!" Pupils responded well to this approach, and all worked very hard to meet the challenge. Teachers make effective use of the best example of work to raise the standards of the whole class. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, the teacher used very good illustrations of more able pupils' work to show others how to join sentences together in interesting ways; as a result, all pupils made very good improvements in their writing. The pupils are very well managed in lessons and relationships are very good. This is why they have such positive attitudes towards English.
78. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership, and sets a very good example by his own teaching. He raises standards of teaching effectively by providing regular training for teachers, as well as everyday support and advice. He also supports teachers well by a useful analysis of their termly and weekly planning. As yet, the co-ordinator has had little time to work alongside colleagues in Years 1 and 2 to support the development of specific writing skills and to provide a wider range of extended writing in order that some pupils move to the higher levels in writing.
79. Teachers make sound use of pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum, often referring to the skills and structures learnt in literacy lessons when giving pupils writing tasks in subjects such as history. In ICT, pupils have sound opportunities to use word-processors to refine their writing and to practice using punctuation.
80. Since the time of the previous inspection, there have been good improvements in teachers' expertise and the supply of resources, particularly the large, class-reading books. However, the library has limitations in terms of the number and quality of books, and teachers make too little use of ICT to extend pupils' skills. The quality of assessment is very good, particularly teachers' regular and accurate assessments of pupils' standards and progress in reading and writing, but the results have not been used well enough in the past to identify the relative weakness of the younger boys. Pupils have useful reading and writing targets to help them improve, and they are very much involved in checking their own progress towards these targets. There are also good tracking systems in place to check whether pupils are making sufficient progress from year to year.

MATHEMATICS

81. By Year 2, pupils' standards in numeracy and all other areas of the mathematics curriculum are average; by Year 6, standards have risen to well above average. While standards by Year 2 are similar to those reported in the last inspection, those in Year 6 are much higher. These improvements are the result of a rigorous analysis of pupils' strengths and weaknesses in their books and in the national tests, followed by a clear focus in teachers' planning on what pupils need to do to attain higher standards. The analysis of pupils' books, for example, showed that younger pupils were not showing their working out in their calculations, while those higher up the school were unsure of whether to use written methods for calculations or to work sums out in their head. Teachers have provided more work on these areas and so both groups of pupils have improved their skills significantly. There is no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls by Year 6, but the difference is marked in Years 1 and 2, with girls consistently exceeding national standards and boys always falling short.
82. By Year 6, pupils achieve very well given their average standards on entry to the school. They make a sound start in Years 1 and 2, developing a broad knowledge of mathematics and gaining confidence in their numeracy skills. Pupils build very well on these secure foundations in Years 3 to 6, and enjoy the challenges set for them by teachers. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and most attain standards in mathematics expected for their age by the end of Year 6. Knowledgeable teaching assistants support them very well by providing just the right amount of help; in this way they ensure that these pupils take a full part in all mathematical activities. In one lesson in Year 3, for example, the teacher was asking pupils to break up numbers into more manageable parts; the teaching assistant helped a pupil with poor mathematical skills to split 25 into $(20 + 5)$ and he beamed with pride when he was the first to provide the correct answer. More able pupils do well, and many exceed the standards expected of eleven year olds by the end of Year 6.
83. In Years 1 and 2, most pupils use mental recall of some of the addition and subtraction facts to ten and order numbers correctly up to 100 and beyond. A few select their own methods for working out problems, but many find this hard, especially the boys, and rely on the teacher. Pupils are starting to show their working out, and this is helping them to avoid careless mistakes. Pupils have a good understanding of shape and measure, and estimate the length of objects with reasonable accuracy. Pupils are good at collecting simple data using tally charts, and produce accurate block graphs of their results. Girls do well because they listen carefully to the teacher and know exactly what to do when asked to work independently. Some boys, however, quickly lose concentration, and then struggle when they are expected to put into practice the skills taught by the teacher in whole-class sessions.
84. By Year 6, pupils have a very good range of strategies to solve problems. They are quick to see patterns in their investigations, and are clear about when to write down their working out and when to rely on their very good mental mathematical skills. They work with numbers with confidence, and set out their sums neatly to avoid unnecessary errors. Nearly all know their multiplication tables well, and have a quick recall, for example, of all multiples of seven. Pupils' work on time using the 24-hour clock is of a very good standard, as is their calculation of bearings from a given point. Nearly all pupils have a good understanding of perimeter, and recognise the properties of common shapes. Pupils represent data very clearly using graphs, and their line graphs constructed to convert metric measures to imperial units show a very good grasp of data handling. Pupils make some use of ICT, for example to plot the results of their investigations into probability of 'heads' or 'tails' when tossing a coin, and using spreadsheets for simple calculations, but teachers use computers too rarely in mathematics lessons to make the best use of the technology.
85. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall; it is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and very good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers are knowledgeable about the mathematics curriculum, and have a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy.
86. In Years 1 and 2, teachers are well organised with resources ready for use, and support staff are aware of what they are required to do. There is sometimes, however, an over-reliance of commercial workbooks that do not always challenge the more able pupils. Teachers maintain

good control of the pupils with a friendly but firm manner. They are very good at involving all pupils by naming them and switching the focus of their questions from one to another. Pupils respond well to this method and are attentive and willing to explain their mental strategies. Other methods, such as open-ended questioning, enable pupils to reflect and think for themselves. Lessons start well, with lively mental work, and this helps pupils' confidence in the basic skills. These sessions, however, sometimes go on too long, and boys in particular become restless and lose concentration. Boys nearly always sit at the back in whole-class work on the carpet, and this makes it more difficult for teachers to see when they are talking among themselves. As a result, when pupils move on to group or independent work, it is the boys who are often unsure of what they have to do.

87. In Years 3 to 6, the very demanding teaching and the fast pace of lessons ensure that pupils make very good progress. Teachers work hard at making lessons fun, and this is why pupils enjoy mathematics so much. In one lesson, for example, the teacher was teaching multiplication tables using a 'ping-pong' game that involved pupils in providing an instant response to the teacher's challenge. Pupils love this game, and delighted in firing back the answers to the feigned astonishment of the teacher. Teachers are very good at including pupils with special educational needs in their questioning, tailoring the level of challenge very carefully to give them a good chance of success. This works very well, and pupils glow with pride when they are seen to be contributing to lessons as much as anyone.
88. Teachers make good use of numeracy skills across the curriculum. For example, graphs and measurement are used in science, for example, to plot the time it takes for ice to melt in different conditions, and in geography, to investigate cocoa production in Africa.
89. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject very well and has a clear understanding of what is required to raise standards. Importantly, the co-ordinator sets a very good example by the high quality of her own teaching, and teachers learn from this. Rigorous evaluation of the quality of teaching and pupils' learning enables the school to continually raise standards. Very good assessment procedures help teachers plot pupils' progress accurately and set challenging targets for the future. The weakness in the use of this assessment information lies in the boys/girls issue, which has not been addressed by the school. The supply of learning resources is good, and helps to make lessons interesting for pupils.

SCIENCE

90. Standards in science are average by Year 2 and well above average by Year 6. This is a significant improvement on pupils' standards at the last inspection, when Year 6 pupils reached levels that were similar to the national average. The school has focused effectively on the quality of pupils' investigations, and this has made a big difference in their scientific understanding. Pupils achieve very well in science and make very quick progress in Year 6 where the quality of teaching is very good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They gain a sound grasp of scientific concepts and, while they sometimes struggle with the recording of their work, they are keen to contribute to class discussions.
91. By Year 2, most pupils collect information systematically, for example, by finding out which devices produce light and which produce sound or movement. Some pupils, particularly boys who have weaker literacy skills, find it difficult to express in words what they find. For example, when asked what the battery did in a hand-held fan, one replied, "It keeps you cool" rather than saying that it produced movement. Most pupils explain clearly that plants and animals grow and reproduce. They know that the shape of certain things can change, and how a metal spring, for example, can open or close its shape. They showed sound experimental skills when exploring how some materials such as chocolate and butter can change when heated or cooled.
92. By Year 6, pupils have very well developed experimental skills, and most are competent at designing their own investigations. They use their knowledge of electricity well to predict that

the more bulbs they add to a circuit the dimmer the light will be from each, because “there is not enough power”. They have a good understanding of resistance in an electric circuit, and use a wide range of scientific terms that relate to the properties of materials. These include words such as ‘impermeable’, ‘conductor’ and ‘insulator’. They are skilled at using filtration and evaporation to separate materials such as salt, sand and water, and test their theories with confidence. Nearly all pupils have a detailed knowledge of the functions of the main organs of the human body and the parts of a flower.

93. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, with some good features. Teachers are well organised, and make lessons interesting by providing pupils with lots of practical and experimental work. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and they manage them skilfully to make the full use of time in lessons. This is why pupils have very positive attitudes to science. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in Years 3 to 6, with notable strengths in Year 6 that contribute very well to the high standards that pupils achieve. Here, very effective questioning extends learning well, for example about the voltage of different components in an electric circuit. Teachers show that they value pupils’ contributions highly, and this encourages them to put forward their own suggestions. Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils, but on occasions they miss opportunities to let pupils try out sensible ideas for their own investigations. Even in Year 6, where teaching is very good, teaching does not always ensure that pupils have the chance to predict what might happen in their investigations. Teachers ensure that pupils record their work neatly and comprehensively; as a result, they set out their work clearly, using text, illustrations and tables.
94. The science co-ordinator provides sound leadership and management. Following her own training on investigative science, the co-ordinator has worked effectively with teachers to improve the quality of their teaching and pupils’ learning in this important area. This has done much to raise standards year by year by the end of Year 6. However, the co-ordinator’s understanding of the teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is limited. She has not yet observed teaching in these year groups to see how she can support colleagues and share what works very well in classes higher up the school. There is no consistent system that teachers use to assess pupils’ work to give them useful information for planning the next step in their learning. As a result, the work that some teachers give to pupils of different abilities is not always matched to their needs. This reflects the picture at the time of the last inspection when assessment arrangements did not give teachers a full picture of pupils’ progress. Informal assessment, however, is often used very well. In Year 6, for example, the teacher uses information from his marking of pupils’ work effectively to adapt the next lesson. In one lesson, for example, this led to a stronger focus on the correct use of scientific terms to do with electricity.
95. As at the last inspection, teachers make too little use of ICT to extend pupils’ learning, and miss opportunities to encourage pupils to record their findings in a variety of ways, or sense changes in materials using sensors attached to computers. The science curriculum makes a clear contribution to pupils’ personal development by teaching them effectively about the importance of a healthy lifestyle, exercise and a balanced diet.

ART AND DESIGN

96. Pupils’ standards in art and design are average by Year 2, and above average by Year 6, where their two-dimensional art and design work is of high quality. Displays around the school, such as the vivid paintings in the library, are a good example of this high level of achievement by the older pupils. The standards of the Year 6 pupils are due to very good teaching of skills and techniques. As a result, standards by the time pupils leave the school are better than they were at the time of the last inspection, when they were average. Pupils achieve well in art and design, with a few gifted older pupils producing some excellent work. Pupils with special educational needs do well, and even those with poor control of their hands make good attempts at drawing and painting.

97. By the end of Year 2, most pupils explore ideas competently, such as extending and developing a printed picture or pattern. They use simple tools such as pencils and crayons accurately to draw and shade their pictures. Most are confident in selecting their own materials, and show good imagination in the way they mix colours. By Year 6, pupils showed their good design skills when producing colourful Christmas cards, exploring different ways to mix colours to make their presentations attractive. A few pupils worked with great accuracy, for example when using sketchbooks to try out pencil drawings of fruit. Pupils' good painting skills are evident in their very effective portraits of famous people, including Marilyn Monroe and Nelson Mandela. In their best work, pupils produced excellent still life images of fruit using chalks, and their paintings in the style of Lowry showed great sensitivity to the artist's style. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work in art and design, particularly in Year 6.
98. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. The most effective teaching is in Year 6, where the teacher has good subject knowledge and very high expectations of pupils; they respond very well to this teaching, and always strive hard to produce their best work. All teachers make good use of sketchbooks to help pupils to learn and practise skills, such as when exploring the effect of different types of pencil and charcoal for shading or producing different effects. Teaching uses discussion well to help pupils to look sensitively at relationships that pictures depict. One pupil, for example, said of a portrait, "He is looking in her eyes so he must love her." Teachers introduce pupils to a wide range of famous sculptors and artists including Matisse, Monet and Henry Moore, and this broadens pupils' knowledge of art and design very well. Although pupils study some art and design from other cultures, such as Aboriginal art and patterns on textiles from Africa, there is a lack of richness in the multi-cultural art that they experience. Teachers manage pupils well, and this helps them concentrate on their work and improve their skills.
99. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management of the subject through his exemplary teaching that leads to pupils producing good quality results. Since the last inspection, the school has resolved the lack of clarity between its plans for art and design and those for design and technology. This has contributed positively to the improved standards by the end of Year 6. The co-ordinator is aware of relative weaknesses in the subject, for example that the school has not fully extended the range of three-dimensional art and design to include pupils' use of a broad variety of materials. Pupils use materials such as clay, but other media such as wire are not included. There are good opportunities for pupils to work with a local artist who visits regularly. The artist has contributed well to the skills and enthusiasm of staff. The school's approach to assessment is informal, and a useful and manageable method of recording pupils' progress has yet to be established. This hampers the further development of the subject. Pupils make limited use of ICT to support their work in art and design, but have used graphics programs to design Christmas cards.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Standards in design and technology are average by Years 2 and 6, and reflect those at the time of the last inspection. These standards represent satisfactory achievement. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, even though some with poor hand control struggle when using tools.
101. In Years 1 and 2 pupils begin to develop their skills of evaluation by, for example, looking at different wind-driven objects such as hand-held windmills and wind socks to see which work best. They use simple tools safely, and take reasonable care with their models. They showed sound designing skills when they planned 'Joseph's coat of many colours'. They explore repeated patterns well in paint, and make interesting collages with a range of materials before moving on to using textiles. By Years 4 and 5, pupils design and make attractive biscuits for the older pupils. Year 5 pupils improve their skills further when they design and make good working models using levers. Their step-by-step designs show clearly how their models will

progress, and their thoughtful evaluations include useful comments about what went well and what could be improved.

102. By Year 6, pupils show reasonable accuracy when using different materials and methods. For example, they sewed felt carefully to make wash bags that are appropriately lined with polythene to make the end product waterproof. Some pupils went further, and enabled the bag to be opened and closed by sewing adhesive plastic strips into the opening. Pupils generate a good number of ideas by collecting and using information systematically, for example, when looking at manufactured chocolate boxes before making their own. Some pupils came up with very imaginative suggestions, such as a box that 'explodes'. Others thought of original names for chocolates such as 'Chances' to reflect the uncertainty of what lies inside the box.
103. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with the best teaching in the Year 5 and 6 class. Here, the teacher's very lively style fosters pupils' enjoyment of the subject, and there is a buzz of activity in the room. Teachers give the pupils clear explanations so that they understand exactly what they will be doing. For example, when pupils were asked to design the chocolate box, the teacher spent time explaining how manufacturers 'persuade' people to buy their products, and how pupils should use the same principle in their designs. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to talk to one another about how their work is progressing, and this helps them see the strengths and weaknesses of their model. Where the teaching has shortcomings, teachers do not insist that all pupils listen carefully to instructions, so they sometimes miss important teaching points. In some lessons, the tasks that teachers give to pupils do not fully extend learning. For example, the drawing of favourite wind-driven objects in a lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2 did not add enough to their knowledge, understanding or skills to justify the time spent on the task.
104. At the last inspection there was no co-ordinator for the subject. The current co-ordinator provides sound leadership and management, but has yet to observe teaching to share with staff what works well and what could be improved. Unlike the time of the last inspection, teachers make sound use of ICT, for example, to produce labels for chocolate boxes and to create designs for Joseph's coat. As at the last inspection, a useful and manageable system for recording pupils' progress has yet to be established to raise standards further.

GEOGRAPHY

105. Pupils' standards in geography are average by Year 2 and Year 6, and similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. They develop a reasonable geographical understanding, but their written work is sometimes sketchy and they sometimes struggle reading the names of unfamiliar places.
106. By Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of the characteristics of a contrasting environment, such as an island in the Hebrides. As a result, they develop a reasonable awareness of places beyond their own locality. They describe physical and human features clearly and accurately, and recognise and make valid observations about these features that give places their character. For example, on their own maps of an island, pupils marked physical features, such as a waterfall and a river in one colour, and human features, including a bridge and a church, in a different colour. They could explain clearly the reason for doing this.
107. By Year 6, pupils have average mapping skills, and a secure knowledge of countries of the world and of climatic conditions needed for certain crops. In work on cocoa-producing countries, pupils completed an accurate map that illustrated the main sources of cocoa in the world. They used their ICT skills well to create a useful graph to show the total production from each country.

108. In a Year 5/6 lesson observed, pupils showed a good understanding of how people can either improve or damage their environment, and how decisions and plans about the environment affect the quality of peoples' lives. This was developed well by pupils working in groups to suggest different ways that the land could be used, and they worked well together to come up with a persuasive argument. For example, one group identified the use of land for small, inexpensive, homes in order to keep young people in the area. They also realised the need to develop the environment for plant and animal life. This work had good links to citizenship, English and science.
109. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons well and use good questioning techniques to involve all pupils in discussions. They manage pupils effectively so that the best use is made of the time available. Teachers place good emphasis on developing pupils' mapping skills and comparing and contrasting places; these teach important basic skills. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils were able to recognise the differences between five different styles of housing, such as the difference between a flat and a bungalow.
110. There is a sound policy and scheme of work in place for the subject. The planning throughout the school is better than at the previous inspection, and there are improved links with other subjects. In ICT, however, the school provides too few opportunities for pupils to research their topics using the Internet. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and management, and monitors the teaching of the subject systematically by looking at teachers' planning and examples of pupils' work. Sound assessment systems give a reasonable picture of how well pupils are progressing. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

HISTORY

111. By Year 2 and Year 6 standards in history are average. This is a similar judgement to the one made at the last inspection, and represents satisfactory achievement. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress and develop a sound historical knowledge. More able pupils achieve well, and a few develop a good historical understanding by Year 6. They lack, however, the opportunities to use computers to conduct their own research that would raise their standards further,
112. By Year 2, pupils are beginning to recognise change in their local environment and in their own lives. They have a sound understanding of historical terms, and talk knowledgeably about events that happened when their grandparents were young. Boys, however, often take little part in these whole-class discussions. Pupils recognise some famous people from the past and present, and know something of their achievements. By Year 6, pupils have a sound understanding of the passing of time, and the changes that have occurred over time. They have a secure understanding of the historical periods they have studied throughout the school, and their interesting work on the Victorians shows a good grasp of how to interpret facts when writing their own accounts of working conditions at that time. Year 6 pupils achieved well when they made accurate historical deductions when using the village churchyard to look at headstones to compare the life span of the Victorian period with those of later periods.
113. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The teachers have good subject knowledge, use appropriate vocabulary, focus well on historical skills and have high expectations of the pupils. These enable pupils to develop a sound knowledge of history. Strengths in the teaching of history and its effect on learning were evident in a Year 4 lesson on Roman artefacts. The teacher was well prepared with excellent resources such as a key, jewellery and a jug; this gave the pupils a very good 'feel' for historical objects. The teacher moved the lesson forward well by asking probing questions. As a result, the pupils developed a good awareness of Roman life, and a clear understanding of how sources can give different views of the past.
114. There is a good policy and scheme of work to help teachers plan lessons and ensure that all National Curriculum requirements are met. The planning is better than at the time of the last

inspection, and takes good advantage of the national guidelines. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and management, monitoring teacher's medium-term planning regularly, and looking at samples of pupils' work to check on the coverage of the National Curriculum. There is no formal assessment, and this restricts the further development of the subject. The curriculum provision is enriched by a good number of stimulating visits and visitors; a local historian, for example, visits the school to talk to Year 2 pupils about their environment, and there has been an informative visit to the Science and Industry museum in Manchester for the older pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

115. Standards in ICT are average in Year 2, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are below average by Year 6, as they were at the time of the last inspection, and pupils are not achieving well enough. The oldest pupils have missed many opportunities to become familiar with computers, and are working at levels at least a year below those expected. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, and enjoy the way word-processing programs enhance their written work.
116. The school has been slower than most to equip classrooms with sufficient computers and software, and the development of the subject was hindered further by the absence of someone on the staff with sufficiently good skills to lead other teachers. The headteacher has taken over temporary management of ICT, and the recent acquisition of new computers is starting to raise standards. Staff are awaiting additional training to improve their skills and raise their confidence.
117. Pupils in Year 2 have an average understanding of how to turn on the computer, locate their program and type in their text using a word-processing program. They use the space bar confidently, change the case of their letters with average skill and print out their work reliably. They use a graphics program well to make a plan of a room, and make effective use of a science program to study parts of the body. Boys are just as good as girls in this subject, and are keen to show off their expertise.
118. By Year 6, pupils are slow using word-processing programs, and some still struggle to locate the required keys on the keyboard. They change the size and appearance of text with reasonable confidence, and print out their work. The school has had problems with their Internet connection, and pupils have had little opportunity to use electronic mail or research their topics. Pupils use spreadsheets methodically to make simple calculations, for example of the perimeters of shapes, and are starting to combine text with pictures. Pupils in Year 6 attend a very useful residential course where they learn how to produce a multimedia presentation incorporating text, animation and sound. This develops their skills well in the short term, but the school lacks the technology for pupils to develop these skills further when they return. Pupils in Year 5 make sound use of a programmable toy to draw shapes, but the school has little else to develop their understanding of how to control devices. The school has no facilities to monitor changes in materials, and few programs to develop pupils' decision-making skills using simulations or adventure programs.
119. On the basis of the lesson seen, discussions with pupils and the analysis of pupils' work, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Pupils' work shows that teachers are teaching all the skills required apart from where the school lacks the equipment to meet the requirements of the curriculum for Years 3 to 6. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory use of computers to develop pupils' word-processing skills, and use the digital camera effectively to illustrate pupils' project on their local town in geography. In Years 3 to 6, while teachers teach valuable skills in dedicated ICT lessons, they make too little use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects. Pupils therefore miss many opportunities to become familiar with computers, and use them too rarely to research their topics. Teachers' knowledge is variable and, while some have reasonable skills, others lack the confidence to use ICT as an everyday tool.

120. The one lesson seen, in Year 4, was good, and developed pupils' skills well. The teacher began well by recapping pupils' previous work on databases, and explained clearly what they were expected to learn. The teacher used the projector well to ensure that all pupils could see how to make a branching database of musical instruments. Pupils listened and watched intently, and were soon finding their own criteria for separating groups of instruments according to whether they had keys, were made of brass or if they were blown. By the end, all pupils had made good gains in their understanding of how to create a database, and had enjoyed the lesson enormously.
121. The school has invested wisely in new computers, and with two in each classroom there are just about enough to teach the required skills. The development of ICT is a priority in the school's improvement plan, which has a good focus on staff training. There is not, however, a sufficient focus in this plan on the inclusion of ICT in other subjects. Only in mathematics is there a reference to increased use of computers. In view of the restrictions placed by the absence of some programs, and the limited use of ICT in other subjects, the subject does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

MUSIC

122. By Years 2 and 6, standards in music are average, and similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is sound. Those with special educational needs enjoy music and make satisfactory progress. The headteacher teaches all the music in the school, except for the additional violin lessons that effectively extend the development of some pupils' instrumental skills. He uses effective methods to improve pupils' learning and he leads the singing confidently. He makes learning fun, and most pupils, notably the younger ones, try hard and enjoy their music. He has a very warm approach to pupils and he values their contributions to the lessons. As a result, most pupils want to please him and behave well. This is not always the case, however, and sometimes the older pupils lose concentration easily and their standards slip as a result.
123. By Year 2, pupils sing with considerable enthusiasm, although many soon lose the rhythm of a song. They listen to recorded music carefully and change from high to low notes confidently when it is their turn to sing.
124. Pupils in Year 6 have a good awareness of the way music can reflect a particular mood, as in the song 'Smile when your heart is aching', or when guitar music evokes a specific feeling. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the names of notes such as minim and semi-breve, and know how long these notes last. Some, however, are less sure of these terms and they sometimes confuse pitch with dynamics, as when muddling 'low' notes and 'quiet' notes. Pupils compose and perform pieces of music imaginatively, for example when asked to create sound effects to accompany a story. When talking about the work of their classmates, most pupils offer helpful suggestions for improvement, such as "You could have done it faster". A weakness is in pupils' knowledge of famous composers and their work.
125. The school does not make enough use of ICT to support learning in music. There are a small number of electronic keyboards and there is some use of computers for composing simple rhythms and melodies.
126. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The range of learning opportunities is enriched by instrumental tuition and by the opportunity to sing in the choir. There are opportunities to play the descant recorder that currently extend to treble and tenor recorders. The choir effectively contributes to the school's links with the community, when they sing, for example, at a local home for the elderly. There is no formal system for assessing pupils' progress to support the planning of future learning or to raise standards further.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. The standards achieved by Year 2 and by Year 6 are above national expectations. These are an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were found to be average. This improvement is the result of more careful and comprehensive curricular planning and more effective teaching. Pupils achieve well, and pupils with special educational needs enjoy the success that the subject gives them, even if their poor co-ordination sometimes frustrates them.
128. By Year 2, pupils' games skills are good. They are aware of the importance of warming up at the start of lessons and put considerable effort into their work. They show good control and co-ordination in striking a ball accurately, and most aim it at the right pace for their partner to receive. In gymnastics, pupils are good at linking together three movements with good balance. They have a good awareness of different types of movement, use space well and travel lightly on their feet.
129. By Year 6 in dance, pupils march in time to music, showing a good degree of precision, control and fluency. Pupils' good knowledge, skills and understanding of dance enable them to comment usefully on others' performance and, as a result, improve their own. In games, pupils have good ball control, and understand clearly the need for tactics and how to play as a team. Pupils' swimming skills are above average, and they benefit from intensive tuition over a three-week period in Year 4. This system works well, and nearly all swim the expected 25 metres by the time they leave the school.
130. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection because of teachers' improved subject knowledge and their higher expectations of pupils' standards of work and behaviour. The involvement of pupils in demonstrating their good techniques has led to them being much more responsive because they are fully involved in the sessions. As a result, they enjoy their work and make good progress.
131. The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced with all aspects being taught. The subject is well led and managed, and the co-ordinator supports teachers well by giving good advice on what should be taught and how it should be done. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular sporting activities, including netball, football, cricket, rounders and athletics. The pupils enjoy many opportunities to play against other schools, and this develops their teamwork well. Teachers ensure that there are equal opportunities for boys and girls to take part, and that pupils with special educational needs are fully involved. The subject does much to enhance pupils' personal development in the way they are taught how to work as a team and support one another.