

INSPECTION REPORT

BECK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sheffield

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique reference number: 107044

Headteacher: Mr J Cole

Reporting inspector: Mr R Crompton
7230

Dates of inspection: 30th June – 3rd July 2003

Inspection number: 246642

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

© Crown copyright 2003

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community School
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Beck Road Sheffield
Postcode:	S5 0GG
Telephone number:	0114 2467536
Fax number:	0114 2571730
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Deborah Fell
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7230	Rob Crompton	Registered inspector		How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
13874	Jane Chesterfield	Lay inspector		How high are standards? <i>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</i> How well does the school care for pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2913	Sue Airey	Team inspector	English Special educational needs	
32304	Jane Banting		Educational inclusion, including race equality English as an additional language Science Geography History	
25778	Andrew Hicks	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
4275	Joyce Taylor	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Art and design Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?
27720	Peter Way	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education	How high are standards? <i>The schools' results and pupils' achievements</i>

The inspection contractor was:

Wessex Education
3 Greenacres
Puddletown
Dorchester
DT2 8GF

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is bigger than other primary schools nationally, with 670 boys and girls aged from three to eleven. A hundred of these children attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Pupils mainly live locally. Attainment on entry to the school is well below that typical of four-year-olds. A fifth of all pupils are on the register of special educational needs, almost all of whom have learning or behavioural difficulties. This is about the national average. A large number of other pupils also require and receive additional support in order to make progress. Eight pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is in line with the national average. Most pupils have cultural roots in the British Isles with thirty-two children from other ethnic backgrounds. None are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very high. The school is part of the Sheffield Educational Action Zone¹ (EAZ) and the Excellence in Cities scheme² (EIC).

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Although standards in English and mathematics are below average, attainment is improving due to good teaching. Pupils achieve well in science. The headteacher and senior staff support pupils' personal development very well and focus successfully on improving their rate of progress. Governors support the school well. In view of the overall provision the school makes, it gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Good teaching and learning is improving standards.
- Very effective provision for pupils' moral and social development means that they develop positive attitudes to learning.
- Visits and visitors provide good opportunities for pupils to broaden their experiences.
- Parents get very good support and every encouragement to help their children learn.
- Highly effective support for pupils with special educational needs means that they make very good progress.
- Pupils receive very good support and guidance which means they can concentrate on their learning.

What could be improved

- Pupils' skills in speaking, writing and spelling.
- Pupils' skills in mental mathematics and problem solving.
- The rate of progress in the reception class, particularly in reading, writing and numeracy.
- The time given to teaching design and technology (DT), geography and history in Year 6.
- Attendance and punctuality.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Good improvement has been made since the school was last inspected in February 1998. Standards are better and the quality of teaching has improved. Weaknesses in management have been mostly overcome and governors now play a more significant role in monitoring the school's performance. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has developed very well.

¹ Educational Action Zones are set up to support schools in areas of social deprivation in raising standards.

² The Excellence in Cities scheme is designed to help gifted and talented pupils in urban schools to meet their potential

STANDARDS

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

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

Children enter the school with very low level of skills. They make good headway in the nursery. Progress is satisfactory in reception but as they start Year 1, most pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are very weak. Their social skills and physical co-ordination have improved but these aspects of development are still below the levels expected. There is scope for all children to achieve more in the nursery and reception classes, particularly in communications, language and literacy.

Most pupils make good progress from their low levels of attainment as they start Year 1, despite the fact that they do not reach average standards by Year 6. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 are below the national average. As the table shows, the picture is similar by the end of Year 6. Over the last five years, however, standards have risen steadily and more quickly than the national rate. Last year, pupils did as well as those in similar schools in English and science and better in mathematics. However, current pupils are not doing as well in mathematics as in English and science. Standards in art and design are good by the end of Year 2. Pupils are making good progress in information and communication technology (ICT) but have lots of catching up to do before they can achieve the levels expected by Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils make steady progress in most other subjects and achieve satisfactory standards in Years 1 to 5. Pupils' achievement in design and technology, geography and history slows in Year 6 because of a concentration on English and mathematics. As a result, standards are below those expected. Pupils who have special educational needs make very good progress because of the support they are given.

Ambitious targets in English and mathematics were set for 2003. At the time of the inspection, results were not available but the level of pupils' current work suggested that the targets would not be met.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy their work. Their positive attitudes in class enable them to learn effectively
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Pupils behave well in class but are often too boisterous out in the yard.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good. Pupils get on well with their teachers and are tolerant of others. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory, although there has been great improvement this year. Punctuality is also unsatisfactory. Too many pupils regularly arrive late.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

English and mathematics are generally taught well. Learning support assistants (LSAs) provide valuable support.

Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory. Children enjoy a good range of activities but are sometimes insufficiently challenged in the reception classes.

In Years 1 to 6, teaching is good overall. Teachers are particularly good at managing behaviour to enable most lessons to run smoothly. Lessons in literacy are usually effective but more emphasis needs to be given to the key skills of speaking and writing. Numeracy teaching is good overall but in some lessons, not enough use is made of the summary session to reinforce pupils' learning. Pupils lack confidence in tackling new work independently because opportunities for doing so are rather limited.

Teaching pupils in different sets in English and mathematics according to their prior attainment works well. When teaching their own classes, teachers often provide work at different levels to help all pupils move forward. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the carefully planned work they are given by teachers and LSAs. Boys and girls, and pupils from all backgrounds and ethnic groups are given the same care and attention. This enables most pupils to make good progress through the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The extensive programme of visits and visitors makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. Excellent links with the local secondary school provide good continuity for pupils' education. The curriculum in Year 6 is dominated by English and mathematics at the expense of other subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils benefit from carefully designed individual programmes and are supported very well by teachers and LSAs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The few pupils who are at an early stage of learning English are well supported and make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils' social and moral development is particularly well supported. Provision for spiritual development is good and for cultural development, it is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school gives pupils good personal support and guidance through the hard work of the senior staff, the work of the EAZ and the back up of outside agencies.

The school has created very good links with its parent community.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership in relation to pupils' personal development. They help pupils to deal with any emotional or behaviour problems and to concentrate on learning. Their role in establishing priorities and monitoring the curriculum is less effective.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body provides good support to the school and fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. Governors have a wide range of expertise and take an active interest in the life and work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is tracked from year to year and the results of annual tests are carefully analysed. Progress through the nursery and reception classes is not checked carefully enough to identify where support is needed.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The budget is managed very well. Spending is closely linked to priorities and care is taken to ensure that good value is obtained from the funds available.

Staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. There are too few teachers in reception. Areas of the school are in need of refurbishment and resources for some subjects need renewing.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children like school, behave well and make good progress. Teachers are very effective and expect pupils to work hard. The school is open and welcoming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The range of activities outside lessons Homework. Leadership and management Information about how their children are doing.

The inspection endorsed parents' positive views. The concerns about activities outside lessons, behaviour and homework are not well founded. The school offers a good range outings, residential visits and extra-curricular activities. Although there are some inconsistencies, homework is used with reasonable success to support pupils' learning. Many aspects of leadership and management are strong, although some areas for improvement were identified.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

The Foundation Stage

1. Children make good progress in the nursery but as they start reception standards are well below those usually seen in most areas of learning. Aspects of personal and physical development are better, although these are still below what is generally expected at this age. Although children make steady gains in learning in reception, attainment is still poor in most areas by the end of the year. There is scope for all children to achieve more across the Foundation Stage³, particularly in communications, language and literacy.

Years 1 to 6

2. Test results in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 have been below or well below the national average over the past five years. The same is true of attainment in English, mathematics and science by Year 6. However, there has been a steady improvement during this period. When compared with similar schools, Year 2 pupils are doing better than others in writing and as well as other schools in reading and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, comparison with similar schools is not quite so favourable. The percentage of pupils who achieve the higher levels in national tests matches that in similar schools, except in reading at the end of Year 2 and in mathematics at the end of Year 6.
3. Progress through the school is good in English and science and satisfactory in mathematics. Pupils who have special educational needs make very good progress because of the support they are given. The very few pupils with English as an additional language make as much progress as their classmates. There are fluctuations in the performance of girls and boys in different years but overall there are no significant differences between their attainment because the school ensures they get equal learning opportunities.
4. Teachers are aware of pupils' weak literacy skills as they start Year 1 and provide opportunities for pupils to improve, although more planned opportunities are needed throughout the school to encourage them to become confident speakers. Similarly, although pupils are occasionally able to develop writing skills in subjects such as history, geography and science, overall opportunities to do so are limited. The school works hard to promote books and reading but this area remains a weakness for many pupils, hampering them in research and the retrieval of information.
5. There is little evidence in pupils' work of the application of calculation and measuring skills outside mathematics lessons. Basic skills in numeracy are taught throughout the school but not well retained or learned by the pupils. There is not enough discussion of number patterns, relationships and strategies for solving mathematical problems. Multiplication tables are neither remembered nor well understood by the pupils.

³ The Foundation Stage is from the child's third birthday to the end of the reception year.

6. Pupils make good progress in science through the school and achieve average standards by Year 2 and Year 6. The strong emphasis on practical activities compensates somewhat for pupils' weak literacy skills. A significant number of Year 6 pupils achieve well by the time they leave.
7. By Year 2, pupils achieve good standards in art. Standards meet expectations in DT, geography, history, physical education (PE) and religious education (RE) but not in ICT. Pupils make steady and sometimes good progress in Years 3 to 5 and achieve satisfactory standards. Because of the concentration on English and mathematics in Year 6, they are not achieving the expected standards in DT, history and geography. Although pupils are making good progress in ICT because of additional resources and improved teaching, they have too much to catch up with so are not yet achieving the expected levels by Year 2 or Year 6. There was insufficient evidence during the inspection to make a judgement about overall standards in music.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The school works very hard to develop pupils' social skills and sense of right and wrong and it is successful in establishing positive attitudes and good relationships. This is a considerable achievement in circumstances where many pupils have difficulties behaving as the school would wish and conforming to accepted standards. Pupils' attitudes to the school and to their learning are good. Pupils are able to concentrate on their work and persevere because teachers manage them very well and instill in them good work habits. This means that pupils are able to learn well, even if they find their work challenging.
9. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. It is usually good in lessons. Pupils know what is expected of them in the classroom and stick to the rules, because they respect their teachers' authority and understand the consequences if they are disobedient. However, they are often very boisterous in their play and forget about other people who are using the yard. Sometimes pupils react physically to one another, with a push or a shove, rather than resolving their differences verbally. There have been five temporary exclusions over the last year, involving four boys. These were all the result of unsafe behaviour which threatened the well being of others.
10. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils respond well to adults and are friendly, open and welcoming. Racial harmony within the school is particularly striking. The few pupils from ethnic minorities are very well integrated; they work and play happily and naturally with their classmates. Boys and girls tend to play separately in the yard, but co-operate without fuss in the classroom. Pupils are tolerant of others' views and beliefs and this is evident in their discussion in RE lessons. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils felt 'people can believe what they like'.
11. Pupils with special educational needs show interest and sustain concentration. They have good attitudes to learning and are well motivated. They listen well and respond positively to teachers and support assistants.
12. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. They do not always take advantage of the good range of extra activities provided by the school to develop their skills and talents. Those that do are often very motivated and do their best to make the most of their opportunities. The half a dozen pupils in the Year 6 German club, for example, have made tremendous progress during the few weeks since the club started and will have a flying start in their Year 7 work. Pupils are natural and ready to express

their views most of the time but they sometimes lack confidence in formal situations, and are not sure what to do and say.

13. Thanks to the hard work of the school, there has been a considerable improvement in pupils' attendance over the last year. It is currently higher than it has been for the last three years and than it was at the time of the last inspection. Nonetheless, the level of pupils' attendance at the school is unsatisfactory because it is still below the national average. Although unauthorised absence is in line with the national average, authorised absence is higher. Too many parents disrupt their children's education by taking them out of school for holidays in term-time, or let them stay at home without good reason. Punctuality is also unsatisfactory. Many families regularly bring their children to school late in the morning and this slows down the start of the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching across the school was good or better in two-thirds of the lessons seen. This is a much better picture than during the previous inspection when one in ten lessons were unsatisfactory. Literacy is taught effectively but more opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and writing skills are needed. Similarly, although mathematics teaching is generally good, some work is too easy for pupils and they need more support in developing strategies to explore patterns in number and to solve problems independently.
15. The work of support staff is very valuable; they help teachers to provide variety in work and to reinforce pupils' learning. They work very well with groups of pupils throughout the school. They are well briefed about the lesson's objectives and about the specific help they need to give.
16. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage and is sometimes good in the nursery. Teachers and support staff have created a stimulating nursery where children enjoy learning both inside and in the outdoor areas. Although sound overall, there is some unsatisfactory teaching in reception. This is mainly due to weaknesses in planning. There are no full time teachers and work sometimes lacks continuity as a result. Although children are enthusiastic, they could be making better progress.
17. In Years 1 and 2 teaching is planned carefully with key aspects of work well demonstrated by teachers. Pupils know what is expected of them. Good teaching was seen in the key subjects of mathematics, English, science and ICT and in art, history and PE. Teachers use appropriate language to explain key terms and are extending the technical vocabulary of their pupils well. In English for example, Year 2 pupils are conversant with words such as *settings*, *characters* and *evaluation*. Most work set enables pupils to work at the right level.
18. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is also good with highly effective lessons seen in mathematics, science, history, ICT, religious education and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Teachers are particularly good at managing behaviour. They are consistent in praising pupils when they have been well behaved and have established effective routines to maintain order and reinforce learning. The current setting arrangements in English and mathematics - where pupils are split according to their levels of attainment – generally works well.
19. Strengths in the teaching and learning across the school were well illustrated in a literacy lesson in Year 4. The teacher's lively presentation engaged the pupils' interest, sustained their concentration and helped them to develop ideas. Very good

relationships and high expectations of pupils' behaviour, personal responsibility and standards of work ensured that they made good gains in their learning.

20. Teachers regularly assess work and make supportive comments in pupils' books, particularly in science. Sometimes pupils need more indication about what they need to do to improve and incorrect work is occasionally ticked. Homework makes a reasonable contribution to pupils' learning. It is set regularly and followed up by teachers.
21. Teachers are very aware of the specific needs of the pupils with special educational needs and plan their work in co-operation with the support assistants. They set and use individual education plan targets and differentiate work to allow pupils to access the planned activity. For example, in English modified activities for the different abilities and needs of the pupils ensures that they understand what to do. Pupils are given more time to get to grips with reading techniques, are given detailed explanations. Those with limited understanding are well supported by different approaches to the same task.
22. Boys and girls and pupils from all backgrounds and ethnic groups are given the same care and attention. This inclusive provision enables most pupils to make good progress. Most pupils are developing good learning habits. With encouragement from teachers, they try their best to improve. Some are occasionally frustrated by their lack of progress, but staff are good at renewing determination to succeed. Teachers and support staff are particularly skilled in anticipating and managing challenging behaviour ensuring that learning can continue as smoothly as possible.

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

23. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. Weaknesses in design and technology, ICT and geography reported at the last inspection have been remedied. A good balance between all subjects is achieved in most years but in Year 6, the strong focus on preparation for national tests has affected standards in geography, history and DT.
24. The nursery is well organised to ensure that all areas of learning are covered. The curriculum in the reception classes is not planned so well. This means teachers are not clear about what has been taught and what children need to learn next.
25. There is a strong emphasis on English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6, although teachers miss opportunities to develop pupils' speaking, listening and writing skills in subjects other than English, for example by encouraging small group discussion. Science is an exception. Pupils have too few opportunities to use numeracy skills in subjects such as science and geography.
26. The school ensures equal access to all areas of school life for its pupils. It provides very well for pupils with special educational needs. The school is committed to supporting children with significant medical needs to ensure that they can take part in school life as fully as possible. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is developing and there are some good examples within the school, especially in science. The few pupils for whom English is an additional language are fully integrated into school life. Expectations for boys and girls are similar and new pupils are supported well during those first few weeks in their new school.

27. The school promotes pupils' personal development well. Good PSHE lessons on topics such as respecting others' views make valuable contributions to their learning. Sex, health and relationships education is treated appropriately. For example, pupils write replies to letters sent to newspaper 'Agony Aunts' to explain how best to deal with problems from argumentative brothers and sisters. Older pupils work with visiting health specialists on the *My Body* project, addressing issues surrounding growing up, puberty and sexual relationships.
28. An extensive programme of visits and visitors adds good variety and enrichment to pupils' learning. Year 2 pupils visit Creswell Crags, for instance, to learn about life in prehistoric Britain. During the inspection, Year 5 pupils visited a nearby wetland area to investigate animal and plant habitats and to work on environmental issues. They returned to school full of enthusiasm about what they had been doing. Residential trips and visits to outdoor adventure centres contribute well to pupils' personal development. They help pupils learn how to stay safe, how to cope with emergencies and how to overcome personal fears, for example in tackling a climbing wall.
29. The school provides a good range of sport and other additional activities. Local professional football and rugby league players train pupils and school teams take part in a variety of seasonal tournaments. Pupils have the opportunity to learn musical instruments, to sing in the school choir and to take part in musical productions. German and French clubs give pupils a good introduction to European languages. Although provision is good, the number of pupils who take advantage of these opportunities is sometimes disappointing.
30. Excellent arrangements help Year 6 pupils make a smooth transition into the next stage of their education. Mathematics, English and science 'link units' are taught and marked by teachers from the local secondary school and there is a programme of visits. A theatre group works with pupils on fears and hopes. As a result, pupils are very positive about their future. 'I am looking forward to meeting new friends, doing new work and taking on new challenges', is typical of the comments they make.
31. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. A visiting speaker from the local Jewish community spoke well in an assembly to extend pupils' understanding of her beliefs and approach to life. Pupils celebrate their own achievements but also consider others less fortunate than themselves. They make substantial collections for children in countries such as Iraq. Assemblies provide good opportunities for personal reflection. Lessons provide further opportunities for spiritual development. For instance, Year 1 pupils were fascinated by the smell and feel of bread dough.
32. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. There are clear expectations for the way that pupils should behave. Teachers and support staff are good role models. They have good relationships with each other and with pupils. They work hard to teach pupils values of respect for themselves and others and to learn how to behave morally, for example in PSHE lessons that explore how rights and responsibilities are linked. Pupils contribute to their own rules for behaviour and understand the system of sanctions and rewards. They have good opportunities to assist in day-to-day support of fellow pupils. The system of playground stewards, for instance, works well. Pupils think hard about the responsibilities involved in helping to manage breaktimes. Pupils with limited independence and social skills are taught to consider and understand their actions. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to raise their hands to speak, to take turns and listen to each other and help each other. All pupils are valued.

33. The school provides satisfactorily for pupils' cultural development, including their understanding of life in multi-cultural Britain. There are developing links with Sierra Leone and Udine in Italy. Visits, such as the recent trip to the city hall to meet the mayor, make a good contribution to pupils' understanding of their own heritage.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. Very good pastoral support and guidance helps pupils to overcome any difficulties they have and concentrate on their learning. The key to this is the wide-reaching approach the school takes to helping pupils and their families with any problems they have. Senior staff, the EAZ and outside agencies all play crucial parts here. The learning mentor⁴, funded by the EIC scheme and the senior teacher maintain a clear overview of issues affecting pupils, informing and involving senior staff where appropriate and drawing on the expertise of outside professionals. This means that pupils get the support they need without unduly disrupting the work of the teachers in the classroom.
35. Procedures for child protection are very good. The school meets all the requirements and there is regular training for staff at all levels. Concerns are regularly discussed at staff and inter-agency meetings. Pupils are taught appropriately about keeping themselves safe. During the inspection, for example, local police gave Year 6 pupils a realistic and relevant talk about drugs.
36. Staff give good attention to pupils' well being. Teachers and support staff know their pupils well and keep an eye out for any problems. Teachers are very good too at boosting pupils' self-esteem and making them feel positive about what they have achieved. This was evident in a Year 1 art lesson, for example, where the task was designed so that everyone could produce something of which they could be proud. Daily routines in the school are effectively established. The playground initiatives introduced by the deputy head, for example, are working well. Pupils feel that the playground stewards, friends and buddies have really made a difference to the atmosphere outside.
37. Staff manage behaviour well. They set high standards in class and are consistent in their use of rewards and punishments. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them and what to expect if they do not follow the rules. They know what they need to aim for in their termly behaviour and attitude reports. The school's 'promoting positive behaviour' policy permeates its daily life. Regular class discussions are used very well to allow pupils to ponder on behaviour issues and to enable teachers to promote successful social and personal skills. Supervision at break and lunchtime is not organised satisfactorily and more needs to be done to monitor behaviour out in the yard. The nature of the site means that there are many nooks and crannies where pupils can linger unnoticed, with the potential for misbehaviour. Bullying is taken seriously by the school and handled firmly. Pupils feel confident that staff will sort out any issues.
38. The school monitors and promotes attendance very well. Recent initiatives have led to a significant improvement in the attendance figures over the last year. The reason for this success is the way in which the school tackles the problem from every angle. Absences are rigorously monitored by staff, working closely with the education welfare service and liaising with parents. The school clamps down on persistent

⁴ The role of the learning mentor is to help pupils, particularly those with behavioural difficulties, to attend well and to develop positive attitudes to school.

offenders through the use of attendance panels. On the other side of the coin, good attendance is heavily promoted, both for parents through the school's newsletter and for pupils through the very popular league tables. Pupils were seen to be very motivated by the possibility of winning sweets and other treats as class prizes. The funding from the EAZ and the EIC scheme has been crucial in the school's work on attendance, enabling the senior teacher and the learning mentor to get to grips with the many issues facing the school and its pupils. The school has recognised the need to improve the punctuality of many of its pupils. The planned breakfast club is a good way to make a start on this.

39. The assessment of pupils in English, mathematics, science has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. In geography and history, good procedures allow teachers to identify what children know, understand and can do. In other subjects, there is little consistency in the way assessment is carried out or recorded. This restricts progress as planning is not based on pupils prior attainment; work is sometime too easy or too difficult.
40. Procedures for assessing and identifying pupils with special educational needs are effective and consistent. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) liaises very well with all the outside agencies to support pupils with statements and specific difficulties.
41. The use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning has improved considerably since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. A good system of setting targets in English is beginning to have a high profile with some pupils having copies of their current targets.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The school has successfully built upon and strengthened this area of its work since the time of the last inspection. It provides parents with very good support and encouragement to assist them in helping their children to learn. Parents are happy with the school and positive about what it provides for their children. Many parents were around and about the school during the inspection, and they appeared to feel welcome on the premises and to get on well with staff.
43. Staff are freely accessible at the beginning and the end of every day and happy to talk to parents. The role of the learning mentor is especially valuable in liaising with parents and senior staff are always ready to deal with any concerns. The school works hard to involve parents in their children's learning right from the start and organises a number of very useful workshops for parents and children, particularly in nursery and reception. Staff and governors have also introduced some imaginative initiatives to unite school and community. A good example of this is the fishing club, which is popular with pupils and parents.
44. Information for parents is very good, both in terms of quality and quantity. The key to this is the way that the school targets its information at what its parents need and want. Parents are provided with termly behaviour and attitude reports, so that they can keep an eye on what their children are getting up to as the year goes by. The prospectus is full of helpful detail about school policies and routines and useful booklets about supporting different aspects of the curriculum are available. A topic and trip sheet is sent out each term and regular, numbered newsletters celebrate the school's successes and remind parents about important priorities such as attendance and punctuality.

45. Reports to parents on their children's progress are generally good. Most indicate clearly to parents how well their children are doing and what they need to do to make more progress. In the best examples, the levels at which children are working in English, maths and science are stated and explained; targets for improvement are practical and understandable. In a few classes, though, this very good practice is not found, and comments are sometimes misleading.
46. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning and to the life of the school. Most support what the school is doing for their children and uphold its principles and decisions. Many come into school to work with their children or others.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. Leadership and management are satisfactory and include areas that are very good and one or two that are weaker. Overall, this is an improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior teacher provide clear and successful leadership in support of the pupils' personal development. They inspire staff, parents and governors. As a result, the school is calm and orderly and pupils have good attitudes to learning. Priorities include ensuring that pupils can cope effectively with the emotional stresses of learning and this aim is met well. Senior staff have also focused successfully on improving the rate of pupils' progress, particularly in literacy, numeracy and science. Standards have risen to match or exceed those in similar schools. The work to ensure the school continues to move forward is less clearly planned. The improvement plan is over-loaded with priorities and needs to be reduced to fewer, achievable targets. The school has been deflected from certain tasks, such as monitoring lessons to evaluate the provision for higher attaining children, by other ideas suggested by the EAZ. While these new initiatives are highly appropriate, the changes are confusing.
48. Staff work well together to put the school's aims into practice. Subject co-ordinators have considerable responsibility, which they take seriously. They monitor performance well, make accurate judgements about what needs to be done and on the whole, take appropriate and effective action. In science, for example, monitoring of the teaching has led to improvements in the way children work and their standards have risen quickly. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed very well by the SENCO. She gives clear direction to the work of the school and there is a good sense of teamwork and collegiality as all staff are very committed to meeting the pupils' needs.
49. Several co-ordinators identified concerns about the opportunities Year 6 pupils have for an appropriately broad curriculum. They discovered that design and technology, history, geography and religious education time allocations were reduced in favour of literacy and numeracy. Consequently, the standards in these subjects were lower than they should be and sometimes lower than the standards reached in Year 5. Although the co-ordinators drew attention to this matter, action was deferred in order not to overload the teachers in Year 6. Senior staff provide support and advice and generally keep a close watch on developments. An exception occurred when, due to budget constraints, there was a decision to keep two rather than three teachers in reception. This decision placed enormous strain on the reception staff, reduced the quality of provision and slowed children's progress. The situation was insufficiently monitored and evaluated by the Foundation Stage co-ordinator, who was opening the new nursery at the time and was fairly busy. More senior staff knew of the anxieties but did not intervene.

50. Governors' involvement in supporting the school is good and is better than it was at the time of the last inspection. They keep up-to-date with developments and provide strong support to the headteacher and staff. There is, for example, a link governor for the key subjects and aspects such as literacy, numeracy and special needs. Governors' strengths are used very well to support areas such as budget management. The governors are very involved and knowledgeable about the provision made by the school because they are kept very well informed by the headteacher. He ensures they are up to date with all proposals. Governors are very clear about the strengths of the school and the areas for improvement identified as priorities. The chair of governors visits often to show support and find out about the work of the school.
51. Management and control of the school's budget are very good. There are close links between setting priorities for school improvement and the allocation of funds. All the money is used very carefully and there is little in reserve. Governors review the standards reached by pupils and compare them with similar schools. They seek information from the parents and children about ways of improving the school and act on suggestions made. They use the budget for special educational needs very effectively. Governors have made successful use of the funding provided by the EAZ for additional staff to support the children's personal development. Overall, they gain good value for the school from the money that is available to them.
52. Staffing levels are satisfactory. In reception, there are enough adults to meet the legal minimum requirements to supervise the children, but there are not enough teachers to teach them. This means that the children do not get enough time with a teacher in order to make the progress that they should. The school gives good attention to the professional development needs of all staff. New staff and newly qualified teachers are well supported so that they can settle quickly into their role. The school has an enterprising approach to staff development and has recently had placements for trainee learning mentors to gain practical experience.
53. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. New buildings provide bright and stimulating surroundings to lift and inspire pupils and staff. However, some of the original building is drab and dingy and in need of refurbishment. Staff facilities are particularly depressing.
54. Resources for learning are broadly satisfactory. Those for ICT and DT have improved since the last inspection but more books are still needed for English and musical instruments are ageing and need replacing. There are insufficient resources to cover the curriculum satisfactorily in PE and resources in the reception class do not match the quality and quantity of those in the nursery.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve standards, the school should:

- 1) Improve pupils' skills in speaking and listening (paragraph 68) by planning more opportunities for them to talk about their work, discuss and explain to others, and to work together in pairs and small groups.
- 2) Improve pupils' writing and spelling (paragraphs 73) by ensuring that they practise and extend these skills in other subjects.

- 3) Improve pupils' skills in mental mathematics and problem solving (paragraph 80) by:
- improving the effectiveness of the final part of the lesson to review what has been learnt;
 - supporting learning by providing visual resources, such as large scale number lines and 100 squares to help pupils when counting, calculating and exploring number;
 - improving the teaching of basic skills and investigative approaches.
- 4) Improve standards achieved by the end of reception in literacy and numeracy (paragraphs 61 - 63) by:
- planning and providing more challenging learning opportunities to help children progress at a faster pace;
 - improving the pupil teacher ratio to ensure that children have more opportunities to learn directly from their teachers;
 - ensuring the resources in reception match the quality and range of resources in the nursery.
- 5) Provide a more balanced curriculum in Year 6 (paragraphs 23, 91 and 96)) so that pupils can build on their earlier achievement in DT, geography and history.
- 6) Improve attendance and punctuality (paragraph 13) by building on the successful strategies for monitoring and promoting good attendance already established.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

62

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	13	26	20	3	0	0
Percentage	0	21	42	32	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	50	570
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	NA	240

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	120

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	41

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.4
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)

		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year		2002	46	45	91
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	36	37	
	Girls	37	42	41	
	Total	66	78	78	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (78)	86 (85)	86 (83)	
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)	

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	32	38
	Girls	37	37	41
	Total	62	69	79
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	68 (76)	76 (83)	87 (83)
	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)

		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year		2002	56	51	107
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	30	42	
	Girls	34	29	42	
	Total	59	59	84	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (55)	55 (46)	79 (68)	
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)	

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	36	32
	Girls	32	31	33
	Total	59	67	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	51 (46)	63 (56)	61 (67)
	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	538	5	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	12	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	4	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	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)	26
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	387

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	50
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002-3
----------------	--------

	£
Total income	1537187
Total expenditure	1521906
Expenditure per pupil	2454
Balance brought forward from previous year	39464
Balance carried forward to next year	54745

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	711
Number of questionnaires returned	110

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	37	2	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	36	3	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	43	6	3	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	39	19	8	5
The teaching is good.	57	37	4	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	38	14	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	29	3	5	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	40	1	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	32	50	9	7	2
The school is well led and managed.	40	43	11	4	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	40	9	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	27	25	15	10

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

55. Within the last twelve months, the school has opened a new and attractive nursery and the provision for the nursery children is now good. In reception, aspects of the provision are unsatisfactory because, despite the constant efforts of the teachers and nursery nurses, the children do not always make enough progress. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage and is sometimes good in the nursery. The nursery is a very welcoming place where children thoroughly enjoy themselves. In reception, the work areas are less attractive with fewer examples of children's work displayed and poorer quality resources. Resources are of a good quality in the nursery and satisfactory in reception.
56. This ratio of teachers and nursery nurses in the nursery works well. Three reception teachers all work part-time, in blocks or for odd days and usually only two are in reception at the same time. This organisation means it is difficult for the staff to plan the curriculum together. None of the teachers regularly teach the same children and as a result, progress is not monitored well enough.
57. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. Regular observations are made of each child's activities and of how well they do in the nursery but the things children need to learn next are not always identified clearly enough. Insufficient use is made of the data collected when children arrive in reception as a starting point for checking how quickly they learn as they move through the year. However, reception teachers have identified weaknesses in children's mathematical understanding and are giving this good attention. The provision for children with special learning needs is good and they make good progress.
58. Very positive links are established between the school and parents. Parents are provided with good opportunities to visit and find out about the school before their children start in nursery and again when they become reception pupils. In reception, parents stay at the start of the day and work alongside their child at a writing task. This is a time when parents show enormous care for their children and give them loving encouragement.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. By the end of the reception year, few children are meeting the expected levels in this area. They make good progress from a low start, however and teaching is good in both nursery and reception. The staff plan and provide many opportunities for the children to learn about themselves, relate to others positively and develop independence as learners. Routines are clear, the children know what is expected of them and as a result, behaviour is good. A significant strength lies in the staff's skills in promoting self-confidence and a positive attitude to learning. As a result, the children are happy and hardworking learners.

Communication, language and literacy

60. By the end of the reception year, about a quarter of children are on course to achieve the expected levels in this area. They make steady progress but, for many of them, the progress should be faster. Some aspects of teaching writing in reception are unsatisfactory. The class writes together and as a result, individuals do not receive

enough support. The earliest basic skills of letter formation, sentence structure and spelling are not developing properly without direct teaching. Their work is often very repetitive and brief, letters are formed incorrectly and their progress in spelling is poor. They cannot build up simple unknown words because much of the teaching focuses on initial letter sounds and does not include enough attention to middle or final sounds. Some children sit with their backs to the lists of helpful spellings. Some similar issues emerge when the children are reading. They are good at using the first letter to try and make out new words, but often look for help or make up an unsuitable word when stuck.

61. Speaking skills are well below average and many children use very simple sentences to communicate. Many opportunities are provided through class discussions and small group activities for children to develop listening and speaking skills. Staff ensure that activities, such as the playdough table in the nursery, provide a relaxed opportunity for chat. A good example was observed when one nursery child pointed out a blob of perfumed playdough to a visitor and said 'Sandcastle. It smells nice. It's honey.' A good amount of time is given to allow the children to reflect before they answer a question. They are encouraged to speak in complete sentences. The children's talk in reception is more reflective. Two boys playing with dry sand confided that 'wet sand is better, you can make things'. They were unable to say what things and relapsed into shy silence when pressed.

Mathematical development

62. A quarter of the reception children are reaching the expected targets in all areas of mathematical development although more of them have an average understanding of number and can confidently count and recognise numbers to ten. This is satisfactory progress from a low starting point. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. Higher attaining children in the nursery know how to count and they understand how this can be useful. Many nursery children count reliably to five, but few to ten. A reasonable variety of activities is planned and these are matched appropriately to the children's learning needs. For example, when the nursery children tasted porridge they were encouraged to use comparative words like more and enough. The reception teachers also ensure that learning is interesting and as a result, the children respond positively. A group of children watched their teacher line up ten toys then covered their eyes while she removed several. The children learned different strategies to work out how many had gone. When working alone, however, the children resorted to counting the removed toys rather than calculating. The teachers have identified calculating as a weakness and are providing a good range of activities to improve the children's skills.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. Teaching is satisfactory in helping the children to make sense of the world around them. Nursery children explore a wide range of familiar resources. They are developing preferences and improving their understanding of how things work. They have difficulty using language to explain their thoughts but are willing to try. One boy using clay said, 'This cold' another using playdough confided, 'I like this. You can push it.' The reception children are not yet reaching the expectations in many aspects of this area of learning. As in the nursery, activities are carefully planned to encourage exploration and observation, but the children's level of spoken language remains low and they too cannot talk about their learning confidently or ask appropriate questions. For example, two girls played with bottles of coloured water containing glitter. They rolled the bottles, shook them and inverted them knowing this would displace the

contents and they enjoyed the flickers from the moving glitter. They talked about the size of bottles and colours but could give no reason why they found the activity interesting. When talking to the nursery nurses, the children use single words, gestures or brief sentences. More needs to be done to help them use a wider vocabulary. Children use computers with support from adults and are developing reasonable skills with the mouse and keyboard.

Physical development

64. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. In their work and play outside, children move with confidence and care. Most can steer bicycles and run past each other without collisions. Most reception children are developing movements such as running and jumping reasonably. In activities such as handwriting and the use of scissors that require small, precise actions, skills are weaker. In the nursery, children pushed fingers into clay but found it difficult to roll balls of clay between their hands. At the water tray, one boy could pour accurately into a narrow tube to make a wheel rotate. Others who tried this were less successful.

Creative development

65. Teaching in this area is satisfactory although most of the reception children are not doing as well as expected at their age. Nursery children are beginning to assume roles, when playing in the Three Bears cottage, for example, but tend to adopt familiar roles from home. They sit and 'drink tea', stir food and feed babies. One child said 'Mummy Bear?' but could not continue the sentence. Meanwhile 'Mummy Bear' was waging war on anyone who dared to pick up a bowl or spoon and had no time to answer questions. In reception, one boy moved a pirate ship over 'drowning' play people and over his own chest while making noises that could not be interpreted. A teaching activity with a nursery nurse enabled the children to use some vocabulary from a story to act out roles. This worked well and the children were introduced to thinking creatively. Art work is satisfactory, although not enough goes on in reception. Children are able to paint recognisable people and can select colours. They respond well to number songs and nursery rhymes.

ENGLISH

66. Improving standards are due to the strong commitment to raising attainment by staff, governors and the local education authority (LEA). Higher attaining pupils receive additional support funded by the EAZ and this is helping to raise their achievements. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress compared with their previous attainment because they receive well-planned and effective support.
67. Attainment in speaking and listening is below what is found nationally. Teachers are aware that this is an area that needs to be strongly promoted. Pupils ask and answer questions, listen and respond to others and try to present their own ideas. In many lessons, they listen well, both to the teacher and to each other. This was evident when Year 1 pupils were writing a story about buying new training shoes and they listened carefully to the teacher as she shared the stories with them. In Year 2, pupils explored the context of stories and had a discussion about where stories were set. Pupils listened well and thought carefully about their responses. Some pupils spoke confidently and clearly, needing little support and encouragement to help them develop their answers. For others, the lack of extended sentences and limited vocabulary inhibits their speaking skills. As they progress through the school, pupils

are given good opportunities to use correct terminology. Year 5 pupils responded clearly to questions about a visit to Old Moor Wetlands Centre, but a number of them needed help to use appropriate terms and language to express their opinions and ideas clearly. After reading *Kensuko's Kingdom*, Year 6 pupils had a good discussion about conflict and resolution and shared their ideas with the whole class. Pupils generally use informal language with few using more complex structures and vocabulary. Teachers ensure that pupils take turns to speak in class but there are missed opportunities for discussion both in literacy and other lessons and there are few planned opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and groups and to speak in more formal contexts. Staff are aware of this and have attended training on 'Talk to Write' courses to develop speaking and listening approaches.

68. In Years 1 and 2, pupils begin to handle books confidently and take them home regularly to practise their skills. The school has encouraged this through successful initiatives such as the *I Love Reading* project. Parents help children to choose books and are encouraged to listen to their children read at home. Pupils' enjoyment of, and interest in, books develops satisfactorily so that, by Year 6, pupils read with fluency and accuracy and evaluate what they read with growing competence. Most comment on characters with varying degrees of detail but fewer read widely. The school places great value on reading and has invested in many more books, although some of the class collections need to be increased and some books need renewing. The school library is used well.
69. Teachers offer pupils a good range of writing opportunities within literacy. This also happens to a reasonable extent in history and geography but not in other subjects. By the end of Year 2, pupils are forming their writing neatly and make appropriate attempts at spelling using their knowledge of sounds when writing stories, poems and news. The lower attaining pupils often need considerable support in writing. Although they have good ideas and understand the structure of sentences, these are not always punctuated correctly.
70. As they move through the school, pupils are able to use their ideas to persuade and inform within their writing. In a Year 3 lower attaining set, pupils were beginning to use sounds to create poetry and were writing using alliteration. The least confident group was well supported by the support assistant and produced an interesting alliteration '*seven swans saw the summer sun sink in the sparkling sea*'. Pupils increasingly use their knowledge and apply it to their work. When pupils in Year 5 were preparing a leaflet about a tourist attraction, they used alliteration and exaggeration and understood how information can be eye catching and interesting. There are limited opportunities for writing longer pieces.
71. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding and recognise the importance of writing for different audiences. They are generally using paragraphs appropriately and consistently and there is evidence of editing, particularly in word-processed work. They are encouraged to draw upon the wide range of vocabulary they encounter in their reading. Lower attaining pupils, while generally writing coherently, have a variable understanding of how to form simple sentences accurately, although almost all pupils can use capital letters, full stops and correct punctuation by Year 6.
72. The school has identified the need to improve standards in writing and pupils' understanding of phonics and spelling patterns. These issues are being addressed but the standard of spelling needs to be improved further through an increased focus on the use of phonics (letter sounds), lists of key words and spelling patterns.

73. The quality of teaching and learning is good and sometimes very good. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Teachers confidently manage the literacy hour. Their clear and interesting presentations interest and involve pupils. Most lessons have a brisk, purposeful pace because they are well planned and pupils are given a clear understanding of what they are expected to learn. Consequently, they learn well. In most classes, teachers and support assistants keep a good range of recorded evidence of pupils' achievements. This is an improvement since the last inspection when there were shortcomings in the assessment procedures. Productive links in subjects such as history and geography develop pupils' research skills and their use of inference and deduction to show understanding of text. Teachers also use subjects such as science to support pupils in retrieving and organising information. This could be extended to other subject areas.
74. The subject is managed well. The co-ordinator supports teachers in improving their planning and has worked closely with the LEA advisory service to help to raise standards in reading and writing but there is still more to do. The school tracks pupils' progress carefully and is now setting literacy targets for individuals and groups.
75. The subject is enhanced by school visits and from theatre groups and the school productions provide good opportunities for speaking and listening. Book Fairs are held annually and the whole school has celebrated *World Book Day* to encourage pupils to become enthusiastic readers.

MATHEMATICS

76. Although the standards attained by Year 2 and Year 6 are below the national average, most pupils are making satisfactory progress. Improved assessment enables teachers to match tasks with pupils' abilities. This is leading to better progress. Pupils mostly enjoy mathematics, particularly when there is a good balance of oral work and written work. They record their work tidily and have a good attitude towards the subject. They work well in pairs and groups but find it difficult to work for long periods with sustained concentration.
77. During lesson introductions, pupils are keen to answer and many are ready to respond when given sufficient thinking time by the teacher. Although often given the opportunity to explain their chosen method, many of the pupils are unable to put into words the calculations which they have performed in their heads. Pupils generally lack confidence because they are not encouraged enough to explain their thinking. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 3 class when a pupil was given time to explain her method, and by referring to a large 100 number square on the wall could describe the process for others to follow. There are far too few visual representations of number in classrooms. These are needed both to stimulate interest through displays and to assist visual patterning and recollection with such things as large number lines, 100 squares and multiplication tables.
78. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can do basic calculations with two-digit numbers. They recognise and name common two-dimensional shapes, make simple measurements using length and time and read simple scales. Some children can mentally add and subtract 1, 2, 5 or 10 with numbers up to 100, but they have limited general mathematical awareness. For example, they do not recognise that multiplication is repeated addition or that halving is the inverse of doubling. Their confidence with the manipulation of number is low and they find much difficulty in using their basic skills in calculations which are presented as problems or

investigations. Although they are making much progress from a low starting point, this lack of mathematical flexibility in thinking hinders progress as they move through the school. Higher attaining pupils are given good encouragement to develop their skills and can, for example, round 774 up to 800 and mentally solve complicated number problems involving more than one step.

79. Older children are generally able to carry out straightforward calculations but find it difficult when more than one mathematical operation is required. By Year 6, higher attaining pupils have a reasonable understanding of ideas, such as fractions and percentages, but they have difficulty in applying this knowledge to investigation or problem solving which, for example, might require them to find a fraction of another number. The work on shape, space and data handling is generally well done throughout Years 3 to 6, but number patterns, larger calculations, methods for mental calculations and problem solving strategies, such as estimation or trial and error, are not well understood. Knowledge of multiplication tables is weak throughout the school.
80. The standard of teaching is good across the school, with some very good and some weaker teaching seen. In the Year 6 top set, the teacher's strong subject knowledge was clearly influential in motivating the pupils. As an 'extra' at the end of a very good lesson, pupils were taken further than they would normally go when investigating the formula for working out the n^{th} number in a sequence of triangular numbers. This is well beyond Year 6 work, but the pupils were fascinated and used their existing knowledge of algebraic expressions and looked for patterns. One pupil spotted the pattern and articulated the required formula. Such high expectations significantly improve pupils' confidence and their ability to explore and discuss number relationships. In the more successful lessons, pupils are given sufficient opportunity to explain what they are doing and discuss their reasons for giving particular answers but the summary sessions at the end of the lesson are poorly used to discuss and reinforce the learning points.
81. Grouping into ability sets in Years 3 to 6 enables teachers to distinguish between the differing needs of the pupils. This is generally successful but some of the work is too easy, as is shown when pupils make very few mistakes in their books. Work is regularly marked but rarely helps pupils know what to do to improve. The challenge demanded of many of the pupils could be increased. Pupils generally have too few opportunities to explore mathematical patterns, relationships and problems, including using their own recording methods. Two good examples of this were seen in the Year 4 work on calculating costs and quantities for a party, and in some Year 6 work on estimating the repainting costs of a classroom. Having acquired some basic number work, pupils need to apply their knowledge to develop their problem solving skills.
82. The co-ordinator is based in the infants and there is no support partner in the juniors for this subject. This reduces the effectiveness of leadership. Significant improvements are being made in the involvement of parents in the infants through workshops and the 'maths sacks' funded through the EAZ. Pupils' performance is being assessed regularly and targets are being set in both infants and juniors, though not consistently across the school.

SCIENCE

83. Standards achieved by Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. In Year 2, for example, pupils carry out a thorough study of sound and are able to identify many sounds and distinguish whether they are loud or soft. They have reasonable investigative skills because much of the work is practical and well thought out. Teachers successfully encourage pupils to observe closely, paying attention to detail in diagrams and drawings. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 1 lesson on recycling where pupils were encouraged to draw the correct recycling symbol found on the rubbish they were sorting. Pupils are clear about what they need to do because their targets are displayed clearly in their books as a constant reminder.
84. In Years 3 to 6, pupils also make consistently good progress and enjoy their lessons. They can make sensible predictions about what they think will happen, drawing on their previous experiences. Pupils in Year 6 discussed at great length how much air was contained within a single chocolate sweet, and whether the volume it took up would change if it were crushed. Pupils have a clear understanding of how the human body works and can, for example, label all the different chambers of the heart and explain how the organ works. In Year 4, pupils identify the parts of plants and their function, using technical language correctly
85. Teaching is mainly good and sometimes very good. Teachers are well prepared and cover a broad range of work, using approaches that are relevant and appeal to pupils. In order to develop pupils' independence in devising a 'fair test', work is carefully planned to teach the skills in bite-sized chunks. This was clearly demonstrated in a Year 3 class where pupils were taken through the stages of devising an experiment on decay. The support given by the teacher enabled the pupils to come up with all the steps necessary to conduct a successful experiment. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking skills and teachers value their contributions, offering further encouragement to less confident pupils. Work in books is carefully and accurately presented, and written comments made by teachers help pupils to know how well they have done.
86. The subject is well led and managed. Good improvement has been achieved since the last inspection and pupils make significant progress in relation to what they could do before. The subject is covered well throughout the school without gaps or overlaps. Thorough assessment and monitoring of teaching and learning enables staff to identify what works best. ICT is used to support work in the subject but could be further developed. The school also needs to continue its work in encouraging the pupils to become more independent so that they can set up their own tests and organise resources with less support.

ART AND DESIGN

87. Pupils progress well and achieve good standards by the end of Year 2, an improvement since the last inspection. As they move through Years 3 to 6, they make steady progress and achieve satisfactory standards but some basic skills, such as colour mixing, are weak in Year 6. Some pupils are still unsure how to mix new colours; some asked advice on making grey and brown, for example. Pupils have good skills with clay, pastels and pencils in Years 1 and 2. When painting, their standards, while satisfactory, are lower. Higher attaining Year 6 pupils have received additional coaching as part of the EAZ initiative. They have worked with paint, making attractive portrait prints. These are of good standard.

88. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for work with textiles and sculpture. Year 1 pupils have made attractive tiles. In Year 2, pupils learned how to manipulate clay to make coil pots. Good demonstrations by the teacher enabled the children to understand the difficulties they would encounter as the clay dried out. They were advised and supported effectively as they learned to make even coils and prepared for future lessons when their pots would be made. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. By Year 6, children's work in three dimensions has progressed reasonably well. They are able to make models in wire and plaster or with clay. Their work is still rather simple in design but they have a good understanding of how to use these media. In the other year groups, pupils draw well. Work from higher attaining children, in Year 5 for example, shows close attention to detail and perspective. In Year 4, portrait work shows that children are learning to recognise and exaggerate some features to create a comical effect. Detailed drawings of Greek vases in Year 3 show the children are learning to observe closely and improvise on the work of other artists.
89. Pupils' work is displayed well and there is an interesting selection of art work displayed around the school, including a range of wooden sculptures linked to the Year 6 work. There is a little art from different cultures and this could be usefully extended. The subject leader provides satisfactory support by ensuring the scheme of work is covered and advising colleagues how best to move the children forward. There is no strategy to assess the children's progress and help them reach higher standards but this has been identified as an area for development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

90. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with national expectations, and are similar to those reported at the last inspection. Standards of work in Year 3 to Year 5 are better now than at the last inspection. Pupils make sound progress in Years 1 to 5, and achieve satisfactorily. However, restricted opportunities for design and technology in Year 6 limit the further progress pupils make and by the end of the school year, standards are below national expectations for eleven-year-olds.
91. Pupils in Year 2 design and make products such as pizzas and puppets. They disassemble products such as sunflower seed packets to see how they are made and draw their own designs before making their own packets. Finished articles are assembled carefully and attractively decorated. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound understanding of the design process. They know that products must meet the requirements set out in a design brief, and once completed, they evaluate their work to show how it could be improved. However, not enough is expected of Year 6 pupils. For example, when designing and making model playgrounds and fabric egg cosies, their design drawings lack detail and they pay insufficient attention to the quality of the finished product.
92. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection but pupils' work indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. However, Year 6 teachers do not spend enough time teaching the subject and the work they set is not demanding enough. Planning is much improved since the last inspection, and overall it is now good. Some high expectations of what pupils can achieve are reflected in good quality products such as Little Red Riding Hood pop-up books in Year 2 and especially the Viking ships in Year 4, which are well up to the standard expected for pupils of their age.

93. The lesson seen was good. Clear instructions ensured that pupils knew what to do to design their own sandwich, following tasting sessions the previous week. The teacher managed the class well, and pupils responded positively. They worked hard and had mostly completed the design phase of their work by the end of the lesson. The final discussion revised what had been learned and prepared pupils well for the practical lesson to come.
94. Subject organisation and management are good. Weaknesses identified in the last report in planning, teachers' subject expertise and provision of equipment have all been remedied. Teaching has improved and standards are rising. However, systems for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress have yet to be developed. This makes it difficult for teachers to build on pupils' skills systematically through the school.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

95. Standards in both subjects are similar. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. By the age of seven, pupils attain average standards in relation to national expectations. They continue to achieve well in Years 3 to 5. However, by the end of Year 6 standards and progress are unsatisfactory because the subjects are given insufficient attention.
96. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils named some of the main differences between modern toys and those from 'olden days'. They treated the toys with care and labelled them correctly. In Year 2, they identified the modern day equivalents to Stone Age tools and correctly sorted tools which were only fifty years old. They used their knowledge of materials available at the time to come to their conclusions. Work in pupils' geography books showed that they had a clear understanding of how their lives differed from those living on a small island. Pupils made simple observations and named key features of an island.
97. Throughout Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils attain a satisfactory standard and continue to make progress in both subjects. Pupils identify what it was like to live in post war Britain and their letters of complaint about the problems encountered living in a block of flats showed that they understood the issues of living in a different time to their own. Work on the Tudors enabled pupils to gain an understanding of life during the period and the important historical facts associated with that era. Pupils name key features relating to coastlines, understand physical processes such as evaporation and erosion, and set out tables and graphs accurately to record information. Mapping skills are slightly less well developed but overall the work is of a satisfactory standard and the pupils make progress in Years 3 to 5.
98. Despite one very good lesson seen in Year 6 on Ancient Egypt, there was little recorded work or other evidence of work in history or geography, and that which was seen was of a poor standard. Pupils' progress in this final year is unsatisfactory.
99. Teaching is generally good. However, gaps in the curriculum in Year 6 mean that pupils are unable to build on previous learning. In other years, lessons are prepared well and labels and artefacts are used to stimulate discussions. Learning intentions are made clear and teachers use skilful questioning to encourage pupils to extend their thinking. Teachers adapt their planning to meet pupils' needs. In the one lesson seen in Year 6, the teacher allowed the pupils to continue with their writing because they were so engrossed in their work. This enabled them to complete the task and to

produce written work of good quality. Throughout both subjects, teachers make the most out of visits and visitors. Work related to Creswell Craggs was imaginative and provided a good balance of written and practical activities. Students from a nearby secondary school made a significant contribution to the geography work on Pakistan.

100. The history and geography co-coordinators work closely together. They provide good leadership and are knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. They have identified curriculum provision in Year 6 as a priority and the need to ensure that appropriate time is given to the subjects so that standards improve. Since the last inspection, attainment has improved in geography for Years 1 and 2, but remains unsatisfactory at the end of Year 6. In history, standards were satisfactory at the time of the last inspection, but are now unsatisfactory at the end of Year 6. Both subjects make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development by raising their awareness of social and cultural issues.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

101. Standards have risen substantially since the last inspection due to investment in new computer systems, better planning and improved teacher expertise. Previous weaknesses in all of these areas have been addressed effectively. Pupils make good progress. However, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are below national expectations overall because there remain gaps in pupils' knowledge.
102. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Training since the last inspection has developed teachers' expertise, but few are confident in teaching all aspects of the subject. Teachers rely heavily on the detailed notes for each unit of work that have been prepared by the co-ordinator. Planning overall is good. Lessons ensure that pupils learn sound computer operating skills and that learning develops systematically on what they already know. However, planning does not take sufficient account of pupils' differing levels of competence.
103. Teachers are most confident in teaching pupils to work with text, pictures and sound and they make good links with subjects such as history and English. As a result, this aspect of pupils' work is the best developed and most pupils reach the standards expected for their age. In a lesson on adjectives for instance, Year 2 pupils found pictures of insects and other 'minibeasts', transferred them to their writing and added descriptions such as '*I saw a slimy, big green slug.*' Some pupils change the size and colour of the text to add extra impact to their work, but limited literacy skills inhibit the production of lengthy word-processed pieces of writing.
104. In a very good Year 6 lesson, pupils made rapid progress in developing a presentation on the Egyptians that combined pictures, text and sound samples found on the Internet. Both the teacher and computer technician were skilful in helping pupils resolve occasional technical difficulties. By the end of the lesson, many pupils had assembled several linked pages of information ready for refinement in later lessons.
105. There are gaps in pupils' learning in data-handling, modelling and control because teachers are less confident in teaching these aspects of the subject. Consequently, progress in these areas is slower and standards are below expectations in all years. Year 2 pupils, for instance, write short instruction sequences to control a screen robot, but pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 do not develop skills significantly beyond this level.

106. Subject management and organisation are good and priorities for further improvements are clearly set out in the action plan. However, there is no system for tracking pupils' progress at present to enable teachers to build systematically on pupils' existing skills.

MUSIC

107. There is insufficient evidence to assess the overall standards that pupils attain in Year 2 or Year 6, or to judge the progress they make. However, some limited judgements are possible. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain the expected standards in singing. In a performance of *Scrooge*, (a musical play seen on video), singing was in tune, rhythmical and expressive.
108. A small number of lessons and hymn practices were seen during the inspection. The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory. Lessons are well organised and teachers manage classes effectively. Their enthusiasm sustains pupils' interest and attention well so that lessons proceed purposefully. Although teachers' subject expertise is satisfactory overall, in some lessons it is not good enough to improve pupils' knowledge and skills fully. For example, in one lesson pupils devised and practised short rhythm patterns, but the teacher was unable to improve very much the accuracy of their performance because her own demonstration was not clear. The music co-ordinator leads hymn practices well. She demonstrates what she wants very clearly and expects high standards of performance. Most pupils respond enthusiastically and behave well. They make good progress when learning new songs.
109. The school provides a good range of instrumental tuition in brass, woodwind, percussion, keyboard and guitar. However, only a small number of pupils take advantage of these opportunities. School musical productions make a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils commit themselves well to the responsibilities of chorus and solo parts, and performance develops their sense of teamwork, self-confidence and personal esteem very effectively.
110. There are sufficient instruments and other resources for class teaching. Planning is satisfactory, but some units of work need revision to improve support for non-specialist teachers. There are no arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress or to monitor the quality of teaching throughout the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

111. Pupils attain the standards expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They work well in groups, pairs and individually, putting in plenty of effort and are keen to improve their performance. They enjoy lessons and demonstrate good attitudes towards all aspects of health, safety and physical activity. They show respect for each other in lessons and offer genuine praise and encouragement when other pupils are successful in tasks or show marked improvement in achievement.
112. Teaching is mainly satisfactory and sometimes good, varying with the knowledge and enthusiasm of the teachers. In good lessons, the pupils do well and achieve good standards. In a Year 6 dance lesson taken by a visiting teacher from the secondary school, pupils were motivated through the structure of the lesson to perform moves and ideas with fluidity and control. They built up their sequences and improved their

techniques through good demonstrations by the teacher and the presentation of aural and visual stimuli. Likewise, in a good dance lesson with Year 1, enthusiastic, well-directed teaching enabled pupils to keep a rhythm and control while maintaining the beat and learning new moves like 'casting-off'. Conversely, pupils in a Year 6 lesson on throwing and catching were achieving no better than pupils in Year 3 who were seen in a similar activity. Teaching with the younger class was planned to allow them to practise, refine, improve and build up their skills step by step. Expectations of behaviour and effort were high. Because of his good knowledge of the subject, the teacher's explanations of the tasks were clear and understandable and pupils made good progress.

113. There is a range of curriculum enrichment opportunities such as clubs in netball, football and dance. Girls in Year 5 and 6 have taken part in a football tournament, football training sessions have been held at the school by local professional clubs and there is an annual sponsored walk and sports day. Sometimes there are inter-school opportunities.
114. The resources are mostly adequate for indoor and outdoor lessons, but there are some shortages and some of the equipment needs to be renewed. The brief action plan does not mention improving standards of attainment and the co-ordinator is not given any time to support and provide feedback for colleagues during lessons. The main hall, as the only space for indoor lessons, is constraining for the number of classes in the school. Standards could be improved by making clear the desired outcomes of teaching and by giving more time to the subject, which currently receives a bare minimum.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

115. By the end of Years 2 and 6, attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils achieve steadily as they move through the school although the amount and quality of recorded work declines for Year 6 pupils. The co-ordinator has been in post for only a few weeks but she has already made a positive impact on the work of the school. She analysed what knowledge the teachers needed in order to improve the subject and provided training about Judaism and Islam. This has resulted in good teaching and learning of these religions across the school.
116. In Year 2, the children had made their first school visit to a church. They were struggling to recall the main features and were interested in the information that had been provided by the vicar about how services, such as christenings, are conducted. Their limited insights were extended well during the lesson as the teacher reminded and prompted them. She used a good range of photographs to help them recall interesting incidents and comments noted during the visit. A child with behaviour difficulties was given good support during these discussions by the classroom assistant who kept him interested and on task. Helping him contribute fully to the lesson. One child had good knowledge of the church as she attends regularly. The teacher commended the girl's knowledge and let her take a lead in several discussions. As a result, there was good learning for this child as well as broader information provided for the others.
117. Pupils in all year groups study Christianity and several other world religions each year. They focus on the impact religion has on people's lives and how it influences their values and behaviour. In Year 5, for example, pupils studied the Islamic custom

of giving to an agreed charity. They clearly understood that in order to have money to give they needed to make an effort to earn it. They decided to help charitable institutions selected and wrote to their parents offering to undertake household tasks in return for donations. This level of insight is above that expected for Year 5. Here tolerance and understanding of different religions is taught well and the children are able to identify places of worship and religious leaders in several religions. In Year 6, written work is thin and some pupils found it hard to recall the range of work covered. Pupils showed a reasonable understanding of the purposes of key features in a Christian church. They were able to show where they are usually positioned and explain why.

118. Religious education is supported well through assemblies. Visiting speakers talk to the children about their own religions and show artefacts and lead prayers. During a visit from a Jewish speaker, pupils showed a high level of respect during the blessing. They bowed their heads unasked and listened attentively to explanations. Several children stayed behind at the end to ask questions and blow out the candles.
119. There is no system in place to assess the pupils' standards but the co-ordinator has experience of introducing assessments in other subjects and knows what she needs to do. Her plans show there is potential for a thorough system of assessment. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development, particularly in opportunities to learn about the beliefs and values of others.