

INSPECTION REPORT

CASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Keynsham, Bristol

LEA area: Bath and North East Somerset

Unique reference number: 109081

Headteacher: Mr Grenville Johnson

Reporting inspector: Mrs Joyce Cox
25074

Dates of inspection: 7th – 9th October 2002

Inspection number: 246864

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Newlands Road Keynsham Bristol
Postcode:	BS31 2TS
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Martin Burton
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25074	Joyce Cox	Registered inspector	Art and Design, Geography, Physical Education, Religious Education, Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19560	Hilary Herring	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20449	Wendy Ward	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information and Communication Technology, Design and Technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
21640	Hannah Lambley	Team inspector	Science, Educational Inclusion, English as an Additional Language	
25461	Joan Walker	Team inspector	English, History, Music, Special Educational Needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated on the edge of Keynsham. Pupils who attend the school live locally and come from a mixture of private and local authority housing. There are 234 pupils on roll aged between four and eleven. Almost all pupils are from white European backgrounds and all pupils speak English as their home language. Children's attainment on entry into reception is broadly average, but their language development is below average. About 12.5 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is about average when compared to other primary schools. Forty-two pupils have special educational needs, which is about average. Seven pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is above average. In September 2002 the school achieved an Investors in People award.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school gives a satisfactory standard of education to its pupils. Standards by the time pupils leave school are average in all subjects except English where they are below. Pupils behave well and relationships are good. Teaching is satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their attainment on entry. The school is soundly led and managed. Staffing issues, including absence and a high turnover have slowed down the rate at which the headteacher could drive forward improvements. Since the arrival of a new deputy head there has been renewed impetus and much has been accomplished. The team spirit in the school is improving and there is sound capacity to move forward with confidence. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- There are good procedures for promoting good behaviour. Consequently, pupils are well behaved and relationships are good.
- There is good support for pupils' moral and social development.
- Staff pay very good attention to ensuring that all pupils are given equality of opportunity to succeed.
- The school takes good care of all its pupils and has good procedures for child protection and improving attendance.
- Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs.

What could be improved

- Standards achieved in English, particularly in the junior classes.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve so as to improve the quality of teaching, improve pupils' interest and motivation and to develop their independent learning skills.
- How the information gained from assessing pupils' achievements is used to set targets and track progress.
- Leadership and management in evaluating and monitoring the work of the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1998 and since then its improvements have been satisfactory overall. Until fairly recently, staffing difficulties have hampered progress and the headteacher has been without a management team to support him in running the school. Most of the seven key issues identified at that time have been addressed but there are several curriculum policies, which have still not been updated. The appointment of two new members of the senior management team and the arrival of a new deputy head has been a significant factor in improving the school. They effectively support the headteacher in his management role. The deputy head has dramatically improved the curriculum for information and communication technology and design and technology and has worked with the

assessment co-ordinators to improve ways in which pupils' achievements are assessed. The school has still to use results from assessments to set targets and track pupils' progress.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	
English	D	D	D	E
mathematics	D	C	C	C
science	E	C	E	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Children start the reception year with average attainment overall and below average attainment in communication, language and literacy. By the end of the reception year, most children are achieving satisfactorily as a result of sound teaching. Children achieve the expected standards in all areas of learning other than in respect of their communication, language and literacy skills, which are below average.

Year 1 and 2 pupils achieve satisfactorily in all subjects apart from mathematics where they make good progress. The 2001 national test results for Year 2 pupils indicate above average attainment in mathematics and reading and writing and when compared to similar schools. Higher attaining pupils achieve well and reach above average levels. In 2002 the school achieved well below average results in tests due to the difficulties experienced by a large number of pupils with special educational needs.

Pupils' achievement in all subjects in Year 3, 4 5 and 6 is satisfactory apart from writing and speaking and listening where progress is unsatisfactory. This is confirmed by the recent national test results. Pupils achieve better results in mathematics than in science and English. Above average numbers of pupils achieved the expected level in the 2001 national tests but few pupils achieved the higher levels. The failure of the school to track pupils' progress effectively means that it has struggled to identify appropriate challenges and targets for Year 6 pupils. The rate of improvement in test results has been slow but has kept pace with the national trend. An above average number of pupils achieve below the expected level in English tests. Pupils' below average standards in literacy slow their progress in other subjects, particularly in the recording of their work.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Pupils enjoy coming to school, but many often show little enthusiasm for their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils form good relationships in the classroom, around the school and in the playground. Two exclusions last year were fully justified.
Personal development and relationships	Good relationships are supporting positively pupils' effective learning.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The school's attendance level is average. Several pupils arrived late for school during the inspection.

A significant minority of pupils lack self-esteem and often show little enthusiasm for their work. They do not volunteer to answer their teachers' questions. They find it hard to concentrate for a sufficient length of time particularly when they are not fully involved in an activity. This has a negative impact on their learning and slows down their rate of progress.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and at times it is good. A small number of very good lessons were observed and two lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory in all subjects including English and mathematics. Generally pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. Teachers and support staff provide good levels of help for those pupils with special educational needs. In the best lessons, teachers provide interesting and carefully planned activities that fully involve the pupils and result in good progress. In other lessons, teachers have low expectations of what pupils can achieve and there is a slow pace, which results in pupils not doing their best work or making sufficient progress. Activities do not always motivate pupils, fully involve them in meaningful tasks or develop their independent learning skills. Homework and marking is not used consistently to support pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school has a satisfactory curriculum, which is supported by a good range of extra-curricular activities and good links with the local community. Too little time is devoted to teaching religious education and geography.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, which include well-targeted individual education plans and effective support in lessons. Consequently, these pupils make sound progress towards their individual targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall there is satisfactory provision for pupils' personal development. There is good provision for pupils' moral and social development and satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a caring and welcoming environment for its pupils. There are good procedures for pupils' welfare. Procedures to assess pupils' progress are satisfactory but assessment information is not used consistently to track individual pupils' progress or to predict likely standards pupils could be expected to achieve.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher provides sound leadership and effective day-to-day management of the school. Senior staff are developing their role in supporting the management. Subject managers have not yet assumed all the responsibilities involved in leading a subject in order to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors are enthusiastic and very supportive of the school. They provided invaluable support to the headteacher when he had no management team. They satisfactorily fulfil their responsibilities and are beginning to play a fuller role in the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. Recent initiatives indicate that the school is beginning to monitor its work. It is now time to use monitoring information to set targets to improve the quality of teaching and standards of work.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school makes effective use of its resources. Funds are directed appropriately and their use is controlled and monitored.

Levels of staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Some of the junior classrooms are very crowded and it is difficult to do practical work such as art and design and technology. The school satisfactorily seeks 'best value' in its spending decisions by questioning what it does and ensuring that money is spent wisely.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. • Their children like school. • Behaviour in school is good. • The teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The homework that is given. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Only 38 parents completed questionnaires and seven parents attended a meeting with the registered inspector. The inspection findings support most of the parents' positive views, but show that teaching, and the leadership and management are satisfactory rather than good. Inspectors support the parents' concerns regarding homework, which is not used consistently to support pupils' learning. Inspectors find that the range of extra curricular activities is good and parents should feel reassured on this count. Inspectors share the concerns of parents at the parents' meeting regarding accommodation and agree that some of the junior classrooms are very crowded.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. At the time of the last inspection, children entered the school with average attainment. They made satisfactory progress and by the age of 11 most pupils achieved average standards in all subjects except design and technology, information and communication technology and geography where standards were below expectations. The school has worked hard to raise standards in these three subjects; resources have been improved considerably as has teachers' subject knowledge and standards are now average in design and technology, information and communication technology and geography.

2. Initial assessments show that there is a wide spread of ability among the children when they start school, but that attainment on entry is average overall, with communication, language and literacy being below average. By the end of the reception year, most children achieve satisfactorily and attain the early learning goals in all areas of learning apart from communication, language and literacy. Reception children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development.

3. The results attained by Year 2 pupils in national tests have fluctuated since 1998 depending on the number of pupils with special educational needs in each year. In 2001, pupils' results were above average in reading, writing and mathematics and when compared to pupils in similar schools. The 2002 results were very disappointing and were well below average in all subjects. There was an above average number of pupils with special needs taking the 2002 tests. Over the last four years girls have performed slightly better than the boys but the differences have not been significant, except in 2001. This difference was a result of the high proportion of boys with special educational needs in this particular year group.

4. In national tests in 2001, Year 6 pupils attained below average standards in English, average standards in mathematics and below average standards in science. Results were well below those of pupils in similar schools in English and science and average in mathematics. Results for 2002 are similar to those achieved in 2001. Since 1998 results have fluctuated considerably with standards achieved by the 1998 pupils being particularly low. Year 6 pupils' scores have risen considerably in mathematics since 1998 as a result of the National Numeracy Strategy, which has given teachers a clear scheme of work.

5. During the last four years there have been significant staffing difficulties in the juniors due to ill health and incompetence. Until recently the headteacher has not had a senior management team to assist him in monitoring the work of the school to raise standards. Several subjects have been without co-ordinators to lead improvements. For instance, until 2001, there was no permanent literacy co-ordinator to initiate and lead the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. These staffing difficulties slowed down the rate of progress and attainment in certain subjects.

6. Inspection evidence shows that standards in Year 2 are average in all subjects except writing where standards are below expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and reading and unsatisfactory progress in writing. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening and reading and writing. Standards have remained similar to those in the last inspection except in writing where results in tests are now below average.

7. Year 6 pupils attain satisfactory standards in reading. In writing, speaking and listening, standards are below average. In reading pupils make sound progress however, most pupils do not make enough progress in writing and speaking and listening. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment in all aspects of English. Standards in writing, speaking and listening have fallen since the last inspection while reading remains at the national expected standard. Year 6 pupils attain satisfactory standards in all other subjects and make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. The higher attaining pupil in Year 6 makes good progress in all subjects across the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.

8. Since the last inspection the school has successfully maintained its ethos of a friendly, orderly community where pupils are happy to attend and behave well. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to learning and most try hard in lessons when appropriately challenged. Their response is noticeably better when they are given the chance to become practically involved with their learning, rather than sitting and listening. They show good enthusiasm for lessons in which they are able to handle artefacts and discuss their thoughts. For instance, in a Year 1/2 history lesson they were fascinated by old household objects such as a washing dolly and eagerly discussed what it may have been used for.

9. There are too few occasions where pupils are inspired by the tasks and they often sit passively, reticent to answer questions and making contributions only when directly spoken to by a teacher or classroom assistant. Many pupils find it hard to concentrate for long periods, but make good progress when given varied, achievable tasks to complete.

10. Behaviour, both in lessons and around the school at playtimes, is good and a feature much appreciated by parents. In very rare instances, such as when pupils are insufficiently involved in their learning, or when classroom organisation is inappropriate, low-key disruptive behaviour can occur. However, teachers are successful in restoring order and pupils fully accept and understand the need for sanctions. The school is prepared to use exclusion to enforce its refusal to accept anti-social, intimidating or oppressive behaviour.

11. Levels of personal support are high and good guidance is given to special educational needs pupils. Their behaviour is invariably good and if and when there are any lapses they are dealt with either by the teacher or learning support assistant in a very caring but firm way. No incidents of poor behaviour were observed during the inspection.

12. Pupils' personal development is good, although there are too few occasions on which they show initiative. Where responsibilities are allocated tasks are carried out willingly and well. Relationships are good. Pupils listen carefully to issues raised in assemblies and discuss these during their personal, health and social education lessons, when they also have the opportunity to air and resolve any other difficulties they may be experiencing, such as friendship problems. The school has purchased 'Friendship Stops' for the playgrounds which allow pupils who are experiencing problems or are seeking playmates to let others know they need support. This venture has yet to be launched through assemblies and the personal and social education programme.

13. Despite having only just completed their second week of full time attendance the youngest children are quickly becoming aware of the routines of the school. They busy themselves with the various activities and concentrate well on the tasks they are given. The majority of the children develop good listening skills and enjoy number and letter-forming activities. In a musical session using percussion instruments to the taped music-'the whole-class band', children were attentive, keen to respond and their enjoyment was evident.

14. Two pupils were excluded from school during the last school year. Attendance and unauthorised absences are in line with national averages for schools of this size and type. Despite the school's best efforts several pupils arrived late for school during the inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching was satisfactory in 26 of the 42 lessons observed. Eleven lessons were good, 3 were very good and 2 were unsatisfactory. This is a similar picture to the quality of teaching found at the time of the previous inspection, although there have been considerable staff changes since then.

16. Teaching in the reception classes is satisfactory overall and enables children to make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. Teachers have formed good relationships with their classes so that children feel safe and secure. They manage the children well following the school's behaviour policy. Planning outlines the activities clearly and the children are developing good levels of independence in directing their own learning as a result. Sometimes the choice of activities provided is not manageable with only one adult in the room. Teachers' planning does not always identify clearly enough what it is they want the children to learn. Consequently, although the children are busy they do not always get the support they need to extend their learning. In some group and class lessons, the pace is too slow and children lose concentration. Particular emphasis is placed on pupils developing personal and social skills and this area of learning is taught well.

17. In some subjects, only a limited number of lessons were observed, but inspectors examined teachers' planning and pupils' work in order to ascertain their quality and the extent of pupils' learning and progress made. At the time of the last inspection gaps in teachers' knowledge and expertise, poor class organisation, a lack of pupil involvement and poor behaviour management were identified as the main areas for improvement. These have been improved to a degree but it was very evident that many pupils are still not sufficiently involved in lessons. Teachers' expectations of what all pupils can achieve are not sufficiently high enough and result in pupils not making sufficient progress in some lessons. The pace at which lessons are conducted is too slow in some classes and pupils become bored, restless and lose concentration as they have been sitting for too long. Activities provided do not develop pupils' independent learning skills. For example there are missed opportunities in some science lessons for pupils to instigate and carry out their own experiments.

18. Despite there being some good and very good teaching, pupils display a lack of interest in lessons, which inhibits the quality of learning. Teachers have to work very hard in order to evoke any response from a number of pupils. One of the key teaching skills necessary to overcome pupils' lethargy is the ability to match tasks and questions very closely to individual pupils needs and interests. For instance in a Year 5 art lesson, the teacher skilfully encouraged pupils to discuss the techniques involved in making mosaics by using interesting resources and by gently and sensitively encouraging pupils to express their thoughts in clear sentences. The teacher realised that pupils needed to verbalise their views before attempting to create their own mosaics. This activity improved pupils' speaking and writing skills and increased their confidence.

19. When pupils failed to be motivated it was because tasks were not matched sufficiently to their abilities and failed to challenge them or were too hard. Also, on some occasions teachers talked for too long without encouraging the pupils to participate in their learning. Many pupils had little idea of how well they are doing compared to other pupils. For instance, in marking pupils' work most of the teachers' written comments are supportive but do not detail strengths and areas for improvement. On occasions, praise was given for very

mediocre work, which does not raise standards. Many teachers accept work, which is not presented well, and this does not encourage pupils to present work neatly. Homework is not used consistently to support pupils' learning.

20. In the very good lessons, for example in a Year 1/2 literacy lesson, the teacher is enthusiastic and lively, sets high standards both for work and behaviour and challenges pupils to read play scripts with expression. As a result pupils are very motivated, try hard and succeed. In a Year 5 science lesson, pupils made very good progress in understanding the functions of the heart, because the teacher provided a real cow's heart for dissection, made very good use of the interactive whiteboard to illustrate teaching points. In addition the teacher made good use of a skeleton to stimulate discussion. As pupils' speaking standards are below average it is particularly important to encourage communication in all lessons. Some teachers are very skilled at this whilst others are not and just accept answers from the confident pupils who put their hands up. Many pupils do not contribute orally in lessons and appear to be sitting and listening but are not understanding.

21. One of the strengths in teaching is the way in which pupils' behaviour is managed, even when it is challenging. Most teachers insist on pupils' full attention in introductory sessions and when explaining tasks. This is particularly important, as lower attaining pupils do not always have the confidence to ask for further explanation of activities and begin work without being clear as to what exactly they have to do.

22. Support in lessons for pupils with special educational needs is good. The teachers use the pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) to address pupils' difficulties effectively and use them to inform future planning. Teachers ensure these pupils are fully integrated into the life of the class. The learning support assistants are very effective in enabling pupils to participate fully and with confidence in all learning tasks. The special needs co-ordinator provides sound support and assists teachers as and when required.

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

23. The school provides a broad and relevant curriculum, which promotes pupils' development in all areas and which prepares them for the next stage of education. Since the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, emphasis has rightly been placed on the teaching of English and mathematics. Sufficient time is spent on teaching these subjects. The amount of time given to the teaching of other subjects shows some imbalance, with too much time being spent on art and design and insufficient time on religious education and geography. History, music, information & communication technology (ICT) and design & technology (D&T) receive sufficient time because elements are taught through other subject areas. For example, in a science lesson focusing on the human life cycle, an elderly school visitor talked about her life using photographs that were placed on a time line. The lesson covered a number of elements in the history curriculum. In another class, during a study of the universe, pupils had entered information on a database and generated graphs from which they interpreted information. This covered elements of science, ICT and mathematics. In designing and making machine embroidered sculptures of leaf skeletons during an arts project, pupils covered elements of ICT well. Elements of the music curriculum are covered through performance. The school plans its curriculum using national guidelines and long term planning contains appropriate coverage of all the statutorily required units of work within these.

24. There is satisfactory curriculum provision for children in the Foundation Stage. Planning outlines the activities clearly and the children are developing good levels of independence in directing their own learning as a result. Sometimes the choice of activities provided is not manageable with only one adult in the room. Teachers' planning does not

always identify clearly enough what it is they want the children to learn. Therefore, although the children are busy they do not always get the support they need to extend their learning. In some group and class lessons, the pace is too slow and children lose concentration. Particular emphasis is placed on pupils developing personal and social skills and this area of learning is taught well.

25. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and provision for sex education is appropriate. There is an agreed planning structure across the whole school. Teachers' long term plans outline when each element of the National Curriculum programmes of study will be taught. All teachers write detailed weekly plans for Literacy and Numeracy, using an agreed format. There are outline weekly plans for all other subjects. These are not always directly cross-referenced to the schemes of work. The best planning focuses on the teaching objectives for the week and provides information about the activities planned to support these. Plans that focus on activities without reference to what it is that pupils are to learn are less effective.

26. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and is a strength of the school. Support staff work effectively, under the guidance of teachers, to meet the identified needs of individual pupils and of groups of pupils who need additional support. Throughout the school there is equality of access and opportunity and all pupils, whatever their needs, are included in class activities. The teachers' commitment to this philosophy is evident in the way in which they seek to involve pupils with special educational needs in all activities within lessons. This is achieved effectively through the use of directed questioning, through the provision of activities that match the abilities of the pupils, through the provision of additional adult support and through the use of adapted resources.

27. The effectiveness of the teaching of the National Literacy Strategy has not been successfully implemented especially in the junior section of the school. Across the school activities are matched carefully to pupils' needs in reading, but the development of writing, spelling and speaking and listening skills is limited in most classes. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to become involved in interactive discussion, to express themselves orally through drama or to respond to questions that require oral responses involving a sequence of sentences. Insufficient attention is given to the accuracy of spelling and specific subject related vocabulary is not always displayed to reinforce correct spelling. Marking does not provide developmental comments that are linked to lesson objectives and that inform pupils of what they need to do to improve the content and presentation of their writing and spelling.

28. Strategies for the teaching of numeracy are effective in the infant and in the Year 5 and 6 classes. Teachers use the first part of each lesson to encourage the development of pupils' mental calculation skills. Pupils are developing some strategies for effective mental calculation. The range of these strategies is not yet fully developed so that pupils do not always use the most effective method for mental calculation. Pupils understand the value of numbers and their place in the number system and use written calculation with satisfactory levels of accuracy. Their application of number skills to solve problems is not yet secure. Where teachers follow the progression recommended in the National Strategy, the teaching of calculation skills is effective. Where teachers are insecure in their knowledge of this progression, they set tasks that do not match the knowledge and understanding of pupils.

29. Provision for extra - curricular activities in the school is good. The opportunities offered to pupils extend their range of skills and enrich the taught curriculum. The wide range of available activities includes country dancing, football, cricket, netball and a teddy bear club. In addition pupils are able to attend evening clubs held in the school that include a drama academy and a well-attended Tai Kwon Do class. Visits from outside speakers, visits to

places of interest and an annual residential visit to Dorset for the older children all provide a range of curriculum enrichment opportunities for pupils. Examples of such opportunities include involvement in a 5x5x5 Arts project led by a textile artist in residence, the STAR road safety project, a simulated Christening Ceremony conducted by a Methodist Minister, a French-style breakfast, a visit to Clarice Cliff Pottery, the Safe and Sound Challenge for which the school was highly commended. Pupils are involved in a full-scale musical production that takes place each summer term and in other plays that sometimes involve staff and ex-pupils. A number of peripatetic music teachers take lessons in piano, violin and flute.

30. The school is particularly effective in ensuring that all pupils have equal access and opportunity to both the taught curriculum and to extra curricular activities. This is a strength of the school and is evident in the positive attitudes of staff towards meeting the needs of every child regardless of race, gender or disability. The school has effectively catered for the needs of a pupil with muscular dystrophy who participated in the activities on the Y6 field trip along with the rest of the pupils. The school is currently very effectively meeting the needs of a pupil with Downs Syndrome, pupils with speech and language difficulties, pupils on the autistic spectrum and pupils with emotional and behavioural problems. The practice observed in classrooms and around the school reflects the schools' policy for including all pupils in the life of the school. The attitudes of other pupils demonstrate that there is total acceptance of pupils with disabilities and they work and play together well. The school's commitment to including all pupils in activities is further demonstrated by the high levels of participation in team games on sports days.

31. There is well-planned provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. This provides a satisfactory basis for pupils to learn about healthy eating and lifestyles, bullying pressures, feelings and relationships, medicines and drugs, growing up and substance use. Parents and pupils value the opportunities for 'circle time' and Year 6 pupils were seen during the inspection to be very enthusiastic during this activity. Pupils in a Year 3 health, personal and social education lesson were able to talk about the effects of exercising on the body and were able to work well in groups to produce survey results. The school has embraced the requirements of the citizenship curriculum and has included this within the personal, social and health education programme.

32. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. There are daily assemblies, which provide pupils with a range of experiences that contribute towards an awareness of others, draw attention to world issues, and explore concepts that are of a broadly Christian nature. Achievements in activities, both inside and outside school, are celebrated and fellow pupils are appreciative of other's efforts. When given time for reflection pupils do so in a quiet and thoughtful manner. Teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities in lessons for pupils to be amazed or fascinated, for instance, by large numbers or scientific phenomena.

33. Provision for pupils' moral development is good and is reflected in the calm atmosphere within the school. Strategies to support the absence of oppressive behaviour are well known throughout the school community. There are six straightforward rules for conduct around the school. These are effective and easily recalled. As a result of high expectations, the pupils treat the school building and its facilities with respect. There is no evidence of litter or graffiti.

34. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Evidence of this can be seen in many places: in lessons, where pupils are encouraged to co-operate fully with each other; going to assembly, at lunchtime and in the playground, where pupils play sensibly together. During the inspection there were few opportunities seen that allowed pupils to work in a group effectively. Often such sessions are, in reality, individual pupils working on their own within a

group situation. However, in a Year 3 personal and social education lesson pupils reacted well in a group situation with a spokesperson elected to present the raw data for a survey on exercise. Throughout the school adults act as good role models in the way that they talk to each other and to the pupils. Pupils experience a variety of visitors and visits including a residential trip, which makes a valuable contribution to their social development.

35. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Appreciation of the pupils' own culture is covered well. Visiting museums, studying the artwork of artists such as Clarice Cliff and visitors from the local community, all make good contributions to pupils' cultural development. The school has spent some money on multi-cultural resources since the previous inspection. However, the appreciation of wider traditions in order to understand ethnic and cultural diversity through art, music and literature is less well developed.

36. The local community makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. A number of clubs, such as football, cricket, drama, Tai Chi and Tai Kwon Do are run by outside providers. A local Methodist Minister conducts services such as harvest festival and there are a number of regular volunteer helpers in school who work effectively under the direction of teachers to support pupils' learning. Visitors are invited into the school to talk to pupils and broaden the experiences offered. An example of this was an Indian visitor who came to talk about Indian culture and to show the pupils artefacts and symbols. There is an active parent-teachers' association that works hard to raise money for the school.

37. There are effective links with local secondary schools. The Year 6 teacher visits as many of the secondary schools to which pupils transfer as possible. Assessment information is passed on, as well as details to support pupils' particular academic and social needs. The school is currently working on a bid with the local secondary school, which is seeking specialist status. The school intends that this will provide opportunities for pupils to access additional resources and expertise that will have a positive impact on the teaching of information and communication technology and design and technology.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The provision for pastoral care is good. Teachers know their pupils well, relationships between pupils and with all adults are strong and mutual trust and respect are underpinning all relationships throughout the school community. Health and safety have high priority, risk assessments take place frequently. Pupils are supervised at all times. Trained first aiders are always present and they carry out their duties conscientiously. Photographs of pupils with particular allergies, for example, intolerance to particular foods, are displayed in prominent places with instructions for use of an EpiPen in an emergency. The designated teacher has had the relevant child protection training and all staff are aware of the procedures necessary and follow good guidelines in the event of any concerns. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support. Teachers and the support staff know the pupils well and are able to give them the necessary care and support. Individual education plans are used well to help pupils' progress and individual pupils know the targets they are expected to meet.

39. The school has an effective behaviour policy which is straightforward and is understood by all and this ensures that good standards of conduct can be maintained by all staff. The school's systems for encouraging and monitoring attendance are good. The relatively high level of unauthorised absence, reported in the previous inspection has been reduced and is now in line with the national picture. The headteacher approves applications for holidays in term time and queries the motives for taking this time away from school if it has not been made clear in the application. This represents good practice.

40. Procedures to monitor pupils' academic progress and achievement are less well developed. Test results are analysed and individual achievements are tracked against National Curriculum expectations and are recorded to demonstrate the progress that pupils are making. But the school makes insufficient use of this data to plan for the curriculum and to set targets for both the class and for each pupil.

41. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have been developed significantly over the last two years and a comprehensive range of data for the core subjects is now recorded. There are currently no formal procedures for assessing the foundation subjects. Teachers carry out day-to-day assessments and evaluations, which are recorded in their planning files and passed on to the headteacher on a weekly basis for comment. There are inconsistencies in the way in which these assessments are carried out. Some refer to a general evaluation of how well a lesson went; others make specific reference to the progress of individuals or groups. The process does not always provide the information necessary to guide curriculum planning. Assessments are beginning to be used to inform teachers' future plans in literacy lessons so that work is adapted to meet the needs of individuals and of groups and to set pupils targets for improvement. The quality of marking across the school is inconsistent. Where it is most effective it focuses on how well a pupil has met the objective of the lesson and what the pupil needs to do to improve.

42. Individual teachers keep mark books of data relevant to their own classes and all teachers carry out useful half-termly assessments in literacy, numeracy and science. These include assessments against the key objectives for learning in mathematics, against level indicators for writing, spelling and punctuation and reading. A sample of each pupil's writing is also retained. There is an overview sheet for each year group that records the outcomes of these assessments.

43. The optional non-statutory assessment tests in English and mathematics are carried out annually in Years 3 to 5. The results of all these tests are recorded using an electronic database. The accuracy of the responses to questions in the statutory assessment tests for mathematics and English are analysed by the assessment co-ordinators and the information is effectively used to set whole school targets linked to specific areas of curriculum development. For example, 'knowledge of times -tables' and 'the ability to solve mathematical problems' were identified last year as areas for development in maths.

44. The process for the systematic collection of assessment data is a recent introduction in the school and the data that is available at present does not yet provide year-on-year information about pupil progress over time. The assessment co-ordinator in the infant department is beginning to use the information to track pupils' progress from entry to the end of Year 2 and to establish which children have not made satisfactory progress. The statutory assessment data provides information about progress from the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. The interim data is not being effectively analysed. The available data for each year group is not used to compare pupil attainment and progress with the expected national levels for the year group. Targets are not being set on a year-on-year basis in relation to national expectations in order that the progress of pupils towards the expected levels and the school targets by the end of Year 6 can be monitored. This process has recently begun for one year group in English but has not yet been introduced across the whole school. Individual teachers do not take responsibility for ensuring that the children in their class reach expected levels of attainment by the end of the year and subject leaders do not have an overview of standards in their subject across the school. This results in a large number of pupils entering Year 6 at levels well below those expected for their year group. The targets for improvement that are being set relate to individual needs but they do not effectively address what the curriculum requirements are that will enable pupils to reach the expected levels as they

progress through the junior school. The use of the data to monitor and support pupil progress is not being used to effectively raise standards.

45. Pupils with special educational needs are given effective support by outside services as and when required. However, there has been no speech therapist to assist pupils with speech and language difficulties for the past year.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. The school's links with parents are satisfactory. The headteacher and his staff work very hard to establish a strong relationship with parents and continue to seek ways in which to extend and explore the links that have been established. Parents support the school's aims and ambitions for their children, and the parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted appropriately. Warm relationships between parents and teachers were seen as parents arrive with their children at the start of the day.

47. Staff have been successful in involving parents more in the life and work of the school. For instance, the school has initiated the Thursday Club which allows parents to meet and to offer suggestions for improvement. Parents accompany children on trips and others have volunteered to help with extra-curricular clubs and some parents assist their children with homework. The Friends of the school work hard to attract parents into school, and social and fund raising events are well supported. Events, such as curriculum-focused workshops and meetings tend to be less well supported.

48. Communication between staff and parents is satisfactory. The school provides useful written information in the school prospectus, governors' annual report which meets statutory requirements and sends regular newsletters. Parents are invited to speak to teachers whenever they wish outside the scheduled parents' meeting forum. Home/school reading records are a useful means of communication. Annual reports are satisfactory. However, although they provide information about the National Curriculum levels reached and topics covered during the year, they are very succinct. They do not give sufficient information on how well the individual child has achieved and do not include clear targets for improvement.

49. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to attend annual reviews to discuss their child's progress. Most parents take this opportunity to do so.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. At the time of the last inspection the headteacher was judged to be providing strong leadership, senior staff and co-ordinators were not fulfilling their responsibilities and the governing body was contributing effectively to the management of the school.

51. Since that time the headteacher has valiantly led the school through severe staffing difficulties including ill health and incompetency procedures. Until very recently the headteacher had no deputy and no permanent senior management team, which made implementing improvements very difficult. In January 2002 the school appointed a new deputy head and since then there has been considerable improvements to curriculum planning and assessment. Currently, the school is soundly led and managed.

52. The headteacher is dedicated to provide a safe and caring school for all the pupils. He has instigated many initiatives to enrich the curriculum. For instance he has introduced the 'Safer Routes To School' scheme and has successfully led the school to achieve an Investors in Peoples Award in September 2002. He has the respect of parents; most of whom feel the school is well led and managed. The deputy headteacher has been in post for

two terms. He has achieved a good deal in a short space of time and provides good support to the headteacher so that together they are starting to implement much needed incentives to raise standards. For instance, they have improved the way in which results from tests are used to track pupils' progress and to set targets for improvement. However these are not yet used consistently by all teachers.

53. The senior management team has introduced more effective arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning but these have yet to have an impact on the low expectations and lack of challenge seen in some lessons during the inspection. The role of subject co-ordinators is unsatisfactory. Although, teachers work hard in their individual class rooms and have good relationships with pupils and each other, some appear to be not yet fully aware of the crucial role they play in school evaluation and improvement.

54. Results from tests are analysed and information shared but until all staff realise that results from these assessments must be used to inform classroom teaching and learning to raise standards then very little improvement will take place. For instance staff reacted quickly to the lower 2002 Year 2 national test results and put measures in place to support the current Year 3 pupils but if tracking procedures had been sharper the school would have been aware of the need to support these pupils earlier.

55. There has been no specific training in carrying out the co-ordinator's role. The English co-ordinator monitors pupils' work and analyses the results of national tests and is beginning to use this information to develop literacy teaching and learning. Further development of the role of all co-ordinators is required to make their contribution to school improvement more effective. Currently there are no permanent co-ordinators for geography, history and religious education, which is unsatisfactory.

56. Leadership and management of special needs are sound. The co-ordinator has no time to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning of the pupils. There is an urgent need to update the special educational needs policy in the light of new requirements. She runs a weekly club for parents of pupils with special educational needs and occasionally the education psychologist attends these meetings. The special needs governor is very committed and hard working. She visits the school regularly and has meetings with the co-ordinator.

57. The governing body, which has many new members, is enthusiastic and very supportive of the school. They carry out their responsibilities satisfactorily. The chairman is dedicated and hard working and provided invaluable support to the headteacher throughout the difficult period of staff illness and incompetency procedures. Without this support the headteacher said that he would have been 'unable to carry on'. The governing body meets regularly and has an appropriate structure that includes committees for finance, premises, curriculum and staffing. Governors receive satisfactory information from the headteacher and some gain further knowledge of the school through informal visits. However, their visits do not have a clear focus that would provide more effective information to support their decision making and monitoring of the work of the school.

58. The school makes effective use of resources, grants and other funding. The school's financial planning is used purposefully to help it achieve its educational priorities. The efficiency and effectiveness of the financial administration systems are satisfactory, although levels of understanding and usage require improvement. The school responded satisfactorily to the most recent auditor's report and the majority of the issues have already been addressed. The governors agree appropriate allocations from the annual budget to support priorities and the school ensures that specific grants are used for their designated purpose. Competitive tendering is well established in this school for those areas of expenditure that

require it. Many staff are aware of and familiar with new information and communication technology, and the school's administration computer systems. Pupils' learning is satisfactorily supported by new technology. Due to technical problems the newly appointed computer suite was only ready for use the week before the inspection started. Only two lessons were timetabled in the suite during the time the inspectors were in school.

59. At the time of the inspection no viable figures were available for the actual income and expenditure for 2001/2, or forecast income and expenditure levels for 2002/3. When revised figures were finally able to be examined some six days after the conclusion of the time at the school, it became apparent that expenditure per pupil was £737 higher than the level reported on the original 'S' form; an increase of some 45 per cent. The revised figures give a level of expenditure of £2375 per pupil which is 22.5 per cent above the upper quartile in the latest National Statistics for comparable primary schools i.e. excluding London schools and schools of less than 50 pupils.

60. The school therefore needs to focus more attention on the outcomes of expenditure at each year and subject to improve value for money. In addition co-ordinators should be required to set budgets by year and plan subjects in such a way as to target the raising of standards at the end of Year 6. High spending levels per pupil must be shown to be providing value for money year on year.

61. National statistics are available for 11 areas of expenditure and the school should become more aware of the need and value of cost comparisons and resulting standards of the educational outcomes not only of schools nationally but of similar schools locally.

62. The school currently has a six and half per cent of the original budget carried forward from the previous financial year. This is the result of the school having to finance an additional teacher in a reception class to ensure class numbers are kept below the required thirty pupils. The school has recently been informed they will be funded for this teacher in due course. The senior management team is kept periodically informed of the school's financial position.

63. Taking into account the overall effectiveness of the school, the efficiency with which the school is run and its overall cost effectiveness, the school continues to give satisfactory value for money.

64. There is a satisfactory match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. The large number of support assistants is well trained and make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress and the school's development. Indoor accommodation is well appointed and in good repair and decoration. The school was largely rebuilt following an arson attack in 1997. As a result the purpose-built accommodation serves the school community well. The junior classrooms are small for the number of pupils on roll and this affects some learning activities, especially practical work. Since the previous inspection there is now a secure play area for pupils in the Foundation Stage. The field and playgrounds are spacious and are in a good condition. All subjects have sufficient resources for teaching. Resources for geography and religious education have improved since the last inspection and they are now satisfactory.

65. Where the school does not have its own equipment, there are systems for loans through the county library service or other local schools. The school does not have a library; this restricts pupils' development in awareness of library classifications and procedures. It also limits the development of elementary research skills and use of a library. The school has just opened its new computer suite and this facility looks like becoming a valuable asset for the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. To further improve the quality of education provided and to raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

- i) Raise standards in English by:
 - Providing more opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their speaking and listening skills in all subjects.
(Paragraphs 20,27,81,86,108,110,139)
 - Continuing to raise standards in writing by improving pupils' spelling and handwriting and developing writing skills in other subjects as well as English.
(Paragraphs 27,83,85,88,90,107,123,127,150)

- ii) Raise teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve by:
 - Ensuring that all teachers are fully aware of and plan for the range of abilities within their classes through detailed assessment and tracking procedures.
(Paragraphs 17,18,19,25,52,103)
 - Improving the effectiveness of teaching methods, to raise pupils' levels of interest and motivation.
(Paragraphs 9,12,17,92,103,110)
 - Ensuring a consistent approach to homework that supports pupils' learning.
(Paragraphs 19,20)
 - Improving the quality of marking so that it helps pupils to understand what they can do and what they need to learn next.
(Paragraphs 19,27,111,129)

- iii) Make more effective use of assessment information to set class targets for improvement and to track pupils' progress through the school. (Paragraphs 40,44)

- iv) Improve the school's evaluation of its performance by:
 - Implementing a rigorous system for checking the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school through systematic lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work; and
 - ensuring that any weaknesses in teaching identified through monitoring are given attention and that teachers are given suitable support.
(Paragraphs 52,53,54)

- Enabling co-ordinators to acquire the necessary skills, have time and opportunity to undertake classroom observations to check on the quality and standards in the subjects they co-ordinate so they can play a full part in school improvement.
(Paragraphs 55,105,112,116,120,121,124,130,142, 150)
- Ensure that governing body visits have a clear focus to support their decision making and in their evaluation of the work of the school.
(Paragraph 57)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	11	26	2	0	0
Percentage	0	7	26	62	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 two percentage points.

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)	N/a	234
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	28

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	46

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	20	18	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	18
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	35	35	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (81)	92 (92)	92 (86)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	18	17
	Girls	17	17	16
	Total	34	35	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (84)	92 (81)	87 (95)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	15	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	14	14
	Girls	11	13	12
	Total	21	27	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (68)	87 (79)	84 (84)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	12	12
	Girls	9	13	13
	Total	16	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (74)	78 (63)	78 (84)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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	223	2	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background	4		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1		
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian	1		
Mixed – any other mixed background	2		
Asian or Asian British - Indian			
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3		
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group			
No ethnic group recorded			

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)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.3
Average class size	28.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	150

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a
Total number of education support staff	N/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/a
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/a

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

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

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001 - 2002
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	£
Total income	517,915
Total expenditure	546,473
Expenditure per pupil	2,335
Balance brought forward from previous year	34,263
Balance carried forward to next year	5,705

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	234
Number of questionnaires returned	38

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	45	8		
My child is making good progress in school.	42	47	3	8	
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	58	5		
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	16	57	19	3	5
The teaching is good.	42	53		5	
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	50	5		3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	34	3		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	42	53	3	3	
The school works closely with parents.	37	47	11	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	47	47		3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	45	5	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	26	37	5	11

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

67. The provision for the youngest children, those in the two reception classes, is satisfactory. Initial assessments show that there is a wide spread of ability among the children when they start school, but that attainment on entry is average overall, with communication, language and literacy being below average. Judgements relating to standards at this time of the year also take into account the work completed by the children who are now in Year 1. By the end of the reception year, most children are achieving satisfactorily and should achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning apart from communication, language and literacy.

68. Teaching is satisfactory and enables children to make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. Teachers have formed good relationships with their classes so that children feel safe and secure. They manage the children well following the school's behaviour policy. Planning outlines the activities clearly and the children are developing good levels of independence in directing their own learning as a result. Sometimes the choice of activities provided is not manageable with only one adult in the room. Teachers' planning does not always identify clearly enough what it is they want the children to learn. Therefore, although the children are busy they do not always get the support they need to extend their learning. In some group and class lessons, the pace is too slow and children lose concentration. Particular emphasis is placed on pupils developing personal and social skills and this area of learning is taught well.

Personal, social and emotional development

69. Children come into school happily and relate well to each other and adults. The higher attaining children speak confidently to visitors, often initiating conversations. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to work in groups and to co-operate and this they do well, for example playing in the role - play area. Support staff are not always available and so are unable to intervene sufficiently often in order to help children to extend their play. School routines have been established and children are beginning to be aware of the pattern of the school day. Children behave well as part of a larger group, for example, in assemblies.

70. Children have good self-help skills. They care for their own needs and get themselves ready for physical education lessons with suitable levels of independence. They co-operate well in lessons and help each other out with tasks. In some lessons, a few higher attaining, more confident children dominate the conversations and call out answers before anyone else. Children share resources, such as playdough, sensibly and help teachers tidy classrooms. They can choose their own activities from a limited range and concentrate for sufficiently long periods of time.

Communication, language and literacy

71. Children enter school with underdeveloped skills in communication, language and literacy. They make satisfactory progress and the small number of higher attaining children achieve the expected level by the time they start in Year 1. Children have immature speaking skills and only a few children answer questions in full sentences. The post office role-play areas gives suitable opportunities for the children to act out particular situations and develop suitable vocabulary, especially if there is an adult to join in the play. Children have many opportunities to share books. They know that pictures carry meaning and they are learning to

retell a story in their own words. They are just beginning to associate sounds with letters and during the inspection were learning to write 's', 'a' and 't'. Work sampling from last year's reception children showed that they all have the same writing tasks to complete. It is a weakness that work set is not sufficiently planned to meet different abilities. By the end of the reception year, although the higher attaining children can write one or two simple sentences, most children are still at the early writing stage. Teaching is satisfactory overall although good teaching was observed in two lessons during the inspection.

Mathematical development

72. There is a suitable mix of direct teaching and structured play activities in this area of learning which helps most children to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Skills and understanding are developing well through sorting, counting and matching activities. Children learn to continue patterns using different coloured animals and they enjoy playing pattern games on the computer. Teachers focus well on specific mathematical vocabulary such as longer and shorter and children learn to sing or say number songs and rhymes. Children learn to count to ten and higher attaining children can count beyond ten. They have painted houses and numbered them one to 20. Children enjoy the practical, fun activities through which learning is presented. Learning in some activities is not always extended because adult support is not available. Overall teaching is satisfactory and children make the expected gains in their learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. As a result of the satisfactory teaching in this area, most children should achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Children have a sound understanding of the sense of hearing. They can experiment making high, low, loud and quiet sounds and learn to listen carefully to identify different sounds from a tape. Relationships are warm and supportive and the teacher guides the children to listen to the tape. Some above average children dominated the lesson and persisted in calling out the answers before other children can think.

74. Children enjoy using the computers and are gaining good control of the mouse. They have produced attractive pictures using the program 'Blackcat' to select pictures to describe aspects of themselves such as their eye colour, shoe size and hair colour. They are beginning to understand how they have changed from a baby to a toddler and then to a child by bringing photographs to school depicting themselves at these three stages.

Physical development

75. The children's physical development is satisfactory and they attain the early learning goals in this area of learning. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but the curriculum is restricted by a lack of opportunities for children to engage in outdoor play using wheeled toys. Teaching in a physical education lesson was good. Through suitable 'warm up' activities at the start of the lesson, the children learnt to understand the changes in their bodies when they exercise. The teacher gave clear explanations and demonstrations so children knew exactly what they had to do and pupils made good gains in learning to use the space and to control their body movements when jumping. Children can use pencils, scissors and construction kits competently to make their models and pictures with suitable levels of control.

Creative development

76. The children are presented with satisfactory opportunities for creative development, including painting, cutting and sticking and most achieve the early learning goals in this area. They have painted colourful pictures of themselves on their first day in school. The role-play in the post office is particularly successful when supported by an adult. Children sing together, recite rhymes and use appropriate actions to words and music with varying levels of confidence. Teaching is satisfactory. In a music lesson, a few children learnt to use percussion instruments. However, only a small number of instruments were provided which meant that many children just sat and observed.

ENGLISH

77. By the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening and reading are satisfactory. In writing, standards are unsatisfactory. In speaking and listening and reading, pupils, make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening and reading and writing. In writing, for all other pupils it is unsatisfactory. Standards have remained similar to those in the last inspection except in writing, where results are now below average.

78. By the end of Year 6, standards in reading are satisfactory. Standards are unsatisfactory in writing and speaking and listening, and are well below average when compared with similar schools. Pupils make sound progress in reading, however, most pupils do not make enough progress in writing, and speaking and listening. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment in all aspects of English. Standards in writing, speaking and listening have fallen since the last inspection while reading remains at the nationally expected standard.

79. By the end of Year 2, pupils can listen attentively in lessons. They enjoy listening to stories, particularly when told well; for example, in a Year 1 and 2 class, the pupils were totally absorbed in the story of 'The Little Red Hen' and at the end of the lesson greatly enjoyed singing a rap about the story. Learning support assistants work effectively to ensure that pupils with special educational needs listen attentively to stories and lesson introductions. However, many pupils lack the confidence to speak in front of the class and there are too few opportunities for pupils to extend their language skills in class and group work.

80. Progress in reading is good. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are confident in using their knowledge of letter sounds and picture clues to help them read new and unfamiliar words. More able pupils are confident in using the context to help them read new words. Pupils know and can explain such terms as 'author' and 'illustrator' but are less sure about 'blurb' and 'publisher'. More able pupils can read fluently and with expression, discuss the characters and predict what might happen next in the story. These pupils read very regularly at home, including books of their own choice. Less able pupils frequently do not read at home and this impedes their progress.

81. Progress in writing is unsatisfactory. By the end of Year 2, standards, particularly in spelling are weak. In lessons, pupils are taught key skills of punctuation, grammar and spellings. However, there was little evidence of pupils being tested regularly in spellings. In lessons, pupils are reminded of using full stops and capital letters at the beginning of sentences. However, from the analysis of pupils' previous work indications are that pupils are not consistently applying these skills in their writing. Pupils make limited use of different joining words relying heavily on 'and' and 'then'. Through marking and expectations, teachers

do not appear to be consistently reminding pupils of the importance of using and applying their skills, knowledge and understanding. Too frequently pupils are not given comments on how they could improve their work and therefore are unaware of how well they are achieving.

82. Pupils are given a suitable range of opportunities for writing and they show a satisfactory range of ideas, even though spelling is weak. For example, pupils wrote reports on their visit to Queen's Road Methodist Church and their holidays. They write poems or add the last words to lines in a poem. Good use is made of story frames to assist them in writing their stories. Pupils write instructions, for example, in 'How to make a Marmite Sandwich'.

83. By the end of Year 2, standards in handwriting are unsatisfactory. From the analysis of pupils' previous work there was little evidence that pupils practise key skills regularly. They are taught how to join letters correctly. However, pupils do not apply these taught skills in their writing and their work is often untidily presented. This is a weakness, which teachers do not give enough attention to in their marking or through reinforcing these expectations during lessons. In the previous report pupils' handwriting was considered to be neat and letters well formed; this was not the case in this inspection.

84. By the age of 11, standards in speaking and listening are below those expected of most primary school pupils. Teachers' planning too frequently does not identify opportunities for speaking and listening either in whole class situations or group work. Consequently by age of 11, except for the more able pupils, they have had insufficient experience in discussing their work with other pupils and do not respond well when the Year 6 teacher does give them the opportunity to do so. In most lessons observed, too few demands were made of pupils to speak and listen. Only a few pupils respond and little use is made of discussion with each other before responding. The same situation was apparent in lessons in other subjects. During literacy lessons, teachers missed opportunities to extend pupils' listening and speaking skills through the use of drama and simple role - play.

85. Overall, standards in reading by the time pupils are 11 are at the expected national level and pupils make steady progress. The more able readers are keen to read and are fluent when reading aloud. They can discuss what they read with understanding and make value judgements about the characters in the story. They know several well-known authors and can explain the difference between fiction and non-fiction. Most pupils can predict what might happen next in the story. Most of these pupils prefer fiction to non-fiction and this is reflected in the reading records. Less able pupils frequently do not read at home and find reading difficult. They often do not use phonics skills to help them read unknown words; for example, words with digraphs in them. Of the pupils spoken to, many did not understand how to find and use an information book in a library.

86. By the age of 11, standards of writing are below the national average and pupils make unsatisfactory progress. Generally the writing produced is not varied and interesting. The best writing seen draws on pupils' own experience or interests as when Year 5 produce an account of their visit to Caerleon in Wales. From an analysis of pupils' previous work it includes many stories, a play script, reports and one session for discussion/debate on 'Is the building of more houses a good thing'. There was little evidence of editing or redrafting. Generally pupils' spelling is weak; for example, 'incarge' for 'in charge' and 'hoilday' for 'holiday'. Many frequently used words are incorrectly spelt. Many teachers do not have high enough expectations of what the pupils can achieve and frequently marking does not give the pupils any ideas on how they can improve their work. Pupils do have individual targets written in their books but little reference is made to them when the teachers mark the work. Much of the work in other subjects does not reinforce literacy skills as some teachers use too many worksheets on which pupils merely fill gaps rather than working on extending their

writing. Although the classroom computers were not being used during the lessons observed there were displays that demonstrated pupils' word processing skills.

87. The school has put considerable time and effort to improve pupils' literacy skills with particular emphasis on spelling and boys' writing. Staff plan to run a similar project next year. Learning support assistants have been employed to deliver government schemes such as Early Literacy Support for Years 1 and 2, Additional Literacy Support for Years 3 and 4 and Further Literacy Support for Year 5. As yet it is too early to judge the impact of these initiatives.

88. Handwriting throughout the junior classes is unsatisfactory. Although the writing is usually legible, it is not consistently joined and a good deal of work is poorly presented. Grammar is usually accurate but there are many examples of carelessness even in work, which has been checked. There was little evidence of regular handwriting practice in the books seen.

89. The overall quality of teaching and learning in the infants is good. It is satisfactory in the juniors. In the Year 1 and 2 classes, teachers plan lessons effectively and different tasks are planned for pupils with various capabilities. The learning objectives are shared with the pupils and therefore they are aware of what they are supposed to learn by the end of the lesson. Teachers manage the pupils well, including those with special educational needs, and behaviour is good. In the very good lesson the teacher sustained the pupils' interest and concentration by constantly questioning pupils and involving them in the lesson. During this lesson one of the learning support assistant 'signs' the letters of the alphabet to a pupil to ensure she understood what the teacher was saying. The teacher is very enthusiastic and the pupils react well by trying very hard with their work.

90. In the junior classes, in all lessons observed, teaching and learning was satisfactory. However, there are some weak aspects of teaching that slows pupils' progress; for example, when the pace of the lesson is slow and learning objectives are not made very clear. This also occurs when the focus of a lesson is too long, pupils become disinterested and their work deteriorates; for example, in a lesson on adverbs the pupils were using whiteboards to assist them in their work and many pupils were 'doodling' on them and showed a complete lack of interest in the activity. The effectiveness of strategies for teaching literacy skills are unsatisfactory mainly because the teachers do not have high enough expectations of what the pupils can do and achieve. Lessons often lack pace and challenge, especially for the more able pupils. Many teachers do not use questions effectively to support pupils' learning. There was little evidence of good question and answer sessions in the lessons observed and this impedes pupils' progress in their speaking and listening skills. When given the opportunity pupils can work together co-operatively thus developing their social and language skills.

91. Pupils' attitudes to English are generally good and they react positively to their work during literacy lessons. Their behaviour is good and most sustain interest and concentration when there is a brisk pace to the lesson and rise to the challenge when activities are interesting. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils. This underpins their successful management of pupils' behaviour.

92. Support for pupils with special educational needs is effective. Many pupils lack confidence and slowly acquire new skills and knowledge in reading and writing. Teachers plan the work for these pupils carefully. Pupils also receive effective support from learning support assistants. As a result, they make sound progress in their learning in relation to their prior attainment.

93. The subject is led effectively by the hard working and enthusiastic co-ordinator. She is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and through the Literacy Action Plan is working to address the weaknesses. Assessment procedures are sound but tend to focus more on pupils' individual targets and less on the National Curriculum level they have achieved and therefore what needs to be taught in their next step of learning. Teachers have been observed teaching literacy by the headteacher together with the English co-ordinator. The local education authority literacy consultant has also observed literacy lessons and has given written and verbal feedback to staff.

94. Resources are adequate to meet the needs of the English curriculum. Although the school is well equipped for reading books and published schemes there are insufficient reference books to meet the needs of the pupils when doing personal research. Pupils do not have the opportunity to learn library skills. The school however, uses the local education authority's library loan service to support pupils' learning. There has been no separate library in the school since the fire in 1997 and there are only a few reference books in each classroom. Homework does not appear to be given on a regular basis, however older pupils do enjoy working at home on specific topics.

MATHEMATICS

95. By the age of seven and 11 pupils attain satisfactory standards in mathematics. In 2001 pupils' standards of attainment in the statutory assessment tests at the end of Year 2 were above those achieved nationally and above those of similar schools. This was a significant improvement over results in previous years. However, in 2002 attainment in the statutory assessment tests fell again. The fluctuation in results over the years is related to the varying range of ability in different year groups. The assessment information available in the school supports this view. Overall the standards observed in the school by the end of Year 2 are in line with expectations for the year group. Over the last four years girls have performed slightly better than the boys but the differences have not been significant, except in 2001. This difference was a result of the high proportion of boys with special educational needs in this particular year group.

96. By the end of Year 2 pupils can partition numbers into hundreds, tens and units, order three digit numbers, tell the time to a minute, add and subtract numbers bridging ten. They understand the value of coins and can solve simple money problems, use a number line to add and subtract two digit numbers, identify multiples of two and five and calculate using these. They can identify simple fractions, divide two digit numbers by a single digit, use some standard units of measure and understand the properties of 2 and 3D shapes using mathematical vocabulary.

97. The teaching of mathematics in the Year 1/2 classes is always, at least, satisfactory and sometimes very good. Teachers plan their lessons using the objectives in the National Numeracy Framework, focussing some of the work at levels above those expected for the age group in order to challenge the more able pupils. The pupils are encouraged to talk about their maths and to use appropriate mathematical vocabulary. An example of this was the references to 2D, 3D, faces, cuboid, oblong, prism that were used in a Year 1/2 lesson on the properties of shapes. Teachers are secure in their own subject knowledge as demonstrated when a teacher described accurately the similarities and differences between an oblong and a rectangle. Activities are well matched to the abilities of the pupils although the demands of the recording sometimes cause some difficulties for pupils. Adult support and a range of learning resources are used well to meet the needs of individuals and groups. Learning support assistants work very well to support pupils with special educational needs

and they use questioning and resources effectively to extend pupils' learning and to retain their attention. Pupils can work co-operatively together, supporting each other and sharing resources. Where teaching is particularly effective teachers use an appropriate range of opportunities to develop pupils' mental oral skills, putting calculations in the context of real life situations, and use a variety of resources and teaching strategies that keep the pupils involved in their learning. When this happens the pace of learning is good and pupils make good progress in their understanding. The relationships between adults and pupils are good with teachers and learning support assistants using praise and encouragement well. All pupils are effectively involved in the lessons. Support assistants work with individuals and groups throughout every part of the lesson, asking them questions, offering additional explanation or using additional resources that enable pupils with special educational needs to access the learning. This results in good behaviour in the classrooms and pupils who have a positive attitude to their learning.

98. In 2001 standards of attainment in the mathematics national tests at the end of Year 6 overall were in line with those of all schools nationally and with those of similar schools. Standards in maths have risen significantly since 1998. The progress of the average and lower ability pupils between the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 was good but the more able pupils made insufficient progress. In 2002 standards fell again overall but there was a significant rise in the attainment of the more able pupils. Standards observed in the school by the end of Year 6 are generally in line with expectations for the year group. The rate of progress within individual year groups is inconsistent and progress in the Year 5 and 6 classes is better than that the Year 3 and 4 classes.

99. By the end of Year 6 average and above average pupils, with varying levels of accuracy, round numbers to the nearest hundred thousand, round decimals to the nearest whole number. Pupils can convert fractions to decimals and vice versa, understand and use negative numbers. They can also use brackets, use the standard written method for all four number operations, use co-ordinates to translate and enlarge a shape, calculate area, calculate the perimeter of composite shapes, use simple algebra, understand simple ratios, draw angles with accuracy and use scale.

100. Overall the teaching of mathematics in the junior classes is satisfactory, but there are elements where it is unsatisfactory and does not meet the learning needs of pupils. Weakness in teaching number affects their progress and means that there is an additional demand on other teachers to ensure that pupils reach the expected levels of attainment by the end of their time in the junior department. Where teaching is satisfactory teachers set clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils, the teachers' own subject knowledge is good, resources and additional adults are used effectively to support pupils' learning and pupils are attentive and motivated. In most classes, the match of work is appropriate to the abilities of the average and above average pupils but for the less able children the work is not always sufficiently simplified to enable them to achieve real understanding. There is an over reliance on the published mathematics scheme in which the objectives do not always match those of the National Numeracy Strategy and do not always effectively identify the progress within stages of learning.

101. Where teaching is unsatisfactory it is due to teachers' lack of subject knowledge. For example, pupils were required to use the standard written method for long multiplication before learning the simpler grid method. The use of resources and of adult support is not well planned. Teachers appear to be unaware that pupils do not have the necessary prior knowledge and understanding to effectively carry out the set activities. Pupils are not well motivated and their behaviour and application to task is unsatisfactory, so that very little new learning takes place. Pupils take little pride in their work and the quality of presentation is of an unacceptable standard.

102. Sufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. There is useful software such as 'Number Shark' and 'Mental Maths' to reinforce pupils' knowledge of number and to improve their calculation skills. There are also data handling packages available to support pupils' understanding of data: pupils can write procedures for programmable robots and can use on-screen logo that reinforce their understanding of the properties of angle and shape. The use of ICT is not yet systematically included in teachers' plans but there is evidence of its use in most classes. In one class the interactive whiteboard is being used effectively to support pupils' learning.

103. The co-ordination and management of mathematics in the school is unsatisfactory but improving. It is in its early stages. The co-ordinator took on the role in February 2002, following the long-term absence of the previous co-ordinator. To date she has ensured that all staff have received appropriate national training and has run an in-service training day for the staff on 'progression'. She has attended mathematics cluster meetings and worked with a numeracy consultant to update the maths policy for the school. The co-ordinator has carried out a valuable analysis of the Year 6 national tests to elicit pupils' response to questions. From this, the co-ordinator has identified areas of strength and weakness that have informed curricular targets for the junior department. She has established a comprehensive system for the collection and transfer of assessment data using an electronic database that will enable the tracking of pupil progress over time. The use of this data for the monitoring of standards across the school and over time is not yet effective and it is not used to agree year-on-year targets for pupil progress. The co-ordinator does not monitor teachers' plans and she has had no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in other classes. She does not have a secure overview of standards and progress throughout the school or of what is needed to improve standards in individual classes.

SCIENCE

104. National assessment results in 2001 were below the national average for pupils in Year 2 and well below in Year 6. When compared with similar schools, the same results indicate that performance in science is below average for pupils at the age of seven and well below average at the age of 11. The number of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in Year 2 is below the national average, and the proportion of those reaching Level 5 in Year 6 is well below the national average. Over the past four years the average performance of Year 6 pupils has been below the national average, but there has been a steady improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level since the time of the last inspection.

105. Inspection findings suggest that standards are better than those shown in the national assessment results. Current overall standards of attainment for infant and junior pupils are broadly at the expected levels, apart from scientific enquiry, which is below expectation. Judgements are based on the observation of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils demonstrate satisfactory factual knowledge in the appropriate areas of the National Curriculum. However, weak speaking and writing skills depress the quality and pace in which pupils present their knowledge. Pupils have satisfactory understanding of scientific concepts and terminology, but lack confidence and need to be encouraged to use relevant scientific vocabulary. They can explain scientific facts, but are hampered by their poor speaking skills. Difficulties in handwriting and spelling have an adverse effect on written responses. Throughout the school, pupils' skills in applying their acquired knowledge in science are less well developed. Performance in scientific enquiry is not at the expected level. This is particularly evident with pupils in Year 6. They know the characteristics of a fair test, but most of them find difficulty in planning relevant approaches for their investigative work independently and in drawing conclusions from the data they collect.

106. The quality of learning is satisfactory overall. Pupils make sound progress in the relevant aspects of the National Curriculum, apart from the area of scientific enquiry where progress is unsatisfactory. When given the opportunity, pupils work together well in pairs and in groups. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported during lessons and make satisfactory progress. Occasionally, pupils make good progress, such as during a lesson in Year 5 when they are actively involved in exploring why and how the heart rate changes. In Years 1 and 2, pupils explore changes in the life cycle of animals and humans. They develop an appropriate understanding of the vocabulary linked to each stage of life, such as baby, toddler and adult, and understand that living things grow and reproduce. Pupils in Year 3 learn about the different types of teeth, such as incisors, canines and molars, and their functions. They work in pairs to make observations on the functions of the teeth while eating an apple, but they do not ask their own questions or report on their findings in a coherent manner. Year 6 pupils have learned about forces and know that objects are pulled towards the earth by gravity. In groups they learn to build beam, arch- and suspension bridges and test them for strength. Although pupils consider the test results using their knowledge of the direction of forces involved, they carry out little systematic planning for their investigation and rely on instructions from the teacher when selecting equipment and ways to record their observations. This lack of pupils' involvement in the development of their own knowledge considerably reduces the quality of their learning.

107. The teaching of science is satisfactory in the infant classes. It varies between unsatisfactory and very good in the junior classes, but is satisfactory overall. Evidence for this was derived from the scrutiny of pupils' work, classroom displays, planning documentation and lesson observations. All teachers are effective in organising their lessons, with well-focused introductions, clear instructions and explanations, and appropriately planned opportunities for pupils to carry out observations. They select suitable resources, have adequate subject knowledge and manage pupils well. The effective use of resources was observed in Year 5 in a lesson on the function of the heart. The dissection of a cow's heart by the teacher was followed by a demonstration of the blood flow in arteries and veins with the aid of the interactive whiteboard. However, there were no opportunities seen when pupils made use of computers, and ICT is insufficiently used by pupils to support their work in science.

108. Teachers use questions and explanations to focus pupils' attention on scientific facts. As a result pupils acquire adequate factual knowledge. Tasks are set appropriately to match pupils' attainment levels, particularly those of lower attaining pupils. The lower attaining pupils receive additional effective support from classroom assistants. However, there is an overuse of teacher talk during most lessons in junior classes, and there are few planned opportunities for pupils to raise their own questions or to contribute to class discussions using extended explanations. Teachers attempt to explain the results of investigations and observations, providing little opportunities for pupils to explore their ideas in class discussion and to put forward their suggestions. Summaries are composed by teachers for the whole class on the board and often copied by pupils. The frequent use of worksheets prevents pupils from developing the skills required for planning and reporting. This was observed in a lesson in Year 4 on the force of friction. The teacher demonstrated the friction of various surfaces for the pupils to repeat in groups and record results on a worksheet. This tight teacher control results in higher attaining pupils not being sufficiently challenged. These pupils' progress is limited through a lack of opportunities to question, plan, reason, generalise and extend their understanding through further independent study. Homework is not organised in a systematic way and only occurs incidentally.

109. Teachers know pupils well and give supportive feedback to them during lessons. Pupils' written work is marked regularly, but this is limited to ticking of correct answers and brief remarks on presentation. Comments do not focus on scientific learning and therefore

do not provide pupils with clear advice of how they can improve their work or extend their knowledge and understanding.

110. The new co-ordinator for science has identified areas in need of attention and is beginning to obtain a better overview of the curriculum with respect to planning. However, the co-ordinator has not yet gained an overview of the delivery of the curriculum across the school and is not aware of classroom practice, particularly in the junior classes. The overall management of the subject is currently unsatisfactory. The science policy is out of date, but is being re-written. Since the last inspection, a new published scheme of work has been introduced and this serves as a basis for teachers' yearly, termly and weekly planning, ensuring progression throughout the school. The co-ordinator intends to develop a better overview of the subject through scrutiny of teachers' termly planning, which is to begin during this autumn term. The school has analysed the results of the national tests and teacher assessment in science, but the co-ordinator has not yet studied the analysis to be fully aware of areas of weakness within the subject across the school. Professional development of staff has not yet been addressed, apart from recent in-house meetings on the new scheme of work and the new assessment procedures. There is no commonly agreed system of assessing and recording pupils' attainment in science, but the school is introducing a structure for assessment during this academic year.

111. The co-ordinator does not manage the budget for the subject, but has identified a need for software and intends to address this following the opening of the new computer suite. The school also has plans to build a wild life area to support the teaching and learning of 'Life Processes and Living Things'. This has been delayed by the building of a school extension in 2000. However, regular out of school visits have enriched pupils' experiences about plants and animals. Infant classes have visited the Court Farm and Year 6 pupils have stayed at the Dorset Field Study Centre.

ART AND DESIGN

112. Very few lessons in art took place during the inspection and only one lesson was observed, but from examining displays and scrutinising planning, it is possible to judge that pupils at ages seven and 11 achieve the expected standards for their age. Teaching and learning is satisfactory. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in developing their skills and understanding of art and design. Although, inadequacies, which were identified in the accommodation, have been rectified with the new building, some of the junior classrooms are very crowded and this makes practical work difficult.

113. Year 1 and 2 pupils have experimented with colour mixing and sketched realistic self-portraits using pencils and pastels. They have produced intricate Islamic patterns. Year 3 pupils have learnt to tie dye materials and make colourful repeating patterns. Pupils in Year 4 use sketch books well to practise their observational drawing skills. Their sketches of their friends and of sections of fruit show good attention to detail and good use of shading. Year 5 pupils have produced detailed charcoal portraits and are learning to make mosaics as part of their history topic about the Romans. The Year 5 teacher made good use of an interactive whiteboard to provide pupils with a good insight into the history of mosaic making and the work of Gustav Klimt in particular. Year 6 pupils have visited an exhibition of photographs by Peter Day entitled 'Invisible Boundaries', in which everyday objects are presented in unusual ways. The pupils took photographs using a digital camera, which they transferred to the computer and using a program called 'Paint Shop' skilfully changed the colours and form to produce fascinating images.

114. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and has worked hard to improve the art and design provision since the last inspection. There is now a policy and scheme of work to assist teachers in their planning. The co-ordinator monitors displays but has no opportunities to look at teaching and learning to ensure that pupils achieve well. Not all the junior classes use sketchbooks and there was very little 3D work in the school. There is a useful display of art from all classes in the hall to show progress from reception to Year 6. Assessment of pupils' skills and knowledge is satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

115. Standards in design and technology (D&T) are satisfactory overall. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in the provision for design and technology in the junior department, although there is still only limited evidence of pupils' reviewing, evaluating and improving their designs. The policy for the teaching of design and technology has been recently updated and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) scheme of work is being followed throughout the school. Long term planning for the subject shows that all the elements within the programmes of study are being covered. Much of the curriculum for design and technology is taught in conjunction with other subjects. For example the 5X5X5 Arts Project involved observational drawing that was used as a basis for the design and making of a large embroidered sculpture made out of parachute material. Year 6 pupils also use study of leaf skeletons to design and make machine stitched leaf sculptures; environmental photographs are used in an ICT package to generate an abstract image that is translated into an art/design collage. In the junior department there is an emphasis on textiles and the quality of work is high. There is evidence of food technology with Year 5 pupils adapting and changing biscuit recipes and making their own biscuits. Pupils also make and adapt models for use with ICT control packages and use hydraulics in designs for vehicles such as tipper trucks.

116. Infant pupils can plan and design using a range of materials. They can design and make a puppet, suggesting materials that can be used. They sew binka to create a repeated stitch pattern; they discuss seaming and evaluate the effectiveness of glue compared to other materials. Pupils design hinges and discuss which are the most effective; they plan and prepare a fruit salad deciding which are the best ingredients. They have used paper and card to design and make attractive articles such as Christmas cards and Chinese masks.

117. No teaching of design and technology was observed during the course of the inspection so it is not possible to make a judgement about its quality or the pupils' response to it. The quality and range of finished articles indicates that it is satisfactory.

118. The deputy headteacher took over the role of co-ordinator for design and technology in January 2002 and since his appointment he has developed a detailed and comprehensive policy with teachers that was ratified by governors in June 2002. He has familiarised staff with the scheme of work. Long term planning identifies which units will be taught in each term and the co-ordinator keeps a copy of the medium term plans for each year group. He has carried out an audit of resources and new resources have been purchased, as necessary. These are stored centrally in an orderly way in the co-ordinator's classroom where they are maintained in good order. There is no system for assessment in place and the co-ordinator has had no opportunity to monitor the teaching of the subject in order to get an overview of standards.

GEOGRAPHY

119. The last time the school was inspected, standards in geography were unsatisfactory at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Insufficient time was spent on teaching geography and statutory requirements for teaching the subject were not being met. Since that time satisfactory improvements have been made and statutory requirements are now being met. Pupils attain average standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, due to staffing difficulties there has been no co-ordinator for the last year to lead the subject forward. The headteacher has had an overview of the subject. Although the school now uses national guidelines to plan geography teaching and learning the policy has not been reviewed for some years and requires immediate updating.

120. No geography lessons were observed during the inspection but work sampling and pupil discussions indicate that teaching and learning is satisfactory. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of different locations. They learn to compare their own town with a country location. Year 1 and 2 visited a nearby village and produced an attractive guidebook containing maps, text and drawings. It was evident from the good quality of the presentation that the teachers had high expectations of pupils and ensured that they produced their guidebook carefully with good attention to handwriting and spelling.

121. In a successful cross-curricular topic, Year 3 pupils have learnt about the local environment of their town. They have made colourful posters debating the pros and cons of allowing traffic through the high street. They have collected and analysed data indicating how many people would like the high street closed to traffic. They understand how to locate specific places in the town using co-ordinates. The Internet is used by Year 4 pupils to research World Mountains. Generally, teachers take too few opportunities to use ICT and do not routinely use what pupils have already learnt in literacy and numeracy hours to support pupils' learning. Work sampling indicates that Year 5 and 6 pupils have covered an appropriate amount of work in geography. However the presentation of their work is not as good as that of younger pupils. Spelling and handwriting standards are weak and teachers use too many worksheets; this affects pupils' acquisition of knowledge and understanding.

122. Geography is in urgent need of a permanent co-ordinator to lead the subject in order to make the teaching and learning more consistent and challenging. Teachers use national guidelines to plan pupils' learning but the policy is out of date and teachers do not assess the pupils' work as regularly or as rigorously as they should.

HISTORY

123. By the end of Year 2 and 6, standards meet national expectations. The school has maintained standards since the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good.

124. By the age of seven, pupils understand the differences between everyday objects from the past and present day and record their ideas. For example, during one lesson the teacher had a selection of everyday objects from the past such as an oil lamp and flat iron. A 'washing dolly' was also introduced which quickly captured pupils' attention and interest and provoked excited discussion. They found it hard to believe that it was used to wash and clean clothes. From the analysis of pupils' previous work, it is clear that pupils understand and can sort objects into 'old' and 'new'.

125. By the age of 11, pupils achieve sound standards and have knowledge and understanding about the passage of time and different periods in the past. Year 6 pupils have

detailed knowledge about the lives of people in Ancient Greece. During a good lesson on the Battle of Thermopylae, pupils understood how a much smaller number of Greek soldiers were able to hold back for a while, the much larger number of Persian soldiers and why it was necessary to do so. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils were studying what it was like to be a child in Victorian Britain. They know that most children, who were of a similar age to themselves, worked. Boys were often sent up chimneys to sweep them clean and girls were scullery maids. From the analysis of pupils' previous work it would appear that pupils have detailed knowledge about the lives of people in Ancient Egypt. In their work on Ancient Greece, pupils had studied the houses, ships, clothes and architecture of that period. However, much of the work on Ancient Egypt was on published work sheets, which does not give the opportunity for pupils' to improve their personal writing skills. In the Year 5 class, pupils were studying the Romans. They visited the Roman baths and amphitheatre in Caerleon. During this visit they dressed up as rich or poor Romans and good use was made of a digital camera to record the event. There are good links with other subjects such as literacy, mathematics and art and design. For example, in art and design, making symmetrical Roman shields.

126. Most pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They enjoy history and work with enthusiasm; for example, in a Year 1 and 2 class, pupils tried hard to answer questions as to what old objects were made of, including the oil lamp; one pupil knew it needed oil to work. In a Year 6 class pupils showed good interest and enthusiasm when they were listening to the story of the Spartans. However, pupils' attitudes deteriorate when the pace of the lesson slows. Behaviour is good across the school.

127. The quality of teaching and learning is good in both key stages. In the good lessons teachers plan work carefully and pitch their teaching to the range of abilities within their class. In another lesson although satisfactory, pupils' behaviour deteriorated when the teaching lacked pace. However, it improved greatly and their interest became apparent when the learning support assistant came into the class dressed as a Victorian cook and a pupil as a maid. There was little evidence of pupils having the opportunity to discuss issues or work in groups. Therefore their social skills are not enhanced in this subject neither are their speaking skills. There was limited evidence that information and communication technology was used to support pupils' learning in any depth. Pupils' recorded work is usually untidily presented and includes many spelling mistakes even when key words have been written on the board. Many of the junior aged pupils can write in a cursive style. Although pupils' work is usually marked there are insufficient comments to tell the pupils how to improve their work.

128. There is no co-ordinator for history and this is unsatisfactory. There is therefore no formal monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in this subject. The policy is unsatisfactory. It should be revised in the light of national guidelines. The school follows a published scheme of work. However, the time given to history by the school is less than that recommended. There are no systems for assessing pupils' work and making comparisons with levels expected in the National Curriculum. This is unsatisfactory. Resources are adequate to meet the needs of teaching history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

129. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory overall. The curriculum opportunities available to pupils, the resources and the level of teachers' knowledge and understanding is much better than in 1998 when the school was last inspected. The absence of a computer suite until this term has limited the opportunities for pupils to use computers. Teachers have made adequate use of the computers available in classrooms but there are still insufficient opportunities identified for the use of ICT to support learning across the whole curriculum.

130. By the end of Year 2 pupils can use a simple word processing package to produce invitations with decorative borders, use a simple graphics programme and 'drag and drop' skills to dress a teddy. They can create pictures using an arts package, input information on holiday places into a simple database, take pictures of the local church using a digital camera. They can use packages such as 'Number Shark' and 'Starspell' to support their learning in numeracy and literacy.

131. By the end of Year 6 pupils can use the Internet to access information, use word processing to produce articles such as reports on visits. Year 5 pupils have used a publishing package to produce publications about the World Cup. They can use a 'branch' program to identify an article by its properties. They can use a programmable robot to draw regular polygons and develop this using screen Logo. Pupils can find out information using a resource package such as Explorapedia and enter and analyse the information in a database. They can also write simple programs to control a sequence of bulbs in traffic lights and a house simulation and control motors and sensors in Lego and other models.

132. Insufficient teaching was seen during the inspection to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching but the teaching that was observed was good. Year 1 and 2 pupils are already confident in using the computers in the very new computer suite. They can settle quickly to tasks and working co-operatively together. They are guided well, with clear, sequential instructions and are given good support. The pupils can log-on, retrieve and save their work and print copies. They are able to create a picture of themselves using techniques such as line drawing, spray can, fill and colour. They can change the colour of lines and fill spaces with different colours. They have good mouse control skills.

133. The deputy headteacher, who is the subject co-ordinator, took up post in January 2002 and since his appointment has done a great deal of work to develop ICT in the school. He has worked with staff to create a comprehensive policy for the teaching of ICT, which was ratified by governors in June of this year and he has ensured that all parents are aware of the schools' Internet Access Policy. He has compiled a portfolio that provides example of pupils' work in ICT and he is currently working on a booklet that describes the software that is available in the school, explaining what it does and the age group for which it is most suitable. All staff have undergone training and there are varying levels of expertise across the staff. The co-ordinator's own levels of knowledge and expertise are high and the new computer suite will be used to provide further in-house training for staff to raise their levels of confidence and competence. Resources for the teaching of ICT are good, with 17 computers in the ICT suite and at least two in every classroom. There is also an interactive whiteboard in the co-ordinator's classroom, which he uses effectively to support pupils' learning across the whole curriculum. There are plans to make further interactive whiteboards available for teaching. There is no effective system in place for assessing standards in ICT and there have been no opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor the teaching of the subject. This has been identified as an area for development in the ICT Development Plan.

MUSIC

134. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, throughout the school attain standards expected for their age and the majority enjoy their music making activities. Since the time of the last inspection, standards have been maintained. All pupils make satisfactory progress. The quality of teaching and learning is overall satisfactory and good in Year 6.

135. By the end of Year 2 pupils can play a variety of instruments with enthusiasm. They are beginning to understand notation and in the previous lesson had devised their own symbols; for example, a drawing of the tree meant they had to use wooden instruments. They can compare metal and wooden instruments and investigate which instruments vibrate longer. Pupils have learned to clap a steady rhythm but less able pupils have difficulty performing this task.

136. By the end of Year 6, pupils' singing shows good control of pitch and rhythm. Most pupils can use parts of their body to clap/slap rhythms. In the Year 3 class the teacher introduced the lesson by discussing the meaning of an orchestra and the role of the conductor. She ensured that pupils understood they must watch her (the conductor) to see when they should start and stop beating out the rhythm. Good introduction to notation and flash cards was used to tell the pupils what to do. Pupils followed these notation cards and enjoyed being 'conducted'. Pupils in Year 6 can play a variety of untuned percussion instruments correctly and take care of them. They know the difference between a glockenspiel and a xylophone. Pupils can demonstrate pitch on instruments such as the glockenspiel and xylophone and say whether it is a high or low sound that is being played.

137. Throughout the school, pupils' singing shows good control of pitch and rhythm. They sing tunefully together, especially during assemblies and hymn practice. However, pupils in Year 5 and 6 are less effusive and spontaneous in the contribution they make. Pupils are usually enthusiastic about their music; and this was apparent during hymn practice. They enjoyed listening to Mozart's Clarinet Concerto, which accompanied them as they walked into and out of the hall. The teacher concluded the session by referring to Mozart's own unfortunate life of unhappiness and his talents, which have lived on through his music. Pupils' moral, cultural and spiritual development was enhanced during this session.

138. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and good in Year 6. Pupils are extending their knowledge and understanding of more difficult rhythms. There were few opportunities observed where pupils composed and evaluated their music. In the best lesson, the teacher shared the learning intentions with the pupils, the pace of the lesson was brisk and pupils made good progress. She organised the class into four groups with instruments. Reading a story from India about three musicians, she conducted them in order to create music that matched the mood of the story. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed this activity. She also discussed how the pupils could distinguish between the glockenspiel and xylophone and reminded them that 'xylos' was the Greek word for wood. In all lessons observed pupils were extending the knowledge and understanding of correct musical vocabulary such as 'notation', 'pitch' and 'vibrating'. There was little evidence that information and communication technology is used to support this subject.

139. Several peripatetic specialist music teachers visit the school on a weekly basis. Pupils have the opportunities to learn the violin, flute and piano. The parents pay for these sessions. During the inspection one session was observed, with two pupils learning the violin. The teaching and learning was good during this lesson. The pupils had obviously practised at home and the teacher was pleased about the progress they had made.

140. The co-ordinator is very keen and enthusiastic and supports the rest of the staff as and when required. She has no non-contact time to monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning across the school. There are no assessment systems in place to ascertain how well the pupils achieve. This is unsatisfactory. She has produced a new scheme of work that supports teachers' planning. However, the amount of teaching time allocated to music across the school is below national recommendations. Every year the co-ordinator is responsible for producing major musicals in which all pupils and staff take part. Every two years she produces a pantomime with the staff and ex-pupils. There was little evidence that pupils have the opportunity to listen to visiting musicians. Resources are adequate to meet the needs of teaching the music curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

141. Standards in physical education meet national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The picture was much the same in the last inspection. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There is no difference in standards between boys and girls. Accommodation has improved considerably as during the last inspection there was no hall, due to rebuilding after the fire.

142. Infant pupils work enthusiastically in gymnastic lessons. In a good lesson, Year 1 and 2 pupils learn to create and copy a series of movements on the floor and on benches. Teaching is lively and challenging; pupils are managed very well and have clear instruction so that they know exactly what to do. Pupils with special educational needs are skilfully encouraged to participate. The teacher provides an interesting range of actions for pupils to perform and constantly challenges pupils to improve their performance, saying 'I'm seeing lots of good actions but you're not using high and low movements enough'. Pupils respond well to this lively inspirational teaching and work hard to improve their performances.

143. Teaching and learning is satisfactory in the juniors. This represents an improvement in the unsatisfactory teaching seen during the previous inspection. Year 4 pupils make appropriate gains in developing the skills needed for netball. Year 5 pupils practise striking and fielding techniques and Year 6 learn to show hunger and desperation through dance when they portray the feelings of Irish people during the Potato Famine of 1840. In the Year 6 dance lesson pupils were successfully encouraged to evaluate each other's performances. This does not always happen in all physical education lessons in the juniors and is an area for improvement. Teachers control pupils well in physical education lessons and plan a good variety of interesting activities. Junior pupils learn to swim in a nearby pool and standards are average. By the time they leave school all pupils can swim at least 25 metres and many exceed this.

144. The enthusiastic, fit and knowledgeable co-ordinator provides good leadership. There are no opportunities for her to look at teaching and learning in other classes or to teach 'model' lessons to share good practice. She has established useful links with sporting organisations, which has resulted in increased funds to buy new equipment. There are a suitable number of after school physical education clubs, which makes an important contribution to pupils' personal and social development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

145. Standards in religious education at the ages of seven and 11 are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Only one religious education lesson took place during the inspection so judgements about standards and progress are based on work sampling. Pupils are attaining standards similar to those found during the previous inspection despite the fact that there has been no co-ordinator for the last year. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

146. Year 1 and 2 pupils learn about festivals and celebrations. They enjoyed celebrating the Hindu festival of Holi. They have used the computer to record their feelings about special days such as Father's Day and one pupil writes: "It was special to me because he cares about me and my brother". A local minister performed a stimulated christening, which extended the pupils' knowledge and understanding of celebrations. Pupils visited the local church and learnt new many new words such as 'font' and 'pulpit'. Standards of presentation were satisfactory.

147. Junior pupils develop a sound understanding of the central beliefs and traditions of various world faiths. For instance, Year 5 pupils study Islam. Year 3 pupils learn about the Last Supper and the Ten Commandments. There was no work for Year 6 included in the sample, but planning indicates that they are learning about sacred texts and in particular the importance of the Qur'an to Muslims.

148. Junior pupils' weak spelling and poor handwriting hinder their progress in religious education. Presentation of work is not good enough and the subject urgently requires a co-ordinator to monitor standards and presentation. Some new resources have been purchased to enhance the school's provision in the subject. However the time allocated to teach religious education is still not sufficient, just as it was at the time of the last inspection.