

INSPECTION REPORT

BARRS COURT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bristol

LEA area: South Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 109136

Headteacher: Mrs Barbara Fox

Reporting inspector: Brian McCutcheon
2420

Dates of inspection: 27 – 30 January 2003

Inspection number: 246877

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Stephens Drive Barrs Court Bristol
Postcode:	BS30 7JB
Telephone number:	01454 867799
Fax number:	01454 867798
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Keith Hartley
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2420	Brian McCutcheon	Registered inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
1333	Elizabeth Forster	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 the parents?
2414	David Westall	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
3349	Jacqueline Ikin	Team inspector	Information and communication technology History Music Foundation Stage	
3856	Sandy Wellsted	Team inspector	English Religious education Special educational needs	Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development

The inspection contractor was:

OASIS
Waterstone Cottages
Naunton
Nr, Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL54 3AS

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33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

There are 286 pupils on roll, aged from four to 11 years. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average, and the proportion identified as having special educational needs is average. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Two pupils speak English as an additional language but none are at an early stage of English language acquisition. On entry to reception there is a broad spread in pupils' standards and some significant variations between different year groups. Overall, standards on entry are broadly average but with some weaknesses, notably in mathematical development and in communication and language skills.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school that benefits from effective leadership and management, and from a committed and able staff. The quality of teaching is a key strength, particularly in the reception classes and in Years 3 to 6, and pupils make good overall progress in their learning. Very good provision is made for pupils' personal development, and this is reflected in their attitudes and behaviour. The school is justifiably held in high regard by parents and provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in Year 6 are well above average in art and design; and above average in science, music, geography and dance. Pupils in Year 6 also achieve standards that are above those outlined in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
- Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics in relation to their starting points.
- Teaching was good, or better, in three-quarters of all lessons observed during the inspection.
- The school is very well led and managed.
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good; and relationships are also very good.
- Pupils benefit from a rich range of learning opportunities in the arts, across the school.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development is very good; and for their cultural development is excellent.
- There is a strong partnership between the school and parents, and parents rightly hold the school in high regard.
- The school is a caring community where the welfare of pupils is given a high priority.

What could be improved

- The annual reports for pupils, which do not meet statutory requirements.
- The provision for pupils' physical development in the reception classes.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved significantly since the last inspection. While 17 per cent of all lessons demonstrated unsatisfactory teaching when the school was last inspected, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed in the current inspection. Indeed, most of the teaching in the reception classes and in Years 3 to 6 was good; and older pupils also benefited from some very good and excellent teaching. Standards are considerably higher now in art and design, music, design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT); and very effective procedures are currently

used to assess pupils' progress and standards. The governors have become increasingly involved in the management of the school and in the evaluation of its work; and monitoring by the senior management team, and subject co-ordinators, is now good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	D	B	C
Mathematics	B	D	B	B
Science	B	B	A	A

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

The table shows that, in English, the results of the 2002 Year 6 statutory tests were above the national average and in line with the average results of similar schools. In mathematics, the school's results were above the national average and the results of similar schools; while in science, they were well above both. These results are a significant improvement on those for 2001. Current standards in Year 6 are not as high as in the last academic year because of the lower proportion of more able pupils in this year group. Overall, pupils' achievements are above average in science and in line with the national expectation in English and mathematics. Nevertheless, the standards achieved by these pupils reflect good achievement given their starting points.

Pupils' achievements in art and design are a key strength of the school and their standards are well above average. In Year 6, standards in music, geography, religious education and dance are above average and, in all other subjects, are in line with those expected nationally.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are keen to learn and have very positive attitudes to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good, throughout the school day.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. Pupils work amicably on shared tasks and respect each other's opinions. They are aware of the needs of others and this is reflected in their caring behaviour.
Attendance	Attendance is good and there are low levels of unauthorised absence. Punctuality is good and sessions start on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons observed and was good, or better, in three-quarters of these. This represents a significant improvement since the 1997 inspection when almost two out of every ten lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. The most effective teaching was in the reception classes where seven out of every ten lessons were good; and in Years 3 to 6, where the vast majority of lessons were at least good and four out of every ten were very good or occasionally, excellent. Lessons are characterised by very positive relationships between teachers and pupils, thorough planning informed by very good assessment procedures, clear explanations of tasks and good organisation.

In the reception classes, teachers have high expectations of learning and behaviour; and they provide regular and good opportunities for children to develop key literacy skills and to gain a secure understanding of mathematics. In Years 1 to 6, the teaching of English is mainly good, sometimes very good and occasionally excellent. Mathematics teaching is mainly satisfactory and sometimes good in Years 1 and 2; and is mainly good, and occasionally very good, in Years 3 to 6. The teaching in science is sound in Years 1 and 2 and is good in Years 3 to 6.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good range of learning opportunities is provided for children in the reception classes and they make a good start. There is a good balance between teacher directed activities and those which are chosen by the children. However, the lack of a spacious and fully secure outside play area inhibits some important elements of their learning. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is broad and well balanced; and the school's rich provision for the arts is a significant strength.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. All staff are aware of the targets in pupils' individual education plans and, with the good support of learning support assistants, teachers ensure that pupils have suitably challenging work.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development; and provision for their cultural development is excellent.

How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a very caring community where pupils' welfare is a high priority, and all children are valued. Weaknesses in the assessment of pupils' academic standards and progress, identified in the last report, have been addressed very rigorously. As a consequence, assessment procedures and the use of assessment information are now key strengths in the school's work.
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HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is very experienced and able. She is a strong presence in the school, knows pupils well and provides a clear sense of direction. Her energy and clear thinking contribute very significantly to the school's success. She motivates staff very well, fostering team work and a shared commitment to school improvement. She has established a climate where all are valued, where pupils' personal development is a priority and where the quality of life is very good. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has made a good start and all co-ordinators are leading and managing their subjects effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The school benefits from a committed governing body which makes a positive contribution to the life of the school. Committees function efficiently and strategies for monitoring the school's work have been improved since the last inspection. A good school development plan has been formulated and this is a valuable management tool which ensures that staff and governors are well informed about the school's priorities. All statutory requirements are met apart from those relating to the information provided in pupils' annual reports.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and the co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science analyse statutory test results carefully, observe teaching, scrutinise examples of pupils' work and talk to pupils about their learning. Valuable feedback is provided for teachers, which informs their planning and benefits their professional development. Governors are informed of the results of statutory testing; and they are appropriately linked to subject co-ordinators in order to improve their knowledge and understanding of curriculum developments.
The strategic use of resources	Overall, the school makes very good use of available resources, and the principles of best value are applied.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
They believe that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the school is well led and managed;• teaching is good and children make good progress;• children have good behaviour;• the school has high expectations for work and behaviour;• their children are happy at school.	Some parents would like: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• improvements in homework;• more information on progress.

Inspection findings fully support parents' positive views about the school. The school provides parents with satisfactory information about their children's progress apart from through annual reports that currently do not include separate comments on all subjects. The quality and quantity of homework set were found to be similar to that in most schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. On entry to the school, there is a broad spread in children's standards and some significant variations across different year groups. Generally, the personal and emotional development of most children are at the level expected but their social development is below average. Children's physical skills are commensurate with their age but their mathematical development, and communication and language skills, are a little below those expected when they start school. As a result of good teaching in the reception classes, children acquire a firm foundation of literacy and numeracy skills and make good progress in all areas of learning. Most reach the standards expected for their age by the end of the reception year and this prepares them well for their work on the National Curriculum in Year 1.
2. The results of the 2002 Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) for pupils in Year 2 were above the national average and the average results of similar schools in reading. In writing and mathematics, the results were in line with the national average and those of similar schools. The 2002 SATs results in Year 6 were well above the national average and the average results of similar schools in science. In English, they were above the national average and in line with the average results of similar schools; while in mathematics, the school's results were above the national average and those of similar schools. These results represent good achievement, given pupils' starting points at the school.
3. In English and mathematics, inspection findings show that pupils make mainly sound, and sometimes good, progress in Years 1 and 2; and mainly good, but sometimes very good, progress in Years 3 to 6. Variations in the make up of individual year groups, which are identified through baseline assessments, are reflected in inspection findings. Those pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6, for example, achieve overall standards that are broadly average, largely because of the relatively small proportion of pupils who exceed the standard expected. However, over time, all pupils build well on their prior attainment and make good progress in relation to their starting points. No significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls were evident during the inspection.
4. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are given a thorough grounding in initial literacy. By the age of seven, most pupils read simple texts confidently and are able to draw on an appropriate range of strategies, such as their knowledge of phonics, to decode print. Higher attaining pupils read accurately, fluently and expressively and their comprehension skills are above average. In writing, most pupils aged seven show a particular talent for retelling familiar stories demonstrating a good grasp of sentence and story structure and some awareness of the reader. They use capital letters and full stops appropriately. The most advanced learners have well-developed narrative skills and their work clearly reveals the influence of what they have read and what they have been taught.
5. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils relish reading. They read widely from a suitable range of fiction and non-fiction and have a good understanding of the structure and language of various types of text. Pupils know how to use a library, the Internet and CD ROMs to locate information and, almost all, are capable of organising and communicating their findings in their own words. They can analyse successful

models of writing and draw on this knowledge and understanding to inform their own writing. The written work of higher attaining pupils is impressive in its mastery of structure, style and form, and also demonstrates a high degree of technical accuracy. Average and lower attaining pupils do not yet apply their skills and knowledge so consistently and weaknesses include persistent errors in spelling, the inappropriate use of informal language, grammatical mistakes and erratic punctuation. Pupils do not always transfer handwriting skills they have practised to their other written work and, as a consequence, the presentation of work, particularly in Years 2, 3 and 4 could sometimes be better.

6. From Year 1 onwards, almost all pupils listen well and demonstrate good powers of concentration. However, although higher attaining pupils are also articulate, there are a significant number of pupils in all age groups whose speech has not developed at the same pace as their other language skills. In many cases, these pupils choose to remain silent during whole-class discussions; and do not always adapt their spoken language appropriately to suit particular purposes and audiences.
7. In mathematics, pupils in Years 1 and 2 steadily develop key numeracy skills and their understanding of shape, space and measures. They acquire a secure knowledge of place value, can describe and extend number sequences and are learning to employ the correct number operations when making calculations. By Year 6, most pupils have a secure understanding of the number system and work confidently with data. They are able to apply their skills when solving problems both in mathematics and other subjects, such as science. In both mathematics and science there is scope for teachers, in Years 1 and 2 in particular, to allocate more time to encourage pupils to talk and explain their understanding.
8. In science, pupils make sound progress in their learning in Years 1 and 2, and standards are broadly average. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' progress increases and is good overall. As a consequence, overall standards are above average in Year 6. Current standards in Year 6 are not as high as in the last academic year because of the lower proportion of more able pupils in this year group. However, the standards achieved by these pupils reflect good achievement given their starting points and represent a significant improvement since the last inspection.
9. Pupils' achievements in art and design are a key strength of the school. They make very good progress in the subject and their standards are well above average, including in Years 2 and 6. This is a significant contrast to the findings of the last inspection when standards were judged to be average and pupils' progress found to be satisfactory. Pupils also make very good progress in music throughout the school and achieve standards that are above national expectations. The standards achieved by the choir are exceptional and this is a strength of the school. Standards were judged to be in line with expectations in the last inspection. In physical education, only the 'dance' strand was taught during the inspection. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 make good progress in dance while those in Years 5 and 6 make very good progress. As a consequence, standards are above average in Years 2 and 6.
10. There has been a marked improvement in ICT since the last inspection and, throughout the school, pupils now make good progress in this subject. They achieve the standards that are expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils apply their skills well in the course of their work in other subjects. In geography and religious education, standards are above the national expectation in Year 6 because of the good progress which pupils make in Years 3 to 6. The last inspection judged progress in geography to be unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. It is not possible to make

an overall judgement about the standards achieved by pupils in either subject in Years 1 and 2 because of the limited amount of completed work available for scrutiny. However, evidence suggests that pupils make sound progress in geography. In history, pupils make good progress across the school and standards are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils make sound overall progress in design and technology in Years 1 to 6. As a result, standards are broadly average in Years 2 and 6, representing sound achievement. There has been a significant improvement since the last inspection in the progress made by pupils in Years 3 to 6, and in pupils' standards in Year 6, which were below average.

11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the vast majority of lessons. When account is taken of their starting-points, the results they attain represent good achievement. Indeed, it is by no means unusual for pupils with special educational needs to make up lost ground and to achieve the expected standards for their age in national tests for pupils aged seven and 11. There are currently only two pupils for whom English is an additional language. Both are bilingual, and they are making good progress within mainstream classes.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils of all ages and abilities are happy at school and have very positive attitudes to learning. With very rare exceptions, they have a strong desire to work hard and are diligent in lessons, doing their best to meet teachers' high expectations. They concentrate well, listen carefully and respond quickly to instructions. They are keen to get on with the work set for them and, on occasions, continue at home with tasks that interest them, using their own initiative. Work is well presented and pupils are proud when it is displayed. They work well independently and can be trusted to remain on task when unsupervised. Homework is nearly always completed conscientiously. In most lessons, pupils are eager to answer questions and share their views when asked. However, occasionally, when the pace of the lesson is slow or questions are not sufficiently challenging some do not volunteer answers although they appear confident about what is being asked. By contrast in the best lessons seen, particularly in music and dance, all pupils throw themselves wholeheartedly into the task and are reluctant to stop as the lesson comes to an end. Pupils are keen to take advantage of the wide variety of extra-curricular activities on offer and are excellent ambassadors for their school when performing in the community or going on educational visits.
13. Standards of behaviour are very high and make for a positive and caring community where high self-esteem is the norm. Because each child is valued and included, and the staff are clearly keen to provide help and encouragement, pupils quickly develop a confidence about school life and routines that enables them to strive towards the high expectations set by their teachers. Pupils are friendly and confident when talking to each other and are polite to adults. They are helpful and keen to take on tasks such as collecting in books and tidying resources. Older pupils enthusiastically undertake whole-school responsibilities such as 'manning' the external doors at breaktimes; and are reliable and trustworthy when providing cover in the school office at lunchtimes. Behaviour at playtimes is lively but sensible and because they know that adults will listen to their concerns, problems are quickly addressed. Consequently, instances of bullying or racist name-calling are rare.
14. Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils listen well to each other in lessons and are good at sharing resources. They work well in pairs and are happy to support each other, for example, when using computers. In group work during Year 5/6 dance lessons, pupils demonstrated excellent collaboration resulting in a

performance in which all could take a pride. Older pupils enjoy being able to play with younger ones at lunchtimes and boys and girls mix happily together both at work and at play. Pupils respond well to the planned opportunities to talk about their feelings or other aspects of personal and social education and consequently develop mature and thoughtful attitudes. The recently created School Council, with representatives from each class, has prompted sensible ideas for improving playground equipment and further fostered a sense of pride and ownership of the school.

15. Attendance at the school is good and there are low levels of unauthorised absence. Registers are completed correctly at the start of each session and this daily procedure is made more interesting for pupils by being carried out in other languages. Punctuality is good and sessions start on time.
16. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all aspects of school life and are valued members of the community. They receive the support and warmth they need to succeed, and their successes are celebrated by their peers as well as by staff. The school's inclusive ethos is at the same time unobtrusive but all encompassing. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are given opportunities to shine in fields in which they have strengths, and their self-esteem is assured. However, in a minority of lessons there is not enough challenge for the more able pupils in Year 2.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons observed during the inspection, and was good, or better, in three-quarters of all lessons seen. This represents a significant improvement since the 1997 inspection when almost two out of every ten lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. The most effective teaching is in the reception classes where seven out of every ten lessons were good, or better; and in Years 3 to 6, where the vast majority of lessons were at least good and four out of ten were very good or excellent.
18. Teaching in the reception classes is good, overall. The teachers have a good understanding of the needs of young children, and provide ample opportunities for them to take part in practical and purposeful activities. They have high expectations of learning and behaviour and, as a result, good habits are quickly established. Both teachers provide regular opportunities for the development of literacy skills; and basic mathematical ideas are successfully promoted through well-focused direct teaching and the provision of a wide range of carefully planned practical activities. Teachers successfully foster children's curiosity and the confidence they need to explore; and all adults work skilfully alongside the children to help develop their language skills and imaginative ideas, for example, during role play. As a result of the effective teaching they receive, children develop positive attitudes to school and make good progress in their learning. However, the outdoor play area does not provide the opportunities that children need to explore the outdoor environment for themselves.
19. Overall, the teaching of English is mainly good, sometimes very good and occasionally excellent. Although teaching is most effective in Years 5 and 6, the cumulative effect of very thorough teaching throughout the school ensures that all pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points. A particular strength of the teaching is the emphasis placed on the links between reading and writing. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are generally good and they provide powerful models for pupils' own aspirations, for example, when they demonstrate the craft of writing. Pupils are made aware of what they are intended to

learn and teachers' marking, particularly in the older classes, helps them to improve. At every stage, planning and teaching are informed by assessment and this is a significant strength. Literacy targets, special educational needs support and the use of 'banding' all serve to ensure that pupils are suitably challenged. However, in Years 1 and 2, it is sometimes difficult for teachers to meet the needs of all pupils during shared text work, given the age and ability range in these mixed year groups.

20. In mathematics, the teaching is mainly satisfactory, and sometimes good, in Years 1 and 2; and is mainly good, and occasionally very good, in Years 3 to 6. Teachers make good use of mathematical display to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding of mathematical vocabulary; and resources are well organized and used effectively to support pupils' learning. Teaching points are clearly explained to pupils; and teachers make effective use of the school's very good assessment procedures to inform their planning. In the best lessons, the pace is good, particularly in the mental/oral starter, teachers use skilful questioning and clear time limits are set for pupils to complete tasks. However, in some lessons, pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to talk about their calculations and explain their thinking.
21. In science, the teaching is sound in Years 1 and 2 and is good in Years 3 to 6. All teachers have secure subject knowledge and some, in the older classes, are well informed. Teachers plan their lessons well and know exactly what they expect pupils to learn. Assessment procedures are good and teachers are very well placed to judge pupils' achievements. In Years 3 to 6, teachers carefully reinforce scientific vocabulary during lessons and are particularly skilled at asking questions that probe pupils' understanding. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 sometimes require more guidance when undertaking simple investigations; and there is scope for teachers in these classes to allocate more time to encourage pupils to talk about their work and to explain their understanding.
22. The quality of teaching in music is very good overall, and in some lessons, including those taken by the co-ordinator, it is excellent. As a result, pupils throughout the school make very good progress, enjoy music and participate enthusiastically in all aspects of the subject. In ICT, pupils make good progress because of the good teaching they receive. Teachers are confident and knowledgeable about ICT; and the organization and management of pupils provides good opportunities for pupils to plan and collaborate together.
23. In physical education, good teaching of dance was observed in Years 1 to 4 and very good teaching in Years 5 and 6 enabling pupils to make good progress across the school. The teaching of religious education was also very good in Years 5 and 6 and was otherwise sound. In contrast to the provision found during the last inspection, religious education is now appropriately taught. However, in Years 1 and 2 in particular, there is scope to improve the emphasis given to the spiritual dimension. Due to timetabling arrangements, insufficient lessons were observed in art and design, history, design and technology and geography, to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in these subjects. However, evidence shows that the teaching enables pupils to make very good progress in art and design; and good progress in history across the school and in geography in Years 3 to 6. Pupils make sound progress in geography in Years 1 and 2 and in design and technology throughout the school.
24. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is mainly good and sometimes very good. A significant feature of the teaching is the emphasis on raising self-esteem through genuine achievement. Irrespective of who is teaching, pupils are always

expected to think for themselves and to engage boldly with new concepts. All staff expect pupils to be able to learn, and they do their best to ensure that pupils with special educational needs acquire the knowledge, skills and strategies they need to become independent and successful learners. A further strength of special educational needs teaching lies in the fact that teaching, as for other pupils, is fully informed by the results of assessments and by regular reviews of progress.

25. Support for the one pupil with a statement of special educational needs is effective, and advice from external agencies involved in supporting several pupils with speech and language difficulties is used appropriately. The learning needs of pupils with moderate learning difficulties are met well. For example, learning support assistants are both competent and well informed and play a valuable role in helping these pupils to play a full part in lessons, particularly in literacy. In numeracy lessons, a 'setting' system based on stages of mathematical development works well for pupils with special educational needs whose work is planned at appropriately challenging but accessible levels. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are also 'set' for literacy. Here, they benefit from very good and sometimes excellent teaching which has a very significant impact on their progress. Various intervention programmes designed to boost pupils' achievements in literacy and numeracy are taught to small groups of pupils, some of whom have special educational needs. These programmes are sometimes delivered by trained learning support assistants who have established very good relationships with their groups. Their input is rigorous, their expectations of pupils' appropriately high, and, as a result, pupils make good progress during these sessions.
26. During mainstream lessons in subjects other than literacy and numeracy, class teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs have suitably challenging work and give them the support they need. Their feedback to pupils, like the marking of written work, is constructive and shows pupils how to improve. All staff are aware of the individual targets included in pupils' individual education plans. It is not unusual for teachers to refer to these in the course of discussion, drawing attention to particularly relevant opportunities for learning as they arise. Where appropriate, pupils at similar stages or with similar identified learning needs are grouped together for intensive input on areas of weakness in their work, for example during guided writing and reading sessions. Both class teachers and learning support assistants make strenuous efforts to hear individual pupils read when one-to-one interaction of this kind is viewed as necessary.

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

27. The school provides a rich curriculum for children in the reception classes which is securely based on national guidance. It ensures that children make a good start and gives appropriate emphasis to the importance of their personal and social development as well as their basic skills in literacy and numeracy. A good range of learning opportunities is available, and there is a well judged balance between instruction by staff and opportunities for children to learn through practical activities, including play. The lack of a fully secure outside play area does, however, sometimes serve to inhibit elements of children's learning.
28. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is broad, well balanced and meets statutory requirements. While provision is good, overall, for pupils in Years 1 and 2, the planned curriculum is implemented particularly well in the older classes where the teaching is even more effective. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection when the curriculum was too narrow in some subjects. As a result, a

balanced coverage of the requirements of the National Curriculum was not achieved in 1997, and statutory requirements for ICT were not met. Currently, curriculum planning is good and is ensuring that pupils are able to develop key skills and knowledge, across the curriculum, in a systematic manner. Sufficient time is allocated for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, and effective use is made of this time, especially in Years 3 to 6. The school's rich provision for the arts is a significant strength. As a result, pupils often excel in their work in art and design, music, drama and dance.

29. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is well planned and effective. Pupils have ample opportunities to express their feelings in group discussions and to develop their awareness of the importance of positive relationships with others. In addition, pupils are made aware of the dangers of drug misuse and the importance of healthy eating. Good provision is also made for sex education, and pupils benefit from a well judged programme which includes talks by the school nurse.
30. The curriculum is considerably enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. After school clubs are plentiful and popular with the pupils, and there are many opportunities for pupils to learn from educational visits. In Years 5 and 6, pupils also benefit from residential trips, and the older pupils are particularly looking forward to the annual visit to France. This visit links well with the school's programme of French teaching, which also serves to enrich the quality of the curriculum for all pupils.
31. The strength of links established with the community makes a very positive contribution to the richness of the curriculum. These support the school's provision of a wide variety of opportunities that enable pupils to experience and participate in creative arts activities. For example, the choir performs with a local brass band and the recorder ensemble is consistently successful in winning the Bristol Eisteddfod Cup. Dance groups are invited to the school as part of topics relating to other cultures and local experts contribute to creative arts week projects. Sound links have been established with the nearby supermarket and these enable pupils to benefit from mathematics trails around the store and some additional funding. Representatives from two local churches lead some assemblies; and pupils visit the church and other places of worship as part of their studies in religious education.
32. The school also benefits from strong links with other schools and institutions. For example, subject leaders have the opportunity to meet with others to discuss best practice in teaching key skills across the curriculum, and this knowledge is well used to inform planning. Specialist training for the subject leader in sport is being funded from lottery funds through a local secondary school; and pupils are encouraged to play a wide variety of sports. Some represent the school in matches and competitions against other local schools and as part of authority wide championships. Teachers are also participating in a project to track pupils' progress in science in the primary school and the first three years at secondary school and this mutually improves the provision and expectations for pupils. Close links have been established with the University of the West of England and, in addition to providing placements for teachers in training, the school participates in interesting research studies such as the promotion of men in primary education. This outward looking approach not only broadens pupils' horizons but also stimulates the staff in delivering exciting opportunities for them.
33. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and to extra-curricular clubs. The breadth of the curriculum and the close links with other schools enriches learning

opportunities, particularly for gifted pupils, in physical education, modern foreign languages, art and music. Topics and theme weeks are also planned so that the richness of other cultures and religions can be explored and celebrated through their art, music, dance, literature and beliefs. Teachers encourage pupils to write to other children in schools visited by them, when taking up opportunities for funded visits abroad, and this gives pupils another international dimension to their learning.

34. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, and provision for their cultural development is excellent.
35. The ethos of the school both promotes and reflects respect at all levels, and very good relationships underpin pupils' spiritual development. Through their high aspirations for pupils and through their own conduct, staff present themselves as models to be emulated. They demonstrate high achievement, promote a spirit of adventure and, through their teaching in various subjects, show pupils the best that has been thought and accomplished in many spheres of human experience. Most staff are at ease discussing abstract values such as friendship or compassion with their pupils, and the best teachers give equal weight to practical and spiritual matters. In religious education lessons, particularly with older pupils, in assemblies and in PSHE, pupils are taught to consider the feelings of others and to reflect upon their own. In Years 5 and 6, thoughts for the week promoting spiritual themes are reinforced when teachers make relevant links to practical examples in pupils' daily lives. When singing, pupils are brought to a particularly high standard of performance that generates an almost tangible sense of harmony and that has a spiritual dimension. In some classes and in some subjects, teachers plan occasions with the explicit intention of providing spiritual experiences. For example, in science, the youngest pupils are encouraged to wonder at the beauty of snowflakes drifting on the wind. In a similar way, during a ceremony commemorating the 10th anniversary of the school, pupils are given pause to wonder when balloons are released and sail skywards, each one representing a child, past or present, who has been, or who is still, a pupil.
36. Through example and through explicit teaching, pupils are taught to respect people, property and the environment. Teachers communicate their high expectations of good behaviour consistently and competently. Pupils are made aware of the need for rules in their lives, particularly those governing safety, and they are taught to realise, for example through studies in religious education, that rules are also a feature in the lives of other people in other places. They are taught to appreciate moral dilemmas such as the need to make the right decisions, and to make judgements about different models of behaviour, for example by deciding what kind of behaviour towards others counts as true friendship. Whenever possible, staff involve the pupils themselves in setting appropriate standards for behaviour. Pupils are variously involved in drawing up class rules, developing moral messages in 'thoughts for the day', and in making decisions that affect others. For example, members of the School Council weigh up ways of ensuring fairness in the use of playground facilities by different groups of pupils, while some older pupils are required to exert a positive influence on others' behaviour, for example by acting as door monitors or by supervising wet playtimes in younger classes.
37. In a wider context, opportunities are used well to promote pupils' concerns for the welfare of others and for the protection of the environment. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 consider the impact of human activity on an area of outstanding beauty (The Alps) and consider arguments for and against the development of new alpine resorts.

38. Pupils' social development is promoted very effectively, and there is a strong emphasis on inclusion. Teachers and other staff value each and every pupil, and, as a result, pupils learn to value themselves and to respect one another. There are many opportunities for pupils to work together and to engage in social activities. In lessons, pupils regularly work in pairs or in small groups, while the many clubs and extra-curricular activities provide rich opportunities for interaction. For example, the school choir and recorder groups enable pupils to learn about the benefits of co-operation in achieving shared goals, while various sports activities clearly demonstrate the value of collective effort and teamwork. Residential visits such as those made by pupils in Year 5 to Kilve Court and by pupils in Year 6 to Normandy give valuable opportunities for pupils to interact with their peers and with staff in settings which allow all involved to demonstrate new skills and new depths of character. The school's strong international links, for example with schools in Ghana and Italy, enable pupils to develop friendships with children from very different cultures and social backgrounds. Through involvement in arts projects and through drama, pupils enjoy regular opportunities to become involved in community projects, while the many specialists who visit the school to work with pupils open their eyes to new areas of expertise. By organising and contributing to collections for various charities, pupils are encouraged to develop responsibility for others less fortunate than themselves.
39. Provision for pupils' cultural development is excellent. The school strives to present pupils with as many opportunities for cultural development as it possibly can. Regular 'theme days' highlight phenomena as diverse as the Scottish stories of 'Katie Morag' and the lives of the ancient Romans. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and to understand many different kinds of text. They enjoy regular opportunities to participate in theatre workshops and in drama productions. Dance is a strong feature of the physical education curriculum, an energetic interpretation of 'rock and roll' providing the focus of activity in two lessons seen during the inspection. Historical periods are studied in considerable depth and detail, particularly in Years 3 to 6. These studies open powerful windows on the past that are often further enriched by visits to places of historical interest. Unusually, the curriculum also has a well planned international dimension. All pupils benefit from opportunities to learn French, and this provision is very effective. Links with schools abroad extend pupils' awareness of other cultures, while well planned arts weeks involve pupils of all ages in a very wide range of arts, crafts and musical activities with a strong multicultural dimension. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn to play the 'gamelan', (an instrument from Indonesia that resembles a xylophone), while pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn the art of African drumming. In art, pupils draw inspiration from the work of famous artists such as Kandinsky and Matisse. However, they are also taught to look carefully at work produced by talented but often unknown artists, for example, by studying and recreating aboriginal and African art and artefacts.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. Barrs Court is a school that recognises the importance of promoting a caring ethos and of having effective systems to ensure that pastoral, academic or other care needs are identified and supported. There is a strong sense of community, and relationships throughout the school are based on encouragement and respect. All staff know the pupils well and home/school diaries are particularly well used by parents and teachers to share information, not only on homework but on any other matters or concerns. This well organised and caring approach, based on good communication with parents, helps pupils to feel secure and confident about all aspects of school life and to develop very positive attitudes to learning.

41. Child protection issues are effectively dealt with and the staff are aware of the correct procedures. Pupils receive regular reminders about the importance of personal safety both through assemblies and as part of the programme of personal and social education. Pupils with particular medical or educational needs receive appropriate specialist support, when necessary, and teachers are sensitive and caring of pupils with particular behavioural or personal problems. Attendance and punctuality are well monitored and unexplained absences are followed up on the first day if children fail to arrive at school. This good practice not only emphasises the importance of good attendance but also acts as a safety check on children.
42. The school is very successful in promoting high standards of behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning. The policy, which appropriately places strong emphasis on praise and positive encouragement, is regularly discussed by teachers and by lunchtime supervisors so that it is consistently applied and minor difficulties are addressed. All adults in the school act as very good role models for the pupils, treat them with respect and set high expectations. Consequently, pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and are quick to listen and respond to instructions. Relationships between pupils are very good and they know that adults will listen to them if they have any worries or concerns. The very rare incidents of poor behaviour, bullying or racist name calling are properly documented, and dealt with effectively, by ensuring that pupils understand the impact of their behaviour on others. There have been no exclusions.
43. There is a detailed programme of induction for parents and children new to the school which is designed to overcome the disadvantages of not being able to make contact with them in their many pre-school settings. The visits before starting school, admission procedures, and the gradual increase to full-time attendance by the first half term, ensures the children gain confidence in their ability to cope with school routines.
44. Pupils benefit from a well planned and comprehensive programme of personal, health and social education which appropriately links with themes for assemblies and topics for each term. Appropriate attention is given to drugs awareness and personal safety education, including road safety. Healthy eating is effectively promoted and pupils are encouraged to drink milk at breaktimes. Opportunities for pupils to discuss their feelings or views are planned into the curriculum and this helps them develop positive attitudes to their peers and the school. This integrated and consistent approach makes a very positive contribution to the personal development of pupils.
45. The school's good health and safety policy includes useful guidelines about safe practice in lessons which are shared with pupils; and a range of appropriate risk assessments have been completed. The site is inspected each morning to check on potential hazards arising from petty acts of vandalism and termly checks of the building are carried out by the headteacher and governors. The buildings and grounds are kept clean, tidy, and in a good state of maintenance. Appropriate security measures are also in place. The school has custody of the adjoining historic moat and, although there is some fencing to separate this from the school field, the school recognises that in some areas this could be improved. Consideration should also be given to providing locks to the gates which give access to this area.
46. The school has a strong ethos of valuing each child regardless of ability or background and funding is available to ensure that all pupils can participate in

residential visits. The school also works closely with parents to plan how the needs of pupils with particular medical conditions can be met on day and residential trips.

47. When the school was last inspected, there were important weaknesses in the assessment of pupils' academic standards and progress, and in the use of assessment information to inform teachers' planning and pupils' targets. These weaknesses have been addressed very rigorously and effectively, so that assessment procedures and the use of assessment information are now key strengths in the school's work.
48. A good assessment policy has been formulated and is being implemented very well. Effective use is made of assessments made when children start at the school in order to inform early planning, and the reception teachers ensure that children's progress is carefully monitored and that action is taken to address underachievement. The results of the SATs are analysed very carefully by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. Indeed, the co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science have examined the individual responses of pupils in the Year 6 test papers of 2002 to identify specific areas where pupils did well or needed to improve. Each provided a clear analysis for their colleagues which helped to inform future planning and is benefiting pupils' progress. In their lessons, teachers are very clear about what pupils are expected to learn, and their plans usually identify the specific National Curriculum criteria that are to be addressed. This means that teachers are well placed to make accurate judgements about pupils' achievements. Teachers record pertinent assessments about the standards reached by individual pupils at the ends of units of work; and challenging but achievable targets are set for pupils in English, mathematics and science. Representative examples of work in these subjects are regularly selected for inclusion in portfolios for individual pupils, and these help to track their achievements. In addition, school portfolios assembled by co-ordinators in English, mathematics and science include assessed examples of a sample of six pupils for each year group, at varying stages of learning, to identify overall trends. In all subjects, teachers keep running records of pupils' achievements, and all co-ordinators have assembled evidence which gives them a secure overview of pupils' standards across the school, and enables them to advise their colleagues wisely. There are meetings for staff to examine examples of pupils' work, particularly in English, mathematics and science, to agree common interpretations of National Curriculum levels. These help to establish a shared perception by staff. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own achievements, and this was particularly evident in a science lesson observed during the inspection when pupils were encouraged to analyse their responses to a test paper. Teachers of pupils in Years 3 to 6 are particularly skilled at asking probing questions in their lessons to judge pupils' understanding and to identify their future learning needs. These teachers are able to provide very well judged feedback to their pupils during lessons. The quality of teachers' marking is good, overall, across the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The school has established a strong partnership with parents who rightly hold the school in high regard. From their first contact with the school, parents are given time to meet the staff and are very well provided with information. The 'starter pack' includes excellent guidance on how best parents can help their children to be well prepared for school life and how they can assist in the learning process. Teachers quickly get to know 'new' parents because children are initially admitted in small groups; and there is appropriate discussion with parents about how their children are coping with the gradual build up to full-time schooling. These good links are

maintained, throughout the school, by the effective use of home/school diaries for communicating information and by having ample opportunities to talk with teachers before or after school. Parents find staff easy to talk to, have confidence to raise any matters of concern, and trust that the school will do likewise.

50. The information provided for parents is very good. The prospectus and regular newsletters keep parents well informed and, in addition, they receive a booklet each term which outlines what is to be taught and the targets their child is working towards. Booklets on how to support reading at home are also provided for pupils of all ages. Parents are invited to class and celebratory assemblies and to participate in special activity weeks. Workshops are organised, from time to time, to provide information about how subjects are taught; and there has been a good response to a course for parents entitled 'Keeping up with children'. Expectations about the content and quantity of homework are shared with parents and inspection evidence suggests that homework is appropriately set and marked.
51. Parents have the usual number of opportunities to discuss the progress of their children with teachers, although, unusually, more emphasis is given to the consultation in the summer term when the annual written report is discussed. Parents have an opportunity to see their children's work at an open day in the spring term and can talk informally to the teacher at any time about how well their child is progressing. Annual written reports include detailed information on what has been taught during the year and specific comments about progress and targets for improvement in English and mathematics. However, only brief indications are given about standards attained and pupils' attitudes in some other subjects. The format used by the school does not allow for all subjects to be reported on individually and, as a consequence, does not meet statutory requirements.
52. For their part, parents are supportive of the school and their children's learning. Some parents are able to help regularly in classes or with extra-curricular clubs; and the annual bulb planting on a Saturday morning attracts a large number of families. A hardworking group of parents organises a variety of events for the Parents Association, raising useful additional funds to provide extra resources for the school. Parents are also included in the project to reduce vandalism of the school's grounds. The vast majority of parents give good support by hearing their children read and ensuring that homework is completed. The parents' commitment to the school and learning, sets a good example to their children which is reflected in pupils' positive attitudes to all aspects of school life.
53. The parents of children with special educational needs speak warmly of their appreciation of the school's efforts on behalf of their children. They are kept well informed about their children's progress and are invited to meetings when targets are reviewed and updated. Evidence shows that many parents value the school's work and support its efforts by helping their children with work at home.
54. The school has developed very good relationships with parents who are 'Exclusive Brethren' or 'Jehovah's Witnesses' consulting them in advance about the content of some areas of the curriculum to ensure their children's fullest participation, commensurate with their beliefs.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The school benefits from a committed governing body which makes a positive contribution to the life of the school. The chair of governors is a regular visitor, knows

staff and pupils well and works closely with the headteacher. Since the 1997 OFSTED inspection, significant progress has been made in relation to procedures which were judged to require improvement and, in particular, to enhancing the role of governors in reviewing the work of the school. A clear cycle for self evaluation and monitoring has been established which appropriately involves governors as well as key staff at the school. All governors are linked to a subject area and most have met with co-ordinators to discuss the school's provision. Some governors have been able to visit the school to observe it in operation and, in addition to providing verbal reports for the full governing body, have also compiled written reports of their observations. The headteacher ensures that governors are informed of the results of statutory testing and they have a sound awareness of the school's performance.

56. A committee structure is now fully established and governor committees meet regularly and function efficiently. The governors have a secure understanding of the school's financial position and ensure that the priorities in the development plan are properly costed. Expenditure is debated carefully and governors ensure the principles of best value are applied when using financial resources. The most recent audit report judged the school's financial systems to be satisfactory, overall. The school has reduced its spending in the current financial year because unexpected demands on the budget have eroded the carefully accumulated surplus achieved in recent years. The finance committee has formulated appropriate contingency plans should it be necessary to make further reductions in future years. Overall, the governing body provides sound support for the leadership and management of the school and, with the exception of pupils' annual reports, statutory requirements are met.
57. The headteacher is very experienced and able; and has very good leadership and management skills. She provides the school with a clear sense of direction and her strong presence, energy and clear thinking contribute very significantly to its success. The headteacher motivates staff very well, fostering teamwork and a shared commitment to school improvement. In addition to communicating her aspirations for pupils' academic achievements, she helps to create a climate in the school where all are valued, where pupils' personal development is a priority, and where the quality of life is very good. The headteacher knows pupils and their parents very well; and the vast majority of parents who completed questionnaires said they felt that the school was well led and managed. The headteacher monitors pupils' progress carefully through the analysis of test results; and scrutinises examples of pupils' work. She also meets with small groups of pupils from all age groups to discuss their progress. In addition, she observes lessons and provides teachers with helpful feedback which benefits their professional development. Her recognition of teachers' achievements and the support she provides for the development of their professional skills and expertise, ensure that all teachers feel valued and an integral part of the positive learning environment. As a consequence, staff morale and expectations are high and, over the years, a good number have gained promotion to senior positions. The deputy headteacher was appointed from within the school at the beginning of the current school year and has made a good start in this new role.
58. The weaknesses in the school development plan, which were identified in the last report, have been fully addressed by the school. The current plan has been formulated through good leadership by the headteacher and the effective involvement of staff and governors. It is well organised, providing detailed planning for initiatives in the current year and outline planning until 2005. The plan identifies relevant priorities, is a valuable management tool and is making an important contribution to school improvement.

59. All co-ordinators are leading their subjects effectively. They are highly conscientious and enthusiastic; and most have a good overview of provision and the standards which pupils achieve. The co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science have developed a good awareness of the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects through effective monitoring procedures. They analyse pupils' test results thoroughly, interview pupils, observe lessons and scrutinise examples of pupils' work. As a consequence, they are able to provide staff with helpful evaluations of their findings and to devise action plans for their subjects which target areas for improvement with appropriate precision. A number of co-ordinators have only recently assumed responsibility for their subjects but have benefited from working closely with the previous co-ordinator, where possible, in order to ensure continuity.
60. The special educational needs co-ordinator is effective in her role and provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place and are consistent with Code of Practice recommendations. All staff involved in supporting pupils with special educational needs receive suitable training and are well briefed about what pupils are intended to learn. Learning support staff are deployed very effectively. Their deployment has been based on an accurate but pragmatic evaluation of pupils' identified needs across the school as a whole. Good account is taken of individual and group needs as revealed by assessments, and, as a result, support is highly focused. The special educational needs co-ordinator has quickly established effective communication systems and teamwork amongst all staff involved in special needs work. Whenever relevant, she supports class teachers by helping them draw up appropriate individual education plans and by recommending useful resources and teaching strategies. There are constructive links with external agencies, and, overall, very efficient use is made of the school's available resources. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties in regard to special educational needs provision. The named governor with responsibility for oversight of the provision is supportive in his role. He keeps abreast of developments through regular contact with the special educational needs co-ordinator and by attending relevant training, and has established valuable links with parents.
61. Equal opportunities are embedded in the vision of the school. There are appropriate policies in place for equal opportunities and racial equality and all adults in the school promote a strong ethos of working in the best interests of each child. The progress of groups of pupils such as the more able is closely monitored and equality of provision across classes of similar aged pupils is secured through common planning. A particular focus on provision and the monitoring of progress of more able pupils is being implemented this year.
62. The accommodation provides sufficient space for pupils and is well used by the school. The environment is particularly stimulating, being enhanced by colourful and interesting displays of pupils' work and artefacts from around the world. It is kept in very clean condition by the conscientious caretaking staff and has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. In the current school year, the building of a new spacious, attractive and well-sited ICT suite has been completed; and staff are beginning to make regular and good use of this valuable facility.
63. There are sufficient teachers. They are able and committed, and have the expertise to cover the age and ability range of the pupils. Induction procedures are well organised and newly qualified teachers receive good support from the headteacher and their mentors. The school has made appropriate arrangements for performance management of teachers and these are benefiting the work of individuals and impacting positively on whole-school priorities. The school has effective learning

support assistants who make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, across the school. They are well briefed by teachers and develop very constructive relationships with pupils. The efficient administrative staff provide very good support and help to maintain the good day-to-day management of the school.

64. Overall, the school makes effective use of its resources and provides very good value for money. This judgement is informed by the overall quality of teaching and the provision for pupils' personal development which is a considerable strength and is reflected well in their very positive attitudes and behaviour.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. In order to meet statutory requirements regarding the information provided in pupils' annual reports; and to improve the provision for children in the reception classes, the headteacher and governors should:

1. ensure that all subjects of the National Curriculum are reported on separately in pupils' annual reports; and

(see paragraph 51)

2. improve provision for the physical development of children in the reception classes by ensuring that there is sufficient, secure outdoor space for large scale actions and movements.

(see paragraphs 18, 69 and 92)

In addition to the key issues above, the governors should also consider the following, less important, issue for inclusion in the action plan.

- Ensure that pupils' speech develops at the same pace as their other language skills by:
 - 1) encouraging more pupils to make a contribution during whole-class discussions;
 - 2) providing more opportunities, particularly in Years 1 and 2, for pupils to talk about and to explain their understanding.

(see paragraphs 6, 7, 20, 21, 104, 114, and 123)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	69
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	13	34	17	0	0	0
Percentage	7	19	49	25	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	286
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	66

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	23	22	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	21	22
	Girls	20	21	22
	Total	40	42	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (95)	93 (95)	98 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	22	21
	Girls	21	22	22
	Total	42	44	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (95)	98 (100)	96 (97)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	21	23	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	15	21
	Girls	21	18	22
	Total	36	33	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (78)	75 (62)	98 (95)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	17
	Girls	16	19	21
	Total	26	31	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (43)	70 (57)	86 (68)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	244	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	84

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	587,654
Total expenditure	570,999
Expenditure per pupil	1,744
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,930
Balance carried forward to next year	16,655

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8.8

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	286
Number of questionnaires returned	112

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	44	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	49	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	52	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	55	17	1	3
The teaching is good.	50	47	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	55	17	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	50	42	8	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	36	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	26	57	14	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	47	49	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	48	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	47	8	0	14

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

66. Provision for four and five year old children is good. It is underpinned by a secure curriculum which covers all the areas of learning recommended for children of this age; and which ensures a good balance between teacher directed activities and those which are chosen by the children. There are good procedures, based on national guidance, for keeping track of children's progress and assessing what children know, understand and can do. This information is used effectively to inform planning for future work. The good teaching that they receive ensures that children acquire a firm foundation of literacy and numeracy skills and that they make good progress in all the areas of learning. This prepares them well for their work on the National Curriculum in Year 1.
67. Children are admitted to the reception classes in the September of the year in which they become four. There are good arrangements to introduce children and their parents to the school. These include very useful booklets about the curriculum, and well planned opportunities for parents and children to visit the school. The children initially start school on a part-time basis, and this gradual introduction helps them to feel safe and secure from an early stage.
68. The links that the reception classes have with parents are good and have improved since the last inspection. They are able to meet with the teachers on a formal basis three times during the school year and parents report that they find the teachers friendly and approachable if they need to see them on other occasions. There are also important links with the school nurse, the health visitor and other schools in the area, all of which contribute effectively to the provision that the school makes for the children.
69. The reception classes share a large purpose built building which is close to, but separate from, the main building. The teaching area is very well organised and there is plenty of space for children to learn in practical ways. However, the outdoor area is too small to accommodate all the activities that young children need for their learning and development. Although teachers work hard to compensate for this, the paucity of provision limits opportunities for children to explore and experience the outdoor environment. It also inhibits their physical development and their mathematical understanding because there are limited opportunities for children to develop their movements and to explore direction, distance and speed on a larger scale.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. The personal and emotional development of most children are at the level expected when they enter school, but their social development is generally below average and many children find it hard to think and make decisions for themselves. Most children make good progress and reach the standards expected for their age by the end of the reception year because of the support and care that is provided, and the good teaching they receive.
71. Children quickly gain in confidence because of the consistent responses they receive from all the adults who work with them. Children's ideas are valued, particularly when adults take part in their play and accept their ideas. With encouragement, the children quickly begin to make decisions for themselves and to take responsibility for their

actions, for example, when choosing which activities they will take part in during planning time, and when tidying up at the end of a session.

72. Children gain a good sense of their own identity, and learn to respect themselves and others as a result of the atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding that is evident throughout the reception area, and the very good relationships that all the adults have with the children. They learn how to get along with their classmates because they are encouraged to work and play together in a range of situations. Children often have to be taught the language which makes for successful friendships and shown how to share equipment. As a result, most successfully take part in activities which require them to work together, and understand the importance of turn taking and sharing by the end of the reception year.
73. Children develop positive attitudes to their learning and gain confidence in their own ability to do things for themselves because of the good range of experiences which make learning enjoyable and which they can control. For example, resources in the role-play area are organised in such a way that the children can access them for themselves, as they need them, when they want to develop their own imaginative ideas.
74. The high expectations of learning and behaviour that the teachers have of the children are consistently reinforced and, as a result, good habits are established from an early stage. By the end of the reception year, most children are keen to do their best, respond well to their teachers' instructions and enjoy taking part in all the activities provided for them. There is good support for children with special educational needs. This helps these children to develop the confidence that they need to take part in lessons and ensures they make good progress.

Communication, language and literacy

75. Children's communication and language and literacy skills are a little below those expected for children of a similar age when they start school. A significant minority of children have difficulty in expressing their ideas clearly and have little respect for books when they start school. By the end of the reception year, most children reach the standards expected. This represents good achievement in relation to their starting points and is a result of the good teaching they receive and the well-focused teaching of basic literacy skills.
76. There is a wide range of opportunities for children to speak and listen to adults and to each other and to represent their ideas through role-play, pictures and model making. They listen with enjoyment to stories and sustain attentive listening during whole-class literacy sessions when they respond with relevant comments to their teachers' questions.
77. Children do not readily use language for thinking, and the absence of this important skill reduces the development of their reasoning and creativity, which are so important for later learning. Although they are able, with encouragement, to retell events to their classmates, they do not readily commentate on their actions or talk through their ideas and imaginative stories. Most children play either alone or alongside each other, and are only just beginning to develop the language skills that they need to co-operate with their classmates. The involvement of adults in children's play is having a beneficial effect in this regard; for example, the teaching assistant helped a group of children in the role play 'aeroplane' to negotiate who would be the pilot, and who would be the steward. She also helped them to resolve a dispute amicably over who should

use a particular piece of equipment. By the end of the reception year, most children are beginning to use the correct words to name objects and can retell their experiences in simple terms when asked to do so. However, they do not have a wide vocabulary and a small minority still have difficulty in pronouncing words correctly and speaking in grammatically correct sentences.

78. Many children have had limited experience of books before they start school. There are regular opportunities to take books home, to share high quality texts in whole-class literacy sessions, and to read and share books with each other and with their teachers. This ensures that all children enjoy looking at books and are aware of how they work by the end of the reception year. Most children show a good understanding of the sequence of a story, and can follow the events as the plot unfolds when they listen to stories being read aloud. For example, in the course of reading the familiar story of 'We're going on a Bear Hunt', the children joined in the repeated phrases with great enthusiasm and very good expression, predicting accurately what would happen when the characters in the story met yet another obstacle. Older and more able children can read simple stories independently and are able to tell their versions of the stories using their emerging knowledge of words and the clues from the illustrations.
79. As a result of the regular opportunities that are given for the development of basic literacy skills, most children learn the initial sounds of words and associate them with letters of the alphabet by the end of the reception year. Every opportunity is taken to draw children's attention to the written word and the letters that are within words. For example, in the course of a whole-class session, children were asked to say where they would hide from a bear. One child said that he would hide in the cupboard. The teacher used this information skilfully to model all the elements of the writing process. She said the sentence through with the children a number of times, counting the words and then the sounds within them. She then encouraged the children to help their classmate to think about which letters made each sound as he made his own attempt at writing the sentence, 'I would hide in my cupboard', on the board.
80. The children are actively encouraged to make their own attempts at writing from an early stage. All their early attempts at making marks are valued and, as a result, children develop the confidence they need to begin to write. Children are formally taught how to form their letters correctly through interesting and practical activities such as tracing letters in sand, as well as the more formal activities of tracing or copying letters. As a result, most children write their own name by the end of the reception year and many, with support, begin to write short phrases or simple sentences.

Mathematical development

81. When children enter the school at the age of four, their mathematical development is a little below the level expected for their age. They make good progress and achieve the levels expected by the end of the reception year as a result of the good teaching they receive.
82. Children gain a sound understanding of basic mathematical ideas as a result of well focused direct teaching and the provision of a wide range of well planned practical activities within the carefully planned environment. Children have regular opportunities to count and order objects. For example, they count the number of beads that they thread on a lace, take turns to say the next number as they sit in a circle, and respond well when challenged to count down from the number ten. As a result, most can count accurately from zero to ten and many can count well beyond this by the end of

the reception year. Opportunities for children to count real objects in a range of different ways help most children to develop an understanding that the last one in the count is the same as the number in the set. Children begin to gain an early understanding of addition and subtraction when they work out how many objects they have when one more is added to a set or one is taken away. Children are taught how to write numbers correctly and are gradually developing the skills that they need to record their own early calculations.

83. A good range of opportunities ensures that most children can identify and describe simple two-dimensional shapes such as squares, rectangles, circles, and triangles by the time they leave the reception classes. Opportunities to make models from construction equipment contribute to children's understanding of three-dimensional shapes. Play activities which involve the use of balances, sand and water are used well to help develop children's learning about shape, space and measure. For example, they explore what happens when objects of different sizes and weight are put on each side of a balance, they fill and empty containers with water, and they draw shapes in sand. Few make use of mathematical terms for themselves but do begin to understand the meaning of terms such as 'more' and 'less', 'full', 'half full' and 'empty', 'heavier' and 'lighter', because of emphasis put on language in the course of teaching, and the practical demonstrations of what the terms mean. Opportunities for children to develop their understanding of shape, space, and speed using larger dimensions are limited because the outdoor area is too small for large scale movements and explorations.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

84. Although most children have a limited knowledge and understanding of the world around them when they enter the school, they need to be encouraged to ask questions about what they see and to actively explore the world about them. They make good progress and reach standards expected by the end of the reception year as a result of the good teaching they receive.
85. Teachers encourage the children to show interest in their surroundings and, as a result, the children develop curiosity and the confidence they need to explore, and find out about the world around them. For example, the children have been asked to look for wheels at home and to bring them in to support their work on transport. The teachers then encourage the children to look very closely at the resulting collection, asking them to think what they might have been on and noting the similarities and differences in the way that they work. For example, how the supermarket trolley wheel differs from the wheel from the buggy.
86. Children have a good range of opportunities to develop their early understanding of place by talking about where they live. They also work on the computer to create maps of imaginary towns. In the course of this work, they accurately develop road systems and drag images of buildings into the correct places. Their ideas of place are extended through the introduction of maps into the role play area. For example, children are encouraged to look at a map and to decide where they are going in their 'airplane'. Their answers of 'Disneyland' and 'Australia', show some understanding of places further afield. Children develop a sound sense of the passing of time and of how things change over time by thinking about how they have changed as they grow older and by opportunities to talk with older people about their childhood. They also look closely at pictures from the past, such as those of old cars, and comment on how they are different from what they see now.

87. Children have opportunities to explore the natural world, not only by looking in their own school grounds, but also by being taken to places further afield, for example, they have visited a local mill and explored the woods to find out about the different creatures that live there. Opportunities to find out about the natural world are also given in the course of other activities, for example, they have looked closely at the patterns of different kinds of seeds, also noting their different colours and shapes. Where there are weaknesses in provision it is because the outdoor play area does not provide the opportunities that young children need to explore the outdoor environment for themselves.
88. Children in the reception classes have ample opportunities to investigate a range of construction materials and to learn how they can be fitted together to make objects of their own choosing. A very good range of opportunities helps the children to develop an understanding of cultural differences. For example, they look at books from different religious traditions, answer the register in French, listen to and sing songs from different countries, and look at art from a range of cultures.

Physical development

89. Children's physical skills are at about the level expected when they enter the school, although their manipulative skills are often limited and they have little sense of their own space in relation to others. As a result of the good teaching they receive, they make good progress and achieve the standards that are expected by the end of the reception year.
90. There are opportunities for children to develop their manipulative skills when using construction toys and when drawing and cutting. They are taught how to hold pencils and scissors correctly and this supports their work in other areas of learning. Opportunities for pouring sand and water from one container to another, for picking small objects such as sequins out of sand, and for rolling and pressing play-dough, also help them to strengthen their fingers and improve their manipulative skills and their hand-eye coordination.
91. Children develop their skills further by taking part in lessons in the hall where they learn to move safely with control and coordination. They develop a satisfactory awareness of their own space and that of others. For example, in a dance lesson the children developed the control of their movements well as they travelled in different ways to represent the movements of an aeroplane, changing directions, levels and speed as they 'took off' 'looped the loop' and 'landed'.
92. Children improve skills such as jumping, skipping and running as they play alongside their classmates at play time. They also have time to explore and refine their movements and actions outdoors on tricycles and other equipment in the course of lessons. However, the size of the hard play area that is available is too small to help them develop control of their large scale actions and movements. For example, there is not enough space for them to engage in bursts of fast pedalling and changing of direction to avoid obstacles. There is also insufficient space for large scale movements such as climbing through and over objects. Although there is a bank of grass for children to experience the effects of different slopes and levels on their movements, it is not sufficiently developed for this purpose.

Creative development

93. Children's creative development is below the levels expected for children of a similar age when they enter the reception classes. As a result of the good range of activities that is provided and the good teaching they receive, children make good progress to attain standards that are in line with those expected by the end of the reception year.
94. Many children find it hard to use their imagination when they enter the school. Adults work skilfully alongside the children to help them make up their own imaginative stories when using the role-play area and this, combined with the well planned provision of resources, helps the children to begin to develop their own ideas. For example, when playing in the role-play area, children decide on their destinations, imagine that they are grown ups on the aeroplane, 'read' the newspapers intently and make serious phone calls to people back on the ground.
95. Children enjoy painting and drawing and respond well to the opportunities that they have to paint what they see, feel and imagine. They make collages with a range of materials. Some very good work was seen in which the children had made African masks and shields using seeds, pasta and paint. They had explored colours and textures and developed their understanding of how to vary the tones of colours and materials to create different effects.
96. The children readily join in with action songs and rhymes, and enjoy their singing and movement in response to the sounds that they hear. For example, they have taken part in samba dancing as part of their work in the school's 'Arts Week'. They already join in with the singing in assemblies.

ENGLISH

97. Although a wide spread of attainment is represented by individual pupils, attainment overall is broadly average as pupils enter Year 1. The variation in the relative proportions of higher attaining pupils in each year group is a significant factor affecting the overall performance of year groups across the school as a whole, and is reflected in the school's performance in national tests.
98. In 1999 and 2001, the school's results in the national tests of reading and writing for pupils aged seven were well above the national average. In 2002, the school's results for reading were above the national average and also above the average results of similar schools. In writing, results were in line with the national average and with the average results of similar schools. The school's results in the national English tests for pupils aged 11 were above the national average in 1998, 1999 and 2000. In 2002, the results were again above the national average, and in line with the average results of similar schools. There is no significant difference in the overall attainment of boys and girls, either at seven or 11.
99. Inspection findings show that there are significant variations in the overall profile and performance of pupils in different cohorts and different classes. In lessons observed, pupils currently in Year 2 and working within the Year 1/2 mixed-age classes make mainly sound and sometimes good progress. They build steadily but very securely on their prior attainment and are given a thorough grounding in initial literacy. For reasons already advanced, attainment within the year group is broadly average. The majority meet the standards expected of pupils of their age in both reading and writing, and a significant though relatively small minority exceed those standards. In Year 6, pupils make mainly good, and sometimes very good progress in lessons, although the overall profile of attainment remains broadly average. In Years 2 and 6, as elsewhere in the school, the effective teaching of literacy enables many pupils of average and

lower attainment to perform better in lessons than when working unaided, for example during tests. Higher attaining pupils in both age groups achieve high standards of performance for their ages in both reading and writing. They are able to recall what they have been taught and can subsequently apply their skills and knowledge successfully, whether working with their teachers or independently. Significantly, inspection evidence shows that, from the time they enter the reception classes to the time they leave at the age of 11, pupils of all ages and abilities build well on their prior attainment and make good progress over time in relation to their starting-points.

100. By the age of seven, most pupils read simple texts confidently. They are able to draw on an appropriate range of strategies to 'decode' print. For example, they apply their knowledge of phonics, sight words, picture cues and context in order to work out unfamiliar words and to predict what is meant. Higher attaining pupils read accurately, fluently and expressively and are able to cope with books they have chosen themselves. They have developed preferences for particular authors and particular kinds of writing, and they can talk about the books they are reading in an informed way, often referring to the text to justify or explain their answers. These pupils are seldom puzzled by the meanings of individual words, and their comprehension skills are above average for their age. They understand the literal meaning of what they read, and they are also able to use inference to work out what is implied but not explicitly stated. All pupils are familiar with the terms used to discuss reading of various kinds, having learned them in lessons. For example, they know what is meant by 'author', 'illustrator', 'blurb', 'non-fiction', 'information', 'plot', 'complication', 'resolution', 'rhyme' and 'rhythm', and they can give, or find, examples of these within relevant contexts. In writing, most pupils aged seven demonstrate a particular talent for retelling familiar stories. Most pupils already possess a strong sense of narrative style, have a good grasp of story structure, and show some awareness of the reader. Most have mastered basic sentence structure; they have learned to use capital letters and full stops appropriately, and they use a few conjunctions such as 'and' and 'then' to link ideas. The highest attaining pupils have well developed narrative skills. Their work clearly reveals the influence of what they have read and what they have been taught. They are aware of literary language and literary conventions, and their writing is well organised, coherent and appropriate for its purpose, whether in English or in other subjects. They choose words and phrases carefully to give their writing impact, use complex sentences accurately, are aware of the need for paragraphs, spell most words correctly and use a suitable variety of punctuation marks accurately. Lower attaining pupils have a more limited vocabulary, and their written language often reflects their speech patterns rather than literary or more formal language. They write at shorter length than their more advanced peers; and, although they have clearly been taught how to spell, how to punctuate and how to match their written language to its specific purpose, they nevertheless find it difficult to combine, simultaneously, all the technical skills needed to produce writing of a consistently high standard.
101. Irrespective of their individual abilities, most pupils in Year 6 relish reading. Although attainment within the cohort remains broadly average overall, pupils are enthusiastic, read widely from a suitable range of fiction and non-fiction, and can talk with understanding about a variety of genres. As a result of highly effective teaching in Years 5 and 6 in particular, they have a good understanding of the structure and language of various types of text, and they are able to talk convincingly, for example, about the characteristic features of persuasive texts and about the techniques used by writers to achieve particular effects. Because they have been shown, explicitly, how to analyse successful models of writing, and have also acquired a repertoire of terms for discussing the organisation, structure and qualities of many kinds of writing, they are able to draw on their knowledge and understanding when they, in their turn,

are asked to write. The written work of the highest attaining pupils is impressive in its mastery of structure, style and form, and also demonstrates a high degree of technical accuracy. Average and lower attaining pupils clearly demonstrate the influence of the very good teaching they have received, but they have not yet reached a stage where they are able to apply their skills and knowledge consistently and confidently. Weaknesses in their written work variously include persistent errors in spelling, the inappropriate use of colloquialisms and other features of informal language, grammatical mistakes and erratic punctuation.

102. From Year 2 onwards, pupils of all abilities know how to form letters accurately and how to produce joined-up writing which is neat and legible. However, they do not always transfer these skills, acquired through regular handwriting practice, to their other written work. As a consequence, the presentation of pupils' written work is sometimes untidy, particularly in Years 2, 3 and 4. The school is aware of this and is currently taking steps to address the problem.
103. At the time of the last OFSTED inspection, pupils' skills in reading for information were judged to be underdeveloped. Evidence from the current inspection shows that these skills are nurtured well, particularly in Years 3 to 6 where teachers forge relevant links between English and other subjects. For example, in history there are many examples of well organised, individually researched topics by pupils of all abilities. By the time they are 11, all pupils know how to use a library to locate information. They know how to select information from a variety of sources (including the Internet and CD-ROMs) in order to answer historical questions. Almost all are also capable of organising and communicating their findings clearly in their own words, for example in the form of topic books which address political, religious, social and industrial developments during specific historical periods. In Year 6, pupils demonstrate particular skill when they consider arguments for or against the continued development of holiday resorts in the Alps. They draw very capably on information gleaned from multi-media resources used in geography to inform their work, and, as a result, many produce powerful examples of persuasive writing.
104. From Year 1 onwards, almost all pupils listen well. They demonstrate good powers of concentration, and they are well aware of the conventions of turn-taking. Higher attaining pupils of all ages are also articulate. With ever increasing confidence and fluency, they express their thoughts coherently and use well chosen words to lend weight to their arguments and precision to their statements. However, there are also significant numbers of pupils in all age groups whose speech has not developed at the same pace as their other language skills. In many cases, these pupils choose to remain silent during whole-class discussions; and in some cases pupils are insufficiently aware of the differences between their own spoken language and Standard English. As a consequence, these pupils do not always adapt their spoken language appropriately to suit particular purposes and audiences.
105. The teaching of English is mainly good, sometimes very good, occasionally excellent, and never less than sound. This profile represents a marked improvement since the last inspection when some lessons were unsatisfactory. Teaching is most effective, overall, in Years 5 and 6. However, it is the cumulative effect of very thorough teaching of literacy skills throughout the school which serves to ensure that every pupil makes good progress over time in relation to his or her starting-point.
106. A particular strength of the teaching is the emphasis placed on the links between reading and writing. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are generally good. They teach confidently, have good questioning skills, and are often

able to make speedy, spontaneous assessments of pupils' performance throughout lessons. These skills enable them to give focused, relevant feedback to pupils when it is most helpful i.e. at the point of learning. They also serve as powerful models for pupils' own aspirations. Nowhere is this more evident, perhaps, than in sessions where teachers help pupils to perceive the structure and the characteristic features of texts or where they demonstrate the craft of writing. In every lesson, pupils know from the outset what they are intended to learn. With varying degrees of success, they are also shown the skills and strategies they need to develop in order to meet these objectives. In the older classes in particular, teachers' marking of pupils' work fulfils a very similar function: each pupil is given the help he or she needs to improve. Indeed, identified as a weakness at the time of the last inspection, assessment in its broadest sense is now a significant strength. The analysis of pupils' performance includes the evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in very specific aspects of reading and writing, whether at the level of cohorts, groups or individuals. At every stage, planning and teaching are informed by assessment. Pupils' individual literacy targets, group targets, special educational needs support and setting all serve to ensure that pupils are suitably challenged and given the help they need to improve. Only in Years 1 and 2 are organisational factors occasionally unhelpful. For example, in shared text work it is difficult for teachers to use materials which provide suitable levels of intellectual and linguistic challenge for higher attaining Year 2 pupils at the same time as providing accessible language and concepts for the youngest pupils in Year 1.

107. The two literacy co-ordinators, new to their roles this year, are fortunate in being able to build on previous work which established monitoring and self-evaluation procedures very securely in regard to teaching and learning in English. Thus far, they have demonstrated very good leadership and management of the subject. They have quickly gained a very good overview of provision and have used both monitoring procedures and the analysis of test results and other assessments to identify and address weaknesses in pupils' performance. They are enthusiastic, perceptive and imaginative, and they are already anticipating the next steps they need to take, for example, to raise standards in spelling and to improve speaking skills. They are aware that pupils' knowledge and understanding of language remain stronger than their actual performance, and there is a shared determination to improve standards further. At the same time, they share a commitment to ensuring that pupils also enjoy a high quality experience of English as a subject which is enriched by drama, by encounters with writers and by meaningful links with other subjects. They are supported in their endeavours by hard-working colleagues, and they have clearly won the trust and admiration of the pupils they teach.

MATHEMATICS

108. On entry to Year 1, pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding are broadly average. The overall results of the 2002 Year 2 SATs were in line with the national average and the average results of similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the standard expected was above average but the percentage of pupils exceeding this level was below average.
109. Inspection findings show that pupils in Years 1 and 2 make mainly sound, and sometimes good, progress from their starting points at the beginning of Year 1. Pupils with special educational needs make good overall progress as a result of the effective support provided by teachers and learning support assistants. Overall, the standards achieved by the current Year 2 pupils are broadly average, which is a similar judgement to that made in the last OFSTED report. Pupils steadily acquire key numeracy skills and develop their knowledge and understanding of shape, space and

measures. For example in a Year 1 lesson, they improved their recognition of coins up to £1 and their understanding that each coin has a different value. More able pupils worked independently using a computer 'toy shop' programme to make simple purchases; while others were soundly supported, either by the teacher or a learning support assistant, as they played 'money dominoes' or completed appropriate worksheets. Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils are acquiring a secure knowledge of place value, can describe and extend number sequences and are learning to employ the correct number operations when making calculations. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, good teaching by the deputy headteacher enabled more able pupils to apply their knowledge of the number patterns which result when adding or subtracting ten when working with 11 or 21. Most pupils were able to add/subtract 11 to at least a two digit number; and consolidated their use of +, - and = to record their mental calculations in a number sentence.

110. The 2002 Year 6 SATs results were above the national average, overall, and above the average results of similar schools. The percentage of pupils exceeding the national standard was well above average. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils in Years 3 to 6, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is a significant improvement in relation to the judgement made in 1997 when progress was reported to be too slow and unsatisfactory. There are no longer weaknesses in data handling, mathematical investigations and problem solving.
111. The proportion of more able pupils in the current Year 6 is lower than last year and, as a consequence, overall standards are mainly in line with the national average. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 develop a sound understanding of the number system and of measures, shape and space; and can handle data. In a good Year 3/4 lesson, for example, pupils were able to solve mathematical puzzles related to position and direction as they worked with co-ordinates. In Year 5, pupils learnt how data from a 'tally' could be transferred to a bar chart and was more accessible in this format. They worked diligently in pairs, or larger groups, as they recorded the rolls of a dice in a mathematical investigation. Good links were made with their work in science as they consolidated their understanding of terms such as 'prediction' and 'hypothesis'. More able Year 6 pupils demonstrated very secure numeracy skills, during the introduction to a lesson, when responding to their teacher's challenge to quickly count in decimal values such as 0.3. They then made good progress in extending their understanding of fractions, accurately calculating the lowest common denominator in sets of fractions, to enable them to compare sizes.
112. The quality of teaching is mainly satisfactory and sometimes good in Years 1 and 2; and is mainly good and sometimes very good in Years 3 to 6. This is an improvement since the last OFSTED inspection when a significant proportion of the teaching in Years 3 to 6 was judged to be unsatisfactory. Weaknesses at that time included insufficiently clear lesson objectives, the use and organisation of learning resources and a lack of pace and rigour. The school has now successfully addressed these deficiencies. Across the school, teachers' planning appropriately takes account of guidance contained in the National Numeracy Strategy and learning objectives are clearly defined. These are appropriately shared with pupils, usually at the beginning of each session. Resources are well organised and are used effectively to support pupils learning.
113. Teachers make good use of mathematical displays in their classrooms and these effectively promote pupils' interest in the subject and help to extend their knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary associated with mathematics. Teaching points and tasks are clearly explained to pupils; and learning support assistants are carefully

briefed and well deployed. They provide good support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers know their pupils well and make effective use of the school's very good assessment procedures to inform their planning. This ensures that the work set is well matched to pupils' needs. Assessment information is also used to 'band' pupils for mathematics teaching throughout the school and this also ensures that the tasks they undertake provide an appropriate level of challenge. Some older pupils benefit from small group 'booster' sessions and receive good support from a part-time member of staff, learning support assistants or their own teachers.

114. In the more effective lessons, teachers have high expectations and manage pupils well. There is a good pace to these lessons particularly in the mental/oral starter, and teachers use skilful, targeted, questioning to probe pupils' understanding and to extend their thinking. A clear and appropriate timescale for the completion of the tasks is set as activities are introduced and this ensures that pupils make good use of the time available to them. All teachers ensure that sufficient time is left at the end of numeracy lessons sessions to summarise key ideas and vocabulary. In some lessons, however, pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to make a contribution during the mental/oral starter, or the introduction to the main activity, either through questioning which is well targeted to meet their needs or through activities that ensure all are required to make a response.
115. A well-equipped computer suite has been established in the current school year and teachers are beginning to make sound use of ICT to extend pupils' mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding. As well as weekly opportunities to improve their ICT skills, all pupils benefit from additional sessions in the suite which are timetabled to enable them to use ICT regularly in their work in numeracy.
116. The co-ordinator has only recently assumed responsibility for mathematics but has liaised closely with the deputy headteacher who managed the subject until the beginning of the current school year. He is enthusiastic about the subject and has applied to attend an in-service training course for co-ordinators in order to improve his knowledge and understanding of the role. An annual audit of mathematics is undertaken and this appropriately includes lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work across the school and pupil interviews. A careful analysis of performance data is carried out each July and the co-ordinator is responsible for compiling a summary report of findings to present to all staff at the beginning of the following school year. An annual action plan for numeracy is also formulated and this clearly defines the school's goals for the year and how these will be achieved, monitored and evaluated. Individual portfolios of work are maintained which contain examples of work chosen to illustrate the pupils' achievements in mathematics; and a helpful school portfolio of levelled work is compiled to assist teachers in making judgements about standards. The targets which pupils are set for mathematics are appropriately shared with parents through the use of an attractive pamphlet which briefly explains the reasoning behind the targets and provides helpful strategies that can be used at home.
117. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

SCIENCE

118. On entry to Year 1, pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding are broadly average. The results of the Year 2 statutory teacher assessments in 2002 were broadly in line with the national average in relation to the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard but were below the national average in relation to the percentage exceeding the standard. Inspection findings show that pupils in Years 1

and 2 make sound progress in their learning, and standards in Year 2 are broadly average.

119. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' progress increases and is good overall. As a consequence, overall standards are above average in Year 6. Current standards in Year 6 are not as high as in the last academic year, however, when the results of the SATs were well above the national average and well above the results of similar schools. All available evidence suggests this fall in overall standards is not as a result of any reduction in the quality of teaching but stems from the lower proportion of more able pupils in the current Year 6 group. Indeed, the standards in the current Year 6 class reflect good achievement given pupils' starting points on entry to Year 3. They represent a significant improvement since the last inspection, when standards in science were below average and pupils were making unsatisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6.
120. In Year 1, pupils are able to recognise and name the main external parts of the human body and know that animals, including humans, grow and change as they become older. They make sound progress when naming common materials and describing their appearance. In Year 2, pupils know that some materials change when they are heated, and some achieve well when explaining why particular materials are suitable for specific purposes. They make sound progress when planning simple investigations to discover whether an ice lolly will melt more quickly in sun or shade, and begin to develop their awareness of the need for fair testing. In lessons observed during the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoyed experimenting with toy cars to discover if the surfaces they travelled over, or the angle of ramps they travelled down, made a difference to how well they moved. In these lessons, pupils made sound progress and demonstrated standards which were satisfactory for their ages.
121. In Year 3, pupils achieve well when learning about healthy eating and can identify foods which provide energy. They can name some major bones in the human skeleton and know that some creatures are invertebrates. In Year 4, pupils make good progress when learning about their muscles and carry out interesting investigations. For example, using data they have gathered from individual pupils pushing as hard as they could onto bathroom scales, they investigate whether boys have stronger muscles than girls, or if older pupils are stronger than younger ones. They record their results clearly and draw sensible conclusions. The most advanced learners in Year 4 can explain that some muscles are voluntary and others are involuntary, and can name muscles of both types. In lessons observed in Years 3 and 4, pupils made good progress when deciding the best methods for testing the relative hardness of wood, wax and rock, and kept useful records as they carried out their investigations.
122. In Year 5, pupils know that the Earth, Sun and Moon are spherical and can support this with evidence. They also know that it is daylight in the part of the Earth that is facing the Sun, and how the course of the Sun changes shadows during the day. Most pupils have a secure understanding of the characteristics of solids, liquids and gases, and make good progress when conducting systematic investigations to discover how to separate a mixture of water, stones, gravel, salt and sand. Year 6 pupils achieve well when learning about sound and can describe ways in which the pitch of a sound made by a particular instrument or object can be raised or lowered. In the course of conducting experiments, they learn to appreciate the need to check their observations and measurements by repeating them where appropriate. In lessons observed in Years 5 and 6, pupils achieved well when planning investigations to decide the factors which affect the rate of evaporation of water, and were able to make sensible decisions about the apparatus they needed.

123. The quality of teaching is sound in Years 1 and 2 and is good in Years 3 to 6. Across the school, teachers have secure subject knowledge, and it is evident that some teachers in the older classes are very well informed. All teachers plan their lessons well and know exactly what they expect the pupils to learn. On occasions, however, pupils in Years 1 and 2 require a little more guidance to ensure they are well prepared to undertake their simple investigations. In addition, there is scope for teachers in these classes to allocate more time to encourage pupils to talk about their work in science lessons and to explain their understanding. In Years 3 to 6, teachers are particularly skilled at asking questions which probe pupils' understanding and are quick to identify how they need to improve. These teachers are also very careful to introduce and reinforce scientific vocabulary during their science lessons. The very good relationship between teachers and pupils is characteristic of all lessons and makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils clearly like and respect their teachers, and are keen to meet the expectations that are set. Assessment procedures in science are good. All teachers regularly check pupils' achievements, and keep useful records to track their progress through the school. It is clear that teachers are well aware of the requirements of the National Curriculum and, in the planning, they identify specific criteria that are addressed in their lessons. This means that teachers are very well placed to judge pupils' achievements on a lesson-by-lesson basis. Teachers make clear judgements about the standards reached by individual pupils at the ends of units of work in science, and representative examples of their work are included in individual portfolios which show their progress. In addition, a school portfolio of assessed examples of work track the achievements of a sample of pupils from each year group, at varying stages of learning, to identify overall trends. In a lesson observed during the inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefited from good teaching which enabled them to evaluate their achievements, and to understand their strengths and areas for improvement. The highly conscientious science co-ordinator is very aware of the school's results in the statutory tests and has rigorously analysed pupils' responses to individual questions in the Year 6 papers in the 2002 tests. As a result, he has identified areas for improvement as well as strengths, and his analysis helps to inform the practice of his colleagues.
124. The science co-ordinator's work is a significant strength. He has very good subject knowledge and is making an important contribution to the quality of pupils' learning in science. In addition to leading the very good practice in assessment, noted above, he also checks teachers' planning and observes lessons across the school. As a result of this monitoring, he provides teachers with very useful verbal feedback as well as carefully focused written evaluations which guide the school's work in science. He is an enthusiast for the subject and runs a very popular after school science club. The co-ordinator has fostered good links with a commercial centre in Bristol which provides pupils with a range of opportunities for 'hands on' scientific learning, and has arranged for a science specialist to visit in order to work with pupils to promote, further, their enthusiasm for the subject. Learning resources for science are very well organised, and there is a sound range of materials and equipment to support pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN

125. Pupils' achievements in art and design are a key strength in the school. They make very good progress in the subject and their standards are well above average, including in Years 2 and 6. This is a significant contrast to the findings of the last inspection when standards were judged to be average and pupils' progress found to be satisfactory.

126. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have achieved very well when learning about the work of Henri Matisse. They have thought carefully about the shapes and colours he used and have created their own collage pictures which reflect elements of the artist's work. These pupils have also studied the book illustrations of Eric Carle and their vibrant representations of roosters clearly show they have been beneficially influenced by the artist. Year 1 and 2 pupils have looked at a range of plants very carefully, and their interesting pictures show good technical skills for their ages and a creative response. They have made bold pastel drawings of the plants, and then have applied paint and collage effects to emphasise colour and texture. In a lesson observed during the inspection, Year 1 and 2 pupils achieved well when painting, and worked confidently with good concentration.
127. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have looked very carefully at the work of Kandinsky and have mixed their own paint colours to create abstract pictures which are informed by the artist's work. In addition, they have used charcoal very effectively to make drawings which reflect, particularly, the artist's use of line. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have achieved well when creating their own prints, using string and polystyrene, which reflect their study of African art. Some have printed on fabric, as well as paper, in order to create cloths which enrich their classroom environment. Pupils have marvelled at pictures of the statues on Easter Island, and have made very good progress when making their own interpretations of the heads using a form of plaster or, for their larger works, a framework of wire netting covered with papier-mâché. Their abstract pictures, created after using viewfinders to reflect elements of the work of Klimt, are of a high quality. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 achieve well when drawing animal skulls from direct observation and, in a lesson observed during the inspection, made good progress when incorporating Celtic images and motifs into their designs for clay tiles.
128. In Years 5 and 6, pupils demonstrate good colour mixing skills when creating jungle pictures which reflect the influence of Rousseau. They also make very good progress when drawing the local environment, using pastels, and have incorporated Tudor motifs into their abstract pictures which combined, effectively, the use of ICT and collage techniques. In addition, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have benefited from studying Aboriginal art and have achieved well when making their own pastel pictures which have some of the features of this art. After looking at African art, they have also made high quality cushions from fabrics they have designed and created themselves using a paste and water resist technique.
129. In the shared activity spaces, throughout the school, there are very large willow sculptures hanging from the ceiling which represent imaginary creatures. These have been made by pupils in Years 3 to 6 in the popular after school art club, and represent very good achievement. These are ambitious pieces, reflecting the high expectations of the teacher and the confidence and advanced skills of the pupils.
130. Due to timetabling arrangements, it was only possible to observe two art and design lessons during the inspection. As a consequence, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. However, both lessons seen were well taught, and evidence from a careful analysis of pupils' completed work shows the teaching, over time, enables pupils to make very good progress. Pupils' work and teachers' planning show that teachers have secure subject knowledge and have high expectations for pupils' achievement. It is clear that technical skills have been taught very effectively, and that pupils' knowledge and understanding are considerably enriched by the study of artists and the art of different cultures. When

the school was last inspected, teachers' planning did not ensure the sequential progression of key skills in the subject. This is no longer the case, and the current planning for art and design is very effective. The breadth and quality of the curriculum provided for pupils in art and design are particularly impressive. Pupils have opportunities to use a wide range of art media and techniques, and benefit considerably from the well organised, rich experience of an "Arts Week" which runs every other year.

131. The art and design co-ordinator is highly conscientious and has a very beneficial effect on the quality of learning in the subject. She is very well informed, monitors teachers' planning carefully and has a good overview of pupils' standards. She has introduced a well planned scheme of work which supports the development of pupils' technical skills and their knowledge and understanding about art, and provides her colleagues with well focused advice. Procedures for assessing pupils' standards and progress in art and design are good. Teachers are clear about what pupils should learn and make regular assessments which help to track their progress through the school. Art resources are plentiful and are well organised.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

132. Pupils make sound overall progress in design and technology in Years 1 to 6. As a result, standards are broadly average in Years 2 and 6, representing sound achievement. When the school was last inspected, pupils were making satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2, and were achieving average standards in Year 2. However, there has been a significant improvement since the last inspection in the progress made by pupils in Years 3 to 6, and in pupils' standards in Year 6 which were below average.
133. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make sound progress when learning about some of the main features of houses and noticing the position and shapes of doors and windows. They demonstrate satisfactory skills when practising a range of simple techniques which could be used to make their own two-dimensional model houses. For example, they explore ways of opening doors and windows using sticky tape, glue or paper fasteners as hinges. Their finished models, made from card, paper and recycled materials, demonstrate sound achievement. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 sometimes achieve well when using construction kits, for example to make model vehicles, and made sound progress during the inspection when they learned that simple levers and sliding mechanisms can be used to create movement. Their simple stick and finger puppets also confirm pupils' satisfactory making skills, for their ages.
134. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make mainly sound but sometimes good progress when designing and making money containers. They make careful plans for their products, after looking at a range of commercially made money containers, and make provision for a fastening method. Their finished products show that pupils are able to make sensible decisions about the materials to use, and can use sound joining skills, including sewing. Some pupils have applied stitched decoration onto their money containers with good skills, demonstrating above average achievement. Year 3 and 4 pupils have also made sound overall progress when learning basic food preparation techniques. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have made satisfactory progress when investigating a range of shelters, including sheds and summer houses, to decide how they were made, which materials were used and the purpose of the buildings. In preparation for designing and making their own model shelters, pupils have made effective progress when exploring a range of techniques for joining materials. For example, they have learned how paper can be rolled to form strong tubes, and

demonstrate sound skills when strengthening frameworks through triangulation. The making skills of most pupils are satisfactory for their ages.

135. Insufficient lessons were observed to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in design and technology. However, the lessons which were seen demonstrated mainly satisfactory but sometimes good teaching. These lessons were efficiently organised and motivated pupils well. A careful analysis of pupils' completed work, together with the few lessons seen, does provide secure evidence that the teaching is enabling pupils to make sound progress in the subject. Indeed, there is some evidence of pupils beginning to achieve well, particularly in Years 3 and 4. Since the last inspection, planning for the subject has improved considerably, and is now mainly good. Individual lessons form part of a coherent programme which provides pupils with appropriate opportunities to develop their key skills and knowledge in the subject. All teachers identify what pupils are expected to achieve in their design and technology lessons and clearly link this achievement to the criteria in the National Curriculum. This helps teachers to make accurate judgements about pupils' standards and progress, and is a significant improvement since the last inspection when assessment procedures were underdeveloped.
136. The design and technology co-ordinator has had responsibility for the subject for just over a year. He is enthusiastic and well informed, and has already contributed considerably to the improvement in the subject. He monitors teachers' planning carefully, helps teachers to be clear about the standards their pupils are achieving and has a good overview of provision. He also provides his colleagues with well focused advice and develops their confidence and enthusiasm for the subject. As a consequence, the school is well placed to improve standards further. Resources are very well organised and are ample for pupils' needs.

GEOGRAPHY

137. As a result of timetabling arrangements, only two geography lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements are made on the evidence of the lessons that were seen, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work, and discussions with staff and pupils. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make good progress in extending their knowledge and understanding of places, patterns and processes. As a consequence, the standards achieved by Year 6 pupils are above national expectations. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about pupils' standards in Years 1 and 2 because of the limited amount of completed work available for scrutiny. However, other evidence suggests that pupils make sound overall progress. In the last OFSTED inspection, standards were judged to be broadly in line with the national expectation at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 but, overall, progress was judged to be unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6.
138. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make sound progress in developing their understanding of different places through their studies of 'An Island Home'. They follow the adventures of 'Katie Morag', through stories about the Isle of Struay, and benefit from well organised opportunities for role play which help pupils to compare and contrast another locality with their own. They demonstrate sound mapping skills as they draw representations of the physical and human features of the island; and make good use of the ICT programme 'Maketown' to extend their understanding. Work based on the story 'Roosters off to see the World' has also provided opportunities for pupils to extend their geographical knowledge and understanding in a meaningful way. Pupils also follow 'Barnaby Bear's' journeys around the world and, through these, deepen their understanding of the notion of travel and develop their awareness of the similarities and differences between other countries and their own. Through walks

around the school's locality, pupils can identify some geographical features and create simple maps of their journey to school. Work planned for the summer term includes a visit to Weston super Mare as part of a focus on 'The Seaside' and should provide ample opportunities for valuable fieldwork.

139. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make good progress when using appropriate resources to compare and contrast an overseas locality with their own. These studies of Chembakolli in India are enabling them to pose and answer geographical questions and to develop their geographical skills. In Year 5, pupils benefit from a residential visit to Somerset in which they undertake beach studies and walk on the Quantock Hills. Year 6 pupils also undertake valuable fieldwork during a residential trip to France when they visit Calais, Honfleur and Bayeux. The current Year 5/6 study of 'Mountain Environments' enables pupils to benefit from carefully focused geographical enquiry, which is designed to enhance their skills of collecting and interpreting information, and presenting their findings. Good use is made of ICT as pupils prepare a multimedia presentation of their findings; and of links to literacy lessons as they make use of persuasive language when preparing scripts to describe the attractions of mountain areas. Pupils also hone their mapping skills through atlas work related to this unit of study and can locate mountain ranges and peaks in Great Britain and further afield. During their study of 'Water' pupils visit the local sewage works; and plans to visit Kingswood in the summer term should provide more opportunities for pupils to benefit from fieldwork in their own locality.
140. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. Helpful guidance, published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), has been used to inform the school's planning and this is having a positive impact on classroom practice. The school is committed to providing an international dimension to the learning it promotes and this has a very positive effect on pupils' progress in geography. Teachers from the school have visited Australia, Ghana and Italy, have made good contacts with schools in those countries and returned with useful artefacts to support pupils' learning. Events such as the recent 'Arts Week' have included, for example, art inspired by Africa, Indian designs, Aboriginal and American Indian artwork, patterns from Ghana, and design and technology work based on the sculptures found on Easter Island.
141. The co-ordinator assumed the role 18 months ago. He is very conscientious and is enthusiastic about the development of the subject. He has worked with co-ordinators from other partnership schools to identify key skills in geography and has formulated a helpful framework for the progressive development of these across the school. This is helping to provide guidance for teachers in all year groups and to ensure that pupils are working towards the expected level of achievement and are being adequately challenged or supported. Work completed by pupils in each year group is collected and scrutinised to check on coverage and is used to provide evidence of the attainment of pupils.
142. Resources are satisfactory. They have recently been reviewed and new atlases have been purchased. The school is a member of the Geographical Association and makes good use of the publication 'Primary Geographer' to follow any recent developments in the subject.

HISTORY

143. No history lessons were seen during the inspection due to timetabling arrangements. However, information from the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that pupils make good

progress and standards are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a similar judgement to that made in the last report.

144. Pupils develop a good understanding of chronology. For example, in Years 1 and 2 they develop personal timelines, in which they calculate the ages of various members of their family at the time they themselves were born. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have found out about Henry VIII's family tree and put the events of the Tudor period in the order in which they happened. Pupils have a sound understanding of the characteristic features of the periods and the societies they study, including the ideas, beliefs and attitudes of the people who lived at the time. For example, younger pupils have studied life in a castle from the point of view of the servants and lords who lived there. In Years 5 and 6, a pupil has written a letter of complaint, which shows a good understanding of the life of women living at the time of the ancient Greeks, when they were denied the same rights for study and discussion as men. Pupils develop a secure understanding of the events of different periods, of how they affected people's lives and of the reasons for them. A good example of this is the work that pupils have done on the Tudors, in which they have considered the reasons for Henry VIII's six marriages and the consequences of his divorce from Catherine of Aragon. They compare different periods of history appropriately, particularly in the course of historical themes, such as transport and how it has changed through the ages. Pupils make effective use of a range of information to find out about the past, including the Internet, CD-ROMs, music, pictures and artefacts. They have opportunities to visit museums and also historical sites. This involves pupils in asking their own questions, as well as those set by teachers, and selecting the information that they need to answer them. In Year 5 and 6, for example, pupils have carried out their own research into characters of the Tudor period and used this information to take on the role of the character and answer questions from other pupils. Pupils are beginning to recognise that the past is represented in many different ways, and that the interpretations of history reflect different points of view and circumstances. Links with the local 'Kingsdown Civic Trust' give pupils good access to original documentation and helps them develop a good sense of the history of their own area. The school is built on a historical site and has a moat in the grounds, which they find particularly interesting.
145. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. However, evidence from teachers' planning and pupils' work suggests that it is good. The scheme of work is well thought out and thoroughly covers all the aspects of history that are required by the National Curriculum. The teaching and progression of historical skills are explicitly planned into the curriculum. The sound progress made in gaining historical knowledge and understanding of facts is, therefore, firmly linked with progress in skills of historical enquiry. Teachers employ a range of interesting methods to teach history and these are effective in motivating pupils' interest in the subject because they encourage them to act like historians. For example, in one lesson pupils became 'archaeologists' as they tried to piece together a 'Roman Plate'. Assessment procedures are very good and used well to inform both planning and marking. As a result they are beginning to be effective in raising standards in the subject.
146. The subject is very well led. All the criticisms of the last report in the areas of teaching, assessment and the development of the skills of historical enquiry have been addressed. The new co-ordinator is building effectively on the work of her predecessor and already has a firm grasp of how to move the subject forward. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and have recently been usefully augmented by a range of original artefacts.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

147. Pupils throughout the school make good progress and now reach the standards that are expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They apply their ICT skills well in the course of their work in other subjects. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average. There is now a thorough scheme of work, which covers all areas of the National Curriculum, good teaching in the subject and improved resources, which include a well equipped computer suite. All of these factors have contributed to raising standards to the expected level. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and benefit from working collaboratively with their classmates.
148. In Years 1 and 2, pupils confidently use their knowledge of how computers work to help them to generate, amend and record their work and share their ideas in different forms. For example they generate text to write stories and accounts, change the size, colour and type of the font and make use of a word bank to develop their writing. They use images to develop plans of towns, selecting those they need and then, using the 'drag' facility, accurately place them in correct position. Pupils develop their skills to enter data into the computer well, and, through a series of instructions, can print out simple block graphs. For example, they have created a tally chart in the course of their work on houses, and then printed out a block graph of their findings. They are developing a sound understanding of how computers can be used to make things happen by giving a series of instructions to a programmable robot, 'Roamer'.
149. In Year 3 to 6, pupils develop their skills and knowledge of an increasing range of ICT applications using computers. They access and retrieve information, for example, to find out about the Romans in Years 3 and 4. In Years 5 and 6, pupils access the Internet and information banks to carry out their own research in history and have, for example, found out about the Tudors in this way. Pupils' continue to make good progress in using ICT to present information in a range of forms. For example, in the course of their work on dinosaurs, pupils in Years 3 and 4 use 'Slideshow' to make simple presentations by importing images, inserting text and creating a hyperlink. In Years 5 and 6, they move on to multi-media presentations using 'Powerpoint', and organise, refine and present information through the use of text, sound and pictures. They are currently developing these skills in the course of their geography work about mountains. They make satisfactory use of ICT for control and modelling, for example, to make a lighthouse work in design and technology and in the use of sensors to give precise information about temperature and noise levels in science. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop their skills in entering and retrieving information on computers well when using spreadsheets. They enter numbers, labels and simple formulae and use the data to calculate totals.
150. The quality of teaching in ICT is good. Teachers are confident and knowledgeable and, as a result, give clear explanations and instructions which help pupils to understand what they have to do. There is a good scheme of work which is used well to ensure that there is appropriate planning for units of work and good opportunities to use ICT to support other subjects of the curriculum. Tasks are generally well matched to pupils' differing needs and the organisation and management of pupils give good opportunities for pupils to plan and collaborate together. They respond well to this and work sensibly together, sharing equipment and discussing ideas.
151. The management and leadership of the subject are very good. The work of the co-ordinator has had a significant impact on the improvements that have been made in the subject. The QCA scheme has been adapted to fit the school's needs and there

are ongoing reviews to ensure that it is reflected in practice. There is a good assessment system which is used well to inform planning for future work. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator gives effective training and support to staff when they are needed. Resources for the subject are good.

MUSIC

152. Pupils throughout the school make very good progress in music and achieve standards that are above national expectations. The standards achieved by the school choir are exceptional and this is a strength of the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are talented and gifted in music also make very good progress. Standards were judged to be in line with expectations in the last inspection. The above average standards that the school now achieves are as a result of very good leadership of the subject, a very thorough and well planned curriculum informed by assessment and very good and sometimes excellent teaching. All of these are improvements since the last inspection.
153. During the course of the inspection, singing of very high quality was heard in lessons, assemblies, and during choir practice. Pupils have very good diction and pitch control and this enables them to communicate the feelings and moods of the music to the listener. On many occasions, particularly when they harmonise, pupils singing has a spiritual quality. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are all given the opportunity to join the choir if they wish and the vast majority, boys as well as girls, choose to do so. Their skills in working together to practice, rehearse and give a performance are excellent. They take great pride in performing well, both in the school and at public events, such as when joining the other schools for a festival at the Colston Hall, and when joining the Bendix Brass Band in a joint concert.
154. Pupils develop a good knowledge of the musical elements and this helps them to make their work more interesting when working together to create musical effects. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 sing a French song, in unison, then as a round, and then in several parts by singing melodic ostinati. They investigate, select and combine their musical ideas to a good standard in the course of compositional work. For example, by the end of Year 2 they make up songs with repeating words and develop rhythms to go with them. In Years 5 and 6 they explore and then develop the lyrics, melody and structure for jingles and three part harmonies. A high percentage of pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn to play the recorder and, as a result, they have a good grasp of musical notation. They demonstrate good control of their instruments when playing together, for example, when accompanying hymns during assembly. The coordinator is very effective in promoting pupils' interest in music. For example, she encourages more reluctant pupils to continue recorder lessons by offering opportunities to learn the treble recorder; she also actively encourages a continuing interest after they leave the school by inviting them back to take part in the 'senior' recorder group.
155. Throughout the school, pupils listen to a wide range of music from different periods in history and from different cultures. As a result, their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of music are very well developed. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 respond to music well, interpreting the moods of the music they hear through words and pictures. They know the names of a wide range of instruments and can recognise them when they hear their sounds. Older pupils learn to respond critically by comparing how composers use the different musical elements and different instruments to create effects. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 music lesson they noted how the composer had represented the different animals in 'The Carnival of the

Animals'. Pupils moved to the speed and the moods indicated by the music and noted the musical 'joke' whereby the composer had incorporated a very slow version of the 'Can-Can' into the 'tortoise' section.

156. The quality of teaching in music is very good overall and, in some lessons, including those taken by the music co-ordinator, it is excellent. The co-ordinator's love of music, and her enthusiasm and expertise in teaching music have significant impact on the standards that are achieved in the school. Other teachers also have a high level of skill and competence in teaching the subject. Lessons are very well planned and structured so that pupils increase their understanding through a wide variety of musical activities that combine performing, composing and appraising. There are very good opportunities for pupils to work independently, in various sized groups and in whole-class situations. As a result, pupils throughout the school enjoy music and participate enthusiastically in all aspects of the subject. The choir is particularly effective in raising the confidence and self esteem of the pupils who take part in it and real joy is evident on their faces when they practise and rehearse their music. There are good opportunities for pupils to receive tuition from the local authority music service and this further develops their skills, knowledge and expertise in reading notation and developing their skills in playing musical instruments such as the violin and guitar.
157. The music co-ordinator provides very good leadership to the subject. She has built effectively on a strong musical tradition in the school. There is a very good scheme of work which matches the needs of the school and which is linked effectively to a very clear assessment system. They are used very effectively to support teachers' planning and to ensure the progression of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The coordinator monitors the subject very well and, as a result, has a clear plan for the ongoing development of the subject. She gives very good support to her colleagues. Resources for music are good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

158. During the inspection, dance was observed in all year groups across the school. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 to 4 and very good progress in Years 5 and 6. As a consequence, the standards which pupils achieve are above average, including in Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils' attainment in physical education was judged to be broadly in line with the national expectation in both year groups.
159. In the two lessons observed in Years 1 and 2, pupils benefited from good teaching as they worked on sequences of movements to portray the different people they see at work around them. Appropriate warm up activities were followed by skilful questions, demonstrations and practise sessions to consolidate work that pupils had undertaken in previous lessons. Music to support the theme of the lessons was well chosen and, as a consequence, pupils worked with great enthusiasm. They made good progress in planning and performing their own sequences of movements. In one lesson, pupils used props such as a police hat, post-bag, or nurses' uniform and worked effectively in small groups collaborating well to improve their performance. As both lessons progressed, pupils responded positively to opportunities provided by their teachers to observe the performances of others and were able to evaluate these sensibly before refining their own efforts. Pupils in both classes listened carefully to instructions from their teachers and moved safely around the hall, always aware of one another and stopping on command.

160. In Years 3 and 4, teachers effectively build on the good progress pupils have made in developing their dance skills. In one lesson, pupils created mechanical and robotic actions through the use of repetitive movements. The theme of the lesson was established during the warm up activity when well chosen music was introduced by the teacher to enable pupils to represent a machine beginning to burst into life. The teacher then set tasks which were appropriate to pupils' physical and intellectual abilities and provided learning situations in which pupils could work alone and collaboratively with others, solve problems, improvise and demonstrate their level of skill, knowledge and understanding. The two lessons observed in Years 5 and 6 were a culmination of the theme of 'rock and roll' actions that pupils have been working on this term. In both lessons, pupils benefited from very good teaching that enabled them to demonstrate good standards of dance. Appropriate attention was given to health and safety issues; and pupils were made aware of the effect of physical exercise on the body. During the warm up activities, pupils enjoyed synchronising a 'hand jive' together which provided a good basis for the main activity in which they worked very well in small groups. They practised and performed a final sequence, which included a minimum of four actions and using a variety of different group shapes, working in unison but also splitting off to work in two's. Suggestions were then discussed by pupils as to how best the group actions could be integrated into a whole class performance before this was performed and then perfected. Throughout both lessons, pupils planned and performed dances confidently, using their understanding of composition to create phrases for themselves and others. They demonstrated expression and sensitivity to music that was stimulating and promoted their interest and enthusiasm. In both Year 5/6 lessons, relationships between pupils and teachers were very good and time was used effectively.
161. It was not possible to observe the teaching of swimming during the inspection. The school organises a coherent swimming programme which enables all pupils in Years 3 to 6 to benefit from visits to the nearby Keynsham swimming pool. Class teachers and helpful parents support a qualified instructor. Over time, the vast majority of pupils attending the school achieve an award for swimming 25 metres and a significant number do even better.
162. The very good range of extra-curricular activities which the school provides makes a significant contribution to the provision of physical education at the school and the standards which pupils achieve. Pupils also have the opportunity to take part in competitive sport against local schools during sports festivals and events such as 'Area Sports' and the South Gloucestershire swimming gala and cross country run. Outside providers are sometimes employed to provide high quality coaching. Pupils in Year 5 also benefit from well-organised outdoor and adventurous activities at Kilve Court in Somerset during an annual residential visit in February. They gain valuable experience in orienteering, hill walking, and beach explorations, and in tackling 'low ropes'.
163. The co-ordinator assumed responsibility for physical education at the beginning of the current school year; and has received good support from a colleague who managed the subject on a temporary basis last year. She is conscientious and enthusiastic about physical education and, following her monitoring of teachers' termly plans, reviews the range covered by each year group. There are also plans for her to observe lessons in the non-contact time which the school allocates to all co-ordinators. The subject policy has recently been updated; and there is a sound framework to ensure the progressive development of pupils' skills. This is appropriately based on helpful guidance from QCA. The co-ordinator has benefited from an additional allocation of time to assume the role of 'Primary Link Teacher'. This

is part of the local authority's response to the national 'School Sport Co-ordinator Programme' which links together primary and secondary schools to provide more and better physical education and sporting opportunities for young people.

164. Resources for physical education are satisfactory and are very well organised.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

165. Pupils in Year 2 made satisfactory progress in response to sound teaching in the two lessons observed in Year 1/2 classes, but there is insufficient evidence to make secure overall judgements about the standards attained or the quality of teaching in these two year groups.
166. Evidence from the lessons seen and from the scrutiny of the limited amount of recorded work produced by pupils aged seven shows that they have a basic knowledge and understanding of various features of Judaism. For example, they know that the Torah has special significance for Jewish people by giving them rules by which to live their lives, and they are able to draw simple parallels with the need for rules in their own lives. However, although pupils of this age readily suggest rules for living 'a good life', few are able to explain their choices clearly. Very few are able to perceive a direct link between their own behaviour and the behaviour they might expect of others, except insofar as 'being naughty' might lead to punishment. In their written work, pupils in Year 2 draw an appropriate distinction between the idea of 'house' and 'home' when they focus on the concept of belonging. They prize the idea of belonging to their nuclear and extended families, and they consider other special 'groups' to which they also belong, including, for example, their class, the school, and various clubs and youth organisations such as 'Beavers' and 'Brownies'. In work on 'The Christmas Story', pupils have memorised the main events and have considered the feelings of the characters involved. They understand that the wise men and the shepherds came to worship Jesus, and they speculate about the religious significance of this part of the story, suggesting that it shows how rich and poor alike are equal before God. Lesson plans show that pupils have also begun to make comparisons between different faiths. For example, they have considered the religious significance of light in the Hindu festival of Divali and in the Jewish festival of Hannukah. They have also thought about religious symbols and practices which distinguish particular religions. For instance, they recognise the cross and the fish as Christian symbols, and they have learned that the christening ceremony marks the occasion when a new child is welcomed into the wider Christian family. Overall, the range of work seen in Years 1 and 2 gives greater emphasis to knowledge and understanding of religion than to pupils' response to the spiritual dimension of experience.
167. Two other lessons were observed, one involving a Year 3/4 class, the other pupils in Years 5 and 6. In addition, an extensive range of recorded work was also presented for scrutiny. All available evidence shows that pupils in these year groups make good progress and that, by the time they are 11, most pupils attain standards which are above average for their age. For example, when learning about Islam, pupils in Year 6 demonstrate a mature ability to appreciate the qualities attributed by Muslims to Allah. They reflect sensitively on the true meaning of 'compassion' and 'mercy'. Later, they define their own views of God, attributing to Him qualities they perceive to be important. For example, they define God as 'The Truthful One', 'The Leader' and 'The Defender', giving well reasoned arguments to explain their choices. In written work seen, pupils write with understanding not simply about Islam, but also about its significance to believers. Their ability to draw meaningful parallels between ways in

which ideas such as 'respect' are demonstrated in Islam and in their own lives is above average for their age, as, also, is their ability to predict the likely aspirations of Muslim families for their children. Indeed, their responses to the latter question not only demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the Islamic faith, but also show the respect and sensitivity with which they approach the discussion of faiths other than their own.

168. In the four lessons seen, teaching was sound in three, but was very good in the Year 5/6 class. In contrast to the provision found during the last inspection, religious education is now taught primarily as a discrete subject in its own right, although staff are also encouraged to seek opportunities to nurture pupils' spiritual development through other subjects such as science. In Years 1 and 2 in particular, it is the spiritual dimension which is given least emphasis in religious education lessons themselves, and this is an area where there remains scope for improvement. Standards have improved in Year 6 since the last inspection, and pupils now clearly have opportunities to discuss feelings and to reflect.
169. The religious education co-ordinator has worked hard to raise the profile of the subject. She has given priority to developing a scheme of work which both fulfils the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and draws usefully on QCA guidance. Teachers are now beginning to use relevant assessment criteria to inform their planning and to gauge pupils' performance, although this practice is not yet established consistently across the school as a whole. A further priority has been the development of collections of artefacts to support the study of major world faiths including Christianity, Sikhism, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam, while the use of ICT to support work in religious education has also increased. For example, pupils can now make 'virtual' visits to a mosque and a synagogue. Real visits are made regularly to the local Longwell Church of England church with which the school has strong links, and also to a Hindu temple and an Orthodox synagogue. A visit to a mosque is also being planned.