

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARTINS JUNIOR SCHOOL

Weston-super-Mare

LEA area: North Somerset

Unique reference number: 109220

Headteacher: Bob Champ

Reporting inspector: Geoff Burgess
OIN: 23708

Dates of inspection: 5th to 12th June 2003

Inspection number: 246898

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	8 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Spring Hill Worle Weston-super-Mare
Postcode:	BS22 9BQ
Telephone number:	01934 628651
Fax number:	01934 417522
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs L Ebbs
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

Information about the inspection team

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23708	Geoff Burgess	Registered inspector	Information Technology Educational Inclusion	Results & achievements Teaching & learning Leadership & management School improvement
31758	Ted Tipper	Lay inspector		Partnership with parents Attitudes, values & personal development Attendance Adequacy of resources Personal welfare & care
24342	Denise Franklin	Team inspector	Science Religious Education SEN	Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development
27333	Richard Selby	Team inspector	English Art Design Technology	Learning opportunities
23330	Tony Burgess	Team inspector	Mathematics Music	Strategic use of resources
27925	David Smith	Team inspector	Geography; History Physical Education	Assessment & academic monitoring

The inspection contractor was:

Geoff Burgess Inspections
4, Dodhams Farm Close
Bradpole
Bridport
Dorset
DT6 3EZ

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The Registrar
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The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Martins CE Junior School serves a wide spectrum of families of mainly British heritage most of whom comes from the streets surrounding the school in the suburb of Worle. Take up of free school meals and movement of pupils in or out of school other than at usual times is less than in most schools. Most pupils come at the age of eight from three feeder first schools and the number of pupils on roll has remained stable at about 600 for several years. Around a fifth of pupils are on the special needs register with ten having statements of special need. Three of these attend the Hearing Impaired Resource Base (HIRB) located in the school. Pupils' attainment when they join the school is average for eight year olds.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an essentially sound school that provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Teaching is good and standards and overall leadership and management are satisfactory. Funding levels are on the low side and attainment on entry is average. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Most teaching is at least good with a good percentage even better and the rest satisfactory
- Pupils enjoy learning, work hard and get on well together
- Boys and girls connected to the HIRB do well and join in all the school's activities
- The school makes good provision for enhancing pupil's cultural and spiritual development
- Instrumental music involving pupils of all ages is a strong feature of the school

What could be improved

- Standards in English and mathematics have not improved at the same rate as seen in similar schools and higher and lower achievers are not making good progress
- Staff, governors, parents and pupils are not well enough informed about how well they and the school are doing and not sufficiently involved in making decisions and accounting for them
- Best use has not been made of available resources and the full potential of all staff has not been realised

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since its last inspection in 1998, national test results have improved in English and science but not at the same rate as seen throughout the country. Standards in mathematics in national tests have not shown an improving trend. With current attainment in science back up to 2001 levels and average levels maintained in English and mathematics, standards have not improved as much as in other schools. Few of the issues listed for improvement in 1998 were properly dealt with. Governors and staff have not been sufficiently involved in real decision making, very little monitoring of teaching took place until recently and assessment procedures have not been good enough to be used constructively. Many parents are still unhappy about the information about their children's progress provided. The school has not improved enough since its last inspection but inspectors are confident that this will be put right very quickly.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	C	C	C
mathematics	C	B	C	C
science	C	B	C	C

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

In national tests following the last inspection in 1998, results were better than in most schools. Since then there has been a small improvement in English and science while overall results in mathematics have stayed at the same level. However, national standards have improved much more in each subject over the same period, so that, when compared to all schools and schools in a similar situation, results almost exactly matched the present average in each subject in 2002. Standards observed during the inspection show that the trend for sustaining average standards has continued in each year group in English and mathematics with attainment in science above average throughout the school. Standards in most other subjects are as expected except in religious education and aspects of music where they are higher. Pupils connected to the Hearing Impaired Learning Base (HIRB) are doing well but other pupils identified as needing help with their learning are not making enough progress in the basic skills.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Boys and girls are fond of their school and the adults who look after them. Most are enthusiastic about the work they are given to do, try hard to please and are confident in their responses and contributions to discussions. Attitudes to learning are good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	When supervised as in class, pupils' behaviour is almost always good and sometimes, as in assemblies, very good. However, at other times such as when moving round the school or when eating lunch, the thoughtless behaviour of many pupils makes the school a less pleasant place for pupils and adults to work in. Overall behaviour is satisfactory.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good throughout the school. Most pupils behave in a mature and sensible way, respecting their environment and taking increasing responsibility around the school. However, a significant minority are much less aware of their role in the school and do not always make a positive contribution without being asked or reminded. Overall personal development is satisfactory.
Attendance	Levels of attendance and punctuality are both satisfactory

Pupils show in many circumstances that they are capable of mature, sensible and exemplary behaviour but unfortunately, at other times, the school's arrangements do not encourage them to carry these attitudes into the less structured aspects of the life of the school

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 4 – 6
Lessons seen overall	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.

Teaching is good overall with some even better and the rest satisfactory. No teaching is less than satisfactory and one excellent lesson was observed. The quality of teaching is broadly consistent across the three year groups with both very good and satisfactory teaching observed in a range of subjects including English and mathematics. Better teaching is mainly associated with the expertise of individual teachers as in swimming, music including instrumental teaching and the HIRB. The small number of learning support assistants helping pupils who find learning difficult make a good contribution by enhancing learning in the basics. Most pupils also make a strong contribution to their own learning by working hard and doing their best.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	All pupils have access to a suitably varied curriculum enhanced by the contribution made by out of class activities, especially in the older classes. Literacy, numeracy and information technology are strongly represented. Good planning arrangements ensure adequate coverage and that parallel classes receive a similar diet. However, the use of shared planning sometimes inhibits teachers' creativity in developing activities which stimulate and energise the pupils in their own class. Provision to enhance pupils' personal, social and health education has some strong features but is not consistent across the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Procedures are in place for identifying pupils with special needs and the coordinator has worked hard to document their needs and fulfil statutory requirements. However, targets on individual plans do not always relate to the learning needs indicated in assessment and, for most, support is more an add-on than an integrated approach. Best use is not being made of available funding and some provision takes pupils out of normal lessons unnecessarily. The exception to this is the work of the HIRB where pupils with very special needs are very well supported, make good progress and are included in all the school has to offer.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Staff make good provision for promoting pupils' personal development with sound arrangements for developing pupils' social skills and attitudes and moral awareness. Curricular provision for pupils to study and appreciate their own cultural heritage and celebrate the cultural diversity of others is good with good attention given to helping pupils to reflect on the more spiritual aspects of their growth.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for ensuring pupils welfare are good but attendance is not actively monitored or promoted. Behaviour in class is generally well managed but at other times several factors lead to unsociable behaviour being tolerated. For instance, at lunchtime, the crowded playground and dining hall, the rushed timescale and the low level of supervision does not encourage pupils to behave in a calm and ordered way. Recent efforts have been made to improve assessment arrangements in the core subjects and they are now adequate to keep an eye on academic progress and guide planning but procedures for monitoring the other subjects have not been properly established.

Parents have mixed views of the school but are generally supportive. However, a significant minority would like to be better informed and involved and to have a much better partnership with the staff. General communications are sound but reports and other arrangements do not provide parents with the information they need about their children's actual attainment. Few parents get involved in the day to day work of the school but many provide strong support for such activities as instrumental music lessons and the Year 6 activities week. The school does not have the support of an organised parents group.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school has been on hold for most of the past three years with the then head retaining control but working elsewhere. With little real power devolved, the acting head and deputy head have done a very good job managing the situation but, by default, the drive and direction needed to raise standards have been missing. The contribution of other leaders has been inhibited and the management potential of many other teachers untapped. Good recent moves show the awareness of the school of the need for change and the capacity to bring it about. Overall management is satisfactory but leadership has not been good enough.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have also suffered from the impact of the uncertainty, lack of involvement in decision making and absence of real vision noted above. They have also worked well with the acting management to keep things going. However, with a history of ready made decisions, minimal information provided and underdeveloped procedures and systems for knowing the school and managing the workload, their impact on making changes has been limited. However, they are very supportive and fully committed to working with the new head to move the school forward.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school community does not have a tradition of monitoring, evaluating and discussing the performance of pupils and staff or of using this information to identify priorities, set challenging targets or to help teachers to build their professional expertise or management skills. Governors and staff were not made aware of the true position of the school relative to other similar schools and school development plans were not focused on raising standards. A good start has been made in most areas but there is still some way to go before the school is in a position to generate the quality of analysis necessary for fully informed decision making and planning to take place.
The strategic use of resources	Best use has not been made of the school's resources for some time. The lack of consultation, monitoring and analysis mentioned above has meant that spending has not been focused on priorities endorsed by the school community. Neither has the impact of the way the budget has been spent, for instance on non-class based teachers, been evaluated objectively to ensure value for money. The potential of many members of staff has not been exploited, several areas of the school are underused and a potentially rich seam of talent amongst parents and the community has been largely untapped.

The acting head and deputy head are to be congratulated on sustaining the school through a long period of uncertainty and latterly, on beginning to move the school forward again. Staff and governors are very much looking forward to the opportunity of working with the new head and developing their contribution to the leadership and management of the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their children enjoy going to school • teaching is good • pupils work hard and do their best • the school is helping pupils to grow up sensibly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality of information about how well their children are doing • the work children are expected to do at home • the range of extra activities • they feel they are not sufficiently involved in or informed about their children's education

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views and consider that homework is a useful aid to learning. However, the school could do much more to encourage parents to take an active role in its life and tell them how well their children are doing. Given the numbers involved, the opportunity for pupils to join in extra activities is less than in most schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In 1998, following the last inspection, results in national tests for eleven-year-olds in mathematics and science were well above average and standards in English were above average when compared to all other schools. English results made a good improvement in 1999 but have not improved since. In mathematics, results have been similar to or below 1998 levels each year except 2001 when they were a little above. Standards in science improved in line with very good national improvements in 1999 but have levelled off since to be mainly above average. In the most recent tests in 2002, all three sets of results were almost exactly equal to the national average. However, when compared with schools attended by pupils with similar prior attainment as measured by tests at the age of seven, standards in English and mathematics were below average.

2. Boys did relatively better than girls especially in mathematics and English in 2002, repeating a trend shown the previous year. Appropriate percentages of pupils achieved average and above average grades in English and science but fewer pupils than expected achieved the higher level in mathematics. The school's analysis of English results shows that there are significant differences in attainment between the seven classes in the year group.

3. Standards in English and mathematics in Year 6 are once again around the average mark but attainment in science is back up to above average. All the same trends are apparent in Years 4 and 5 with broadly average standards in English and mathematics and above average in science, differences between classes, and fewer pupils achieving higher standards than might be expected. Pupils attached to the HIRB are making good progress towards their learning targets but the progress of other pupils who find learning difficult is very inconsistent. Several with identified learning difficulties do not have specific learning targets on their individual education plans and support for most is more an occasional add-on than an integrated approach to enhancing learning. Where the class teacher builds on this in the classroom and where the coordinator takes a group of lower achievers as a 'set', progress is good. However, in other classes where this is not the case, progress is not good enough.

4. Overall sound teaching and comprehensive planning means that standards in most other subjects including information technology are as expected but, in most cases the constraints of working to a common plan mean that few pupils are achieving at higher levels. There are two exceptions to this picture. Standards in religious education are generally higher and, for some pupils and in some classes, attainment in music is higher than expected. The 100+ boys and girls involved in instrumental tuition regularly perform at high levels for their age and where music lessons are taken by music specialists, standards are higher. In other classes where teachers have particular expertise, such as in art and swimming, standards are higher.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

5. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and the majority of pupils are eager to learn. They settle quickly in class and in well-structured lessons show a keen interest in activities. Most particularly enjoy being involved in musical activities such as the orchestras and in school performances. In practical sessions, pupils work happily in pairs or groups, sharing information and equipment safely. Almost all are willing to answer questions and join in discussions. Pupils are friendly and courteous towards visitors but sometimes show less consideration for others, particularly in the corridors and playground.

6. Standards of behaviour are satisfactory overall. In most lessons behaviour is good. In a lesson where teaching was excellent, boys and girls behaved extremely well and rose to the teacher's challenging questions. Pupils are aware of the school rules and do their best to follow them. However, the behaviour of some pupils around the school, in the corridors and in the

playground is not as it should be. When not closely supervised some pupils run up and down the corridors noisily. Lunchtimes are rushed and many do not have time to socialise with their friends when eating their food. Although playground facilities have improved there is still not enough for pupils to do at this time. Other areas for pupils to sit quietly with friends are underused and so they try their best to play in a confined space. Some pupils, who find it difficult to socialise in the playground play well together and enjoy being in the games room.

7. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is good and this promotes pupils' confidence and self-esteem. As a result most pupils are polite, helpful and respectful. They enjoy having special responsibilities around the school and the members of the School Council take their responsibilities seriously. Many pupils are willing to organise weekly fund-raising sales and as a result the school raises large sums of money for charity each year. They show respect for feelings, values and beliefs as was evident in a religious education lesson when pupils wrote about how the person felt on his/her first pilgrimage of Hajj and also when pupils discuss their interpretation of 'The Lord's Prayer'.

8. Attendance is satisfactory at just below the national average having stayed fairly stable since the last inspection at around 94%. The great majority of pupils arrive punctually so latecomers cause little disruption to lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

9. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was said to be 'strong' with 'six out of every ten lessons' good or better, 'just over one in ten' very good and very few unsatisfactory. Overall standards of teaching as observed in classrooms have improved with twice as many very good lessons, one excellent and none unsatisfactory. In overall terms:

- the balance of good and better teaching is broadly similar across the three year groups with Year 4 marginally the strongest
- within each year group, the quality of teaching per teacher ranged from overall satisfactory to overall good and in Year 4, very good
- roughly half the staff observed taught at least one very good lesson, three taught more
- every teacher taught at least one good or better lesson
- the percentage of good and better teaching in each of literacy, numeracy and science is broadly similar to the overall picture
- the percentage of good and better teaching in the foundation subjects taken together is also broadly similar to the overall picture
- of the lessons observed, teaching was strongest in music, religious education, in activities associated with the HIRB and when outside specialists were involved

10. This points to a solid core of teaching with no real weaknesses but with inconsistencies across year groups, ability groups and subjects associated partly with the capacity of individual teachers and partly with particular expertise in certain subjects. Several factors have influenced this situation. On the positive side:

- subject coordinators have worked hard to provide detailed lesson planning for teachers to use which ensures that less confident colleagues are well supported in this area
- learning objectives are made clear at the beginning of lessons and referred to during most
- individual teachers are well prepared and, with occasional exceptions, they manage their classes and the activities well
- pupils enjoy learning, listen and concentrate, respond well orally when required and work well both independently and in groups
- where, as in music, subject expertise is used by teachers in other classes, learning is greatly enhanced
- when lower achieving pupils are taught as a 'set', they learn more and faster.

11. However, other factors are currently acting in the opposite direction. These include:

- low levels of classroom support and a wide range of ability in each classroom mean that it is difficult for teachers to provide the help pupils require to perform as well as observed in other schools which provide good levels of well-trained in-class support
- this has a particular impact on pupils on the special needs register who do not have dedicated support for whom, in most classrooms, current arrangements mean their work is not focused on their particular learning needs for much of the week
- the use of pre-prepared lesson plans means that, unless modified, everything tends to the average and not enough is expected of higher achievers. It also means that teachers are less likely to be creative and take risks to build enthusiasm and motivation
- the historic lack of regular monitoring of teaching has meant that specific training needs and good practice have not been identified and any professional development has not been focused on an objective view of the individual and group needs of teachers

12. Good examples of all the above were observed during the inspection. In a very good lively literacy lesson on drafting and redrafting poetry taken by the Year 6 literacy coordinator, very well motivated pupils reacted very positively to high expectations for both the use of language and the pace of working. This included two well supported pupils with extra needs. Boys and girls talked confidently about sonnets, alliteration, haiku etc. and produced good quality work including a rhyming advertisement for the radio for their class anthology. The same quality was seen in an earlier poetry session involving another Year 6 class but two other similar Year 6 lessons, though adequate, did not have the same energy or high expectations. A similar pattern was seen in numeracy with very good lessons in Years 4 and 5 alongside satisfactory lessons using the same planning and materials.

13. However, another Year 5 lesson illustrated the very good impact of pupils identified as needing extra help with numeracy working together in a smaller 'class' or set. In this, the special needs coordinator used the smaller numbers and narrower ability range to pitch the lesson and use strategies very appropriate to the needs of the group. Although some struggled, each child achieved and enjoyed the process of using a calculator to find fractions of numbers. Another very good example of special needs provision came when the HIRB coordinator took the lead in team teaching a lesson on haiku poetry involving a pupil from the HIRB and then worked with the lowest attaining group while the class teacher managed the rest.

14. The impact of teachers making very good use of their expertise was observed in a variety of situations which included:

- two music specialists displaying all the infectious confidence and enthusiasm for the subject they possess in prompting their own pupils to high standards involving gamelin and a range of African music. One repeating the lesson just as successfully with another class
- the history coordinator, who nonetheless obviously has a great deal of knowledge about the bible, leading a fascinating discussion about the biblical creation story with her class. This lesson also illustrated what can happen when teachers use their professional judgment to modify planning as she postponed the planned activity to allow her pupils to follow their intuitive and thoughtful lines of thought in discussion to a conclusion.
- a very good Year 4 art lesson taken by the art coordinator in which she used the illustrations from 'Where the Wild Things Are', Munch's 'Scream' and Blake's 'Ghost of a Flea' to prompt pupils to think about style and imagination in making pictures of a dream.
- the HIRB teacher working both one-to one with 'her' pupils and also supporting a class teacher by providing the input and then working with a group including a child connected to the base and so ensuring that all pupils involved made good progress.
- two very good physical education lessons taken by outside 'experts', one bought in to take swimming throughout the school and the other taken by the school's feeder secondary school staff and supported by Year 10 students in which Year 4 pupils put together a dance to the music from 'The Adams Family'.

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

15. The quality and range of learning activities provided by the school is satisfactory. In 1998 the school was said to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which met the statutory requirements. Literacy, numeracy and information technology are strongly represented. The school uses national guidance and strategies to give boys and girls a wide range of learning experiences that cover all the required elements, these are enhanced by a range of initiatives and out of class experiences

16. A consistent approach to planning enables the school to build a curriculum with full coverage. The use of national strategies and national curriculum guidance through the QCA schemes of work gives full entitlement to all pupils. There are strengths in science in the school and particularly in the instrumental and orchestral work in music. The school has been successful for the last two years in attracting European Union funding for a German language assistant and the successful Comenius Project with schools from Germany and Poland is nearing completion. In religious education, the school has adopted a locally agreed syllabus. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is enhanced by a good approach to citizenship and the links with worship in the school and themes followed in assemblies, but there is no overall agreed coverage although there are plans to formalise a scheme of work this year. This will need addressing as a matter of priority.

17. A suitable emphasis is placed on the teaching of English, mathematics and science and the numeracy strategy has been effectively implemented. Last year the school recognised that the Literacy strategy was not properly implemented. They have since taken steps to ensure the full implementation of this strategy and this approach is beginning to bear fruit.

18. Curriculum planning covers all aspects of the National Curriculum. All subjects have appropriate policies in place and base their schemes of work around national guidance. Overall the planning is thorough and has a satisfactory impact on teaching and learning. Joint planning in year groups strengthens the delivery of the curriculum, ensures even coverage and encourages staff to share their expertise. Lesson plans seen clearly identified the learning intentions for each session, indicated differentiated activities where appropriate and showed the links to previous sessions. This uniform approach does not always provide the opportunity for adaptation of curriculum planning, and therefore pupils at the top and bottom of the ability range are not always best catered for. Where this adaptation does occur, progress is good for the full range of pupils. For example, in a Year 4 literacy lesson, pupils had the task of writing kennings to describe domestic pets, the class teacher worked this into the theme of monsters that had been a stimulus for other poetry and linked art work. This simple link generated much enthusiasm and the resultant writing was extremely effective.

19. The school has a positive attitude to equal opportunities which is reflected in the overall caring nature of the establishment. However, current provision for pupils who find learning and/or conforming difficult means that many of them are regularly taken out of lessons for extra teaching. Some unnecessarily miss whole class input they could get a great deal from while others miss lessons in other subjects that they may well enjoy. Sessions when the class teacher takes a lower achieving group while another teacher takes the class have a positive side. However, it is difficult to see why they need to be away from their classmates and why the objectives cannot be achieved as a normal part of group work. Current provision does not encourage an integrated approach to learning for lower achieving pupils and the shortage of learning support assistants is a further hindrance. Although instrumental music is a feature of the school, the pupils involved also miss other lessons and the school could do more to ensure that the impact of this is minimised.

20. All year groups take part in external visits and Bristol is well used for various curriculum areas. Further usage should be encouraged; for instance a planned visit to Bristol could include visits to different places of worship to enhance the provision of religious education. Useful links with Wyvern School and Bristol Rovers Football Club have a direct input in the physical education

(PE) curriculum. PE is also enhanced by the employment of a fully qualified swimming coach to instruct Year 4 and 5 pupils in the school pool. Year 6 take part in a wide-ranging choice of activities in the second half of the Summer Term and during the inspection groups were visiting The Isle of Wight, Lyme Regis and the Wye Valley while another group were based in the school and undertook local activities. High levels of organisation and staff commitment were evident, though by holding this at the end of the school year some opportunities are lost for enhancing the wider curriculum on a deeper basis.

21. The provision for extra-curricular music activities is very good and the orchestra is a very strong feature of the school performing with distinction at school assemblies and functions and outside events. Apart from this, however, the number of opportunities for pupils to participate in after-school clubs throughout the year is less than might be expected of a school of this size. Year 4 pupils, in particular, suffer in this regard.

22. Overall, the local community makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' learning. There are good links with local Christian churches and there is a weekly lunchtime club run by their representatives. However, opportunities to meet people of other faiths and visit their places of worship are very limited. The same can be said of making use of members of the local community to relate their experiences of their working lives or of living in the past. There are also few links with local businesses and other organisations that enrich the learning of the pupils or the personal development of teaching staff. Local organisations do make good use of the school's facilities, however, especially the swimming pool, in the evenings.

23. The school has developed some effective links with its feeder schools, through meetings between subject coordinators and visits by the Year 4 coordinator and the SENCO. Valuable transition arrangements with receiving schools include joint curriculum planning. Partnership with other schools is also enhanced through initiatives such as the Weston Education Achievement Zone and the Comenius project which has linked the school with others in Poland and Germany. Sporting links with other junior schools are, however, limited by the absence of a school playing field. The school has an established link with an initial teacher training institution from which it normally takes four students per year.

24. Good arrangements are made for pupils' personal development. Provision for spiritual development is good. Through the curriculum, the rolling programme of whole-school assembly themes and the personal, social, moral and cultural programme the school provides pupils with knowledge and insight into values and beliefs and enables them to reflect on their own and others' experience. Other acts of collective worship, in class or year groups, clearly follow 'the theme for the week' and also provide good opportunities for reflection. For example, during the inspection week assemblies were based on 'caring for the environment'. Achievement assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to recognise individual talents and achievements. Good links are made with the local church and members of the church community regularly lead school assemblies. The school also visits the church as part of the religious education curriculum and pupils attend services to celebrate festivals such as 'St Martin's Day' in November. A very good display of pupils' thoughts and reflections about 'Collective Worship' supports provision for spiritual development very well.

25. Provision for moral and social development is satisfactory. Pupils were involved in putting a Code of Conduct together when it was first written but have not had the opportunity to revisit the code to decide whether it meets the needs of pupils currently in the school. Some teachers negotiate additional class rules with their pupils at the start of the year but this is not part of the school's policy. The personal, social and health education programme and times when pupils sit in a circle to discuss issues, provides pupils with opportunities to discuss moral and social issues. However, these are not fully embedded into the school timetable and are not yet used consistently by all teachers. Moral issues are regularly addressed in assemblies and pupils are encouraged to take responsibilities around the school. Each class has monitors and older pupils take responsibility for tasks such as registers, dinner money boxes, distributing daily newsletter to staff and manning the office at lunchtime. Residential visits and other day trips also make a good contribution to pupils' social development, as do visits to other schools for music and sporting

activities. The School Council enables pupils to take some part in the organisation of the school, for example they asked for the playground to be improved and as a result the school organised some marking for games on the playground. However the current arrangements for play and lunchtimes does not provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to develop their social skills.

26. Provision for individual pupils who find it difficult to socialise is good. The school provides a games club for pupils who find lunchtimes difficult and several social skills groups where pupils can discuss issues and learn to work and play in small groups. It makes good use of outside agencies to support pupils in developing appropriate social skills.

27. Cultural provision is good. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about their own cultures in various areas of the curriculum, particularly in history and geography, and during visits to places of interest such as Bristol. The school has good links with several European countries including Poland and Germany which enables pupils to find out about their cultures and to share their own with pupils in these countries. From previous links with Kenya and when the head visited Canada and the acting head, Trinidad, pupils gained a good understanding of the different cultures in these countries. A small range of multi-cultural books is kept in the school library and it is possible to identify books with a multi-cultural theme using the library computer system. The music and art curriculum provide opportunities for multi-cultural development and the well planned religious education programme provides pupils with good opportunities to learn about other world religions with a particular emphasis on those practised in Britain today. Although the school has links with some local churches this is an area for further development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. This is a caring school where all members of staff are vigilant in their concern for the health and safety of their pupils. Teachers and support staff get to know their pupils very well and are clearly involved in their personal development. Effective records are kept for each child and these are transferred electronically between feeder and receiving schools. Governors carry out an inspection of the school twice a year identifying areas of concern relating to health and safety issues which are then addressed as soon as possible. This is supported by daily checks by the caretakers and the constant vigilance of staff. The system for undertaking risk assessments of all school activities and procedures, however, is only just being introduced. A number of first-aiders and a well-equipped medical room are both well-used during break-times. The special needs coordinator who is currently the designated person responsible for child protection, is operating a system in line with local procedures. She has received the appropriate training. Staff are made aware of the procedures during their induction and regular updates during staff training sessions.

29. Pupils are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle through subjects such as science, physical education and PSHE and the visits of health professionals. However, while pupils are allowed water bottles in the classroom, their use is not actively encouraged and the school has not committed itself to the Healthy Schools Standard or become involved with initiatives such as Sport England's Activemark which recognises the promotion of the benefits of physical activity.

30. The school has a clear behaviour policy based on a list of school rules supported by a range of classroom rewards and sanctions. Poor behaviour is generally resolved by the class teacher and the situation rarely develops beyond this point. However, there does not appear to be an effective system for ensuring the orderly behaviour of pupils in the corridors, dining hall and playground. As a result, several pupils are sent to the head each day, especially after the lunchtime break. Three pupils were subject to fixed-term exclusion orders during the year.

31. Teachers and administrative staff use a manual system for recording attendance and the registers are completed promptly at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. However, the attendance totals are not completed until the end of the year so that the school has no detailed knowledge of its performance until then. This, plus the lack of a computerised system, prevents the detailed analysis of patterns of poor attendance by particular individuals and any variations between classes. Also, the reasons for absence are not always recorded accurately with the result that the published rate of unauthorised attendance is understated. There are also

few rewards for encouraging attendance and there is little focus within the school highlighting its importance.

32. Assessment procedures for identifying pupils with learning difficulties are currently not sharp enough. The school identifies those pupils who are not expected to achieve the expected National Curriculum levels at the end of Year 6 but the current organisation of the provision does not enable all these pupils to receive the type of support they need in the classroom. Targets on pupils' individual education plans often focus more on supporting pupils with behavioural problems than on their learning needs. For example a pupil in the older class has behaviour targets but is currently performing well below average in literacy and mathematics. Although the pupil is withdrawn weekly for focus literacy support he does not have any specific literacy targets to aim for. Although pupils with statements have some of their needs satisfactorily addressed, this is done mainly through withdrawal and there are times such as in physical education where 'ongoing monitoring of physical needs in PE' are not addressed because of no additional support at this time. The small number of pupils who attend the HIRB are well supported and their individual needs catered for very well both in the base and in their mainstream classes.

33. Overall, effective arrangements are in place to assess and monitor pupils' academic development in the core subjects. With the introduction of a system to electronically manage assessment results the school is in a position to begin to track pupils individually. Staff have completed training on the program and data from the end of key stage and optional year groups tests is beginning to provide information that enables the school to set school targets and to identify pupils who will benefit from literacy and numeracy catch-up programmes. The English, maths and science coordinators have all made a detailed retrospective analysis of the Year 6 test results and this information is being fed into the school's development plan. Assessment data shows progress from the tests in Key Stage 1 and there is further scope for using the test data to set targets for the end of each year. Assessment information from feeder schools varies and although Key Stage 1 test results are provided, the information was not available until after the pupils had started and data for pupils in the year prior to entry at the school is not consistent. Standardised data for this group would provide benchmark information and enable the school to track progress more effectively in year four and in following years.

34. A number of improvements have been made to assessment arrangements since the last inspection with good practice in year six where the available test information is effectively used to identify pupils for intervention programmes. Teachers use the Year 5 test data to track the progress of pupils requiring support. In a joint moderation exercise, the Year 5 teachers provide samples of an explanation text for year six teachers to mark and then, in consultation with the literacy coordinator, jointly discuss and agree attainment levels. An extension of this practice to all year groups would ensure higher and lower attaining pupils are identified at an early stage, their progress monitored and appropriate planning put into place to meet their learning needs.

35. The use of assessment to inform planning is not consistently developed throughout the school with an over reliance on the end of stage data to inform areas for development and priorities rather than an analysis of the data available from the year group tests. Assessment procedures in the foundation subjects are not well developed and this is identified as an area for development. The school's development plan also acknowledges the need to improve the tracking of pupils' assessment results in all year groups, to improve the analysis of Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 test results and to introduce a baseline test for pupils on entry to the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. The prospectus gives parents a good introduction to the school and the governors' annual report is a well presented and informative booklet going beyond the statutory requirements. Informative school newsletters, which give details of forthcoming events, reports on recent activities and information on issues such as parking outside school gates, are distributed every month. However, these are not reinforced by noticeboards, which would be very useful given the school policy of not encouraging parents to go further than the playground when bringing and

collecting their children. Parents also receive leaflets at the beginning of each year, which provide useful information on what is to be studied in each subject.

37. Parents have opportunities to discuss the progress of their children at formal meetings in the autumn and spring terms. The annual reports provide a very brief description of pupils' achievements in each subject and their personal and social development. However, they do not indicate where a pupil is in terms of the expected level of achievement and offer limited information on what a pupil needs to do to improve. There is no information on attendance. Also, as there is no organised parents' meeting in the summer term, they do not have the opportunity to discuss the reports except by personal appointment. The home-school diary does enable some contact between home and school but its use is inconsistent across the school.

38. Few parents are involved in the daily life of the school although some assist in the School Shop and Bookshop when it is in operation. The school's policy of not allowing parents to assist in the same classes as their children has clearly inhibited their involvement in the classroom. There is also no form of parents' organisation linked to the school.

39. Overall, the school's links with its parents are very under-developed. It is not a welcoming environment for them and, although many teaching staff would welcome their greater involvement in the school in general and the classroom in particular, there appears to be an element of suspicion on both sides. However, parents give strong support for such activities as instrumental music lessons and the Year 6 activities week. The fact that a recent sponsored activity for a national charity raised £3,600, shows the potential benefits to be gained by the school from encouraging parents to become more fully involved in its daily life.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

40. In 1998, leadership was said to be 'strong' with clear educational direction provided by all the senior managers and supportive governors but inconsistencies in decision making, strategic planning and monitoring. Key issues at the time included developing the strategic role of governors, enhancing the roles of the senior management team and improving arrangements for monitoring the quality of teaching and provision. They still are. During the inspection, it became obvious that little had been done in the years following the last inspection to deal with the issues identified. 'Strong' leadership, which meant very centralized decision making, did not involve the school community in dealing with the implications of the report and, at a time of fundamental change in primary education, various requirements and opportunities were not properly taken on board.

41. Over the past three years, a series of short term secondments of the then head saw the present acting head and deputy head managing the situation but not in a position until very recently to move the school forward. Despite this, they fully deserve the thanks of the school community for holding such a large school together and for beginning to make the sort of changes that will be necessary for this 'sleeping giant' to stir and make the kind of impact of which it is capable when the whole school community pulls together.

42. Until recently, little monitoring of teaching or other aspects of provision took place and where it did, the information so gained was not used to provoke debate, establish priorities or set internal targets. Almost no discussion about ways of improving either standards or provision took place between staff and/or governors and where it did, the then heads view prevailed. Pupils were asked to take optional and other tests but no apparent use was made of the results to identify what needed to be done to raise standards or to set year group targets. Mandatory targets were set at levels that maintained the status quo and did not raise expectations. Performance management has not been properly used as a tool to promote professional development. Coordinators and managers have not been provided with real opportunities to discuss their responsibilities or targets for improvement based on good information against which their contribution could be measured.

43. The inherited management structure of the school does not make best use of the potential of the staff team in managing continuous improvement in provision and standards in all subjects and other aspects of the school. Other than the acting Year 6 leader, who has kept her responsibility for physical education, none of the most senior staff have responsibility for a subject. The leadership of the core subjects has been in a state of flux and two current leaders are part-timers. Nearly half the teaching staff have no subject or other management responsibilities within the school yet one teacher is managing two subjects. However, curriculum and other leaders are working very hard and becoming strong influences for good in their areas of responsibility, which is already having a positive effect in many areas. The special educational needs coordinator has worked hard to fulfil statutory requirements and set up all the necessary documentation but the current organisation and level of support is not adequate to meet the needs of the majority of pupils in need of help. New appointments and the sharing of responsibilities have strengthened the leadership of literacy and numeracy and a good start made in monitoring what is happening in the classrooms.

44. However, in science and the other subjects, coordinators are finding it difficult to make the kind of difference they would like to see. To increase their impact, sufficient planned time must be provided during the school day for staff to monitor and support what is going on in classrooms in the various subjects and aspects. Consideration should be given to making use of the very high levels of non-class based teaching staff as cover in order that this can happen. In such a large school with at least 20 classrooms to monitor, it will be necessary for the school to develop innovative and inclusive arrangements involving all staff to make this possible and manageable for subject managers.

45. Governors are very aware that, despite their best efforts and their continued support for the staff over the years, they have not been able to perform the critical friend element of their role. This has not been for want of trying but more for want of detailed information about the school's performance and the opportunity to question the direction of the school. All the structures and procedures are in place to manage the necessary business though perhaps needing some re-organisation to be fully effective, and all statutory requirements are met. However, as with other aspects of the school, their contribution has tended to be an add-on rather than an integrated part of leadership and management. The governing body has several vacancies but it is very encouraging that those governors remaining are showing great commitment and willingness to work with the newly appointed head in building up their role and sharing in the challenging and important decisions that will need to be made.

46. The school has not made the best use of its resources including finances, staffing and accommodation because the identified priorities for improvement have not sufficiently focused on raising standards. Although the school budgets systematically and efficiently, insufficient comparative data and analysis has been used to ensure spending decisions are targeted wisely. For example, no analysis has been made of the effectiveness of the present deployment of teaching and non teaching staff, neither have comparisons been made with similar schools to explore different models of staffing which have proved particularly effective in raising standards and benefiting the children. Inadequate analysis of assessment results and other information is provided for the governors to ensure the best use is made of available funds to bring about improvement in standards. As a result none of this year's 'priorities for improvement' in the school development plan (SDP) specifically target raising standards, despite the clear need indicated by this year's results in national tests.

47. Since the last inspection the SDP has been refined and improved. It focuses on developments for the current year, but also considers long term improvements over the next five years. It identifies proposed developments and includes details of key personnel, cost, proposed development, evaluation criteria and timescale. This year, teachers submitted bids for their areas of responsibility, which were considered by the acting head. Sufficient levels of responsibilities for spending are delegated to staff with management responsibilities with subject coordinators managing their subject budget. The financial administrator provides the governors with a regular update of the budget position to allow them to monitor the progress of the SDP and the emerging financial situation.

48. Systems of financial control are well-established and respective roles and responsibilities are appropriately defined. Good accounting records are maintained and monitored by the school. The financial administrator provides high quality support. Efficient and unobtrusive systems support the day to day running of the school. A finance computer package is used efficiently to raise and pay orders and monitor spending. However the school has not taken advantage of the computer technology available to help monitor attendance. The most recent external audit identified a few minor issues where policies and practices would benefit from being updated. All these issues have been, or are in the process of being, addressed. The school has also benefited from the move to Cheque Book School status.

49. Efforts have been made to actively explore alternative funding to improve provision or create additional posts. For example, one of the Governors managed to obtain a Sports Aid Foundation Grant to resurface the front playground and provide play equipment, while the school successfully attracted European Union funding to employ a German Language assistant. Formal tenders for items of major expenditure, such as the computer suite, have been sought, but the lack of 'comparison' and 'consultation' indicates the principles of best value are not always applied. The considerable expertise of individual teachers is not always fully exploited. Subject leaders rarely directly monitor the teaching of their subject and, despite having staff with subject strengths in music, this is not fully reflected in the provision. Links with Weston Educational Action Zone (WEAZ) have generated funds to enable the school to broaden the artistic and creative elements of the curriculum by funding theatre visits and artists in residence. The gym, dining hall, school hall and swimming pool generate substantial income from lettings thanks to the cooperation of the two very dedicated caretakers.

50. School buildings are generally in a good state of repair both inside and outside although some windows and doors need replacing and many areas would benefit from a coat of paint to brighten them up. Thanks to the efforts of the caretakers and cleaners, St Martins is a very clean and tidy school. The recent resurfacing of the playground has been of great benefit to the teaching of PE but the lack of a grassed playing area inhibits sporting activities. Also, the two grassed quadrangles are an under-used resource especially when the playground is so overcrowded. Internally, the buildings are well used in terms of classroom, storage and assembly areas but the benefit afforded by the separate gymnasium is limited by the poor acoustics. Resources to support teaching and learning are satisfactory in all subjects except physical education where they are unsatisfactory. However, given heavy usage with seven classes per year group, not enough is being spent on their continued replacement in any subject to ensure they continue to meet the requirements of the curriculum.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51. To make it possible for everyone in the school community to achieve their full potential in the best interests of the children, the governors, headteacher and staff of St Martins Junior School should:

- (1) Make it possible for each child to achieve the highest standards in literacy and numeracy of which they are capable by:

- working with feeder schools to establish a clear baseline of knowledge, understanding and skills for each child so that work can be matched to their needs from day one
- setting challenging targets for each child, class and group and using developing assessment procedures to track progress against them to evaluate provision and value added by the school
- using the advantages of the seven class year groups, organize pupils in ways which mean that teachers can focus on narrower bands of attainment to increase levels of challenge at each level especially for higher and lower achievers
- encouraging teachers to develop the established planning to better meet the needs of children and provide more energy and stimulation
- using very good practice in the teaching of literacy and numeracy within the school as an exemplar on which colleagues can model their work
- basing mainstream special needs support on everyday work in the classroom, focusing learning targets in individual plans for pupils with learning needs on measurable improvements in pupil performance, and providing class teachers with the help necessary to manage and support such pupils in their classes.
(Paragraphs 1 - 5, 11, 12, 19, 32 - 35, 43, 46, 52, 54, 58 - 63, 88 & 71)

- (2) Significantly improve the way the school evaluates how well it is doing compared with similar schools and involve the whole school community in using this information in the process of prioritizing actions, setting challenging targets and measuring success by:
- using all the procedures listed above to inform the school community on a 'need to know' basis' how well individuals and the school are doing against national expectations and agreed targets
 - setting up a programme of in-class monitoring to evaluate the quality of teaching and other provision and using the performance management process to encourage and support teachers in developing their professionalism
 - using all the information to establish priorities, focus energies, evaluate the impact of initiatives and initiate and inform discussions at all levels
 - involving the whole staff and representatives of the rest of the school community in the decision making and management process and creating a management structure which enables and encourages this
(Paragraphs 11, 40 - 46, 66 , 72, 87, 95, 101 & 117)
- (3) Using the process noted above to evaluate the effectiveness of current expenditure, ways of working and deployment of staff and resources, and making these match the key aims of the school by:
- auditing and reviewing the impact that past decisions, or the lack of a decision, have had on provision and standards
 - involving the whole school community on agreeing what is urgent and important and the implications necessary change has on the deployment of resources and ways of working
 - focusing attention on the need to ensure that the bottom line for all resource decisions is standards
 - using established value for money principles to ensure that all decisions involving resources are properly tested
(Paragraphs 42 - 46, 49, 50, 58, 62, 65, 73, 93, 94, 96, 102 & 106)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Unsatisfactory behaviour around school when pupils are not under the direct control of a teacher (Paragraphs 5, 6, 25 & 30)
- Unsociable lunchtime arrangements (Paragraphs 6, 25 & 30)
- The lack of analysis of attendance records (Paragraphs 31, 37 & 30)
- Underdeveloped partnership with parents and community (Paragraphs 22, 36 - 39)

- Too many pupils unnecessarily miss out on important activities or do them away from their classes (Paragraphs 19 & 32)
- Lack of assessment in the foundation subjects (Paragraphs 35, 79, 82, 87, 92, 95, 101, 106 & 110)
- Inconsistency in teaching, aspects of provision and standards across year groups (Paragraphs 2, 3, 10, 12, 16, 25, 37 & 81)
- The limited take up of extra curricular activities per pupil excepting music and activities week, but especially in Year 4, sports and the lack of curricular visits / visitors (Paragraphs 21, 27, 58 & 106)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

83

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

23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	16	38	28			
Percentage	1	19	46	34			

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	Y4– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		606
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		68

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y4– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		118

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	65
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	36

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.001
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	113	98	211

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	88	89	108
	Girls	75	67	86
	Total	163	156	194
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (75)	74 (78)	92 (96)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	89	91	106
	Girls	77	69	83
	Total	166	160	189
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (77)	76 (82)	90 (94)
	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	589	10	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background	8		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3		
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background	2		
Asian or Asian British - Indian			
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese	1		
Any other ethnic group			
No ethnic group recorded	3		

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

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Number of qualified teachers (FTE)	26.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.6
Average class size	28.8

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	189

Financial year	2002
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	£
Total income	1066753
Total expenditure	1035433
Expenditure per pupil	1709
Balance brought forward from previous year	24945
Balance carried forward to next year	31320

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	12

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number 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	606
Number of questionnaires returned	187

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	41	51	5	3	
My child is making good progress in school.	32	55	8		4
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	53	14	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	43	24	12	2
The teaching is good.	28	62	5	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	40	30	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	36	46	12	5	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	35	53	5	3	4
The school works closely with parents.	22	40	20	13	6
The school is well led and managed.	27	47	6	8	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	32	52	10	1	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	49	16	6	8

Other issues raised by parents

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

52. Standards overall in English reach the national level of expectations but there has been no improvement since the last inspection when standards also reached national levels. The rate of improvement has not been comparable to that made by similar schools. In literacy lessons, the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress but though the lessons are planned for the different ability groups, higher achievers are not always making the progress they are capable of. For those pupils with specific learning difficulties, the match of tasks to their needs is not always appropriate.

53. By the end of Year 6 standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to express views and they do so well in discussions. Effective questioning helps them to extend their thinking and reasoning. Many pupils talk confidently in an increasing range of contexts. For example, they describe plot outlines in stories and express opinions about the characters of favourite novels. In discussions about persuasive letter writing they are able to voice mature opinions and give alternative solutions to problems involving the environment.

54. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading in the school are satisfactory. Most pupils respond well to a range of text. Through the literacy lessons they have come across a wide range of poetry and can appreciate the different forms. This focus on poetry was a good feature of the inspection week, and the enjoyment of the work of poets and their own writing was clear in pupils' reading of a range of self-written and published poems. Individual reading is encouraged but there are at this time not enough strategies to fully develop pupils' reading. The reading of class novels and the associated work, class sessions in guided reading groups and the opportunity to choose regularly from a growing range of fiction help to nurture good reading habits but there is more that could be done. There has been some trialling of reading logs and there are plans to revive this initiative as detailed in the school development programme; this should then provide more structure to the reading in the school and increase progress in this important area.

55. Much of the teaching and learning during the inspection was good. From discussion with pupils and from the analysis of pupils' work, it is clear that with the full introduction of the literacy strategy earlier in the year, levels of attainment were just satisfactory in the two terms leading up to the inspection. Greater familiarity with the strategy and growing teacher confidence, supported by the two coordinators, are beginning to move the standards in the school forward. Work is well presented in books, clearly labelled with learning objectives and marking is usually helpful. However, this is more notable in Year 6 and could serve as an example for other cohorts.

56. In a good Year 4 lesson, pupils responded enthusiastically to the task of creating kennings and then joining together these descriptive compound words to form their own poems. Different ability groups had graded tasks and the lower achievers were well supported by the class teacher while other groups worked quietly and with purpose. This activity built on the good descriptive poetry pupils had written about monsters. Using their own art work as a stimulus for their writing, the effective results were read out well by a wide range of volunteers.

57. Year 5 pupils had to consider the best use of language for persuasive writing; they had clear understanding of the use of suffixes and prefixes and of the power of different verbs. The teacher's good subject knowledge led to satisfactory levels of attainment. The work was well linked to whole class shared text work and the levels of discussion were good. Year 6 pupils had to write poetry in different styles. Good differentiation set challenges for some of the higher attainers who were writing effectively in sonnet form while other pupils wrote riddles and used alliteration in their poetry. Clear instruction, useful visual displays and good support from the class teacher and a support assistant for a hearing impaired child contributed to the success of

this lesson. Other Year 6 lessons demonstrated the thoroughness in planning for this two-week unit on poetry, and the pupils' contributions were consistently enthusiastic.

58. All teachers follow the literacy strategy format which was only fully introduced this year. The two coordinators have worked hard on the implementation of the strategy and have supported their colleagues well. Planning is consistent within each of the year groups, but there is not always enough emphasis on adapting and developing plans to match the needs of pupils on the day. An analysis of all seven Year 6 classes' work on Shakespeare showed that all of the classes adopted a similar approach to the teaching of the work. However, while levels of attainment were satisfactory for the majority, pupils with learning difficulties and those of higher ability had less successful outcomes to their work. The curriculum is enriched by the annual visit of a theatre group but few visits to theatres have been made in recent years. The school library has a useful computerised system that enables pupils to easily call up lists of fiction and non-fiction stock from different genres and topics. However, the current stack of books looks decidedly 'tired' and the librarian was underused during the inspection.

59. Assessment procedures involving the use of optional tests are building towards a useful system. Half-termly writing assessments and group guided reading assessments are used to track pupil progress, but there is more scope for individual target setting to focus the next stage of a pupil's learning. These assessments are kept on computer and some current Year 5 pupils have been identified for booster classes. An able writers group planned for the next academic year for a group of twenty children, and careful consideration should be given to extending this number as the school will have approximately sixty pupils expected to reach higher levels of attainment in the 2004 SATs. Further work in developing assessment is planned for Year 4 and for the 2003 intake. This needs to be in place as soon as possible. Target setting will be well supported by the levels of formative marking that already exist. Where this marking is at its best, pupils are given direct input within the course of a piece of work. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson, pupils' poetry had an individual focus for them to develop; this helped them as they prepared an anthology of their own poems at the end of a two-week unit of work.

60. The two enthusiastic coordinators have a clear vision for the development and improvement in the subject as detailed in the English development plan. They have achieved a great deal in a short time, implementing the literacy strategy fully, conducting monitoring exercises and planning for improvement in literacy standards. Their impact on the subject in the school is growing and their management of the subject in the two and a half terms since they were given this responsibility has clearly been good. Resources are usually adequate although there were instances of pupils having to share texts when some simple adjustments in the timetable would have avoided this. Further use could be made of information technology to support learning. There are examples of good cross-curricular approaches and the varied use of literacy in other subjects supporting good progress in pupils' learning.

MATHEMATICS

61. Since the last inspection the overall trend of improvement has been below that achieved by most schools. In the most recent national tests attainment was average when compared to both all and similar schools, although the proportion of children achieving the higher level (level 5) was below average. This is largely consistent with the standards observed during the inspection based on evidence from lesson observation, talking to children and analysis of work. Overall the judgment on attainment is slightly below, but similar to that made in the last inspection, when 'attainment at Level 4 was in line with, and much of it was above, the national expectations' and 'At Level 5 attainment was slightly below national expectations.' Attainment for girls and boys is similar but when compared nationally, boys achieve better than girls.

62. Through the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy (NNS) and the accompanying improvement in provision, particularly teaching, pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress and are achieving satisfactorily. It has brought necessary rigour to the planning and a proper progression to the development of the subject through the school. A form of ability setting has been introduced in each year group for two days a week. However this only involves a

relatively small group of higher and lower ability pupils and means that most of the children for most of the time are taught in mixed ability classes, with a low level of additional adult support. As a result, despite the best efforts of the teachers, higher attainers are often insufficiently stretched and the lower ability pupils are not making the progress they should because of the lack of additional support. The school is currently considering setting all pupils as they were at the last inspection! Such a move would allow teaching to focus on a much narrower ability range, thus ensuring a better match between teaching and learning at all times.

63. Pupils' knowledge, skills and methods of working in mathematics increase and refine as they work through the school and they begin to develop good work habits. However pupils' ability to instantly recall number facts is not as marked as observed in many schools. For example, some pupils of average ability struggle to multiply two single digit numbers together at any great pace. The standard of presentation of their work is generally satisfactory with some examples of some very neat work. Year 4 pupils are beginning to use the grid method to multiply a two digit number by a single digit number. They identify the lines of symmetry in a number of regular and irregular shapes. Year 5 pupils use brackets to show the order for operations in a calculation and are beginning to identify the relationship between simple fractions and percentages. However, some found ordering fractions difficult because they had not fully understood the concept of equivalent fractions. Year 6 pupils are developing their computational ability and can typically 'long multiply' using two methods. They show awareness of number patterns and are able to explain how different sequences of numbers are generated.

64. The teaching of mathematics is good. Where teaching is better the pace of lessons is brisk, planning is well structured with clear learning objectives, work is matched as far as possible to pupils of all abilities and questioning is skilful and challenging. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory the work is less well matched to the ability of the child or class management is weaker, with the result that the pace of learning is slower. The teachers are familiar and secure with the Numeracy Strategy, which they apply effectively. Planning is now thorough and systematic and teaching and learning have improved as a result. Teachers use mathematical vocabulary well and pupils are expected to do likewise. The oral and mental sessions are used effectively to give a clear start to the lesson. They are usually conducted at a brisk pace and different resources, such as number sticks, number boards and number cards make it possible for every child to answer and so be fully involved. In nearly all lessons observed the plenary was used effectively, but sometimes didn't properly draw together what had been learned in the lesson or highlight key facts or ideas that need to be remembered.

65. Teachers ensure activities are well chosen to involve all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The quality of learning is generally good. Most pupils establish good work habits, try hard and participate fully in lessons. They volunteer answers willingly and are keen to improve. Pupils' attitude to mathematics is good. Most respond enthusiastically, particularly in 'mental and oral maths', when they write answers quickly on their individual whiteboards and explain their strategies. They are nearly always fully engaged and interested in their work. In many classes pupils move from class to group activities with a minimum of fuss, so maintaining the pace of learning. Most pupils establish good work habits and try hard. They improve their understanding of mathematical operations and their ability to use different methods of working out a problem in their head. Most ask for help when needed and are motivated to improve. The availability of a computer in each classroom enables pupils to consolidate their learning by using programs containing mathematics related activities during lessons. However, computers were not often in use in lessons observed during the inspection.

66. The school is beginning to build up a more rigorous collection of assessment data, including detail of national tests for 7 and 11 year-olds and optional tests in Years 4 and 5. Unfortunately, the information received from the feeder schools is inconsistent and at present the school does not have a reliable baseline on which to judge future progress. The electronic database (Assessment Manager) recently introduced is beginning to be used to monitor progression and look at trends. Alongside these more formal assessments a number of planned teacher assessments are identified. Assessment sheets are completed for each child, tracking progress against key objectives. A review of these sheets is planned for summer 2003, to

incorporate attainment levels to aid analysis using information technology. Teachers' day-to-day assessments are made on the lesson planning sheet or kept in the teachers' mark books. Pupils' work is regularly and consistently marked but rarely includes constructive comments to help them recognise how well they are doing and how they can improve. At present, pupils' knowledge of where they are and what they need to do next is not as good as in many schools.

67. The curriculum is now based on the Framework for the National Curriculum, which provides a wide ranging curriculum and ensures progression and continuity as pupils move through the school. Staff have just completed the transition to the new NNS Unit plans. Daily plans are adapted, annotated and extended as appropriate by planning partners and individual teachers. Over time these modifications will ensure a better match between the work and the ability of the pupils. Booster classes were run from November to April for Y6 children.

68. Mathematics is well led by a well-qualified subject leader who recognizes the need for change to maximize learning and for the school's improvement planning to focus on raising standards. Although he is relatively new to the post his enthusiasm and commitment is already having a positive impact on the development of the subject. He regularly monitors teaching and provides feedback to teachers on their strengths and areas for improvement. Resources for mathematics are satisfactory; with enough equipment etc. to properly resource the implementation of the NNS. The school recognises the need to establish more cross-curricular links with other subjects and to purchase software to support Numeracy in class.

SCIENCE

69. By the end of Year 6 standards in science exceed the national average. The school places sufficient emphasis on practical investigations and experimental work and every classroom has a good display of key science vocabulary to support pupils, which has a positive impact on their learning. Standards have improved since the last inspection but test results have been erratic with a slight dip again last year.

70. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of the life cycles of various plants and animals. Higher attainers have a clear understanding of the process of photosynthesis. Both higher and average attaining pupils understand about the importance of different habitats, food chains and conditions for growth of micro-organisms. Higher attaining pupils investigate how microbes are used in industry. In materials and their properties pupils understand about solutions and dissolving and many can set up an investigation into how to clean dirty water. They understand the processes of reversible and irreversible change. In physical processes pupils have a good understanding of the solar system and forces, including gravity and friction. They know force is measured in Newton's and higher attaining pupils know that when an object sinks the path of gravity is greater than the up-thrust. Younger pupils have a sound understanding of electrical circuits and are able to draw a simple circuit.

71. The quality of teaching and learning is good and most pupils are achieving well in science. However a small minority are not achieving so well because they are not supported with their recording in class or to ensure they have a clear understanding of the task. In some classes, where support is good, lower attaining pupils are provided with tasks to meet their needs and with additional resources. The teacher focuses on these pupils and as a result they make the same progress as the rest of the class. Higher attaining pupils are well supported to enable them to achieve higher levels because they are often given more challenging tasks and extension work. Planning is consistent across the year group and teachers plan effectively to share resources. Most lessons have a brisk pace and plenary sessions are used well by teachers to assess knowledge and understanding gained in the lessons. However lesson plans are very prescriptive and not all teachers take the opportunity to use assessment information to adapt their next lesson plans to meet the needs of all pupils. Skilful questioning effectively develops pupils' thinking. For example, in one lesson the teacher moved from group to group asking questions and focused pupils' thinking so that they designed a fair test. Classroom management is good, resulting in orderly classes where pupils work hard.

72. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. End of key stage test results are carefully analysed to highlight areas of concerns and this is used for future planning. However results are not compared sufficiently with national results so that the school can see how well pupils are doing nationally. At the start of each topic pupils are asked to complete an assessment sheet so that teachers have a clear understanding of what they need to teach and this is revisited at the end of the topic to assess how much the pupils have learnt. This is a good form of assessment, although teachers need to show the flexibility to use this information to adapt their own planning in order to meet the needs of the pupils in their class.

73. Teachers are conscious of the importance of supporting work in literacy and the correct scientific vocabulary is introduced and used well. Measurement, calculation and the graphical representation of results support numeracy; for example, pupils in Year 5 presented their results in a line graph to explain the effect of exercise on heart rate. Information technology (ICT) is underused, so opportunities are missed for supporting learning in science and extending knowledge and understanding of ICT. This is, however, an area already identified for development by the coordinator. Science makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' social development. They are encouraged to work in groups on investigations and in one lesson pupils discussed their answers with their partner before sharing them with the rest of the class.

74. Management has been good for some time. The coordinator supports her colleagues very well and has undertaken some careful monitoring of pupils' work to support the school in raising standards in science. She has a clear understanding of what needs to be done for further improvement which includes in-class monitoring of teaching to improve consistency across year groups. Resources are satisfactory and have been well organised by the coordinator for easy access by staff. The subject has a high profile in the school and learning is effectively enhanced by visits to a local venue for a scientific experience.

ART AND DESIGN

75. Standards of work in art and design, from lessons seen, school displays and work analysed are as expected for pupils of this age. In the previous inspection of 1998 the standards were judged to be above national expectations. There is now a suitable strong emphasis on the processes and development of skills through a unit of work and much of this work is good. Final outcomes are satisfactory, with some variation between classes.

76. Good use is made of artists' work and of pupils' direct experience to create a curriculum that mixes skills acquisition with the opportunity for imaginative and interpretive work. Much of the teaching seen had a good emphasis on discussion and the development of artistic vocabulary, where pupils were challenged to explain their responses to their own and to artists' work. Teaching overall is good but ranges from satisfactory to very good.

77. Pupils in Year 4 used illustrations by Maurice Sendak and work by Munch and Blake to work on sketches based on dreams. The dreamlike quality of Sendak's 'Where the Wild Things are' proved a good focal point for some in-depth discussion, then pupils moved on to construct their own sketches. Many of these followed the theme of monsters from their work in literacy, and the pupils were able to use stylistic devices from the various artists' work in their own sketches. These are the basis for future work in painting and printing. In Year 5, pupils have created a range of collages using textiles. Some of this work is descriptive where colourful illustrations of the story of Demeter are well displayed in the school. Other collages are more symbolic, where pupils have used symbolic devices to represent the different parts of a journey to school. They also analyse and draw a wide range of containers, prior to designing and making their own.

78. Year 6 pupils worked very well in a prolonged session of figure drawing using their fellow pupils and photographs as models. Through a lengthy session, pupil interest was well sustained and the results were good, with some good progress being made during the session as their prowess improved. Good teaching enabled the pupils to progress noticeably through a range of activities, studying body shapes and proportion. Boys' and girls' attitudes and responses were

good and levels of concentration were high. Pupils have also worked with an artist in residence supplied by the local action zone, simple illustrations and book jackets were designed and pupils made their own books.

79. The subject is well managed by the coordinator whose enthusiasm for the subject is clear and whose personal subject knowledge is good. The coordinator has a clear view of future developments in the art and design curriculum and makes a good job of managing the resources in the school. There is a clear need to develop an effective assessment and monitoring system for the subject and time should be allocated in order for the coordinator to tackle this. The role and responsibilities involved in the coordination of this subject in such a large school need to be reviewed. It would be beneficial to extend the artist-in-residence scheme, though the school needs to be aware of the expected outcomes when engaging an artist. Further opportunities to visit galleries and exhibitions should be explored. The coordinator could also encourage a wider range of multicultural influences and inspiration.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

80. Standards in design and technology, from the one lesson seen, evidence in books and displays and from discussion with pupils, are at the expected level in the school. The subject coordinator has established a plan that follows national guidance and allows the development of skills through taught units. Year group plans are produced cooperatively by teachers and this enables consistent coverage and equal access for all pupils.

81. Pupils were observed in a Year 4 lesson where they were making a money container out of textiles. They worked well, with a good level of cooperation and mutual help in the class, using a range of sewed stitches and were well supported by their teacher. Designs had been drawn out in their books and annotated to show the materials to be used and some of the stages involved in the making. Year 5 pupils' food technology work centred round the making of pizzas. Commercial pizzas were researched and pupils designed and created their own. Good attention was paid to the health and safety issues of this project. Year 6 pupils designing and making model shelters, listed and evaluated different kinds of shelter, tested materials according to their weather-proofing capabilities and drew up a step by step storyboard with instructions. At the end of the making process they completed detailed evaluation sheets. In one class, prototypes mounted on design sheets and well finished final models were displayed but in a parallel class the final products were not as sophisticated.

82. The subject is well managed by the coordinator. A suitable policy and schemes of work with a satisfactory number of units of work are in place and other staff have felt well supported in the acquisition of new subject knowledge. Further support and Inset are planned for particular units of work. The task of leading a large group of colleagues teaching twenty-one classes has to be shared with her duties as art coordinator and the work load involved in the coordination of both subjects needs reviewing. Monitoring and assessment should be a priority for the development of DT. Pupils plan their work according to guidelines and complete good evaluation sheets which could become part of the assessment process. Resources are adequate and well managed.

GEOGRAPHY

83. By the end of Year 6 pupils achieve standards that are in line with national expectations and they make satisfactory progress. The school organises topic themes to ensure that there is continuity and progression in developing skills, knowledge and understanding of pupils in geography. Investigations into a variety of people, places and environments enable pupils to make

links and comparisons with the United Kingdom. They carry out geographical enquiry inside and outside the classroom and use a range of geographic skills and resources. Pupils express an interest in their learning and answer questions willingly.

84. In Year 4, pupils use maps and plans of the local area to locate key services such as the post office, schools and library. They learn how land is used in the area and are able to classify use as residential, agricultural, industry, shops, office or leisure. From local traffic surveys they discuss the difficulties of crossing roads where there is no crossing patrol and offer sensible solutions. Good use is made of a computer program that requires pupils to provide accurate commands for directions from home to school on a street plan. Grid references are used to identify locations on a street map of Bristol and most pupils are able to provide accurate directions from one location to another. Kenya is a focus for study in Year 5 as they learn about contrasting countries around the world. Many aspects of life are compared and in discussion with pupils it is notable that the study has altered their preconceptions of an African country as they have learnt that as well as levels of need there is organised industry, education and prosperity.

85. From studying rivers and their effects on the landscape, pupils know how waterfalls are created and how rivers can change the landscape through erosion over the course of time. In their studies of the River Severn they learn that water can be used for irrigation by farmers and also be the source of drinking water. The Amazon is studied in Year 6 and pupils are able to locate the tropical rain forests, explain the water cycle and make rainfall comparisons with this country. They show an insight into the lives and traditions of the tribes people and an understanding of the reasons for the rainforests disappearing. Ideas on conserving rainforests are researched through the internet. Atlases are used effectively to identify and locate the major mountain ranges of the world. The formation of mountains is discussed and pupils express a good knowledge of the local hills, the Mendips and Quantocks, and of the Welsh Beacons and Snowdonia.

86. Teaching in geography is satisfactory with subject knowledge being sound and lessons well planned with clear and focused objectives. Introductions and instructions are clear and purposeful. Pupils are led through a succession of activities to develop their skills and pupils of differing abilities are provided with appropriate extension activities. Opportunities to link the geography theme to current affairs are taken with, for example, the Mount Everest anniversary celebrations. Resources are used effectively to demonstrate lesson objectives.

87. The coordinator provides good support for staff through the scheme of work and termly plans that include learning objectives for each lesson, resources and opportunities for fieldwork. Geography is monitored by the coordinator through the outcomes of work completed in pupils' books. Assessment procedures linked to the plans are not fully developed and the coordinator plans to introduce assessment sheets at the end of each unit of work. There is no current provision for the monitoring of teaching although staff competencies have been surveyed through questionnaires and discussion. Older pupils undertake fieldwork as part of their residential week activity. Displays of pupils' geography work around the school contribute to learning. Fieldwork visits are organised such as the visit to Bristol to study the environment and origins of the city. Although resources for the subject are satisfactory they are not sufficient for a year group to undertake the same topic at the same time and history and geography topics have to be taught in rotation

HISTORY

88. It was not possible to observe history lessons being taught in all year groups during the period of the inspection and judgements are based on discussions with pupils and staff and scrutiny of work. From this evidence the skills, knowledge and understanding are judged to be as expected for the ages of the pupils concerned.

89. Pupils in year four study the Romans and in reflecting on the story of Romulus and Remus consider what is myth and what might be based on the truth. Comparisons between

Roman soldiers and Celtic warriors lead to the conclusion that the Romans were better trained and organised, and able to march for long periods carrying their weapons and tools. Booklets produced by pupils on Queen Boudicca's rebellion against the Romans reveal an understanding of the reasons for the conflict and the eventual outcome. Pupils learn of the impact of the Romans on this country and aspects of their culture that were introduced such as the gods, building of villas and roads. Travel guides made by pupils entice visitors to Pompeii to enjoy the pleasures of bathing. When studying Ancient Greece Year 5 pupils compare the system in Athens, where resolutions were decided by those who shouted the loudest, to Sparta where decisions were taken by the ruling kings. Some pupils express a preference for joining the army in Athens at the age of 12 rather than the Spartan army at the age of 7. They are able to explain why Henry had so many wives and the reason he established the Church of England in his efforts to secure an heir to the throne and the future of the monarchy.

90. The internet is used as a research tool in Year 6 to support studies of Britain since the 1930s. Comparisons with the present day in the use of labour and increase in mechanisation, changes in the domestic life, music and fashion show an understanding of how things change. Pupils also have an understanding of the causes of the Second World War and the affects on family life. Written work includes mock diaries which reveal empathy for the feelings of evacuated children during the Second World War. They retell the sadness of being separated from their families and fears in being "selected" by foster parents. Wall displays include posters which encourage people to "Carry your gas masks" as a safety measure. Year 6 pupils also study Aztec society and put major events onto a timeline. Their work demonstrates an understanding of how Aztec society developed and the eventual conquest by Cortes and Spain.

91. History planning is detailed and thorough, subject knowledge is sound and the quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. Pupils' attention is drawn to the learning objectives at the beginning of each lesson. Where the teachers' knowledge is secure lessons proceed at a good pace and questioning is used effectively in promoting understanding. Good use is made of first hand material and the school logbook is used to illustrate school life in the 1930s. Although pupils show they understand events and their consequences some activities such as cutting and pasting houses onto a timeline are not sufficiently challenging for older pupils. Lengthy introductions sometimes lead to some restlessness that could be avoided by maintaining a brisk pace and purposeful learning activities.

92. The coordinator provides enthusiastic leadership. Assessment procedures are limited and need to be developed as an integral part of the planning process. Links to other subjects are actively developed with, for example, plans that link the "Invaders and Settlers" topic with the geography "Settlements" topic. History "Big Books" such as the "Historical letters, diaries and journals" book enhance links with literacy and non-fiction writing. Teachers are given sound guidance and support by the coordinator and staff confidence in teaching history has been audited. The monitoring programme was overtaken by other priorities within the school this year and is due to be revived in the coming year with a focus on teaching and learning. Resources are just satisfactory and consist of pictures, text, videos and artefacts. The range covers the themes studied but the quantity is only sufficient for half of the classes in each year group to undertake the topic at any time. The coordinator has put together "history bags" with source evidence which focus on the development of history skills rather than just knowledge. The funding available to replenish and develop resources is modest and the coordinator is proactive in seeking funds such as those acquired to enable visits to a local museum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

93. The 1998 report stated that 'almost all pupils attain the national expectation in all aspects of ICT' as a direct result of 'skilled, specialist teaching within a well appointed computer room'. The ICT curriculum was said to be very well planned and teachers were encouraged to use computers to support other subjects. The school was obviously ahead of the game at the time and, although other schools have caught up, with continued investment and sound use of the training opportunities which accompanied national initiatives, pupils are now attaining the higher standards currently expected. A major change is that class teachers now teach ICT though still with the support of the non-class based coordinator who previously taught all lessons. Teachers

are still 'encouraged to use computers to support other subjects' and with networked computers in each classroom, the opportunity is there, but few of these computers were in use during the inspection. The use of ICT is mentioned in lesson planning in several subjects but was not observed in action. However, with just three yeargroups to concentrate on, the ICT curriculum is still well planned but now based on the national scheme of work and this ensures consistency and coverage of all the required elements.

94. All teaching observed during the inspection was at least satisfactory and sometimes good where the teacher had particular confidence in extending learning beyond the current learning objectives. Year 4 pupils had been using a fairly basic graphics package to create 'tiles', stamp them onto a worksheet to make 'wrapping paper' and save them into Word to make it possible to print it out. During the inspection, they moved onto using tools in the programme to create free patterns with one and two lines of symmetry, filling the spaces with colour and again stamping and printing. Following this, another class selected available regular shapes before drawing in lines of symmetry to reinforce learning in mathematics. Teachers made good use of the prepared planning and the computer suite. However, the lack of a digital projector or interactive whiteboard meant that on-screen teaching had to be done using the network and in the cramped room, not all pupils were able to keep up with the teacher or sustain the necessary concentration hidden behind their computers. Otherwise pupils enjoy their sessions in the computer suite, work well on their own, help each other when necessary and almost always complete set tasks in good time.

95. Year 5 pupils have just started a unit on databases as per the national scheme but the previous week teachers had discovered that pupils had very little previous experience in this topic. Consequently and appropriately, teachers revised their expectations and planning and during the inspection were working at a relatively low level before moving on to the activities planned for the year. This has implications for the development of the school's induction procedures with the three feeder schools with regard to ICT and also the effectiveness of its own assessment arrangements. The coordinator has developed a digital assessment/recording system based on the national scheme but it is hard to see the impact on provision at present and those spoken to were not aware that it is in use or of how well they are doing. Pupils in Year 6 were very keen to show inspectors how they were able to use formulae in spreadsheets to find the area and perimeter of regular shapes and copy them from one cell to another to extend the spreadsheet.

96. The long standing coordinator has done a good job in building on strong foundations to keep provision and standards in the subject up to par since the last inspection. However, in the intervening years, the high priority given to the subject nationally has meant that other schools have caught up and, in several aspects, moved ahead. Levels of expertise within the school community are sound but with few teachers trained to advanced levels and no support staff involved, the school is falling behind in this area. Most schools have been using either digital projectors or interactive whiteboards for some time, not just as teaching aids in ICT but also, for instance to create multimedia presentations in other subjects such as geography and religious education. The school has not identified its digital high-fliers and is not making provision for gifted and talented pupils in this area or for the minority of pupils without access to a computer at home.

MUSIC

97. Music remains a 'strength of the school' as it was in the last inspection. Overall inspection evidence from observation of a small sample of lessons, music associated with assemblies, extra-curricular activities and individual instrumental tuition indicated that standards in music are average. However, many children are involved in musical activities outside the classroom playing instruments and singing. For example, over 100 children receive individual music tuition and the school has a very strong orchestra and a Year 4 orchestra of a further 30+ children. As a result of this additional provision standards among these children are often higher, enabling the more-able pupils to achieve very well. The tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers in violin, cello, flute, clarinet, cornet and trumpet, guitar, keyboard and drums, together with the extra curricular activities of recorders and the two orchestras, greatly enhance and complement what the school has to offer its pupils.

98. Pupils make sound progress in lessons and many achieve well in music throughout the school when receiving extra tuition. Year 4 pupils sing well during hymn practice, which is enlivened by the year group orchestra and solo instrumentalists. In lessons pupils build up a variety of different beats and use percussion instruments to perform a piece of music in the style of Dagbamba drummers from the West Coast of Africa. They listen to a piece called 'Independence Song' from Tanzania and are able to describe the main features of the piece using appropriate musical vocabulary, such as rhythm, pitch, instrumental and vocal. Year 6 pupils use a wide range of tuned percussion instruments to play together Gamelan music from Java, with some being able to create their own four bar Gamelan tune.

99. An extremely active school orchestra, run by the coordinator, is continually working towards a variety of performances throughout each year. Around Christmas it performs to a variety of different organisations, including homes for the elderly, while the Year 6 choir participated in a production at the Playhouse Theatre. Later this term the orchestra will be giving a concert to the three feeder schools. Each year group performs a large-scale production at different times through the year. For example Year 5 performed 'The Lion King' this year.

100. Teaching of music in the lessons observed was good and sometimes, where subject knowledge is high, very good. Lessons are well structured with clear learning goals and objectives. The teachers organise the lessons with an appropriate mix of information, demonstration and practical activities. Subject knowledge is at least sound and improving. Resources available are used well, and all pupils are encouraged to participate. Typically pupils are enthusiastic in music lessons and relish the opportunity to both compose and perform, and this is equally true of both boys and girls. They really enjoy singing and are proud of their accomplishments and as a result behave well.

101. The music coordinator is well qualified. He leads the subject well by advising colleagues on teaching class music, running the school orchestra and coordinating peripatetic support. However he has not been given sufficient non-contact time to directly monitor teaching and learning. As yet the school does not have a formal means for assessing or recording progress in music and the coordinator recognises this is an area for development. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard to maintain the quality of provision in music despite the inevitable time restraints on the subject brought about by the implementation of national strategies. The commercial scheme used to support planning by identifying the learning activities and outcomes is ensuring progression and adequate coverage of the curriculum.

102. A sufficient range of musical instruments and other resources, including some from different cultures, are available but the coordinator acknowledges that some of the percussion instruments are looking a little tired and need to be replaced. Resources for music are well used. However the 'stretched' nature of the school does present difficulties when instruments are moved around the school. The proposed creation of a dedicated music room will to some extent alleviate the difficulty, however care must be taken to ensure that it is adequate to accommodate and teach a whole class, if this is the intention.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

103. Standards of physical education throughout the school are in line with national expectations. Pupils enjoy being active and use their creativity and imagination in physical activity. They learn new skills, linking them to sequences of movement and enjoy collaborative work and competing with each other. An understanding of the need for exercise for good health is developed and they learn how to evaluate their own capability through a range of different activities. Attitudes and behaviour are good and pupils cooperate well and are encouraging and supportive of each other.

104. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. Learning objectives are introduced at the beginning of lessons and an emphasis is placed on the importance of a warm-up activity before exercise. Health and safety guidance is provided with a strong focus on pupils developing an understanding of the health benefits of exercise. Planning is detailed and thorough and some teachers are confident enough to modify the plans during lessons to ensure that pupils are

engaged and busy. Explanations are clear and concise and often build upon the work in previous lessons. Subject knowledge is good and teachers effectively demonstrate movement and actions to help pupils learn. However, on occasions explanations and demonstrations take too long and slow the pace of the lesson. Expectations of behaviour are high and good sporting attitudes are promoted with pupils giving team members positive support and encouragement. In a dance lesson a teacher from the local secondary school was supported by a group of secondary age students in preparing a year four group for a public performance. Pupils demonstrate good sequences of movement and the ability to work independently, with a partner and in a group in a dance lesson performed to the "Adams Family" music. There is a great deal of enthusiasm for the dance activities particularly as secondary school students are part of the group and the dance will be part of an Arts Festival to be performed in a local theatre.

105. Year four pupils learn running skills and acquire an understanding of the different techniques required for middle distance running and sprinting. They acquire a good understanding of how exercise raises the heart rate. Whilst practicing these skills, and alternating sprinting and jogging, some pupils cannot overcome the desire to complete the course and finish in front of others. The standard of swimming is good and pupils learn the basic strokes and improve on these in the school's own pool and, in year six, at the local sports centre. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in swimming lessons where able swimmers are used to highlight teaching points and demonstrate the stroke. Tennis skills are developed in year five as pupils acquire good coordination skills. Catching a dropped ball starting with a hand above the ball proves to be a challenging activity that surprises many with the difficulty of reacting quickly. When working in pairs with a racket and tennis ball, pupils increase the level of challenge for their partner by varying the position of the ball. Athletics is also a theme for year six pupils who also demonstrate good sprinting techniques.

106. The coordinator for physical education provides effective leadership having taken over responsibility this year. She provides support for colleagues, models lessons for other year groups and organises the residential week for year six pupils, which provides opportunities for outdoor adventures. National Curriculum requirements are covered through the new curriculum overview and detailed planning but as yet, no recording of pupils' levels of performance against expected levels takes place. A good range of club activities are provided for pupils in Years 5 and 6, such as netball, football, volleyball, athletics and rounders, but the percentage of pupils actively involved is small and opportunities are limited for year four pupils. Effective links have been developed with outside agencies such as Bristol Football Club and Somerset Cricket Club. A group of pupils participate in a literacy project with Bristol Rovers which involves visits to the school and Fun Day and 5-a-side tournament at the stadium. The gymnasium and swimming pool are assets to the school although there is no sports field and sports day takes place on a local recreation field. Resources for physical education are unsatisfactory overall with many items due for refurbishment or replacement. The acoustics in the gym makes teaching difficult and much of the fixed apparatus is out of date and more suited to older pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

107. Attainment in religious education exceeds the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils are making good progress and are achieving well. The strong Christian ethos and respect for other religions in the school is having a positive impact on standards.

108. By the end of Year 6, most have a good understanding of Christian beliefs and those of other world faiths such as Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. They can confidently identify some of the differences and similarities between religions. Pupils in Year 4 locate the country of origin of Hinduism and by the end of the lesson have a good understanding of approximately how many Hindus are living in India, United States of America and The United Kingdom. Other pupils retell the creation story and also offer their own opinions about creation and the wonders of the world around them. They understand that the origin of the story came from the Jewish faith and pupils confidently discuss whether they think the story was fact, opinion or belief. Year 5 pupils take a close look at 'The Lord's Prayer' and understand that it is central to Christian worship. Some share their own thoughts about 'The Lord's Prayer' with the rest of the class and rewrite at least

some of the prayer in their own words. They compare the writings in the Christian bible with the Torah and identify special festivals in the Christian and the Jewish calendars.

109. Detailed written reflections are made on 'Collective Worship' and what it means to each of them. In Year 6 pupils reflect on the meaning of the Muslim pilgrimage of Hajj. They write a simple diary of a young person making his first pilgrimage and include his/her thoughts and feelings during the journey. They know the significance of the 'Five Pillars of Islam' to Muslims and relate them well to their own personal life. Most have a good understanding of signs and symbols used in Christianity and the growth and spread of the faith. They compare practices within the Christian faith such as the Catholic and Baptist churches. Some contribute thought provoking written work about the changes in their lives and experiences.

110. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All teachers have secure subject knowledge and use the coordinator's planning well. They are confident to promote discussions and ask thought-provoking questions. As a result pupils rise to the challenge and discussions are meaningful and lively. Resources are well organised and used well in lessons. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Literacy skills are used satisfactorily to record their work and to present their work in a range of forms. For example pupils used their knowledge of the format for diary writing to record a Muslim's journey to Mecca. Marking is positive but there are currently no formal assessments in religious education.

111. Leadership and management of the subject is good and the coordinator has worked hard to provide comprehensive planning for colleagues which meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Some monitoring of samples of pupils' work has been completed and this indicates consistency in planning and delivery across the year group. However, no lessons have been monitored. Satisfactory resources are well organised. Each year group has a box of resources to support the unit of work being covered. Good links have been made with the local church. Though pupils do not currently have the opportunity to visit places of worship from other faiths, the school does encourage visitors to share their beliefs with pupils.