

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOHN'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Midsomer Norton, Radstock

LEA area: Bath and North East Somerset

Unique reference number: 109271

Headteacher: Mrs Carolyn Banfield

Reporting inspector: Mr Graham R Sims

28899

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th January 2003

Inspection number: 246905

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Colin Tincknell
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd February 1998

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31754	Mrs C Roberson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
15334	Mrs J Hooper	Team inspector	English English as an additional language	Educational inclusion
23583	Mr P G Kerr	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education	The quality of the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
19302	Mrs C M Perrett	Team inspector	Science Design and technology	
32136	Mrs L Brookes	Team inspector	Art and design Music Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated close to the centre of the town of Midsomer Norton. It is a voluntary-aided Church of England primary school, with 413 boys and girls on roll between the ages of 4 and 11. It is much larger than most primary schools and is over-subscribed. Most pupils live in the town, but many come from the surrounding North Somerset villages. Very few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. There are five pupils whose mother tongue is not English, but only one of these pupils is at an early stage of learning English. The percentage of pupils who join or leave the school, other than at the usual times of joining or leaving, is below average. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Ten per cent of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is below average. Six pupils receive help from outside specialists for a range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties, and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Three pupils have statements of special educational needs. Children are admitted into the Reception class at the beginning of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. The attainment of the latest group of children to start school is average. Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed, and there have been various modifications to the school's accommodation. Although there has been a high turnover of staff in recent years, the school's staffing situation is stable. The inspection of collective worship and religious education has been carried out separately by the Diocese.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St John's CE Primary School is a good school. Under the very good leadership of the headteacher, who is supported well by a relatively new and enthusiastic team of senior staff, there is a real desire to improve the quality of education and the facilities which the school provides. Many new initiatives have been introduced, and these are starting to have a positive impact on the school's practices. However, not all staff are yet pulling consistently in the same direction, with the result that there are some inconsistencies in the quality of the teaching and the progress pupils make. Despite this, the overall quality of teaching is good, pupils make good progress and achieve above average standards, although performance in some aspects of English is lower than it ought to be. This is a happy school, in which staff work hard, and successfully, to help pupils to develop personally. The pupils and their parents appreciate this, and pupils enjoy coming to school. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides very good leadership, has a very clear vision of how she wishes the school to develop, sets high standards and gives clear direction to the staff.
- Standards are well above average in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Overall, pupils make good progress through the school and achieve above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Despite inconsistencies, the overall quality of the teaching is good. The school has a number of teachers who provide models of very good teaching practice.
- The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for the pupils, with particularly good opportunities for them to develop their musical skills and an appreciation of art.
- The staff give very good attention to many aspects of the pupils' personal development. The great majority of pupils behave well and develop good relationships and positive attitudes to school.
- The school has a very good working partnership with parents, who provide considerable support.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing and the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills.*
- The quality of the teaching in some classes and the way some teachers implement the school's agreed guidelines on teaching.*
- The consistency with which all teachers help pupils to develop independent learning skills.*

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and carers of pupils in the school.

The issues marked with an asterisk () have already been identified as priorities in the school's development plan.*

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, there has been a good degree of improvement since the last inspection in February 1998. The school has dealt effectively with the key issues identified in the previous inspection report. All subjects now have an appropriate scheme of work, and assessment procedures in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have improved significantly. Better use is made of assessment data, so that staff now have a much clearer picture of how well their pupils are doing and what they need to do to improve. Despite some initial opposition, staff have been trained in the use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and the latter has had a good impact on the way mathematics is taught. Standards in mathematics have improved throughout the school, but they have not improved in

English. There have been significant improvements in the provision for, use of and standards achieved in information and communication technology. Improvements have been made to the school's accommodation and resources.

Over the last two years, the time and effort, which have gone into analysing what the school does and introducing new procedures in order to bring about improvement, have been impressive. An example of this is the very thorough programme of monitoring what happens in the classroom which has been introduced gradually and which is beginning to raise teachers' awareness of what needs to be done to improve. The headteacher's vision has been to alter the style of teaching and management from one of tight control and teacher-directed learning into one in which pupils learn to take greater responsibility for their own actions and learning. Despite the effort, the transition has not been easy, some staff have not fully understood the implications for their own teaching practice, progress has been slower than the headteacher would have wished and the benefits of the changes have yet to be reflected in the school's test results. Nevertheless, progress is being made and, in a good number of classes, where the teachers are prepared to be more adventurous in their teaching, the quality of pupils' work and their ability to think for themselves is improving.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			similar schools ¹	Key
	all schools				
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	C	B	C	E	Very high A* Well above average A Above average B Average C Below average D Well below average E Very low E*
Mathematics	B	B	C	D	
Science	B	C	C	D	

In 2002, the school's national test results at the end of Year 6 were marginally above the national average in English and science and almost into the above average category in mathematics. However, when compared to similar schools, the results were below average in mathematics and science and well below average in English. Since the last inspection, standards have risen in mathematics, at a similar rate to most schools, and in science, although not quite as much. Standards in English are slightly lower than they were four years ago. Over the last two years, the school's targets, set in conjunction with the local authority, have been unrealistically high, and the results have fallen short of them. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 reveal a stronger picture. In 2002, the results in reading and mathematics were well above the national average and the average for similar schools, reflecting an improvement since the last inspection. The results in writing were close to the national average. Although they were significantly better than the previous year's results, they were slightly lower than those achieved four years ago.

The inspection findings show that overall standards at the end of Year 6 are above average and higher than those indicated in the 2002 results, as the school's efforts to improve the quality of the teaching are starting to have effect. Standards in mathematics, science, art, history and music are all above average. Standards meet national expectations in all other subjects. Although it varies widely, children's attainment when they enter the Reception classes is typical for their age. Children make good progress in all areas of learning in the Reception and, by the time they start Year 1, overall standards are above average. By the end of Year 2, this good start has been consolidated, and standards are above average in most subjects and well above average in reading and mathematics. Pupils' achievements in art, music and reading are particular strengths throughout the school, but standards in writing are not as high as they should be, and pupils' speaking and listening skills are not developed as effectively as they could be. Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the last inspection, and pupils acquire an appropriate range of skills in using computers. Despite the fact that progress varies considerably from class to class, the pupils make good progress overall during their time at St John's.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The great majority of pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes towards their work. Most pupils participate enthusiastically in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave very well in lessons, but there is a small minority in some classes whose behaviour is not always appropriate. The pupils are polite, and their behaviour around the school is good.

¹ 'Similar schools' are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. This measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships amongst the pupils and between pupils and staff are good. Most pupils are cooperative and work well with one another. The development of independent learning skills is one of the school's main priorities, but pupils are still too dependent on adult help in some classes.
Attendance	Very good. The level of attendance is well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of the teaching and, as a result, the way pupils learn, varies significantly throughout the school. Over a quarter of the lessons observed during the inspection were very good or excellent, but there was also a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. The best teaching is found in classes where the teachers encourage pupils to think for themselves and to become more independent in their approach to learning. In some classes, the teachers are too prescriptive in their approach, which can prevent the more able pupils from making as much progress as they are capable of. Despite the inconsistencies, the overall quality of the teaching is good and pupils learn well. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly, and there is an increasing awareness of the need to cater differently for pupils of different abilities. Much thought, for example, has gone into how the school ensures that its gifted and talented pupils are challenged sufficiently. Good support is also given to pupils with special educational needs, although the small number of teaching assistants means that these pupils do not always receive sufficient support within the classroom. The teaching of mathematics and the development of pupils' numeracy skills have improved in recent years. Reading continues to be taught well, but there is room for improvement in the teaching of writing skills, and not all teachers are sufficiently aware of ways to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. Although there are many opportunities for pupils to produce written work in subjects other than English, teachers miss opportunities to help pupils develop their writing skills on these occasions. The teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly, but do not always insist that pupils follow up teachers' written comments. The teachers' confidence in the teaching of information and communication technology has improved significantly since the last inspection, but the school could look for more ways of using new technology as a tool for teaching across the curriculum. The good relationships between staff and pupils and the pupils' positive attitudes to their work contribute significantly to pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school fulfils statutory requirements and provides a good range of learning opportunities for the pupils. The school has introduced good initiatives to teach thinking skills and to provide additional challenge for gifted and talented pupils. Extra-curricular provision is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. There is insufficient additional support provided for pupils with special educational needs within the classroom, but where support is provided by teaching assistants, either for individuals or small groups of pupils, the quality is good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The school has appropriate procedures for supporting the very small number of pupils whose mother tongue is not English. These pupils are well integrated and make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school has a very good awareness of the important contribution it makes to pupils' personal development. Timetabled lessons for personal and social education, well-coordinated assemblies, residential visits, stimulating displays and opportunities to learn about other cultures all contribute to pupils' development beyond the academic curriculum.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school has good procedures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment have improved significantly. The staff know their pupils well and keep careful track of their progress.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Very good. The school fosters strong and positive links with its parents, who feel welcome in school. Parents are kept well informed about what is happening and their children's progress. Many parents help the school in practical ways, making a very good contribution to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and manages the school well. She receives very good support from her senior teachers, all of whom share a common vision and an eagerness to bring further improvement to the school. Subject coordinators vary in their effectiveness, but all know what is expected of them, and some provide good leadership.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their statutory obligations well. The governing body is well organised, and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governors keep a careful overview of all aspects of the school and its future development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher and senior staff have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Rigorous systems are being introduced to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. The school's development planning is very good.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school makes good use of its accommodation and resources. The school budget is planned effectively to meet the school's priorities. Finances are managed very efficiently, as is the school administration. The school has very good procedures to compare its performance with others, to consult parents, staff and pupils, and to ensure that its funding and specific grants are spent in the most cost effective way.
Adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	The school has an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced teachers, but an insufficient number of teaching assistants. The school's accommodation is adequate. The amount and quality of learning resources has improved and is now good overall.

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 coming to school. • The quality of the teaching is good and their children are making good progress. • The school expects their children to work hard. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • Standards of behaviour are good. • Most parents feel welcome and say that the staff are approachable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents feel the school does not work closely with them and would like more information about their children's progress. • Some parents have concerns about the appropriateness of the homework which is set. • Some parents would like to see a wider range of activities outside lessons.

[The views of parents are based on those expressed by the 11 parents who attended the parents' meeting and the 133 parents (32%) who returned the parents' questionnaire, a few of whom also enclosed written comments.]

The inspection team agrees very largely with all of the positive views expressed by parents, and finds little justification in the concerns expressed by a minority of parents. The overall quality of the teaching is good, although it is significantly better in some classes than in others, and pupils could be making better progress in some aspects of English. The school has very positive links with its parents. The headteacher takes steps to ascertain the views of all parents and takes action over issues which are of concern to them. The inspection team feels, as do most parents, that the school strikes an appropriate balance in the amount and type of work pupils are required to do at home. The range and quality of activities provided by the school outside lessons is much better than in most schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2002, the school's results in reading and mathematics were well above the national average and the average for similar schools. In writing, the results were just above both averages. Since the last inspection, there has been a gradual improvement in the school's results in reading and a significant improvement in mathematics. Results in writing are slightly lower than they were, but there have been improvements since the school adopted more stringent marking procedures in 2001. The overall trend is one of improvement, in keeping with the national trend. The range of attainment in all three tests in 2002 was wide, but only a small proportion of pupils failed to reach the nationally expected standard of Level 2³. In reading and mathematics, well over half of the pupils achieved the higher Level 3. In contrast, very few pupils achieved this level in writing. The results indicate good progress from the end of the Reception Year to the end of Key Stage 1. The inspection findings show that the standards achieved by pupils in the current Year 2 are well above those normally found in reading and mathematics. Standards are improving in writing and are just above average.
2. The table of results for the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2002 shows the school's performance to be average in English, mathematics and science. The results were just above the national average in English and science and not far short of the above average category in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, the results were below average in mathematics and science and well below average in English. When compared to schools whose pupils achieved similar results in their tests four years previously at the end of Key Stage 1, the school's results were average in all three subjects. The results indicate satisfactory progress from the end of the Key Stage 1 to the end of Key Stage 2. Four out of five pupils achieved the nationally expected standard in English and mathematics, and over a quarter achieved the higher Level 5. In science, almost all pupils achieved at least Level 4, and over a third achieved the higher Level 5. Since the last inspection, the school's results have improved in mathematics and science, but they have not improved in English. The overall rate of improvement, therefore, is not as much as in most schools. The inspection findings show that the standards achieved by pupils in the current Year 6 are average in English and above average in mathematics and science. This picture is somewhat better than that indicated by the 2002 results and is largely due to the improving quality of the teaching.
3. There are no marked differences in the attainment of boys and girls in mathematics and science but, as in many schools, girls achieve better results than boys in English at the end of both key stages. The school has undertaken an exhaustive analysis to see where the results of boys and girls differ and has focused particularly on raising the attainment of boys in English. The school's strategies have yet to have a marked effect on their results, but the teachers' awareness of the problems is an important first step in working towards eliminating the difference.
4. For the last two years, teachers have been setting targets for each year group of pupils as part of the school's drive to improve standards and to ensure that all pupils make at least satisfactory progress. The increasing use of target-setting has been helpful in raising teachers' awareness of the standards pupils achieve and what needs to be done to bring about improvement. The targets set are realistic and take account of pupils' prior attainment. For the last two years, the school's official targets, which are set in conjunction with the local authority and which relate to results in national tests at the end of Year 6, have been unrealistic and the school has fallen short of them.

2 The words 'Key Stage' refer to the different stages of learning in schools. Children start school in the Foundation Stage, which caters for children aged 3 to 5 and generally refers to children who are in the Nursery, Reception or Early Years classes. Key Stage 1 is the first stage of compulsory primary education. It caters for pupils aged 5 to 7 and refers to pupils who are in Years 1 and 2. Key Stage 1 is also frequently synonymous with the term Infants. Key Stage 2 is the second stage of primary education. It caters for pupils aged 7 to 11 and refers to pupils who are in Years 3 to 6. Key Stage 2 is also frequently synonymous with the term Juniors. At the age of 11, pupils start Key Stage 3, which marks the beginning of their secondary education.

3 The standard of pupils' work is assessed against National Curriculum Levels. The national expectation for each subject is that pupils should be working comfortably at Level 2 by the end of Year 2, and at Level 4 by the end of Year 6.

The targets which have been set for 2003 are still ambitious given the pupils' prior attainment, but they are more realistic than in previous years.

5. Children enter the Reception classes with a very wide range of attainment. It is clear from a very early stage that some children have special educational needs, whilst others speak confidently, are already well on the way to reading simple texts and have an understanding of the rudiments of writing. Overall, however, the attainment of the latest entrants to the Reception classes is fairly typical for an average group of children of their age. Pupils settle quickly into the school routine and make good progress during their year in the Reception. By the time they start Year 1, most children are on course to achieve all of the expected standards in each area of learning and around a third of them are working beyond the expected level. The children, thus, receive a good preparation for the start of their more formal education in Key Stage 1.
6. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the inspection findings reveal a complex picture with regard to pupils' achievements, linked very closely to the quality of teaching, which varies markedly from one year group to the next and also between parallel classes in some year groups. The current pattern also differs markedly from the past, as there has been a relatively large turnover of staff over the last two years and some staff have moved from one year group to another. Pupils achieve very well in some years, for example in Years 2 and 6, where the teaching in all four classes is particularly strong. In contrast, the pupils make only satisfactory progress in some other classes. Progress in some subjects is better than in others. The teaching methods used in mathematics, for example, enable pupils to achieve more highly in mathematics than they do in English. However, viewed over the duration of their time in the school and over the whole range of subjects, pupils achieve well overall, reaching above average standards in mathematics, science, art and design, history and music by the time they leave. In all other subjects, pupils achieve standards which are in line with those expected for their age.
7. The headteacher and senior staff have worked very hard to raise teachers' awareness of the differing needs of individual pupils in order to ensure that all groups of pupils are given appropriate challenge and achieve as well as they can. As with the majority of pupils, the progress of different groups varies from class to class, and is also affected to a certain extent by the availability of additional support. Pupils with special educational needs and the more able pupils make good progress and achieve well in the Reception classes and Key Stage 1. Pupils with special educational needs and lower-attaining pupils who receive additional support in Key Stage 2 also make good progress in relation to their prior attainment, because the work they undertake in small groups under the guidance of a teaching assistant is well focused to help them improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Within the classroom in Key Stage 2, the progress of pupils with special educational needs varies according to the amount of attention teachers are able to give them when having to meet the needs of a whole class on their own. Overall, their progress in these situations is satisfactory. The progress of the more able pupils also varies at Key Stage 2. Overall, they make satisfactory progress, but good progress is evident in a number of classes where teachers provide different challenges for these pupils and encourage them to be more independent in their work. The school has a very small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and they are all well-integrated members of the school community, who make similar progress to their peers. The very few pupils whose mother tongue is not English make good progress in their acquisition of spoken English, which enables them to make at least satisfactory progress in their learning of other subjects.
8. Reading is by far the strongest aspect of pupils' work in English throughout the school. Considerable time and attention is given to the development of reading skills, with the result that pupils not only enjoy reading but also develop the skills to tackle texts which are demanding in relation to their age. Standards in reading are well above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2, and pupils make good progress throughout the school. Standards in speaking and listening vary but are, generally, average. In some classes, the pupils are given good opportunities to develop skills of oral communication and good progress is evident. In other classes, teachers too frequently accept one-word or short answers to questions, and pupils could be making better progress. Although the school has identified the development of writing skills as one of its main priorities for development and has devised a number of good strategies to help achieve this aim, pupils could still be achieving better standards in writing. Standards are just above average by the end of Key Stage 1, and are average at the end of Key Stage 2. However, a significant proportion of pupils are still not reaching the nationally expected standard in writing by the

time they leave Year 6. Although writing techniques are taught well enough during English lessons, pupils are frequently not given enough time to write, and skills are not consolidated as effectively as they could be when pupils producing writing in subjects other than English.

9. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in mathematics and achieve standards which are well above those normally found at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils have very secure knowledge and understanding of number, shapes and measurement, and apply their knowledge well to real-life problems. Pupils make good progress during Key Stage 2 overall, but it is uneven across year groups and within some year groups which gives rise to gaps in some pupils' learning. However, the pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of number overall. The pupils are improving their ability to apply their number knowledge to solve problems which are expressed in words. They show good skills in investigating patterns and in setting out solutions to problems systematically.
10. Pupils achieve above average standards in science by the end of Years 2 and 6. Overall, they make good progress, but pupils achieve more in some year groups than in others. In Years 2 and 6, for example, pupils make particularly good progress because activities are planned to challenge all abilities and pupils are encouraged to plan and carry out investigations independently. In some classes, there is insufficient challenge for the more able pupils.
11. The school's provision for, and standards in, information and communication technology have improved since the last inspection and most pupils achieve the expected standards in nearly all aspects of the subject by the end of Years 2 and 6. In some classes, the more able pupils could be achieving more; some of the tasks are rather prescriptive and they are not given enough scope to broaden their skills. However, overall, pupils are making satisfactory progress and leave the school appropriately equipped for their next stage of education.
12. Art and design and music are particular strengths of the school in which additional opportunities beyond the normal curriculum contribute significantly to pupils' achievements and the progress made. In both subjects, standards are above average throughout the school and pupils make good progress. In art and design, the range of opportunities, which include the use of a kiln, and the quality and variety of artwork on display from many different cultures, help pupils to gain a broad range of experience and develop a good appreciation of the place of art within society. In music, a wide range of extra-curricular activities provides opportunities for many pupils to learn musical instruments and to perform together.
13. Pupils also make good progress and achieve above average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 in history. The subject is taught in a lively and interesting way, to which pupils respond well. In design and technology, geography and physical education, pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Many positive features were noted in the previous inspection, with particular strengths in relationships in the school. This was a popular school then and it still is. Pupils are happy and relaxed and enjoy coming to it every morning. Pupils were very friendly, attentive and tried hard. They generally got along well and behaved well. In many respects, these features still predominate, although many older pupils are not over confident, and just a handful are a little immature. But the school recognises that it needs to continue to encourage independence and the use of initiative and is constantly looking at ways to reinforce self-motivation and confidence in every child. Pupils at St John's demonstrate particularly good levels of care and support for each other. They are developing very sound values and attitudes as they progress through the school. Personal development has always been given priority and parents express very favourable views on these aspects of their children's education. The high levels of attendance have also been maintained.
15. Overall, the pupils' behaviour is good. The youngest children settle well into routines, play happily with each other and behave very well. In assemblies, pupils' behaviour is very good, and they sit and listen without much fidgeting for quite lengthy periods. During dinner, they are also very patient and behave well in conditions which are not easy or conducive to calm and orderly behaviour, not least because of the inevitable high levels of noise in the hall. Outside playtimes are busy, but pupils behave well and enjoy the opportunity to play with and chat to each other. Pupils themselves talk

openly about past upsets and incidents on the playground but, more recently, partly because of the school's actions, playtimes are harmonious occasions and behaviour perfectly acceptable.

16. In most lessons, the pupils' behaviour is at least good, and there are some instances, for example, amongst the very oldest pupils, of exemplary behaviour. Pupils are well used to routines and teachers' expectations. They enjoy the activities and tasks provided for them and are nearly always enthusiastic and diligent, including in extra-curricular activities. They behave well in groups and in pairs, support each other sensibly and give of their best. However, in just a few lessons, there is a small minority of pupils, usually boys, who misbehave or get over-excited and do not always respond to teachers appropriately. Occasionally, even when reprimanded, pupils continue to misbehave, giggle and cause a distraction. In one class, a thoughtful 'guardian angel'⁴ said, 'Today's a calm day, and everyone is behaving really well,' and she rightly looked pleased about this. No incidents of racism or bullying were observed during the week of inspection and no pupils have been excluded from the school since before the last inspection.
17. In all classes, pupils are well mannered to visitors; they are very polite, friendly and can be very talkative, especially in a one-to-one situation. They also know they must share and cooperate, take their turn and be kind to each other. They are proud of their school and want to do well. They appreciate each other's work, which is so prominently displayed around the school. During the inspection, there were also many examples of pupils supporting each other's learning, of pupils listening properly to each other, for example during class assemblies, and of warm and caring relationships. They certainly know the difference between right and wrong. Relationships are generally good and pupils trust adults who, in turn, are respectful of and listen to pupils. Older pupils are consistently taught that they must take responsibility for their own actions and this, they realise, is an important quality, which they have some control over. When given the chance, they do respond well, but there is scope to develop still further this area of independence. In some instances well-meaning adults are sometimes too reluctant to let pupils choose and make their own decisions. However, particularly good attitudes and responses are evident when pupils are expected to think for themselves and make their own decisions.
18. At the time of the previous inspection, attendance was very good with no issues around punctuality either. Since 1999, it has been consistently high with figures for the last school year still over 96 per cent, which is very good when compared to schools nationally. The school records tiny numbers of unauthorised absences. The great majority of pupils arrive very punctually every morning and are ready for a prompt start to lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of the teaching varies throughout the school but, overall, it is good. During the inspection, the quality of the lessons varied from excellent to unsatisfactory, but over two-thirds of the lessons observed were good or better, and almost a quarter were very good or better. Only a small proportion was unsatisfactory. All of the parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire feel that their children are being taught well, and the inspection findings largely endorse this view. There is, however, inconsistency in the quality of the teaching, so that pupils in some year groups, for example in Years 2 and 6, make very good progress, whilst pupils in other year groups make only satisfactory progress. In some years, there is also a difference in the quality of teaching in the two parallel classes.
20. Considerable attention is given within the school improvement plan to improving the quality of teaching. Indeed, most of the goals within the plan relate directly to teaching. Documentary evidence suggests that the school's efforts are having a positive effect and that the quality of teaching is improving. The significant turnover of staff over the last three years has also had a positive impact, as new staff have adapted more readily to following the school's current initiatives which place a strong emphasis on developing independent learning skills. The considerable emphasis on in-service training, initiatives such as the sharing of good practice through demonstration lessons, induction programmes, the introduction of professional development files, self-evaluation and staff

⁴ In each class, two pupils, one boy and one girl, are appointed as 'guardian angels'. It is their responsibility to be the first point of contact for other pupils if there are difficulties in the playground. The scheme is intended to give greater autonomy to the pupils and is part of a concerted programme to promote good behaviour and to help with pupils' personal development.

appraisal procedures, are also all helping to raise teachers' awareness of the school's expectations. Significant improvements to the school's procedures for assessment and the development of schemes of work for each subject give staff a much better basis than before for planning their lessons. Thorough analyses of the school's national test results have given teachers a much better awareness of how well their pupils are achieving and what pupils need to do in order to improve.

21. Despite inconsistencies, the overall quality of the teaching of mathematics is good. Thoughtful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the helpful guidance of the previous mathematics coordinator have helped staff to become more secure in teaching the subject and have led to improvements in standards in mathematics. There is a good awareness of the need to pay greater attention to practical and problem-solving activities, but sharper and more demanding mental activities at the start of each lesson are having a positive impact on the development of pupils' abilities to handle numbers and to master different ways of performing mental calculations.
22. The overall quality of the teaching of English is not as good as for mathematics, but it is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory overall. A particular strength throughout the school lies in the way staff help pupils to develop their reading skills. Considerable time is set aside to listen to pupils read on a one-to-one basis in Key Stage 1, and there is also a strong emphasis on the development of reading in Key Stage 2. Writing skills are taught well during literacy lessons, but they are not consolidated as effectively as they could be in subsequent lessons or at other times during the day and, in some classes, pupils are not given sufficient time to write. Spelling patterns are taught well initially, but they are not revised frequently enough until they become second nature. Pupils are given some good opportunities to write in subjects other than English, but little attention is paid to the quality of pupils' writing on these occasions. There are good formal opportunities for pupils to exercise their speaking skills, but not enough use is made of the many occasions during the school day, when pupils give spoken answers to questions, to improve pupils' abilities to communicate orally.
23. The overall quality of teaching and learning in science, art and design, geography, history and music is good. In information and communication technology, design and technology and physical education it is satisfactory. There are no subjects in which the teaching is weak, but some teachers would acknowledge the need to deepen their understanding of aspects of information and communication technology in order to be able to provide greater challenge to the more able pupils. Amongst the staff, there is particularly good expertise in art and design and music, reflected in the additional opportunities which these staff provide for pupils to extend understanding of the subjects through participation in musical activities outside normal lessons.
24. The quality of the teaching for children in the Reception classes is good and is having a positive impact on children's progress in first few terms at school. The teachers ensure that the planning of children's learning is matched to the national guidance for children in the Foundation Stage. The teachers have a very good understanding of the needs of young children and choose activities that extend and challenge them effectively. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well, and children are making appropriate progress and acquiring a sound basis of basic skills. The relationships and liaison between the two Reception teachers are very good and extend to the teaching assistants who work alongside the children. As a result, all of the adults have a good understanding of what the children are to learn and the most effective ways to achieve this. Resources are of good quality and well organised, and the teachers use them well to hold the children's interest. The teachers manage the children skilfully, and their relationships with the children are supportive, perceptive and purposeful. This ensures that children settle quickly into the day-to-day routines of the school and become aware of the expectations that adults have of them. These are appropriate both in terms of academic performance, and in how children are expected to treat one another.
25. There is a growing awareness of the need to plan more specifically to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, although some staff still find this difficult to accomplish in practice. Additional help is frequently provided outside the classroom for small groups of pupils or individual pupils with special educational needs. The quality of this teaching, generally provided by teaching assistants, is good and has a positive impact on the learning and progress of these pupils, including those with statements of special educational needs. The teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs within the classroom, however, varies more widely. Where teaching assistants are available to help within the classroom, they fulfil their roles well and make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress. However, in many classes, little additional support is available and teachers are not

always able to provide these pupils with the level and intensity of support they require in order to learn.

26. There is only one class at present which has a pupil whose mother tongue is not English. The teacher ensures that additional help is provided, as far as is practically possible, in order to enable full participation in lessons.
27. The work of the coordinator for able pupils and accelerated learning has highlighted the specific needs of more able pupils and raised teachers' awareness that not all lessons provide these pupils with sufficient challenge. Much more is now being done to provide additional activities for these pupils, as well as encouraging their attendance at courses run by the local authority specifically for more able pupils. In the best lessons, teachers extend these pupils well, but this is not the case in all classes.
28. In order to extend the more able pupils, the school has raised teachers' and pupils' awareness of different learning styles, introduced the teaching of accelerated learning techniques and endeavoured to help pupils to develop more independent learning skills. They have subsequently extended the use of these techniques to all pupils, but there are inconsistencies in the way staff employ them, in their expectations of pupils and in their willingness to let pupils develop greater independence. The teaching in some classes is still very prescriptive; pupils are told exactly what to do and how to do it and there is little opportunity for pupils to use different methods, try things out for themselves or make suggestions of their own. In these classes, pupils find it difficult to transfer knowledge or skills to new situations and are very dependent on adult help. In contrast, some teachers encourage independent thought well, by providing more open-ended tasks or asking pupils to find their own ways to solve a problem or design an investigation.
29. The teachers are well prepared for their lessons and their planning is generally thorough. There has been significant progress since the last inspection in the way that teachers share planning tasks with each other. This not only reduces teachers' workload, but also helps to ensure that pupils in parallel classes receive similar learning experiences. In the best lessons, teachers provide different tasks for pupils, which match their needs well. In some lessons, however, all pupils carry out the same work, with the result that the more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. At the beginning of most lessons, the teachers help pupils to understand the purpose of the lesson, although occasionally the wording of teachers' lesson objectives is not easy for pupils to understand. Good use is made of resources to capture pupils' interest and help them to maintain their concentration. In a very good English lesson in Year 6 in the computer suite, for example, the teacher used a digital projector to present material to the pupils. In Year 4, the use of a human skeleton in a science lesson and large aerial photographs in a geography lesson provided good focal points for discussion and awakened in the pupils a desire to learn.
30. An aspect which varies considerably is the way teachers use the time available to them. In the best lessons, teachers have a very good awareness of how much time to devote to each part of the lesson in order to sustain pupils' interest and concentration. The best lessons are purposeful and business-like, containing a good variety of well-paced activities, but also allowing sufficient time for pupils to carry out extended tasks, such as producing a written account. The teachers make clear to pupils how long they have for their tasks, and give them reminders to keep them on track. In some classes, however, the balance is not right. Pupils are kept sitting on the carpet for too long, with the result that some lose their concentration and there is insufficient time for them to complete their activities. Some lessons have too much time allocated to them. In some literacy and numeracy sessions, which last for an hour and a quarter, pupils take far longer over their tasks than is necessary. In some classes, the teachers sub-divide this time, so that pupils not only have, for example, a full literacy lesson, but also a short lesson in another subject.
31. The teachers generally mark pupils' work well. Their written comments are not only encouraging to the pupils, but provide helpful comments to show them how to improve. The teachers are not so good, however, at ensuring that their suggestions are followed up, that work is corrected by the pupils or unfinished work is completed. Homework is used appropriately to reinforce pupils' learning in school.
32. Throughout the school, there is sufficient expertise and examples of really good teaching practice and high expectations on which to build good foundations for the future. In the Reception, good

planning, good organisation and busy, occupied, autonomous children provide a good learning environment for the start of the children's education. In Year 2, lessons which include plenty of variety and short, well-paced routines, which help maintain pupils' attention and reinforce previous learning, help pupils to make very good progress. In Key Stage 2, the enthusiasm for and expertise in art and music shown by the subject leaders encourage high standards. In Year 6, well-constructed lessons, tasks which are carefully matched to pupils' prior attainment and the cooperative and enthusiastic participation of well-motivated pupils ensure good learning. In order to raise standards further, the school now needs to ensure that this good practice is mirrored consistently throughout the school.

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

33. The school provided a satisfactory range of learning opportunities for its pupils at the time of the last inspection, but planning did not ensure that pupils developed skills systematically in each subject as they moved through the school. This weakness has largely been remedied. The range of learning opportunities for all pupils is now good. The range of opportunities provided outside of lessons is very good, as it was at the time of the last inspection, and the pupils' education is enriched through a good range of visits, visitors and other activities within lesson time. Some teachers also give up a considerable amount of their free time to ensure that older pupils have the opportunity to experience outdoor education in a residential setting. The school fulfils its statutory obligations to teach the National Curriculum and religious education, including the provision of religious education in the Reception classes. Curricular planning for children in the Foundation Stage is good and the Reception teachers make good use of the national guidance materials. They have a very good understanding of the needs of young children and choose activities that extend and challenge them.
34. The school provides an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2, with due attention to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school is effective in teaching the basic skills of numeracy. Key areas of weakness highlighted by the pupils' performance in the national tests have formed the focus for recent emphasis in lessons, so that pupils are now developing the ability to apply their number skills to real-life situations. Displays around the school demonstrate this prowess. Older pupils have opportunities to extend their skills in the 'Mathematics Challenge' clubs and competitions. Provision for the development of pupils' literacy skills is satisfactory. Reading is promoted well through guided reading in lessons, a good range of books in the library and extra-curricular reading activities. Speaking, listening and writing skills are promoted less successfully. Pupils do not have enough good-quality, planned opportunities to speak, discuss and write at sufficient length in lessons. Pupils do not yet use writing as often and effectively as they could to explain their thinking in other subjects. The curriculum coordinator has plans in hand to extend the development of literacy skills through other subjects and topics, but these have yet to be fully implemented.
35. The provision for teaching pupils appropriate skills in information and communication technology and enabling them to use these skills as a tool for learning in other subjects has improved since the last inspection and is satisfactory. Some good lessons take place in the computer suite, but the distinction between the teaching of information technology skills and applying these skills to aid learning in another subject is not always clear. The school has good plans in hand, however, to make computers more readily available to pupils so that teachers can optimise their use for both purposes in classrooms. Satisfactory arrangements are in place to cover the National Curriculum in science, design and technology, geography and history. The opportunities pupils have in art and design are much better than is usually found. Pupils experience a wide range of creative activities, including the use of clay, and are introduced to the work of a wide range of artists from all over the world. The quality of pupils' work on display around the school reflects this very good provision, especially in pottery. The pupils also have greater opportunities in music than in many schools. A wide range of music-making activities occur in lessons, and there are very good extra-curricular opportunities, including instrumental lessons and singing. After-school activities also considerably enhance opportunities for physical education. These include team games, cross-country, athletics and dance. Physical education lessons provide satisfactory learning opportunities for all pupils in games and athletics, dance gymnastics and swimming.
36. All pupils, including those with exceptionally high or low attainment, enjoy equal access to all the learning opportunities that the school provides. Some support for pupils with special educational needs takes place outside the classroom, but the pupils cover similar ground to the rest of the

class. Pupils who show exceptional talents or overall ability are well catered for. A register is kept of such pupils, and extra activities provided, for example, young authors and mathematics challenge clubs. Appropriate arrangements are made to ensure that the very few pupils who are not fluent in English are not placed at a disadvantage in lessons. The school is successful in its aim to give all pupils equal access to all activities regardless of their ability, gender race or special educational needs.

37. The way the timetable is organised leads to slots of time not being used effectively. For example, all classes are allocated more than an hour for many of their literacy and numeracy lessons, when the recommended time is one hour and 40 to 50 minutes respectively. This extra time is not used effectively in some classes. In these classes, there is seldom a plan to use the time purposefully and lessons just expand to fill the gap, leading to inefficient learning. In contrast, some teachers use this additional time well, with carefully planned additional activities, such as the teaching of thinking skills. Pupils also spend considerable periods of time waiting at tables in the dining hall with nothing purposeful to do when they could be outside enjoying exercise in the fresh air. The curriculum coordinator is aware that these occasions mount up to a considerable period of time over the course of a week and is planning to review the organisation of the school day so that better use can be made of the overall available time.
38. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Arrangements for the identification of pupils who may have special educational needs are good and the curriculum is suitably adapted for their needs. Policies and procedures meet statutory requirements. Pupils with special educational need have appropriate individual programmes of work provided for them. The school has access to a good range of specialist support services with whom it has very good relationships. These specialists offer support with adapting the curriculum and teaching methods as appropriate. There are some weaknesses in the way provision for these pupils is managed, and there are not enough teaching assistants to ensure that pupils' needs are met consistently within the classroom. However, where additional support is provided, the quality is good and relevant to pupils' needs.
39. The school's provision for promoting pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Through the written personal, social, health and moral education programme, through extra-curricular activities and through other informal systems in the school, such as the 'guardian angels' scheme, pupils are being encouraged to grow in confidence and in many aspects of their personal development. The school has taken on board a programme to promote 'healthy schools' and is planning to develop this still further. Pupils in Year 6 are taught aspects of sex and education and drugs awareness in line with the school aims and the governors reviewed policy. The older pupils have a residential week away from school with many activities arranged for them, and pupils in Year 6 speak in excited anticipation of this. Good records are kept of individual pupils' contributions and achievements in many areas of school life, but the school has recognised that the next step is for a more rigorous evaluation of all activities which contribute to pupils' personal development to ensure consistency between classes and continuing progression through the school. Current targets within the school improvement plan identify this as an area for development so that pupils can gain more skills to solve problems in real-life situations.
40. Links with the community have a high profile in the school and contribute very effectively to pupils' personal development and their academic progress. The school receives very good support from the community and, in turn, is active and successful in involving pupils in community activities and events, including in the church, where links are very strong. Pupils get involved in many musical events. There is strong representation from many parts of the community on the governing body. Many visitors from the community are welcomed into school over the year to talk to pupils, such as grandparents, who have talked about their memories of World War Two. The school has an agreement with a local university to take students for teaching practice, and many prospective college students and students from local secondary schools complete short work placements in the school. There are good links with nearby secondary schools and some sharing of resources. Of particular value are the opportunities provided by the local authority for gifted and talented pupils to attend extension classes out of school hours.
41. The school cultivates pupils' personal development well, and the quality of provision is very good. Strong links with the church, daily acts of collective worship, and opportunities for quiet reflection make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Special events in the religious calendar

are celebrated. Spirituality is also fostered well through high-quality choral singing and appreciation of classical music, enhanced by music in assemblies, the school orchestra and recitals, and through study of the work of artists and responses to beauty in the world around them. The appreciation of the complexity and interdependence of nature is fostered well, and pupils learn about the influence of human intervention on the environment.

42. The provision for pupils' moral development is also very good. All classes have their own rules, and the concept of respect is strongly developed throughout the school. Issues related to the consideration of others are identified in classrooms. For example, pupils in Year 5 have a 'problem box' where class monitors make good attempts to resolve individual problems while maintaining confidentiality. Referring unresolved problems to adults is not done without a pupil's agreement, thus maintaining confidentiality and confidence in the system. As a result of such practices, and the high expectations of staff, positive attitudes and empathy with others pervade the life of the school. Fund-raising activities, such as the support of a child in India, as well as the local hospice, encourage appreciation of the needs of others.
43. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Opportunities to work in pairs and groups are evident in all classes, and pupils respond to these and cooperate well. Responsibilities are allocated to pupils within classes, and older pupils benefit from whole-school responsibilities. Teachers act as good role models and give, as well as receive, respect from their pupils. The School Council, a relatively recent introduction, is developing well, with representatives from each class. In some classes, pupils do not always have sufficient autonomy to develop independent learning skills.
44. The school makes very good provision for pupils' cultural development. Visits take place to support a range of subjects in the curriculum, so that pupils begin to recognise the cultural heritage of their own community. Understanding of other cultures is fostered through lessons about other faiths, and through use of opportunities arising from pupils from other countries and cultures joining the school community, and by the use of visitors to support extending knowledge. A new initiative is the appointment of a member of staff as coordinator for the International Dimension. The school's recent European Week contributed significantly to pupils' understanding of other European cultures. The library holds a good selection of books from other faiths and cultures, and music from other cultures is a positive feature of lessons and assemblies, supported by a range of ethnic instruments. Displays around the school, together with collections of artefacts from other continents and cultures, highlight cultural and regional differences.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

45. Many strengths were identified in the previous inspection report concerning the welfare, care, health and safety of the pupils and, since then, there have been improvements in some areas. Staff are now well informed about the school's procedures and arrangements for child protection, and the named person, who has undertaken appropriate training ensures that especially vulnerable pupils are properly cared for. Significant improvements are also evident in the training and skills of the very caring group of school midday supervisors. Health and safety procedures are now very good. The headteacher ensures that child protection procedures are clear, understood, and followed. She also takes seriously her role of supporting a small number of pupils who are in public care and shares appropriate plans with outside agencies, as is good practice. Overall, standards of care and support are good. The management of the school's youngest children is good and adult relationships with the children are supportive, perceptive and purposeful. This ensures that they settle quickly into the day-to-day routines of the school and become aware of the expectations that adults have of them.
46. Staff know the pupils well, and many have developed flexible and sensible systems to monitor aspects of their personal and social development. A teaching assistant with specific responsibility for special educational needs takes a key role in the guidance of certain pupils. Personal and social development is promoted and monitored throughout the school both formally and informally. Some staff use praise very effectively to encourage pupils. Circle time⁵ is used effectively as a focus for discussion. Pupils are rewarded for trying hard and enjoy being invited to the headteacher's tea

⁵ During 'Circle Time' pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. All pupils agree that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and, therefore, pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

party. Certificates are given for a range of achievements to promote personal development and these are sent straight to families by post. The school council, which has only just been formed, is beginning to give pupils more responsibility for their school. Overall, the procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' personal development and progress are good.

47. Arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The school keeps an up-to-date medical information register of every pupil, and individual staff are aware of the needs of individual pupils. There are named first-aiders in the school and a number of adults who are fully trained. They are patient and very caring towards any child who may feel unwell. Medicines are not administered in school as a matter of routine but, if needed, they are stored properly behind lock and key for parents to administer during the day. As part of the school's aim to care for pupils, fresh drinking water is encouraged and available. The school requests parental permission for their children to use the Internet and its policy makes it clear the school has considered the safety of pupils in this area. Links with outside agencies are secure, and a number of visiting specialist support staff, such as support teachers for special educational needs, music specialists and the educational welfare officer, visit the school and individual pupils.
48. Procedures for security are reviewed regularly. Pupils are supervised well throughout the day, including during the lunch break. Appropriate attention is given to pupils' safety during lessons and as they move around the school. The school buildings do not provide an easy environment, but the accommodation is generally safe and secure, and the internal areas kept clean and as well maintained as the age of some parts of the building allow. Pupils themselves are very aware of the more hazardous areas around the school and the site. As it stands, the existing accommodation is not fully accessible to wheelchair users. Current toilets for older pupils are very old and difficult to maintain to a proper standard. However, plans are in hand to address both these points. Importantly, parents and pupils themselves believe they are well looked after.
49. The importance of good attendance is clearly and successfully promoted by the headteacher and by governors. The school is oversubscribed, and parents are keen for their children to attend every day. They are frequently reminded to support the school by informing teachers whenever their children are absent. There are no issues around attendance, except that staff do not consistently and accurately record reasons why pupils are sometimes absent, or accurately account for the very small number of unauthorised absences. However, the system in use is still manual and the school is planning to use a computerised system very shortly which will enable office staff, who have just been trained, to monitor attendance more closely, both that of the school as a whole and that of individual pupils where necessary.
50. The school has good arrangements for promoting good behaviour and ensuring that there is no oppressive behaviour. Considerable discussion has taken place on how to ensure consistently good behaviour and, in recent months, staff have been flexible and imaginative in strategies used to promote good behaviour. For example, a less harmonious class went away together for two days to learn specifically how to get along better. It achieved some success and both pupils and parents spoke positively about the experience. Pupils themselves have discussed rules for each class, and these are on the wall for all to see. The headteacher plays a full part in disciplining pupils who are sometimes sent to her, and they are sensitively encouraged to see each other's point of view and to make changes for the better. The system of 'guardian angels' on the playground and the friendship bench are both having a positive impact on behaviour in the playground. House captains are very responsible and play their part sensibly in making sure play is as happy as possible. Individuals are treated fairly and generally consistently but, as in some other aspects of school life, there is scope for all teachers to come on board and be just a little more consistent so that the good standards of behaviour can get even better.
51. The school cares well for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' needs are carefully assessed and the information gained is used to set appropriate targets. Each class teacher maintains a special educational needs file which show that staff have a clear understanding of pupils' needs, the difficulties they face and the action necessary to resolve them. The learning targets in pupils' individual education plans are appropriate to pupils' needs and are taken into consideration when teachers plan their lessons. Targets are reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

52. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress have improved since the last inspection and are now good. The school uses the data it collects well, to set targets for the pupils and to help in the planning of the curriculum and individual lessons. Assessment procedures in English and mathematics are very thorough, so that all teachers and pupils have a clear picture of pupils' current attainment and what they have to do to attain the targets set. Assessments in science have improved, and pupils are now tracked efficiently to monitor their progress. Throughout the school, there is a cycle of assessment that is a crucial part of the planning for these subjects. However, assessment procedures for the subjects other than English, mathematics and science are not as well developed as they could be and this remains an issue for further development.
53. As children enter the Reception classes they are assessed, using the county's assessment procedures. The information gathered is well to group pupils and to plan their learning. The teachers, and other adults, make effective use of the regular assessments that are made of the children as they move through their first year at the school. The day-to-day assessments are generally effective, and the information is evaluated carefully to gauge what skills the children have mastered and what modifications to teaching are necessary in order for the children to master the skills taught.
54. Throughout the rest of the school, there are comprehensive systems for tracking pupils' progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Results of tests are analysed carefully, and the analysis is used to set targets for improvement where this is seen to be an issue for the whole school, such as in writing. The results are also used to identify pupils who need more support, including the highest-attaining pupils. This is a good feature of the assessment process. The coordinator is looking into setting up a computerised system for recording assessment, so that all teachers will be able to see at a glance how their pupils are progressing. As well as school and whole-class targets, pupils also have individual targets in English and mathematics. These are short-term and effective, are discussed by teachers, pupils and parents, and are reviewed regularly, although they are not often referred to when teachers mark pupils' work.
55. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special educational needs, is good. This information is used to set targets in their individual education plans. The targets set are appropriate and aim to improve the achievement and behaviour of the pupils. Targets are normally reviewed and revised at the end of every term, but arrangements exist to update them more frequently if necessary. Arrangements for meeting the needs of pupils with statements of special educational needs are good. Parents are kept well informed and they are invited to attend annual review and other meetings to discuss the needs and progress of their children. The school works closely with other agencies, such as the special education support network. A specialist teacher is contracted by the school to come into school on a regular basis each term to assess pupils' needs and to advise teachers and teaching assistants about teaching methods and special equipment.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

56. The involvement of and communication with parents and carers are very positive features. The headteacher is very committed to seeking the views of parents and carers on many aspects of school. This open and active consultation is a fairly new development and one which is purposeful and regular. She and all staff are accessible and available and parents speak of their approval of the school's efforts to keep them involved and informed. On the whole, parents are very interested in what their children learn and do at school and are supportive of the continuing learning done at home. Overall, the school's partnership with parents and carers is very good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' achievements.
57. Parents and carers think highly of the school and have very positive views about many aspects of school life. There is unanimous approval of the teaching in the school and nearly all parents feel that their children are making good progress. They believe the school expects their children to work hard and to give of their best. Parents feel comfortable in approaching the staff. They like the way the school values individual children and celebrates all achievements. They are impressed with the strong moral code promoted in the school. Just a small minority are not always convinced that homework is set at appropriate levels and some feel the school could offer a wider range of activities outside lessons. Parents are not afraid to speak their mind, but their concerns are taken on board and the headteacher works consistently to resolve any difficulties.

58. Despite the numerous ways in which parents are kept informed about what is happening and their children's progress, there are still a few who would like more information. However, the inspection team judges the quality and frequency of information to parents and carers as very good. The 'Purple Pages', written every week by the headteacher and sent to parents every Thursday, are commended by many in the school community and keep parents regularly updated very successfully. Improvements to the annual report from the governors, which they now write themselves, make it an interesting and informative report, which is clear and easy to read. The school prospectus is full and detailed and includes many photos and pupils' own contributions. It, too, gives an informative picture of St John's with good emphasis on what the school so clearly aims to do. Helpful guidance booklets have been provided for parents when their children move from Year 2 to Year 3 to help ease the transition between the key stages. Annual written reports on pupils' progress are very full and informative. All pupils have reading records which go home regularly and, if it is considered necessary, pupils are given a home-school book, with the specific purpose of keeping parents well informed about, for example, behaviour during the school day. Parents of new pupils attend meetings and receive information before their children begin in Reception. The phone, and in some cases email, is used frequently to keep parents and carers informed. Importantly, the school is a welcoming place and many parents call in every morning, informally, at the start of the day. There are no shortcomings in the way the school seeks and acts to keep parents and carers well informed.
59. A significant number of parents are involved on a very regular basis in helping voluntarily in the school. The work of parents within classes and in small withdrawal groups is carefully managed and overseen by the headteacher. She takes time to ensure that parents know what is expected and this help is effective in many classes. Many parents are involved as governors and, often, an election is held when a vacancy arises. There is a long tradition of a very supportive Parent Teacher Association, which continues to work very hard and with great success to support the school and pupils. Significant sums of money are raised through frequent and enjoyable events. Parents are invited into school for special class assemblies and often join with the children when they visit the nearby church for special services and occasions. Nearly all parents attend the termly open evenings. Parents are fully involved when pupils develop difficulties with their learning or behaviour. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited into school on a regular basis to review the progress of their children. The parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs are invited in for the formal annual review. Pupils who are following behaviour programmes make progress because of this close partnership.
60. The school works closely with the many local pre-school groups, and the arrangements that are in place, enabling staff and children to visit each other prior to joining the school, are good. This ensures that the children settle into school with a minimum of fuss when they start at the age of four and that they are comfortable with their new surroundings. The reception teachers have developed purposeful links with parents who give good support to their children's learning at home. Many parents read with their children, for example, or support them well in their early learning. Parents are invited into classrooms at the start of the day, and this gives them a good opportunity to share with the teacher and support assistants any concerns they may have. However, parents are not provided with written information about the curriculum offered to children in the Reception classes and the school, thus, misses an important opportunity to help parents to provide the most appropriate support for their children at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

61. The overall quality of the leadership and management provided by the headteacher, the school's senior management team and the subject coordinators is good. Although there has been a complete change of the senior management team since the last inspection, the school is continuing to receive strong leadership, but with a different emphasis on the school's main priorities.
62. The headteacher herself provides very good leadership. She has a very clear understanding of how she would like the school to develop and what needs to be done to improve. She has brought great energy to the task of moving the school forward, has introduced good new initiatives and is very thorough in her approach. She provides very clear educational direction for the staff, but some staff have been slow to adapt to the new direction, with the result that there is some inconsistency in both the teaching and the underlying philosophy which is promoted. For example, one of the school's aims is to help pupils 'become highly motivated, independent learners'. Whilst all staff work

hard to motivate the pupils, not all are successful in helping them to become independent learners, despite the emphasis that the school's leadership has given to this aspect of learning.

63. The school has an effective management structure, within which tasks are delegated well. The deputy headteacher and Key Stage 1 coordinator provide very good support for the headteacher and share a common vision, within which the priority to improve standards, particularly through helping the pupils to become more independent, is of paramount importance. The role of the subject coordinator has developed well since the last inspection, and there is good leadership in mathematics, science and music, and very good leadership in art and design and information and communication technology.
64. Overall, the management of the school's provision for special education needs is satisfactory because the staff work together to ensure that all pupils with special educational needs receive as much support as they are able to provide within the available resources. There are, however, weaknesses in the leadership provided by the special educational needs coordinator who delegates much of the day-to-day management to the school's main teaching assistant for special needs and is rarely available to give advice and support to colleagues. The assistant carries out the delegated work very capably. Accurate records are kept and up-dated as appropriate. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is closely involved with this aspect of the school. She visits school regularly and has a detailed knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the department. She meets regularly with senior members of staff to determine priorities for improving the provision for special educational needs within the school.
65. Until very recently, the school has not admitted any pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The provision for the very small number of pupils in this situation is satisfactory, and good progress is being made because of the additional attention given by the school's staff. However, the headteacher recognises that the local community is becoming more culturally diverse, has contacted the appropriate authorities for advice, and is organising staff training for the management of pupils whose mother tongue is not English. The school does not have a policy statement outlining the school's approach to the management of these pupils, but this situation is shortly to be rectified.
66. The school is managed well. Staff have a clear understanding of day-to-day procedures. Most daily routines are organised efficiently, although the time allowed for some activities could be allocated more efficiently. Some assemblies, for example, are unnecessarily long, as is the time allocated to some literacy and numeracy lessons. Staff have regular opportunities to discuss new procedures and professional issues, and considerable emphasis is given to staff development. Good mechanisms are in place to help staff learn from each other. Each week, for example, staff from selected year groups share three ideas which have had a positive effect on teaching and learning within their classroom, and staff have taken it in turns to host staff meetings in their classroom, providing an explanation to colleagues of the particular learning environment and how learning is organised. The school has taken appropriate steps to formulate a policy to promote racial equality, although pupils are already very good at respecting others, regardless of race or background. Two recently allocated responsibilities have had a good impact on the broadening opportunities for pupils. One member of staff is now responsible for the 'international dimension', and the recently organised European week helped pupils throughout the school to acquire a much better understanding of a wide variety of European countries and their cultures. Another member of staff was given the responsibility to oversee provision for the more able pupils. This role has been carried out very well and the responsibility has been widened to promote the development of thinking skills throughout the school, as the initial experiences with the more able pupils was seen to have great relevance for all pupils.
67. The governing body is effective in fulfilling its statutory responsibilities and governors work hard together, many giving much time to support the school and the headteacher. Minutes show that meetings of committees and the full governing body are frequent and are well attended. Governors are very committed to the school, very loyal and supportive and many have been involved with it for many years. The chairman is experienced and knowledgeable, and all governors are keen to get involved. Governors have made significant improvements since the previous inspection in ensuring that health and safety arrangements are so tight. Risk assessments are routinely undertaken. Many governors attend training sessions to ensure they know about the latest guidance. The governing body is well organised and is kept very well informed by the headteacher, especially through her

detailed regular reports. This last fact, together with the fact that so many governors are parents, are frequent visitors to the school, or help voluntarily in it, enable governors to show a good knowledge and understanding, not only of the school's strengths, but also of the challenges which it faces. Procedures for governors to monitor many areas of school, including the curriculum, are well established.

68. Potentially, the school's procedures to monitor and evaluate its own performance are very good, but because systems have not yet been disseminated to all those with responsibility, the overall judgement for this aspect is that the current procedures are good. The headteacher and senior management team have a particularly good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They have set about implementing a comprehensive system of monitoring by focusing on one or two areas and training coordinators how to monitor lessons and pupils' work, and then how to use their observations to evaluate provision within their area of responsibility. Where this has happened, for example, in English and mathematics, science and information and communication technology, the system is beginning to have a good effect and is leading to improvements in the quality of teaching and standards of attainment. Observations have led to specific new initiatives. For example, the analysis of data on pupils' attainment in Years 2 and 3 highlighted apparent under-performance in Year 3. As a result, the school successfully introduced a programme to ease the transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2. Training sessions have raised teachers' awareness of different learning styles, and staff in some classes have successfully raised pupils' own awareness of how they learn. Pupils in a class in Year 6, for example, talked knowledgeably about their own preferred learning styles and the laminated cards which they each had which identified strategies for them to use to help them to learn.
69. The school's procedures for appraisal and performance management are very good. Targets set for individual teachers are linked to the school's main priorities for development, and the school is using this as a rigorous procedure to bring about further improvement. The school's efforts to become more self-evaluative and to involve all staff in the continual quest for improvement are acknowledged in the recent award of the 'Basic Skills Quality Mark' and the renewal of the school's status as an 'Investor in People'.
70. Because of the headteacher's insight and the very good progress made in developing a culture which focuses on self-evaluation and the need to improve, the school has developed very good procedures for planning future development. The school's priorities for development are very appropriate. The development plan itself is very well written, the targets are clear, and the process is already proving to be effective in a number of areas. At present, the efforts to improve are greater than the resultant reward. Most staff show very good commitment to implementing change, but a few staff are not yet pulling consistently in the same direction, which gives rise to the inconsistencies noted elsewhere in the report and hampers the overall progress to the realisation of the school's main goals.
71. Control of the school's finances and the day-to-day management of finance are very good, as at the last inspection. A detailed analysis of spending is carried out and any variances or staff changes that will have a financial impact are identified. Governors are kept well informed about the school's finances. Financial planning is related through the school improvement plan to the school's educational priorities. Curriculum coordinators, team leaders and class teachers manage their own budgets, having identified resource priorities. The school has a very good understanding of the principles of best value. Best value is sought by the governors at all times when considering the purchase of goods or services. The headteacher and governors are very aware of how the school's standards compare with those of other schools and there is regular consultation with parents, pupils and staff over major changes. Governors question whether expenditure represents value for money. The headteacher has presented to governors a detailed cost-benefit analysis of the activities involved in monitoring the school's progress during the previous financial year in order to prove that the money set aside for these activities is well spent.
72. Currently, the school has a high, but planned, underspend, which is earmarked for the imminent building project to re-model the Victorian part of the building. In addition, the school is being prudent in saving for the replacement of computers in the suite when the existing computers become out-dated. The day-to-day management of finance conducted by the school's bursar and the headteacher was found to be very effective in a recent audit by the local education authority. Almost all recommendations in the report have been implemented.

73. Grants for specific educational purposes, such as special educational needs, are used appropriately for the purposes intended. Monies allocated to upgrade the building to provide an information and communication technology suite, pottery room, art gallery and small teaching areas have been used well. Despite the cramped accommodation of the old Victorian building, very good use is made of the school's existing facilities. Taking into account the school's expenditure and the quality of education provided, including provision for the personal and non-academic needs of the pupils, the school gives good value for money.
74. There is a sufficient number of teachers to teach the full curriculum. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. Opportunities for furthering their knowledge and skills are good. Induction procedures to support teachers who are new to the school, as well as newly-qualified teachers, and for providing training for new teachers is generally good.
75. The number of hours allocated to teaching assistants is, proportionately, well below the allocation in most schools, and is not really adequate to meet the needs of the school. The members of staff currently in post make a valuable contribution to the education of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and those pupils who have been identified as in need of additional help. The teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils' learning, especially literacy and numeracy in lessons, but mainly through teaching smaller groups outside the classroom. Teaching assistants have good opportunities to improve their professional skills and are fully involved with teachers on training days. The administrative staff are very capable and enable the school to run smoothly. The premises manager maintains the buildings well and takes a pride in its appearance. He is often involved in making improvements and modifications to the school's facilities, working in cooperation with parents and staff.
76. The school's accommodation is adequate. It has been expanded and improved since the last inspection; for example, classrooms are no longer used as thoroughfares. The headteacher is keenly aware of the importance of the effect of the school's environment on pupils' attitudes and behaviour and on teaching and learning. She has a fully developed plan for improving the building. This includes replacing three very old, Victorian teaching areas currently used by pupils in Years 5 and 6. Re-development work on these areas is planned to commence in the near future. The school is justly proud of the recent improvements to provide a computer suite, pottery room, art gallery, libraries, small teaching areas and new office. These areas also offer opportunities to display pictures and artefacts from around the world and from a good range of different cultures. The outside environment has been much improved since the last inspection. As part of the Millennium celebrations, parents raised money and have been involved in the design and building of an additional play area. This provides very good and safe opportunities for adventurous play. Much of the school now offers a bright and attractive environment to support teaching and learning, free from signs of vandalism, graffiti and litter. Classrooms are bright, attractive and well organised. Pupils' work is very well displayed. Overall, the school offers a pleasant environment in which teachers and pupils can work well together.
77. Resources were previously inadequate in some areas of the curriculum at the time of the last inspection. There has been a considerable improvement since that time and resources for teaching are now at least satisfactory in all subject areas and are good overall. In science, the range of resources is excellent, in art it is very good, and in history, mathematics and music it is good. Resources are very well organised and deployed to improve standards of teaching and learning in all subject areas.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

78. In order to improve the quality of education provided and the standards pupils achieve, the governors, headteacher and staff should work together to:
- Improve pupils' writing, speaking and listening skills* by ensuring that:
 - skills taught during the literacy hour are consolidated sufficiently in subsequent lessons and as opportunities arise in other lessons;
 - teachers focus on the development of writing skills when pupils are asked to produce written work in subjects other than English;
 - reference is made to pupils' targets when marking their work;

- pupils follow up and act upon the comments made by teachers when marking their work;
- teachers actively promote the development of pupils' speaking skills during daily interaction in lessons.

[Paragraphs: 1, 8, 22, 34, 54, 88, 90, 93, 94 and 128]

☐ Ensure that all staff implement the school's guidelines on teaching*, with particular focus on:

- raising expectations of what pupils can and should achieve;
- ensuring there is always sufficient challenge for the more able pupils;
- being less prescriptive in the teaching methods used;
- making more efficient use of the time available.

[Paragraphs 19-32, 62, 70, 91-93, 99, 100, 105, 106, 120, 130, 131 and 140]

- Improve the consistency with which all teachers help pupils to develop independent learning skills* by:
 - helping pupils to apply their knowledge and skills, rather than telling them what to do;
 - giving pupils more opportunities to determine their own methods of working;
 - ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to devise and carry out their own investigative work;
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their critical faculties by reviewing their own work more rigorously and providing critical evaluation of the work of others.

[Paragraphs: 7, 10, 14, 17, 28 43, 62, 63, 90, 91, 103, 106 and 130]

79. Other issues which should be considered by the school for inclusion in the action plan:

- improve the way provision for special educational needs is managed* *[paragraph 64];*
- provide more support from teaching assistants within the classroom *[paragraphs 7, 25, 38, 78 and 131];*
- ensure that teaching timetables reflect a more efficient use of time, especially during lessons which last for more than an hour *[paragraphs 30, 37 and 66];*
- ensure that all staff comply with regulations regarding the completion of attendance registers *[paragraph 49];*
- improve assessment procedures in foundation subjects* *[paragraphs 52, 112, 116, 126 and 137].*

The issues marked with an asterisk () have already been identified as priorities in the school's development plan.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

88

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

[In addition to this figure, there were many informal discussions with staff, other adults and pupils]

58

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	15	40	25	3	0	0
Percentage	6	17	45	28	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	–	413
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	–	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	–	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	–	41

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	25	25	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	23	24
	Girls	24	24	24
	Total	47	47	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (90)	94 (75)	96 (90)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	22	23
	Girls	24	24	24
	Total	45	46	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (83)	92 (90)	94 (90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	33	32	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	26	33
	Girls	27	26	28
	Total	52	52	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (79)	80 (73)	94 (89)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	28	30
	Girls	27	28	29
	Total	49	56	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (76)	86 (83)	91 (90)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
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
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
348	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
5	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.8
Average class size	29.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	168.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	–
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	–

Total number of education support staff	–
Total aggregate hours worked per week	–

Number of pupils per FTE adult	–
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Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.4

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	772,719
Total expenditure	704,281
Expenditure per pupil	1,726
Balance brought forward from previous year	40,637
Balance carried forward to next year	109,075

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	413
Number of questionnaires returned	133
Percentage of questionnaires returned	32

Percentage of responses in each category⁶

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school	58	37	2	3	0
My child is making good progress in school	50	48	1	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good	29	65	1	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	26	64	10	1	0
The teaching is good	56	44	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	36	53	9	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	58	35	5	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	59	41	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents	32	58	8	2	1
The school is well led and managed	43	50	5	2	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	49	48	0	2	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	32	50	10	3	5

⁶ Because of rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

80. The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and much improved since the previous inspection. The teachers have worked hard to address the shortcomings identified in the previous report. The quality of the teaching has improved, as has the quality of planning to support children's learning, and is now good in all areas of learning. The overall attainment of the children on entry to the school is average, although a small number of children already have identified special educational needs. Some children enter the school with levels of attainment beyond those expected for their age. They are, for example, confident in their use of language and have a good understanding of the world in which they live. The children make good progress in the Reception classes in all areas of their learning and, by the time they move into Year 1, most children are likely to achieve, and some exceed, the expected standards in all six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Personal, social and emotional development

81. By the time children transfer to Year 1, they are likely to achieve, and many will exceed, the expected standards in terms of their personal, social and emotional development. The teaching is good and effective in ensuring that children make good progress in this aspect of their learning. Children are confident in their approach to their work and establish positive relationships with one another, the class teachers and the teaching assistants. They behave well and are considerate of others when moving around the classroom, or playing with resources and equipment. Children work well together when part of a group and concentrate when they are asked to work independently. Sometimes, they are sufficiently confident to move freely to another activity without guidance from the teachers. The children are polite and know that they need to wait patiently if the teacher is working with other children. When getting ready for physical activities, the children change into their clothing for physical education quickly, and only a small number need the assistance of an adult, for example to fasten top shirt buttons and tie ties. All adults give due praise and encouragement when they notice children who have done something kind for one of their classmates. This is effective in building up the children's esteem and personal confidence in their approach to each other and in their work.

Communication, language and literacy

82. By the time they transfer to Year 1, nearly all children are likely to achieve the expected standards for communication, language and literacy, and some are likely to be working within the early levels of the National Curriculum. Children make good progress in their understanding and use of literacy skills during the course of their first year at the school. The teaching is good, and the teachers provide rich and varied opportunities for the children to practise and develop their skills. Good opportunities are provided for children to extend their speaking skills through other areas of learning. They enjoy listening to stories, nursery rhymes, songs and poems that are read to them. In discussions about books, some are able to express their ideas about what they have heard, and a few use a mature vocabulary for their age when expressing their views. The teachers and teaching assistants are sensitive to those who need a little more time to think about what they are to say, and this helps to boost the children's confidence in knowing that their ideas are appreciated and valued. Many of the children have a good understanding of the conventions of books and explain what an author is and the purpose of an illustrator. A few are beginning to read simple texts and talk about the main character and events in the stories that they read. The classrooms have a good range of books, which are stored accessibly for the children, who have many opportunities to look at and share them. The children have opportunities to listen to story tapes to enhance their enjoyment of stories, and many have the confidence to use the equipment without adult help. Most are beginning to write their names unaided, and higher-attaining children write simple statements and accounts of something they have experienced and accomplished. Letter formation is usually correct. Good use is made of the classroom-based computers to support the children's early reading and writing skills, such as in the recognition of letters and their corresponding sounds.

Mathematical development

83. By the time they complete their year in Reception, most children are likely to achieve the expected standards for mathematical development, and some will exceed them. The teaching of this area of learning is good. Children make good progress in their early understanding of number, shape and measure. Many of them are beginning to handle simple calculations with numbers to five, and some to ten. Most children can count on and back within 10 and sometimes 20, and are able to write numbers in the correct order. Children talk about various simple and more complex mathematical shapes. They identify the number of sides and corners, as well as naming the shapes. The teaching provides children with a wide range of opportunities to develop their understanding of terms such as 'full' or 'empty'. The teachers devise interesting activities, such as creating shape pictures, that successfully develop the children's understanding of shape. For children who are less confident with number, the teachers provide a wide variety of games and puzzles, specifically designed to support the children's early understanding of number. The children enjoy using these. At all times, staff are careful to demonstrate the correct use of mathematical vocabulary. As a result, children make good gains in their understanding of mathematical language such as 'addition', 'counting on' and 'counting back.'

Knowledge and understanding of the world

84. Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world as a result of good teaching and many opportunities to experience a range of activities that ensure good coverage of this area of learning. Children show curiosity and interest in all of the activities presented to them, and they make rapid gains in their learning. By the time the children start Year 1, nearly all are likely to achieve the expected standards, and some will exceed them. The children's skills in using computers are particularly advanced for their age. This is because the teaching is good and children have opportunities to work in the computer suite, where they enjoy sustained access to computers and have plenty of time to explore programs and improve their skills. They learn very early on to use the computer to draw pictures, and they develop good control of the mouse. They click, drag and drop icons with increasing precision, for example, to create scenes from 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. A few higher-attaining children discover how to rotate images on the screen to enable them to put the bear in bed. The children learn more about their world through a rich variety of activities. Teachers and learning assistants give children good support, emphasise correct technical language and provide good opportunities for children to learn through practical experiences. During the inspection, for example, they handled and discussed a variety of kitchen utensils. This activity was used well to enhance the children's vocabulary, as they described what they saw and used their previous knowledge to make informed suggestions as to what the utensils could be used for. They recognise changes that happen, as they grow older, and they learn about different countries of the world. The teachers ensure that the children learn through direct observation and practical experience and value all their suggestions. Adults use questioning well to develop the children's vocabulary and use of language to explain their thoughts and ideas, and they encourage the children to think about their world and appreciate the wonder of it. In this way, they ensure that the children are involved, interested and continuously learning.

Physical development

85. Nearly all of the children attain the expected standards for physical development by the end of the Reception year, and many exceed them. The quality of the teaching and the planning for children's physical development is good, and the children learn well. Most children are well coordinated, move with an increasing awareness of their bodies, and manipulate a range of small equipment with dexterity. They use the hall for their physical education lessons, and learn to move with increasing control of their bodies, showing a good awareness of the space around them. Children learn how to move in different directions and at different speeds, obeying commands promptly. They learn how to judge distance with increasing accuracy, for example, when aiming and throwing a beanbag into a box. Good use is made of the examples set by adults, who lead and join in, becoming thoroughly involved alongside the children. The children's personal and social skills are developed well during physical education lessons as they learn to take turns amicably, work cooperatively with a partner, for example, when they try to synchronise their movements, and learn to appreciate and value the efforts of others. At present, there are insufficient opportunities for outdoor activities, but there are comprehensive plans to develop the outside facilities for the Foundation Stage in order to provide a

wider range of activities for the children's physical development. Fine motor movements are developed through the use of pencils, brushes, scissors and small construction apparatus.

Creative development

86. Children have a wide range of opportunities to develop their creativity, and most attain the expected standards by the end of the Reception year. The planning and teaching of this area of learning is good, and the children enjoy a range of artistic experiences. They use a variety of pencils, pastels and collage materials to create images. They use paint effectively to make representations of themselves, and create pictures of Flemish houses showing the characteristic stepped outlines. They handle clay and use their imaginations well when moulding objects. During music lessons, the children learn to use a variety of percussion instruments to create music using loud and quiet sounds. They learn to sing a number of rhymes and are given good opportunities to listen to music. The children are encouraged to use their imagination during role-play sessions, when they use the cafe. They use tubes and split pins very effectively to create moving figures in a variety of poses. During the Reception year, the children achieve well and are prepared very effectively for work in Key Stage 1, developing a range of artistic skills as a result of the good teaching and wide range of learning opportunities.

ENGLISH

87. Standards in English are above average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. Standards have not risen since the last inspection. In the 2002 national tests, results were well above average in Year 2 in reading and above average in writing. The results in Year 6 were average. As pupils move through the school, the overall progress pupils make in Key Stage 1 is good, and pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that the rate of progress varies considerably between classes and year groups. Overall, pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve well when compared with their prior attainment, and the overall achievement of pupils in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory.
88. In speaking and listening, standards at the end of both key stages are average compared to most schools. The pupils are encouraged to pay attention and listen well. The majority of pupils do so, only losing concentration when the pace of lessons slows and work does not challenge them. Most pupils are eager to talk and voice opinions, although some do not yet have a sufficiently wide enough vocabulary to express themselves clearly. A significant minority of pupils, especially boys, lack the confidence to speak clearly and to express ideas. Vocabulary is not always developed effectively. The pupils are not given enough opportunities to speak at length about their feelings, to express their opinions and to join in class discussions. As a result, a large number of the pupils use a narrow range of vocabulary, speak in simple sentences and do not adapt their speech sufficiently to suit different audiences and purposes. Although teachers' questions challenge pupils to give thoughtful answers, they do not always require the pupils to give reasons or to extend their ideas or hypothesise or predict conclusions to events. There are, however, examples of good practice, such as in a class in Year 2, where the teacher was encouraging the pupils to shape their answers and think of alternative ways of questioning when discussing the objects and games the pupils had brought from home to share with others. In a very good lesson in Year 5, the teacher posed the question, 'What would happen if dogs could talk?' This not only promoted a great deal of fun, but was very effective as the teacher encouraged pupils to be creative in their thinking, which led to some interesting suggestions and discussion.
89. Standards in reading are well above average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Most pupils throughout the school enjoy reading and are happy to talk about books they have read. In Year 2, the pupils' knowledge of letter sounds and basic spelling patterns is well developed, and the pupils use this understanding effectively to read new and unfamiliar words. Higher-attaining pupils also use context clues well, and younger pupils make good use of pictures to help them decipher text. Pupils in Year 2 confidently predict what might happen next in the story. They know where to find the contents and index pages in information books, and the more able pupils can use these to research simple information. By the end of Year 6, the pupils read a wide range of texts, including Shakespeare, modern poetry, adventure stories, diaries, biographies, autobiographies and non-fiction. Many say they read for pleasure at home, often borrowing books from the local library. They give considered opinions about favourite authors and the type of book they prefer. They show that they understand the text they are reading by making reference to what happened earlier in the story.

Most say they use non-fiction books, as well as computer programs and the Internet, to gather information for topic work.

90. Standards in writing are slightly above average by the end of Year 2 and average in Year 6. The school has identified writing as a priority for improvement and has recently put in place a number of strategies to help to raise standards. For example, a programme of English work has been developed so that pupils can use the skills they have been taught in literacy lessons in other subjects. The increasingly low attainment of boys in writing as they move through the school is also causing concern, and the school is seeking ways to address this. For example, in a lesson with pupils in Year 3, the teacher had chosen to use a story that clearly stimulated the boys' interest so they were fully involved in the lesson. All pupils are developing and using appropriate techniques such as web diagrams, lists and note-making to plan and structure their work as they write for a range of audiences and purposes. Pupils in Year 6 were using the important features of informal writing they had listed the previous day to help them write a formal invitation. However, in literacy lessons, teachers frequently spend far too much time on the introductions to their lessons, often giving pupils few opportunities for participation, so that insufficient time is left for pupils to write and work independently. As a result, when given time to work on group or individual tasks without direct adult supervision, few have the skills to do so successfully. Examples of pupils' past work show that, too often in some classes, pieces of work are not completed. Although teachers give appropriate emphasis to teaching spelling, grammar and punctuation, pupils are not given enough time to use these skills to write independently. A recent initiative to improve pupils' handwriting has been very successful, and most pupils present their work neatly. The youngest ones print their work and, as they move through the school, pupils learn to join their letters so, by the time pupils are in Year 6, they write in a neat cursive style, using fountain pens.
91. Although varying from unsatisfactory to very good, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The teaching and learning is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. All teachers plan using the National Literacy Strategy and identify clearly what they expect pupils to learn. They share their learning intentions with the pupils to give them an understanding of the focus of the lesson. Where teaching is less than satisfactory, the teachers choose inappropriate teaching methods, do not move the lesson on at a good pace and set work which does not meet the needs of all the pupils. As a result, the pupils lose interest, do not engage in the activities and sometimes misbehave. In these lessons, very little learning takes place and progress is poor. In contrast, pupils make very good progress in some classes. In a very good lesson in Year 6, the teacher started by establishing, through a very good question-and-answer session, that pupils had a clear understanding of a 'root word'. He had high expectations of what the pupils could achieve and gave them a challenging task, in a set time, to find five words using the root word 'company'. Afterwards, this stimulated a good discussion, promoting learning well as the teacher used the pupils' contributions, both correct and incorrect, very effectively to make valuable teaching points. The lesson continued to move at a brisk pace and all pupils made very good progress as the teacher successfully ensured that all pupils took a full part, for example, by making sure that all contributed to question-and-answer sessions and using some as 'scribes' to write key points arising from class work on the board. The teaching is less effective when the teachers spend too long talking at the start of lessons. This allows some pupils to daydream and miss out on learning as well as reducing opportunities for the pupils to express their own ideas. Although good assessment procedures are in place, and most teachers use these effectively to plan work for individual pupils, some teachers have low expectations of what the pupils can achieve independently. For example, too often they give pupils the same work to do without adding extra challenge for the more able pupils. Most teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and, in the best cases, make points for improvement as well as giving praise. However, it is evident that pupils do not always act upon the comments. For example, incomplete work is not always finished, as suggested. Most teachers monitor pupils' reading carefully through group reading sessions and listening to pupils read individually. Pupils are encouraged to read at home every day and most do. Teachers, especially of the older pupils, ensure they read a wide range of books. A group of pupils from Year 6 said they valued the good choice of reading material they had. These pupils had made good attempts to write critical appraisals of the books they had read. All pupils keep reading diaries, which are used to monitor progress, and, when taken home, these provide a useful dialogue between teachers and parents. Teachers give pupils homework on a regular basis, which provides good support for their learning in lessons.

92. Most teachers give pupils with special educational needs good support in lessons and ensure that they are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum. Overall, these pupils make satisfactory progress, but they make better progress when there is extra adult help in the classroom or when they are withdrawn for group activities. The very few pupils, for whom English is not their mother tongue, are fully included and make good progress in their acquisition of spoken English, which enables them to make satisfactory progress in their literacy skills.
93. Pupils have some opportunities to practise their literacy skills through other subjects and, although practice is currently not consistent throughout the school, procedures are in place to develop this. In some classes in science, for example, pupils develop their report-writing skills and share their ideas about topics verbally, practising their speaking and listening skills. In a very good literacy lesson, the pupils in Year 6, as part of their focus on comparing formal and informal writing styles, used and developed their information and communication technology skills very effectively as they wrote a formal invitation. Pupils could, however, make greater use of information and communication technology as a tool to help them develop their writing skills, for example, in the drafting and redrafting of their work.
94. The coordinator is experienced and has a clear knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses within the English curriculum. She has had the opportunity to monitor standards through direct lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work. However, not all teachers have responded positively to the strategies she and the senior management team have developed in order to raise standards. Nevertheless, she sees the need to continue to ensure that what teachers plan is delivered in lessons, in order to raise standards, especially in writing and speaking and listening. Resources are good, including two libraries with a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. Other reading books are attractively displayed in bookcases in corridors and are easily accessible to staff and pupils.

MATHEMATICS

95. Standards are well above average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. These findings reflect the school's results in the national tests in 2002 at Key Stage 1 and a continuing upward trend in the results at Key Stage 2. Standards at the end of both key stages are higher now than they were at the time of the last inspection, and there have also been significant improvements in the quality of teaching.
96. Pupils make good progress overall and achieve well in Key Stage 1, with particularly rapid progress in Year 2. By the end of Year 2, the pupils' knowledge and understanding of number is very secure. For example, they discuss patterns in numbers and explain clearly what happens to the tens and units when two-digit numbers are added together. They apply this knowledge well to real-life problems, for example working out total costs and the change due when shopping with money. Higher-attaining pupils make very good progress and achieve well in Year 1 and Year 2 because the teachers ask them to solve difficult problems and to explain fully how they did it. They respond very positively to the challenges they are given, for example, to work with numbers above one hundred, showing confidence and skill in the way they solve problems. There are examples also of pupils with exceptional insight. For example, a pupil in Year 1 saw immediately how he could organise tens and units numbers to show how many he could write without repeating a digit in any number. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs learn well because of the good level of support they receive with suitably simplified tasks. For example, a group of pupils in Year 2 made very good gains in making up an amount of money with coins because the teaching assistant who was supervising them ensured that every individual had plenty of time to show and discuss their own solutions. The pupils' knowledge of shapes and measurement is also very good at this stage, reflecting consistently good teaching of the ideas and vocabulary involved.
97. Standards are above average at the end of Year 6. Pupils make good progress during Key Stage 2 overall, but it is uneven across year groups and within some year groups. This gives rise to gaps in some pupils' skills, particularly their ability to do the quick simple calculations that they need to do in order to solve more complex problems. For example, some pupils were held up in learning how to multiply numbers by 50 by halving the number and then multiplying by one hundred because they were so slow to work out the simple division by two which was necessary as a first step. The pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of number overall, however. They use fractions, decimals and percentages more confidently than most pupils of this age, and have a good understanding of ratios and proportions. Teachers identified the use of number knowledge to solve

word problems as a weakness in the pupils' performance in the 2002 national tests. The pupils' work samples show improvements in this area. Pupils identify which operations they need to solve a problem, and often go on to arrive at a correct solution. However, their level of achievement in this area is still lower than in their basic number skills. Even the most able pupils in Year 6, for example, tend to rush at problems and do sums with the numbers they see rather than spend time thinking what the question is about. This sometimes leads to them doing the wrong sum and not realising that they need to use different aspects of mathematics that they have learned about, such as ratios. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. In some lessons, and in Year 6 where an additional teaching set has been created, progress is good. For example, in a lesson in Year 5, a group of lower-attaining pupils made good progress because they received skilled support from a classroom assistant with simplified sums. Their self-esteem was also enhanced by being given the role of checking other pupils' answers with calculators at the end of the lesson. In some lessons, however, these pupils do not make good progress because tasks are not suitably simplified and extra adult help is not available.

98. The pupils show good skills in investigating patterns and in setting out solutions to problems systematically. For example, in Year 5, they show how many different snowmen could be made using a selection of hats, scarves and noses and, in Year 6, they illustrate square and triangular numbers. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to represent data using graphs and charts is above average. Their work includes a good range of block graphs in Year 2 and line graphs and charts in Year 6, with clear labels to show what the data is about. However, it is not always clear what the graph is telling the reader. There are some good examples of pupils explaining fully what they have done and what they have learned from it, both in investigations and graph-work, but this aspect of presentation is often overlooked. As a result, pupils are not using their mathematics work as effectively as they might for developing and extending their writing skills. The pupils make satisfactory use of information and communication technology in their work. For example, pupils in Year 2 used computers very effectively to help them develop winning strategies in a game involving making a target total with coins. In some lessons, however, pupils make fewer gains in mathematical understanding through the use of computers than they could because insufficient thought has gone into how the mathematics skills involved could best be developed.
99. The overall quality of the teaching is good. In Key Stage 1, there are examples of good and very good teaching in most classes. Teachers are confident with the level of mathematics they are teaching and provide lessons that challenge pupils of all abilities. Lessons proceed at good pace, with lively introductions that involve all the pupils in answering questions and providing explanations. The pupils are then moved quickly on to group work, often with a good level of adult support in addition to the teacher. The adults supervise the activities closely, keeping all the pupils busy, and the teacher brings the lesson to a close with a useful discussion about what has been learned. Teachers use a variety of resources and methods in their whole-class teaching to keep the pupils interested, and they provide a good range of practical work, including games, to maintain motivation. As a result of this good teaching, the pupils enjoy their mathematics, learn quickly and securely and have a good awareness of what they know and what they need to learn next.
100. The teaching is good in Year 3 and very good in Year 6. In Years 4 and 5, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall; one unsatisfactory lesson was seen. In the best lessons, the pupils are engaged from the start of the lesson in stimulating discussions on how to solve problems, with plenty of opportunities to discuss their own strategies. They are set a range of problems to solve independently and have good opportunities at the end of the lesson to share their strategies with each other so that they learn to be flexible in their approach to solving problems. The lowest-attaining pupils in Year 6 achieve well under the present arrangements as they are taught in a small group by a qualified teacher who offers them skilled support at their level. The highest-attaining pupils also have opportunities to work together under adult support on more demanding tasks so that their rate of learning is also good. Teachers in Years 5 and 6 provide clear guidelines on how to tackle problems and how to decide which operation should be used. However, the pupils are not encouraged sufficiently to ask broader questions about the problems they tackle, such as how accurate the answer needs to be, and what are the practical implications of their answers. This limits the progress made, especially by the more able pupils. In less effective lessons, teachers talk too much to the whole class and keep all the pupils working at the same rate regardless of their ability. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, this led to the lowest-attaining pupils losing interest and misbehaving and to the highest-attaining pupils making little progress because of the time wasted and the resultant lack of opportunities for them to interact with the teacher. In the better

lessons, teachers make good use of the available resources, such as 100-squares, to give those pupils that need it visual support for their thinking. In the less effective lessons seen, this was not the case, and some pupils struggled to marshal their thoughts without appropriate practical aids. The teachers' marking of the pupils' work in their books is consistent and encouraging, with high expectations for presentation and accuracy. However, there are not enough examples of teachers suggesting ways in which the work could be improved or extended, especially for the highest-attaining pupils, who get most things right first time and could therefore be challenged more.

101. The subject coordinator is new to the school, but is making a very positive contribution to raising standards, maintaining the good quality of leadership and management of the subject that he inherited from his predecessor. He gives a very clear lead in encouraging the pupils to think of themselves as 'mathematicians'. Very good use has been made of the analysis of the pupils' test results to target teaching at identified areas of weakness, such as working out percentages of quantities and solving problems expressed in words. Teachers have been provided with lesson plans based on the National Numeracy Strategy and purposeful displays of mathematics around the school stimulate the pupils' interest. The coordinator is aware of the need to review the use of the lesson plans to ensure that they meet the needs of all the pupils in each class and to find ways of spreading best practice in teaching throughout the school. The 'Mathematics Challenge' clubs make a good contribution to pupils' enthusiasm and progress in Year 6, with pupils from the school winning medals in local mathematical quizzes. Homework is used well to involve parents in their child's mathematics education. The school is well placed to continue improving provision and standards.

SCIENCE

102. Pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 attain above average standards in science. Overall, pupils make good progress in science, although progress varies from one year group to the next. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen since the last inspection. In Key Stage 1, pupils achieve well, acquire a good body of knowledge, and are generally developing their scientific skills effectively. The pupils, particularly those in Year 2, benefit from good focused teaching, where activities are planned to challenge all abilities. They are encouraged to use their literacy skills to describe their findings, and the higher-attaining pupils use reference books effectively to find out more about a range of different materials. By the end of Year 2, pupils are beginning to understand the need for a fair test, and they make sensible suggestions drawing on their previous knowledge and understanding, for example, when investigating if objects are natural or man-made.
103. Throughout the school, the teachers place an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' scientific skills and give them opportunities to carry out investigations, predict outcomes, ensure tests are fair, and record their findings. In Key Stage 2, however, the approach to practical work is inconsistent, as pupils in some classes do not have regular opportunities to plan their own investigations. In these classes, there is a more didactic approach to teaching, where methods are prescribed and all pupils do the same activity, so little independence is encouraged. In other classes, particularly in Year 6, pupils are expected to plan and carry out experiments independently, record their findings and draw individual conclusions.
104. Although lessons are generally well planned, there is often insufficient challenge offered to the most able pupils. This was a concern at the time of the last inspection, and remains so. All pupils do the same tasks, which do not always match their different intellectual needs. There is also a lack of emphasis on drawing conclusions, particularly in Key Stage 2, so that pupils do not always understand exactly why something has happened. Although pupils are encouraged to explain their findings, a number find this hard, as they are unable to articulate and organise their thoughts in a meaningful way. Thus, only the higher-attaining pupils are able to make generalised conclusions based on their findings. The majority of pupils reiterate results, rather than answering the question 'Why?' This prevents more pupils attaining the higher Level 5. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls, and pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers.
105. Despite some weaknesses in the teaching in some classes, standards have risen since the last inspection, and there have been good improvements in the way the subject is taught. The scheme of work has been adapted well to meet the needs of the school, and there is a more rigorous approach to how and when science is taught. Planning is well established to ensure that all pupils in

a year group receive the same learning opportunities, and that all elements of the subject are covered. The coordinator now monitors the quality of teaching and learning, is aware of the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, and is trying hard to support the weaker teachers. She has a good overview of the subject, and its strengths and weaknesses. Resources have been enhanced since the last inspection and are now very good. Good use is made of assessment opportunities to continuously assess pupils' attainment and to track their progress, and careful analysis of statutory tests is used to help plan the curriculum and address any weaknesses. The good assessment procedures are used to give pupils a range of personal targets to help them improve.

106. The quality of the teaching overall is good and has improved since the last inspection. However, the quality varies from satisfactory to very good. In the best lessons, pupils are given opportunities to plan their own investigations, and apply their knowledge and understanding to explain scientific phenomena, such as what forces are acting in a given situation. In these very good lessons, the pace is brisk, probing questions are used well to reinforce learning during introductory sessions, and after investigation pupils explain their findings and draw conclusions. Accurate use of specific scientific language is stressed, and opportunities are given for pupils to develop their language skills through discussion and reporting. In this way, literacy skills are developed in a scientific context. Activities are set to challenge all abilities, and these ensure that pupils are continuously enhancing their learning. Relationships are good, ensuring that pupils have the confidence to seek clarification when unsure, and pupils are well behaved and concentrate hard for sustained lengths of time. In these lessons, pupils make good gains in their learning. In the best lessons, there are many opportunities for pupils to develop their personal skills. For example, in a class in Year 5, pupils worked together cooperatively in pairs and small groups, discussing and planning how to undertake individual investigations into the conditions necessary for water to evaporate quickly. They valued each other's ideas and, through meaningful discussion, planned a range of investigations. Pupils are very aware of the need to change only one variable to make the test fair. In the weaker lessons, time is not used well, as the teacher spends too much time talking and gives insufficient opportunities for pupils to engage in practical activity. There is little sense of urgency in the lesson, and expectations are not always high enough. Activities are often prescribed, with few opportunities given for pupils to develop their independence through planning their own experiments. In these lessons, teachers lack confidence to allow their pupils to work independently, which has a negative impact on the personal development of these pupils. There is also a general lack of extra challenge for the higher-attaining pupils, as insufficient opportunities are given for these pupils to apply their scientific knowledge and understanding through problem-solving activities.
107. Although literacy skills are generally promoted satisfactorily in science lessons, numeracy skills are not developed so well. Pupils measure accurately using Newton meters and rulers, and use a variety of tables and charts to record their results, but there is insufficient use of graphs to display findings. Some effective use is made of information and communication technology, such as in Year 6, when pupils use spreadsheets to collate information, but this is not a feature of the majority of lessons.

ART AND DESIGN

108. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils reach standards that are above national expectations. This represents a very good improvement on the provision found at the last inspection. Art has a very high profile within the school, and stimulating displays of artwork from many different cultures enhance pupils' understanding and appreciation of art. In general, all pupils make good progress in the development of their understanding and application of different artistic techniques in their work. They demonstrate a good capacity for learning.
109. No taught lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 during this inspection, but a review of current planning and the work produced by pupils shows that they are attaining good standards overall. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of the works of famous artists, and they enjoy using the artists' techniques in their own work. A good example of this is seen in the watercolours produced by pupils in Year 1, inspired by Monet's style. The pupils understand that art can be created using a range of different media such as chalks, paints, clay and fabric. They make good progress in learning how to draw, paint and print and have a secure understanding of the need to draw carefully and apply paint in a consistent and even manner. The pupils' skills are developed well through a good range of activities and the introduction of a range of techniques such as shape

pictures, bubble painting and collage. They also develop good skills in three-dimensional work through their introduction to clay techniques in the pottery room, where they use a range of tools to prod and prick the clay and improve their physical skills as they mould, roll and fashion.

110. As they progress through the school, pupils continue to make good progress in their understanding of the work of famous craftspeople. For example, pupils have enjoyed exploring and learnt well from studying the work of Picasso, Dali, Seurat and lesser-known painters, such as the Russian artist Fomin. They develop a good range of techniques to emulate the styles of these artists' work in order to create their own works of art. When drawing, pupils understand that different types of pencil produce different effects and that 'shade', 'tone' and 'perspective' can all be used to give their work added impact. They have a good understanding of how secondary colours can be generated from mixing primary colours, and they know that 'pointillism' is a particular technique that can be used to create simple images and works of art. By the end of Year 6, pupils have been given sufficient opportunities to use tie and dye, clay and paper sculpting, and this enables them to understand that simple three-dimensional works of art and design can be created using different materials.
111. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good, and this helps to promote pupils' interest and curiosity in the subject. One of the lessons observed during the inspection was excellent. The teachers have secure subject knowledge and understanding and are supported well through the newly-introduced scheme of work, which enables them to plan to extend pupils' learning through a variety of media and techniques. Links with other subjects are good. For example, pupils have drawn wax-resistant pots in the Greek style to illustrate their own hobbies and, during the school's 'European Week', they studied and reproduced work in the style of artists and craftspeople from the countries studied. Pupils have used computers to aid their design of repeating patterns when studying the work of William Morris, and the use of computers is planned appropriately throughout the scheme of work. More able pupils are supported well. For example, a pupil attended a course on Chinese brush painting, accompanied by the subject coordinator, and some high-quality work using the technique was produced. Teachers make good use of the excellent range of resources, which include reference books, reproductions of well-known works, and a broad range of artefacts.
112. The subject makes a very positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In particular, the use made of the works of artists and craftspeople from different ethnic groups enhances pupils' understanding of culture, and their response to the many works and artefacts on display indicates that a positive effect is had on their spiritual development. The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. The coordinator has led the subject for a number of years and has an appropriately broad view of the quality of teaching and learning across the school. The recent introduction of a new scheme of work has given teachers new inspiration, as well as confidence in their own ability to teach the subject. At present, assessment procedures are informal and pupils' progress is monitored and tracked informally. This aspect could be improved, as not all teachers have a clear idea of where pupils are in their artistic development, and how to plan learning accordingly. This makes it difficult to build on what pupils already know, can do, and understand, in order to move them on further in their learning. The quality of resources to support teachers in their work is good, and the subject is further enhanced by the use of a dedicated pottery room and kiln, and the new art gallery to display pupils' work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. Standards of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Timetabling arrangements meant that only two short planning sessions were scheduled during the inspection. However, discussions with pupils indicate that they have positive attitudes to the subject, and that they learn a range of specific skills to enable them to undertake a variety of projects. Sufficient attention is paid to the design process, and pupils are expected to evaluate the finished product. However, there are weaknesses in these processes. Although pupils appreciate the need for careful designs, these are not always completed in sufficient depth to include step-by-step instructions and accurate measurements. Pupils identify the materials needed and the tools required, but exactly how a product is to be constructed is often very vague. Pupils are beginning to evaluate their products, and are able to adjust plans in light of experience as the making process develops. However, evaluations of the finished articles are often superficial, stressing whether the pupil likes it or not, rather than evaluating it to see if it is fit for the identified purpose.

114. In Key Stage 1, pupils acquire a satisfactory range of skills. In Year 1, for example, they learn how to join recycled materials, for example, to make a home for an animal, while in Year 2 pupils use cross-stitches to create a picture for a calendar. In both year groups, pupils show an appropriate level of skill in drawing their designs, which show a close resemblance to the finished product. In Key Stage 2, pupils refine their skills and learn to use a wider range of materials and tools.
115. Insufficient lessons were seen to give a detailed analysis of the quality of teaching, but scrutiny of the pupils' work indicates that teaching is at least satisfactory. Very good opportunities were given in the two planning sessions observed, when pupils constructed 'mind maps' to focus their thoughts on the designs for making slippers. The teachers stressed the importance of making plans realistic and achievable, and pupils were very aware of the constraints such as cost, and time, that affect the project. Although skills that are necessary for a given topic are successfully taught to enable pupils to use them to succeed, there is no programme of teaching skills through a series of focused tasks before projects are planned.
116. The subject is managed satisfactorily, and the coordinator is aware of the need for some further teacher training for less confident members of staff. Assessment procedures are not formalised at present, as there are no procedures to ensure that skills are progressively developed. Resources are good, with a good range of consumable materials, although there are no clamps available to ensure the pupils' work is kept firm when sawing.

GEOGRAPHY

117. Pupils achieve standards which are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as others. Geography makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. For example, the whole school was recently involved in a European Week. During this time, classes were involved in studying the geography and culture of a wide range of European countries, including Norway, France, Spain and Germany. Information and communication technology is used appropriately, although not widely, to enable pupils to discover additional geographical facts about the topic under discussion. For example, in Year 6 pupils use appropriate software to discover more about the principle mountain ranges of the world. A few longer pieces of work are carefully word processed to improve presentation and layout.
118. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are beginning to develop a sense of place in relation to home, school and places further away. They are developing the ability to compare features and understand the differences of contrasting localities. In Year 2, for example, pupils describe, using language appropriate to their age, the differences between their own houses and those found in a village community in Kenya. The teachers make good use of visits, for example, to Clevedon to look at the pier and the promenade, to develop pupils' understanding of different localities. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of the purpose of maps and how they are used to identify the location of geographical features.
119. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a sound understanding of the physical features of the world and have appropriate mapwork skills. Pupils in Year 6, for example, use atlases with confidence and plot principle mountain ranges on a world map. The pupils present their work well. Their maps, for example, are carefully labelled and neatly coloured. The pupils make satisfactory progress through the key stage. In Year 3, for example, pupils are developing a sound understanding of ways in which humans pollute the environment. They use words such as 're-cycle,' 'pollution,' and 'environment' with confidence. As at Key Stage 1, visits are used successfully to extend pupils' geographical knowledge and understanding.
120. The quality of teaching and learning in geography is good at both key stages. During the inspection, the quality of lessons ranged from good to excellent. Most lessons are planned and taught well, and good use is made of both time and resources. The needs of all pupils are considered and group-work is often adjusted accordingly. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are generally good. In Key Stage 2, however, whilst whole-class question-and-answer sessions are very quiet and orderly, potentially very good lessons are sometimes spoilt because pupils lack the maturity or self-control to work quietly in groups. Noise levels are frequently unacceptably high, and teachers constantly

have to call classes back to order and to remind them to work quietly. Pupils find it difficult to work and apply themselves unless directly supervised. In one excellent lesson in Year 6, pupils worked in pairs quietly, busily and on task, completing map-work, for an extended period of time asking questions of each other in a very mature and sensible manner.

121. The management of geography is satisfactory, although there are inadequate procedures to monitor planning and standards achieved across the school. The level of resources is satisfactory, but the school also has some more unusual resources which are used well to stimulate pupils' interest. In a very good lesson in Year 4, for example, salvaged photographs and large-scale plans of the town in the 1920s and 30s were used to good effect to help pupils in their study of the local area at present and in the past. Pupils were very excited and interested in these. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their literacy skills but little use is made of information and communication technology.

HISTORY

122. Standards in history are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. History makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. For example, in their poetry and writing about the Second World War, pupils show good empathy and insight into the unhappiness of the times and the sadness of parents and children at having to leave each other. Throughout the school, pupils present their work well.
123. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have developed a good awareness of the passing of time and the differences between the past and their experiences of today. They are beginning to develop an understanding of how to find out about events in the past. In Year 2, for example, pupils know that the diaries of Samuel Pepys were a source of information for historians. The higher-attaining pupils can give the date of the Great Fire of London and know the name of the reigning king. Other pupils know where the fire started, why it spread so quickly and why it was difficult to extinguish.
124. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have developed a deeper understanding of the more distant past. They use secondary sources well. In Year 5, for example, they discover some of the important features of the life and times of Ancient Egypt. In Year 6, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of life during the Second World War and of major developments in the latter half of the twentieth century.
125. The quality of the teaching in history is good at both key stages and pupils learn well. For many pupils, history is a popular subject in which they take great interest. Two of the lessons observed during the inspection, one in each key stage, were excellent. Both were planned very carefully and with due consideration of the needs of all pupils, from the most able to those with a range of learning difficulties. The teachers were skilful in gaining the interest of the pupils, who responded enthusiastically to pertinent questioning by the teacher. In Year 5, for example, pupils were asked to be detectives and discuss the possible gender, age and origin of a person from the contents of a bag. This then led on to a discussion of the value of artefacts from Egypt and the information that can be gleaned from them. Photographic evidence shows a similar level of engagement in other classes. For example, as part of their studies of the Second World War in Year 6, the teacher organised an 'Evacuation Day' in which pupils dressed in clothing appropriate to the period, wore labels giving their names and addresses and carried their gas masks. This set the scene well for the letters which they then wrote to their parents about their experiences as an evacuee. Such activities also provide good opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy skills. In another good lesson, pupils worked very well together in groups making notes on the evidence presented to them in preparation for writing a full report in the next literacy lesson. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology as a tool for learning.
126. The management and planning of history are satisfactory. Opportunities for the coordinator to monitor the planning and teaching of the history curriculum are scheduled into the school development plan for the future, but have yet to take place. The quality and quantity of resources have improved since the last inspection. Teachers use these resources well to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

127. The school's provision for information and communication technology has improved significantly since the last inspection. A new coordinator was appointed to oversee the development of the subject. A derelict part of the school was turned into a computer suite. The teachers' expertise has improved as a result of training, and the subject is planned very much better than before. As a result, standards have risen and are now in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. The subject coordinator has provided very good leadership and is conscious of the need to bring further improvements. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory, but few staff have the necessary expertise to be able to move beyond a tightly structured curriculum and provide additional challenge for the more able pupils. Pupils are making satisfactory progress overall, but greater use could be made of information and communication technology within other subjects, and the more able pupils could be extending and making better use of their skills. The current development plan recognises these needs and the school is shortly to make another major investment in equipment which will improve the reliability of equipment in the computer suite and provide more computers for use in the classroom, thus making it more practical for groups of pupils to use computers outside the timetabled sessions in the computer suite. The suite itself has had a significant impact on raising standards. All classes have a weekly lesson in the suite and teachers find this a much more effective way to teach new skills.
128. By the end of Year 2, nearly all pupils are working at the expected level in all aspects of the curriculum, though few have progressed beyond this. Pupils understand how new technology can enable them to exchange and share information. In Year 1, for example, pupils learn how to use the computer to produce labels and, in Year 2, they produce short pieces of writing. Few pupils, however, have the opportunity to write at length using a computer and, although they are learning how to correct what they have typed, they have yet to develop any real understanding of how helpful computers can be when reviewing and modifying their work. Pupils know that computers can be used to find things out, but do not have regular opportunities to use CD-ROMs or the Internet. Most pupils have learnt essential skills, such as logging onto the school's network, locating programs, retrieving previous work, starting a new piece of work and printing it out. However, for the youngest pupils, the procedures for logging onto the network, locating files and navigating to the correct folder to save their work are complex, and a considerable amount of time is still needed to get the computers up and running at the start of a lesson which is not the most productive use of the short amount of time pupils have in the computer suite.
129. By the end of Year 6, pupils are working at the expected level in most aspects of the subject, but few pupils are working beyond this level. The pupils are most competent in the aspect of exchanging and sharing information. They use the basic functions of a word processor confidently and know how to set out text in different ways. In a very good English lesson in Year 6, for example, the pupils entered text for a formal invitation and then altered the size and alignment of the text to reflect the style of an invitation. They have a satisfactory understanding of how to find out information but, due to factors beyond the school's control, have not had the opportunity in recent months to access the Internet. The pupils' understanding of how computers can be used to monitor events is the area in which pupils have least experience, but new resources have been purchased to provide more learning opportunities for pupils. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, they have acquired a broad range of skills which enable them to operate a variety of applications.
130. The overall quality of the teaching is satisfactory, and there is a small amount of very good expertise amongst the staff. The teachers are competent in teaching the basic elements of the curriculum for information and communication technology, but more training is needed for staff to be able to move beyond the boundaries of the familiar and provide real challenge for pupils. The teachers' planning is generally satisfactory and follows the recommended scheme very closely. In some classes, more imagination is needed to adapt the printed scheme to a context which is more immediately relevant to the pupils and what they are studying in other subjects. Most teachers introduce their lessons well, giving clear explanations, and many make good use of the digital projector for demonstrations so that all pupils can see clearly what is happening and understand what they have to do. In some classes, the teachers have produced helpful instruction sheets to guide pupils through complex operations. In some lessons, the teachers focus too much on getting pupils to follow a set of instructions, rather than helping them to understand underlying principles. In Year 5, for example, pupils were being taught how to enter data and formulae into a spreadsheet. Although most pupils completed the task by following step-by-step instructions, not enough time was spent helping pupils

to understand how to construct the formulae they used or giving them opportunities to work independently to investigate how to apply this knowledge in other situations.

131. In most classes, some pupils still need a significant amount of support from the teacher, who generally spends most of the main part of the lesson helping individual pupils. This is not always the most efficient use of the teacher's time, as it precludes them from teaching separate groups of pupils, for example, to help the more able pupils move on to more challenging work. Pupils make better progress when the teacher is supported in the lesson by a teaching assistant with a clear brief. In a lesson in Year 2, for example, the assistant was assigned to work with a group of lower-attaining pupils, and was very effective in helping these pupils to focus on their work. Most pupils are well motivated in lessons and keen to get as much done as they can. In most lessons, however, pupils work in pairs, which is not always the most productive use of their time, especially when they have to wait for their turn to take control of the mouse and keyboard. In some lessons, however, working in pairs is productive, as pupils benefit from the interaction with and suggestions of their partner. However, the school has yet to give much thought to other forms of organisation that might prove more effective in some lessons. Although most teachers finish their lessons with a concluding session in which they attempt to draw together what has been learnt from the lesson, these sessions are frequently too superficial. Not enough time is spent on helping pupils' to develop a critical awareness of their own work or to learn how to improve their work through the suggestions of others.
132. The teaching scheme used for information and communication technology is thorough and covers all aspects of the curriculum. However, not all units are used as imaginatively as they could be, by adapting the context to tie in with work being undertaking in other subjects. Although there are examples of effective use of computers as a tool for learning in other subjects, such as the collection and analysis of data presented within a word-processed report in geography, the wider use of new technology is still an area for further development. The school is, however, making a conscious effort to use new technology to reinforce pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. All classes, for example, are expected to devote part of their time in the computer suite to teach literacy and numeracy. At times, this is very effective. In a very good mathematics lesson in Year 2, for example, the pupils played a game in pairs in which they took it in turns to add coins to purchase an article, trying to be the person to add the last coin to make up the exact amount required. The game not only consolidated pupils' understanding of money, but also helped them to develop strategies and think beyond the consequences of their immediate action. In a very good English lesson in Year 6, the teacher not only introduced key aspects of the lesson using the digital projector, which gave pupils a clear focus for the lesson, but also got pupils to carry out two exercises on the computer which reinforced not only their information technology skills but also their ability to understand and apply formal language.
133. The coordinator has a very good awareness of what is happening in the subject throughout the school. Information and communication technology has been one of the subjects in which the coordinator has been trained to observe the lessons of other teachers and, as a result, he is well aware of areas for improvement. There is a planned schedule for developing helpful assessment procedures, and the first steps already give a good indication of the work which is being undertaken throughout the school. Through the monitoring of teachers' planning, the coordinator keeps a careful check on which aspects of the subject have been taught, and whether any strands need greater input. The school has an appropriate policy for use of the Internet, and good attention is given to health and safety aspects of using computers. The school has come a long way over the last four years, has a clear understanding of what needs to be developed and has well-formulated plans to build on what has been achieved.

MUSIC

134. Pupils make good progress in music and attain above average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6. The very good range of additional musical activities is a major factor affecting the standards pupils achieve. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in the school orchestra, the choir, a range of various recorder groups and less common activities, such as handbell ringing. The orchestra is well supported, and pupils play a wide range of instruments with enthusiasm. The local education authority school also provides good help and support for the school, as well as individual and group tuition in a broad range of instruments for many pupils. The school has maintained its good-quality provision in music since the previous inspection.

135. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Key Stage 1. Weekly lessons are supplemented by other activities, such as hymn practice. Through practical activity and hands-on involvement, staff encourage pupils to respond positively and with enthusiasm to their musical activities. In one lesson during the inspection, for example, pupils developed a good understanding of short and long sounds through the use of tambourines and rhythm clapping. They then developed their expertise by clapping the rhythms of well-known nursery rhymes for others in the class to guess. The pupils are learning to respond appropriately to conductor's hand-signals. In a very good lesson in Year 2, pupils chose from the broad range of instruments on offer to represent stimulus words such as 'crackle', 'whoosh' and 'sprinkle' and combined sounds to build up a picture of the Great Fire of London, which they are studying in history. They took obvious pleasure in the activity and blended their instruments and creations well to form a convincing overall sound picture.
136. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is good overall and, as pupils move through the school, they develop a good understanding of scales, harmony and chords. They learn to write music scores using symbols and, by Year 6, they have a good understanding of and expertise in graphic notation and composition. During performances in class, they are encouraged to act as 'critical friends', a role which they carry out with tact and sensitivity to improve each other's performance and technique. In a very good lesson in Year 6, pupils responded to symbols on notation cards to perform individually, and together, on a range of instruments, and were beginning to write their own graphic notation. Staff and pupils use music vocabulary appropriately and well.
137. The music curriculum, based on national guidance and a commercial scheme, is good. Published materials are used to provide appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum as well as guidance for staff. Cross-curricular links are made, and information and communication technology is used satisfactorily. New resources have just been purchased to promote literacy and numeracy skills through music. The quality of leadership and management is good. The coordinator has been in post for a number of years and uses her expertise and enthusiasm to support and inspire pupils and teaching colleagues. Some teachers lack confidence in their ability to teach the subject satisfactorily, but there are plans to improve their confidence and skills through in-service training. At present, assessment of pupils' progress is too informal, and teachers' own observations of pupils' progress and development contribute little to their overall development in music. However, pupils with special educational needs are identified and supported well, as are those with particular gifts and talents for music. In the best lessons, teachers support pupils of all abilities well, using vocabulary and terms that can be understood by all pupils, but extending the more able pupils, for example, by identifying key changes. Peripatetic teachers and school staff provide good group and individual tuition in a range of instruments, such as brass, upper and lower strings, guitar, and recorders. Pupils have good opportunities to take part in music festivals and events with other local schools, and to perform at major events such as the Bath Music Festival. School performances combine dance and acting with music and are popular with pupils and parents.
138. The school's resources for music are good and are continually being improved and extended. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have access to a range of instruments from other cultures and sing a wide variety of songs, including those from other countries. Hymn singing is taught well, and pupils' enthusiasm during such sessions is evident. They sing with enjoyment and energy, using dynamics well and producing a good, tuneful sound overall.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

139. Standards in physical education are broadly in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Opportunities for pupils to be involved in extra-curricular sports activities have improved. Games and gymnastics lessons were observed in Year 6. In games, pupils have levels of skill which are appropriate for their age. They show a good awareness of the space about them and the positions of their own and opposing team members when playing ball games. They control and pass a ball with expected levels of control and skill. The pupils' attainment in gymnastics in the one lesson seen was below expectations, but this was only the second lesson of a series, so the pupils have time to develop at least average skills. Currently, they lack a sense of adventure and fluency and poise in their movements. The range of movements they incorporate into a sequence of balances, movements and jumps is more limited than expected for this age. In response to the limited opportunities they were given in this lesson to evaluate each other's performance, they showed sensitivity and insight in their praise and suggestions for

improvement. Standards in swimming meet expectations. All pupils, except those with exceptional disabilities, swim at least 25 meters before they leave the school and know the basics of water-safety. The only lesson seen in Year 2 was gymnastics. In this lesson, standards were in line with expectations. Pupils created a sequence of contrasting movements at different levels in pairs with a clear finish. They reflect on their work and say what is good about it. Standards in the lessons seen in Years 1, 4 and 5 in dance were in line with expectations. Photographic evidence suggests that, over time, pupils have a greater than average exposure to dance and, therefore, are likely to reach above average standards, but the inspection found no evidence to support or refute this proposition.

140. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, but it varies from class to class from good to unsatisfactory. From the lessons observed, the teaching is best in Years 2 and 6. Pre-recorded tapes were used in most of the dance lessons that were observed. Some of these were successful in stimulating the pupils' imagination and securing good progress. In a lesson in Year 1, for example, the teacher's enthusiasm and her willingness to stop the tape and link the ideas to the pupils' own circumstances led to very enthusiastic participation by the pupils and good progress. The links in this lesson to the class theme of friends, family and community, helped to consolidate the pupils' awareness of their place in the school community. In some lessons in dance, the teachers do not observe the pupils' performance closely enough to pick out examples of good performance for demonstration and discussion. There is a lack of emphasis on the quality of the individual parts of a sequence, and too few opportunities for the pupils to reflect on the standard of their own performance. On one occasion, this lack of guidance from the teacher resulted in unsatisfactory teaching and learning. The teaching of gymnastics is good in Year 2, with a good level of challenge for the pupils to think about different levels when using apparatus, and to refine different parts of their movements, such as the finish. In Year 6, expectations in the lesson seen were not high enough and pupils were not challenged to extend themselves. An over-emphasis on safety and procedures slowed the pace of the lesson so that pupils' interest waned and the need to manage lively pupils became more of an influence. The pupils respond well when engaged in discussion of how to improve their own movements, and less well when they spend too long listening to the teacher's instructions to the whole class about procedures.
141. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular sports and games activities through which all the pupils have ample opportunities to develop their interests and talents. Good collaboration with other schools to share equipment and obtain the services of specialist coaches enhances the pupils' opportunities to develop their skills in a wide range of physical activities. The inter-school sports and games and dance displays that are arranged make a very positive contribution to the pupils' social as well as physical development and their awareness of the wider community.