

INSPECTION REPORT

ST GEORGE'S LOWER SCHOOL

Leighton Buzzard

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109467

Headteacher: Mrs R Bullock

Reporting inspector: Mr N Sherman
16493

Dates of inspection: 6th – 8th May 2003

Inspection number: 246911

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Lower
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	East Street Leighton Buzzard
Postcode:	LU7 1EW
Telephone number:	01525 372096
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Carey
Date of previous inspection:	21 st May 2001

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16493	Mr N Sherman	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Information and Communication Technology The Foundation Stage Educational inclusion	The school's results and achievements; How well are pupils taught? What could the school do to improve further?
9619	Mr B Miller	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils?
23686	Mrs P White	Team inspector	Mathematics History Geography Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
10611	Mr M James	Team inspector	English Music Physical education Religious education English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in Leighton Buzzard in Bedfordshire. There are currently 100 pupils and there are more girls than boys. The percentage of pupils with free school meals is 21%. This is around the national average. Most pupils are of white ethnicity and there are no pupils at the early stages of learning English. Twenty one pupils, including one pupil who has a statement of special educational need, are currently on the school's special educational needs register. This figure is average. The children's attainment when they start school varies from year to year and is below average for the current Foundation Stage class.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school, after a period of considerable staff turnover, is rapidly improving and is providing pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. Although standards are below the average in English and mathematics by the time pupils leave the school, they make satisfactory progress overall. Standards in art and design are above expectations by the end of Year 4. Standards in design and technology are below expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 and standards in information and communication technology are below expectations at the end of Year 2. Teaching is satisfactory overall and in the Foundation Stage it is very good. The leadership and management of the school are good and the headteacher, staff and governors have worked hard to tackle the shortcomings identified in the previous report. Although the school is generously funded, the recent rapid improvements at the school now ensure that the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils reach high standards in art and design by the time they leave the school.
- Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and the quality of provision is very good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and relationships are equally good.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- There is good day-to-day care of the pupils.
- There is good leadership and management of the school, and the headteacher who is well supported by her colleagues and the governors, provides clear educational leadership.

What could be improved

- Standards in design and technology at both key stages.
- Standards in information and communication technology at the end of Key Stage 1.
- The progress of higher-attaining pupils.
- The way the school assesses pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.
- Standards in investigation work in science.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 2001. At that time, it was judged to have serious weaknesses, particularly in teaching, which was judged to be unsatisfactory. Progress since then has been good. While further work still needs to be undertaken to raise standards at the end of Key Stage 1, most of the key issues from the last report have been tackled. However, the impact of this has yet to work through in terms of raising pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests. Teaching has greatly improved, as has the way in which the school plans improvements. Under the clear and effective guidance of the headteacher, the school demonstrates good capacity to improve.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests in reading, writing and mathematics indicate that standards were well below the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards were well below average. Over time, results have been slightly better in mathematics than in reading and writing.

The findings of the inspection indicate a much more positive picture in respect of standards than the 2002 results indicated. Standards are judged to be below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Most pupils make satisfactory progress, although higher-attaining pupils have the potential to achieve more. The difference between National Curriculum tests and inspection findings is due in part to the difference in attainment between cohorts of pupils but also as a result of the good work undertaken by the school in improving teaching. Standards in science are below expectations. Standards in literacy and numeracy are below expectations. Teachers increasingly plan to promote pupils' literacy and numeracy in other subjects, although more needs to be done in raising expectations of what pupils formally record. With the exception of design and technology and information and communication technology, where standards are below expectations, pupils attain standards in line with expectations in all other subjects.

In Year 3 and Year 4, pupils make good progress, but by the time pupils leave the school at the age of nine, standards in English and mathematics are below expectations. Progress in science is good and pupils are on course to reach national expectations. Progress in art and design is good and standards are high. With the exception of design and technology, where standards are below expectations, progress in all other subjects is satisfactory, and standards are in line with expectations.

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in many areas of their learning. By the time they enter Year 1, they achieve the Early Learning Goals in their mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative, and physical development and in their personal, social and emotional development. Although progress in their communication, language and literacy is good, standards remain below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the time the children start in Year 1.

Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and most pupils make good progress in relation to the goals set out for them in their individual education plans. Despite the good support some pupils receive in lessons, the pupils who have high levels of behavioural need occasionally demonstrate quite challenging behaviour.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy their learning and work hard in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall but not all pupils have a clear understanding of how their actions can impact on others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good. Personal development is satisfactory but too few opportunities are provided for pupils to determine the course of their own learning in lessons.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are in line with the national average and lessons commence on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Very good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is much improved since the previous inspection. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and ensures that the children get a good start to their education. There is some variation in the quality of teaching seen in Year 1 to Year 4 with consistently good teaching seen in Year 4. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory overall and teaching increasingly ensures that pupils are given scope to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy in other subjects. However, teachers' expectations of higher attaining pupils, particularly in the amount of work that they formally record are too low and this impedes their progress. The teaching of art and design, information and communication technology and religious education at Key Stage 2 is good and teaching in most other subjects is satisfactory. However, the teaching of design and technology throughout the school and in information and communication technology at Key Stage 1, where pupils make too little progress, is unsatisfactory. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and the pupils receive well-targeted support in lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very well planned and provides a good foundation for the learning of the younger children. At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the curriculum is satisfactory and all requirements are met. At present, design and technology has too little time for pupils to develop their skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well supported in class and most pupils make good progress. However, despite the good support and care pupils receive, a small but significant number of pupils in Year 3 do not always make the progress they could in relation to the targets set to improve their behaviour.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development and aspects of subjects are used equally well to promote pupils' sense of wonder in the world around them and develops pupils' understanding of their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Despite the recent high turnover, many staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the pupils and provide a high degree of pastoral care. While there are good procedures to monitor and track pupils' progress in English and mathematics, the school has yet to develop effective ways to record and check the progress pupils make in most other subjects.

Parents have an improved opinion of the school and have valued the work and commitment of the headteacher and staff to improve the school. While some parents give good support to the school in a number of ways, in the main too few parents regularly support the school in its efforts to improve pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	There is good leadership and management of the school. The headteacher, together with her colleagues, have worked hard to tackle the shortcomings identified in the previous report. The headteacher has been very effective in putting into place procedures to strengthen the day-to-day management of the school and provides the school with astute and clear leadership.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors, many of whom are new to the school, are effective in fulfilling their responsibilities and have a good understanding of the school's needs and what still needs to be done to improve pupils' learning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The monitoring of teaching and learning is regular, and the headteacher has ensured that teaching and learning is critically evaluated with the information gathered from this used to good effect. The school is making greater use of assessment information from pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests to plan improvements.
The strategic use of resources	In the past, there has not always been clear financial planning to support the school's long-term development. This has led to governors having to consider further staffing reorganisation within the school from September 2003 to ensure spending is in line with the school's budget. The school has yet to put more robust procedures in place to ensure that the funds that are spent on supporting pupils' learning are evaluated against the standards that pupils reach.

The school's accommodation is extensive and used well to support pupils' learning. Staffing levels are good. Resources are satisfactory overall, although there are shortages in design and technology and in the number of computers in classrooms.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the school has improved since the appointment of the new headteacher. • Improvements in the school accommodation. • The care that their children receive. • The progress that their children make in the Foundation Stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework their children receive. • The range of learning activities provided for their children after school.

Inspectors agree with the positive views that the parents hold about the school. Inspection evidence indicates that current provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and the school is planning ways to extend what is currently provided. While inspection findings indicate that pupils in the Foundation Stage are provided with suitable reading activities to pursue at home, more could be asked of the pupils in other parts of the school in what they are asked to do. Inspectors support parents on this issue.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The children attend the school part-time at first and then formally commence their full time education in the Reception class in the term in which they become five. The attainment of the children when they start school is currently below average, although this can vary from year-to-year. Children make good progress in their first year at the school and in most areas of learning, they achieve the Early Learning Goals. While children make good progress in their communication, language and literacy development, their attainment remains below that expected by the time they transfer to Year 1.
2. In the Key Stage 1 2002 National Curriculum tests pupils reached standards in reading, writing and mathematics that were well below the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science indicated higher attainment with standards in line with the national average and above average when compared with similar schools. Over time, standards in reading and writing have been well below the national average. The findings of the inspection are that the standards of the current group of Year 2 pupils are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This is a better picture than the 2002 results partly because of continued improvements in teaching and in how the school makes use of assessment data are starting to impact on pupils' achievements. In addition, the previous group of pupils had a very high number of pupils with special educational needs with almost three quarters of the class being judged to have a range of special educational needs.
3. In Year 1 and Year 2, pupils are currently making satisfactory progress in speaking and listening, reading, and writing. Pupils' learning in English has been one of the main development priorities since the appointment of the headteacher. Increased attention has been paid to developing pupils' literacy skills in other subjects. Currently a good balance is being achieved by teachers in developing pupils' understanding of producing technically correct written work yet at the same time encouraging them to increase their use of imaginative vocabulary to make their writing more interesting for the reader. However, standards in presentation are often unsatisfactory, particularly in terms of how pupils present their work in other subjects. The school is aware of the need to ensure that the good progress that many of the children make in the Foundation Stage continues to be developed as they move through Year 1 and Year 2. Assessment information about the progress pupils are making is increasingly being used effectively to plan pupils' learning and, for those identified as needing additional help with their literacy, the data is also used to provide additional support which is provided, for example, through the Extra Literacy Support programme for pupils in Year 1.
4. In Year 1 and Year 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics. Teachers increasingly make use of other subjects to develop pupils' understanding of number. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the vocabulary associated with number, although their ability to solve mental arithmetic problems quickly and confidently is less developed and this is a weaker feature of their attainment. In addition, pupils' below average literacy skills make it difficult for them to understand without support the nature of mathematical problems posed and this limits the progress they make in their mathematical investigative work. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their understanding of early scientific ideas such as how other living creatures need food, shelter and water in order to grow and thrive. Overall teachers' expectations of what pupils formally record in their day-to-day books are too low and there are too few opportunities for pupils to undertake open-ended investigations in

science. This restricts pupils' progress in developing and consolidating their understanding of scientific ideas.

5. In Year 1 and Year 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in art and design, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education where standards are in line with expectations by the end of Year 2. Progress in design and technology and information and communication technology, however, is unsatisfactory and pupils do not reach the standards expected of them by the end of Year 2. Teachers do not provide pupils with sufficient opportunities, for example, to use computers in the course of everyday lessons and this limits the progress pupils could make in using computers to support their literacy, numeracy or aspects of their design and technology development.
6. In Year 3 and Year 4, pupils make good progress in English and mathematics, aided by the quality of teaching which in Year 4 is often good but standards are below expectations in both key stages. The pupils are given clear and regular opportunities to take part in class discussions and they make good progress in their understanding of the need to listen effectively to one another. Pupils increasingly make good progress in developing their confidence in using written language imaginatively, although this is marred by lower standards in how pupils present their work. Teachers make increasing use of computers to support pupils' numeracy development and this enables the pupils to develop well their understanding of how certain software can be used to store numerical data. In science, pupils make good progress, and standards are in line with expectations when they leave the school.
7. Pupils make good progress in art and design and by the time they leave the school, standards are above expectations. This marks a good improvement over the last inspection. Standards in design and technology have fallen and standards are below expectations and pupils make unsatisfactory progress. In all other subjects, standards are in line with expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress.
8. There is some variation in attainment between different groups of pupils in the school. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and the teachers, in close liaison with the special educational needs co-ordinator, devise suitable individual education plans that highlight clearly what pupils need to achieve in order to lift either their academic attainment, or as in the case of those with high behavioural needs how to improve this behaviour. In the main, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. However, in the Year 3 class, some children do present a very high degree of challenge for a teacher who is newly qualified, and the progress these pupils make is satisfactory. Although the school has increasingly targeted the needs of higher-attaining pupils in order to boost their achievements, these pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in most classes. Some teachers' expectations of what these pupils are expected to formally record in their daily work books are too low and as a result, the pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. While inspection findings could find no difference in attainment between the boys and girls, Key Stage 1 National Curriculum test data indicates that from 2000 – 2002, boys attained higher standards in reading and mathematics. The school is aware of this difference and is closely monitoring teaching and learning to evaluate more carefully as to why this is.
9. The recent efforts by the school to raise pupils' achievements are starting to raise standards. Since the last inspection, the high turnover of staff that has included a new headteacher, deputy and two new additional teachers at the start of the current academic year means that the effect of new initiatives has yet to be fully seen in terms of their impact on standards attained by pupils. One of the measures that the new headteacher has introduced has been improving assessment procedures in English and mathematics to

monitor pupils' progress more closely and to use the information more astutely to set whole school targets in order to raise pupils' performance in National Curriculum and other tests. The school does set challenging targets for pupils' performance in these tests. All the indications are that given the improvements in teaching and how the leadership and management makes increased use of assessment data, the school is well placed to continue raising standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The pupils' attitudes to their learning and to school are good. Pupils' values and the relationships between pupils are also good and the school has maintained the provision in this aspect of its work since the last inspection.
11. Children in the Foundation Stage work hard in class and are often enthused by the work they are asked to do. They listen attentively to the stories that are read to them, for example, and actively participate in the singing of number games that are often used to commence numeracy sessions. The children are taught well to consider the needs of others and many are sensitive to those who find sharing equipment more difficult to practice. In many lessons, the children persevere well with the tasks they are set and demonstrate good capacity to work and solve problems for themselves. Only as a last resort do the pupils openly seek the assistance of another adult to help them solve a problem.
12. In Year 1 to Year 4, pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn and for most pupils the work that they do captures their interest and curiosity. The majority of the pupils sit sensibly in carpet time sessions in order to listen to what the teachers are explaining or demonstrating. They then take the instructions they are given and for the most part work sensibly together in small groups in order to complete the tasks set. In Year 3, however, not all the pupils are able to concentrate for sustained periods of time and where this happens, their learning often falters. In the main, the pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards one another and are duly sensitive to the needs of others.
13. Behaviour continues to be good as it was at the time of the last inspection, although there has been one exclusion in the past academic year. Pupils move sensibly in and around the school and do not stray beyond the boundaries they are given to play in on the large playground. Behaviour in assemblies is good and pupils demonstrate appropriate levels of respect towards those invited into the school to talk to them about aspects of the topics and themes they are exploring. In lessons, the majority of the pupils enjoy the activities and co-operate well. They share resources sensibly and take turns in using the different play equipment. However, some pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 demonstrate more challenging behaviour at times and a small but significant minority of pupils find it more difficult to appreciate how their behaviour can impact on the well being and the learning of others. Where instances of boisterous behaviour occur, they are dealt with in an appropriate manner, by the staff. The vast majority of pupils settle quickly at the beginning of each day and this ensures an orderly start to activities.
14. Relationships are good between the pupils and between the pupils and adults. Pupils are polite and helpful to one another. They respond well to the satisfactory provision made for their spiritual, social, moral, cultural and personal development. They carry out class monitor duties and the older children look after the younger ones at playtimes and mediate in playground disputes that may occur. However, while some pupils are provided with some scope to develop the course and direction of their own learning, by using the school's computer facilities for example, in the main this aspect of their personal development is under-developed.

15. Attendance is satisfactory and continues to be in line with the national average as it was at the time of the last inspection. The vast majority of pupils are punctual and lessons start and finish on time ensuring that little time is wasted.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, although there is some variation between different classes. During the inspection, teaching was very good in 10 per cent of the 30 lessons seen, good in a further 39 per cent, and largely satisfactory in the remainder. The stronger teaching is in Year 4 where teaching is often good and in the Foundation Stage is frequently very good. Teaching is greatly improved since the previous inspection. At that time, teaching was found to be unsatisfactory in nearly one in three lessons and was judged to be a serious weakness. The new headteacher has implemented various initiatives that have impacted well on teaching. These include a good programme of professional development for staff and regular monitoring of teaching and learning to enable good practice to be shared. As a result, teaching is now satisfactory, although there remains further work to be undertaken to ensure that the needs of higher attaining pupils are fully addressed so that they can make the progress of which they are capable.
17. The teaching of English is good in Year 3 and Year 4 and satisfactory in Year 1 and Year 2. Teaching in mathematics is satisfactory at both key stages. Teachers use the materials in the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy consistently in planning the pupils' learning and the school is increasing the opportunities afforded through other subjects to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. However, information and communication technology, particularly at Key Stage 1 is not a regular feature in many subjects. At Key Stage 1, the teaching of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory as too few opportunities are planned by teachers to promote the pupils' learning in information and communication technology in daily lessons. At Key Stage 2, the teaching of information and communication technology is good, with teachers being more effective in choosing interesting activities that successfully promote pupils' understanding of how computers can be used to support their learning in different subjects. The teaching of art and design at Key Stage 2 is good and the pupils benefit from the skills and expertise of the headteacher who teaches the subject in all classes. The teaching and learning is satisfactory in most other subjects with the exception being teaching in design and technology, which is unsatisfactory. Teachers lack confidence in the subject and there are gaps in pupils' learning.
18. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good enabling the children, many of whom enter the school with below average levels of attainment to make good progress in their first year. The teacher has a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and very good use is made of the detailed information that is gathered on the children as a result of the home visits made prior to the children commencing school. This is used well both to group the children and to plan learning that is a close match to their personal and academic needs. The teacher is very much aware of the need to ensure that the children are provided with activities that develop their early literacy and numeracy skills. The classroom is effectively managed to support this. For example, as part of a topic on 'Teddy Bears', part of the classroom has been organised to look like the house of the three bears in the story of Goldilocks. The children in imaginative role-play activities then use this at different parts of the day. This not only has a positive impact on their communication, language and literacy development but also their personal, social and emotional development. The management of the pupils is also very good resulting in the children being made to feel comfortable in their new surroundings and a purposeful work ethic is very much

evident in the classroom. Effective and detailed monitoring of the children's progress is used to plan what the children need to do next in order to improve further. As a result of the consistently very good teaching the children experience, they make good progress both academically and personally by the time they enter Year 1.

19. The teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 is satisfactory, and much improved since the previous inspection. Teachers manage the pupils well and time in lessons is used well. Teachers explain clearly and at the same time give the pupils good scope to ask and answer questions. Good use is made of 'Big Books' in literacy lessons and this helps to fire the pupils' interest and enthusiasm in reading for pleasure. The expertise and assistance of the additional support in classrooms is used to good effect and this frees up the time for the teacher to work with those that may need additional support and assistance. Equally good use is made of equipment and resources, particularly in mathematics and science, which enables the pupils to help grasp new concepts and ideas. Although teaching is satisfactory there are some shortcomings that impede the pace of learning in some areas and for some pupils. These include the setting of work to fully match the range of abilities in the class. In some instances, such as the teaching of science, higher attaining pupils are provided with similar work as that for other pupils in the class and they could handle more challenge and be extended more fully and creatively. In addition, the teachers' expectations of what pupils formally record in their day-to-day exercise books are too low. There are instances in pupils' work where there is too long a period of time before pupils formally record what they learn. This makes it difficult for them to refresh their memories about their previous learning in order to build on what they know.
20. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory with some good features. Teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of most of the subjects that they teach and the planning of lessons is detailed and provides a clear rationale for what different groups of pupils are to learn. Time in lessons is used well and teachers creatively use opening sessions to explain to pupils what they are to learn in the time available. In Year 4, the teacher's expectations of the pupils to encourage them to listen effectively to their classmates are high and this results in pupils being sensitive and appreciating the efforts of those who may not be as confident in speaking aloud to a larger group. In Year 4, the management of pupils is good, resulting in little time lost in lessons. In Year 3, however, where there are higher numbers of pupils with special educational needs, the management of the pupils is not always fully effective and time is lost in lessons reminding the pupils of the need to concentrate fully on what they are to learn.
21. In some classes, the pace of pupils' learning is better than in others as a result of the variation in the quality of teaching. Where teaching is more effective, pupils make more rapid gains in their knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are studying. Inspection evidence suggests, however, that under the leadership and management of the new headteacher, there is an increasing consistency in teaching. Planning of learning is more effective as is the monitoring of pupils' progress in English and mathematics the results of which are used to determine what pupils are to learn next. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are higher than those noted at the time of the previous inspection, although there is a need to ensure that all teachers expect more of the pupils in the amount of work that they record and in how this is presented. In too many instances and in different subjects, pupils' work is often untidily presented and mars their efforts. Marking of pupils' work also needs to be made sharper in that it gives clear guidance to pupils on what they need to improve their efforts. The use of homework to support pupils' learning is satisfactory overall. This is administered on a once-a-week basis and pupils are asked to complete set tasks to support their literacy and numeracy development. In the main, however, more use could be made of homework to support pupils' learning in other subjects.

22. The teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs is good, and it has improved since the previous inspection. The teachers and learning support assistants have a clear understanding of the needs of the pupils, they work closely together and they arrange a most suitable range of activities and work for them. Positive relationships are established, and help and support are readily provided. The teaching and support given to pupils with a statement of special educational needs is good ensuring that the pupils are included in the full range of learning opportunities planned for all pupils.

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

23. The quality and range of opportunities for learning provided by the school are very good for children at the Foundation Stage, and they are satisfactory for pupils in Year 1 to Year 4. All statutory requirements are met and religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus of the local education authority.
24. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and provides a very secure platform for the children's learning. The teacher carefully plans the children's learning in line with national guidance, and effectively planned visits and visitors to the school who talk to the children about the themes often complement this. The curriculum in Year 1 to Year 4 is appropriately broad and balanced, and suitable provision is made for most subjects. At the time of the last inspection there were weaknesses in the provision for religious education, and in the use of mathematics in other subjects. Both of these issues have been successfully tackled. However, there are currently weaknesses in the development of pupils' scientific skills in Year 1 and Year 2, and in the overall provision for design and technology throughout Year 1 to Year 4. Whilst all elements of information and communication technology are taught, at Key Stage 1 there is inadequate provision for the use of the subject in other curriculum areas. The current provision for art and design goes beyond that expected, and the profile of the subject has been significantly raised since the previous inspection. This is contributing well to the higher standards being achieved.
25. Appropriate and relevant policies and schemes of work that have been updated since the previous inspection are in place for all subjects. They contain suitably detailed and extensive information that clearly outline provision in each subject. The school has successfully adopted the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy and increased use is made of mathematics in other subjects of the curriculum, such as science and physical education. In literacy, a number of opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their reading and writing skills, both within English itself and across the range of curriculum subjects, such as history, and geography. The successful implementation of these strategies has contributed towards the improved progress that pupils are making.
26. Overall, teachers' curriculum planning is effective in ensuring the steady and effective development of pupils' knowledge and skills as they move through the school. Planning usually makes suitable allowance for the needs of lower attaining pupils, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. However, there is not always enough challenge provided in work given to higher-attaining pupils. The school makes satisfactory provision for the equality of pupils' access to the whole curriculum, with the staff making sure that pupils are involved, as far as possible, in a full range of activities. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, with aspects of sex and drugs education being fully covered within lessons when appropriate. Other aspects of pupils' personal development, such as worries and concerns they may have, are dealt with caringly and sympathetically as they arise. The importance of healthy eating is also emphasised to pupils in their work in science.

27. The provision for out of school activities is satisfactory. The clubs that are largely of a sporting nature are well attended but because of a lack of sufficient adult supervision these are currently prevented from being extended further. The school has good links with the main feeder middle schools and there are regular meetings with other lower schools in the area. Students completing their initial teacher training also spend time at the school. This programme is well managed and the students make a good contribution to the work of the school. The local community and environment are used satisfactorily to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils visit the elderly and a number of local residents contribute to the recently formed 'Friends of St George's Association', which supports the school's fund raising events. Outside speakers from the local community come into school and assist for instance with history lessons. All of these various initiatives help to enrich pupils' day-to-day learning.
28. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Clear procedures are in place and they closely follow the new Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of pupils. The new Code has been carefully and effectively implemented. Individual education plans are provided for pupils, and these are generally of good quality and they are reviewed each term. Care is taken to ensure that the work provided for pupils is closely suited to their needs. Any pupil with a statement of special educational needs is provided with the most suitable support, in line with the requirements indicated. The statements are reviewed annually. All pupils are involved in the full range of school activities.
29. The school makes good provision for all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Improvements have been made, since the time of the previous inspection, in the provision for spiritual development.
30. The school now makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Assemblies are well planned and most thoughtfully delivered, with pupils often making a suitable contribution themselves. Pupils are helped to gain knowledge and insight into their own, and other people's, values and beliefs, and in particular they are encouraged to respect and value the opinions of others. Moments of quietness are provided for pupils to reflect on what they have heard and to consider how they should respond themselves. Appropriate opportunities are now planned for pupils' spiritual development in the subjects of the curriculum, with interesting and thought provoking activities being provided in a number of subjects, such as art and design and music.
31. Provision for moral development is good. The headteacher and staff, as well as providing good role models themselves, regularly remind pupils of the correct forms of behaviour and give reasons for them. Discussions often take place in lessons, and rules of conduct are emphasised when necessary. Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and they are regularly praised and rewarded for maintaining these high standards. Pupils are encouraged to develop a clear understanding of right and wrong and to treat staff, visitors and other pupils with courtesy and respect. Most pupils also have a high degree of self-discipline and they show great concern should any of them not maintain the expected standards.
32. The school makes good provision for pupils' social development. Pupils are encouraged to form good relationships with each other, their teachers and other adults. As they progress through the school pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively, to take turns and to share resources, such as when taking part in experimental work in science, or in working together in music and physical education. Older pupils are particularly caring of younger ones, and they relate well to them during lunch-times and break times and, in fact, whenever a need should arise. Younger pupils in turn are keen to seek out the company of older pupils.

Suitable opportunities are provided for pupils to take on responsibilities within their classrooms, although fewer opportunities are available for pupils to use their own initiative. Older pupils carry out their particular tasks, such as arranging the hall for assemblies and acting as librarians, with great care and efficiency.

33. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. They are taught about aspects of British culture in subjects such as English, art and design and history. A most appropriate emphasis is laid on their knowledge and understanding of other cultures during assemblies and during lessons in subjects such as geography, music and religious education. The school makes suitable provision for making pupils aware of the multi-cultural society in which they live. They consider some of the different forms of worship, ritual and life-style, celebrate important festivals such as Eid and Diwali, and welcome visitors from other cultures. There is a suitable range of books in the school library, and a variety of religious artefacts are well displayed around the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The pupils are supported well in a caring environment, which is an improvement on the last inspection. Parents are pleased with the provision and are confident that all the staff look after their children in a caring and sensitive way. They believe that the school is effective in helping their children towards becoming mature and responsible.
35. There are good systems for safeguarding children's health and safety. The school grounds, for example, are very extensive and make it difficult to keep a careful watch on the children during break times and the school is extra vigilant in this respect. In addition, the school building is large considering the number of pupils on roll. Regular safety inspections of the building are undertaken and where necessary appropriate action taken. Appropriate first aid arrangements are in place for dealing with accidents and illness.
36. There are secure arrangements for dealing with child protection issues. Staff, many of whom are new to the school have received appropriate training and are aware of the issues involved. Very good induction arrangements are in place for children and their families attending the Foundation Stage for the first time. Home visits are carried out by staff and this gives families the opportunity to talk of any matters of concern to them. Parents enjoy meeting teachers in an informal setting and appreciate the time and effort taken by the staff to ensure that the transition from home to school is as smooth and as unobtrusive as possible.
37. There are good procedures in place for promoting attendance and punctuality. Registration procedures meet statutory requirements but unexplained absences are not always followed up quickly enough. There are good links with outside specialists such as the educational welfare service and the school is proactive in ensuring parents appreciate the need for their children to attend school as fully as possible. There are very effective arrangements in place for promoting high standards of behaviour including appropriate ways to prevent boisterous and over aggressive behaviour. These have recently been reviewed, after consultation with pupils, parents and staff. There are simple rules for the children, rewards for good behaviour and sanctions for dealing with misbehaviour. Staff implement these rules consistently and pupils quickly learn what is accepted as appropriate behaviour and what is not.
38. There are good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Targets such as those for behaviour are set after consultation with the child and the parents concerned. Despite the many new staff to the school in a relatively short space of time, staff know the pupils well. They are alert and responsive to the pupils' needs and they monitor

pupils' personal and social development effectively. Personal and social issues are addressed in classes during 'Circle Time' and the pupils who may have a specific difficulty or emotional need know that all staff will support them sensitively.

39. The procedures for monitoring the pupils' academic performance and their personal development are good in English and mathematics and an improvement over the judgement made at the time of the last inspection. Although improvements have been made in the way that teachers use assessment information to plan for the range of ability within the class, more still needs to be achieved to ensure that assessments of the higher attaining pupils lead to planned work that will help this group of pupils to achieve and make more rapid progress.
40. The use the school makes of assessment information to guide curricular planning and to support the pupils' academic progress is strongest in English and mathematics and this has contributed to the gradual improvement in standards in these subjects. As the pupils move through the school, a thorough analysis of national test results and the results of optional tests are used to set individual targets and to track the progress of year groups. From recent analysis of assessment data the school has targeted writing as a specific area for improvement and has also identified the need to improve the pupils' recall of basic number facts and tables. Assessment information is used to set individual targets in English and mathematics that are recorded in the pupils' books and also shared with parents. The teachers' daily assessments of the pupils' work are satisfactory. Learning objectives are shared with the pupils and there are some opportunities for pupils to share their assessment of their own performance in the summing up sessions at the end of some lessons. The best marking complements this and the pupils are informed of their achievements through constructive comments about their work. However, this is neither regular nor consistent and there are variations in how daily marking is used to help the pupils to improve. In some classes marking is reduced to a tick. Some assessment takes place in other curriculum subjects but this is not as consistent or as rigorous and overall is unsatisfactory. As a result, teachers do not develop a sufficient profile of the precise stages of progress pupils are making in order to plan what pupils need to do next in order to move on in their learning.
41. The support for pupils with special educational needs is good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Clear procedures are in place and they closely follow the new Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of pupils. The new Code has been carefully and effectively implemented. Individual education plans are provided for pupils, and these are generally now of good quality. They are reviewed each term. Care is taken to ensure that the work provided for pupils is closely suited to their needs. Those pupils with a high level of need are provided with most suitable support, in line with the requirements indicated. The statements are reviewed annually. Pupils are involved in the full range of school activities.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Parents consider St George's Lower School to be a good school. They have become increasingly happy with what the school provides and what their children achieve. The only area of significant concern expressed by parents in the questionnaires used to gauge their views prior to the inspection is the use that is made of homework. Inspection findings are that homework while given to pupils on a weekly basis, the use of homework generally is not extensive and more could be made of this to support the pupils' learning.
43. Parents are kept appropriately informed of school events and of what their children are to learn in the Foundation Stage through regular newsletters and other information that is put on

notice boards that are strategically placed around the school. The information provided helps parents to gain an understanding of the sort of experiences that their children are to have. Parents are not provided with a similar range of information about what their children are to learn during the course of a term at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, however, and this information, if provided, could prove useful to parents to assist their children in their learning. Good procedures are in place to help parents gain a clear idea about their children's progress. The school very much promotes an 'Open Door' approach for parents, encouraging them to discuss any difficulties that their children may be experiencing so that any potential problems can be dealt with quickly and effectively. Consultation meetings with the class teacher take place during the year but a small number of parents would like more opportunities for informal day-to-day contact with staff to learn how their child is getting on. The annual written reports about pupils' academic and personal progress are of good quality and identify the areas in which the pupils could improve. The parents of children with special educational needs receive good information about the progress of their children. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of the reviews of their children's individual education plans, so that they are fully aware of the provision being made for them. Parents of statemented pupils are invited to the annual review meeting. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. The school prospectus contains much helpful information and the governors provide parents with clear information about events taking place at the school through their annual report.

44. The school appreciates that there remains more work to be done to further improve the level of parental support in order to help move the school further forward and to help parents assist in their children's learning. With the exception of the Foundation Stage, few parents assist in classrooms. Parents' involvement in the work of the school is unsatisfactory despite the school's increasing efforts to encourage them to help in school and contribute to their child's education at home. The educational events the school has arranged for parents have been poorly attended. However, the recently formed 'Friends of St George's' association helps to support the school's social and fund raising activities.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. There is good leadership and management of the school. The headteacher provides good leadership and she is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the chair of governors. The parents who responded to the questionnaire and those who attended the meeting support this judgement and value the recent work that has been undertaken by the management of the school in order to improve provision.
46. Since joining the school eighteen months ago, the headteacher has shown strong personal commitment to ensuring that the shortcomings highlighted in the previous report, particularly in relation to teaching, have been overcome. She has established effective strategies to enable the staff and governors to work together to bring about improvements in many aspects of the school's work. The school has taken advice, accepted expertise and worked hard to raise standards. This well focussed leadership and co-operation are major factors in the improvements made since the last inspection. In recent times, the school has experienced considerable staffing difficulties that have slowed the school's progress towards its targets. Nonetheless, the changes have been managed well and the school demonstrates good potential to move forward at a more rapid pace.
47. The leadership skills of the subject co-ordinators are good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and they give a clear direction to their subject. The leadership of the Foundation Stage and the co-ordination of the school's special needs provision are both of good quality. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is well organised and performs her role effectively, contributing much to ensuring that arrangements for special educational needs conform to the requirements of the Code of Practice. Close attention is paid to the setting of individual targets that are shared with the pupils and all those involved with them. The governor appointed to monitor the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs, carries out her work efficiently and thoughtfully.
48. The school regularly and effectively evaluates and reviews its work in order to find ways to improve standards and the quality of teaching further. The headteacher, staff and governors, are clear in their aim to ensure that standards continue to be raised and that the school becomes more effective in relation to the management of funds that it receives. These are very much seen as main priorities. The headteacher has implemented procedures to monitor teaching and the deputy and subject co-ordinators evaluate teaching through the observation of lessons and looking closely at the pupils' work. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved across the school and this positively affects the progress the pupils make. The school's evaluation of its own performance is good overall, although the school's evaluation systems have yet to address the issue of low expectations of what pupils' record, and in how teachers mark pupils' work. Test and assessment results are carefully analysed so that trends can be noted, targets set and appropriate action taken. However, the way in which the information from monitoring and assessments is used could be more focussed and rigorous. For example, through its monitoring of the pupils' work, the school has identified writing as a priority for development, but has not addressed the fact that standards in how pupils present their work could be higher.
49. The school's results and achievements are discussed at governors' meetings and governors are knowledgeable and realistic about the school's strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be done to continue to improve. The work and overall effectiveness of the Governing Body are much improved since the previous inspection. Under the guidance of the chair of governors, committees are now in place and each has terms of reference to guide its work. These committees oversee personnel, finance and buildings and maintenance issues as well as school improvement. All the governors have subject links and they have quickly developed a good knowledge of the school's organisation and planning

in their curriculum areas. The governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively and this represents good improvement since the time of the last inspection. The governors are clear about the school's aims and targets and what they want to achieve for the school. They have good first hand knowledge and information to effectively hold the school to account for what it is providing for the pupils.

50. The school has made a good improvement since the last inspection in 2001 and almost all of the issues have been addressed successfully. Standards are rising, albeit slowly and, as a result of monitoring, support and training, the quality of the teaching has improved significantly. Lesson objectives are an integral part of every lesson and the pupils have individual targets that they know and understand and which are shared with parents. Assessment information is now used well in some subjects to plan work for the lower and average attaining pupils but further work remains to be done to ensure that the higher attaining pupils are set appropriately challenging tasks and that all staff have suitably high expectations for this group of pupils. Since the last inspection the school has reviewed and updated all its policies and these are now useful and informative and provide much clear information to the provision made in many areas of school life.
51. The school improvement plan is a much-improved document that is shorter and more succinct than at the time of the last inspection. It covers a three-year period and sets out the school's priorities along with timescales, costs and success criteria. Curriculum co-ordinators also prepare satisfactory action plans for their subjects. However, more sharply focussed areas for improvement with shorter timescales for their implementation would provide more rigour to curriculum development and so quicken the pace of improvements. In response to another key issue of the last inspection, the school now has a clear set of aims that are widely displayed and they form an integral part of the teaching, learning and daily life of the school. These aims outline the school's commitment in ensuring that all pupils regardless of their age, race and ability are fully included in all aspects of school life. Despite the high turnover of teaching staff, arrangements for performance management are fully implemented with targets appropriately dovetailed to meet staff's professional needs and the wider needs of the school.
52. Historically, there has been weak strategic financial management of the school. Just prior to current governors taking up their responsibilities, the previous Governing Body took the decision to move to a single aged class structure and duly appointed another teacher to enable this new staffing profile to take effect. Most of the funding for this was to come from the large carry forward figure that had been accrued. However, the long term implications of this strategy were not thought through sufficiently in terms of the impact on the school's budget. The situation was further compounded with an extensive shortfall in numbers at the school owing to a fall in the birth-rate in the area. As a result, the school has had to put into place a plan to address the shortfall in its budget over the next two years that will require a reduction in staffing levels. The new Governing Body has fully discussed the implications for the school and the headteacher is very likely to have more of a class teaching responsibility. Governors are kept fully up to date with information about the budget from the headteacher. The day-to-day management of the budget is secure and the headteacher carefully manages the budget to support the school's future development.
53. The school is very generously funded and part of this support has been in the form of additional grants provided by the local education authority. These, as well as other grants given to the school, such as those for staff training, development and pupils with special educational needs, are used wisely to support school development. The school has satisfactory procedures for ensuring that the principles of 'best value' are applied in terms of expenditure incurred and close discussions take place to ensure that the school gets a good return for buying back into the support packages of the local education authority. Financial

quotes are obtained for all major expenditure. However, it has to develop more robust procedures for ensuring that standards are monitored in light of the funds that are spent in order to raise them. Overall, given the good improvements at the school as well as the fact that the headteacher and the governors have a clear idea of what improvements still need to be made, despite the shortfall in the school's budget share, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

54. The numbers of teachers and support staff at the school are good. Staff are appropriately qualified and receive regular training by which their skills and knowledge are updated. Training for support staff is also regular and the staff concerned are involved in the training days organised for teachers. This helps to promote a strong team spirit at the school and encourages high commitment from the support staff towards improving pupils' learning. The school has a very extensive range of accommodation to support pupils' learning. Some classrooms are used by a private Nursery, which generates useful income for the school. Some classrooms are of a good size and much physical development and refurbishment has taken place in the school since the appointment of the new headteacher that has helped considerably to improve the overall quality of the school accommodation. This has included decoration of the classrooms as well as a full overhaul of how the school library is organised. This is now attractive and sited in the centre of the school allowing pupils full and easy access to its reading materials. The school makes very good use of its extensive grounds to support pupils in their learning. An attractive pond area is used extensively
55. The quality and range of learning resources are satisfactory overall, although there is some variation. There is insufficient information and communication technology equipment in classrooms to help pupils continue to develop the skills they acquire in the school's small but adequate computer suite. In addition, the computers in the Foundation Stage are outdated and although pupils do use the computers, the response rate of the machines is slow and this impedes the children's learning, as they have to wait for the computer to perform even some basic tasks. Resources in design and technology are insufficient.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. In order to build on the good progress that the school has recently made, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

(1) **raise standards in design and technology at both key stages by ensuring that:**

- resources are sufficient;
- the subject has sufficient time for it to be taught effectively;
- teachers' confidence in teaching the subject is raised.

(paragraphs ⇒ 5, 7, 17, 24, 55, 99 – 103)

(2) **raise standards in information and communication technology at Key Stage 1 by:**

- ensuring that information and communication technology is used more effectively to support pupils' learning in day-to-day lessons;
- classroom based resources are improved;
- pupils have greater access to the Internet to support their day-to-day learning.

(paragraphs ⇒ 5, 7, 17, 24, 55, 81, 85, 97, 107, 113 – 117, 121, 130)

(3) **raise teachers' expectations of higher attaining pupils in particular by ensuring that:**

- the pupils are given work that is a close match to their ability and which they find suitably challenging;
- pupils are given greater scope to formally record their work;
- standards of presentation are improved;
- marking gives pupils the necessary guidance to improve their work.

(paragraphs ⇒ 8, 19, 21, 26, 40, 48, 50, 77, 80, 81, 87, 88, 89, 92)

(4) **develop assessment procedures in subjects other than English, mathematics and science to enable teachers to build up a stronger picture of pupils' attainment**

(paragraphs ⇒ 40, 98, 107, 112, 117, 121, 125, 130)

(5) **pupils are given greater opportunities to develop their investigation skills in science.**

(paragraphs ⇒ 4, 24, 89, 90)

Minor issues

- develop procedures to measure the cost effectiveness of spending decisions on the standards that pupils attain.

(paragraph ⇒ 53)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number		6	12	11	1		
Percentage		20	40	37	3		

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 three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	100
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	21

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	9	15	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	16	17	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (79)	71 (71)	75 (92)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	18	14	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (75)	58 (71)	92 (79)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Figures given are school totals only where the number of boys and/or girls in the cohort is fewer than 10.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	87	1	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background	1		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2		
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British - Indian	2		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1		
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	2		

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 – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Average class size	21

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	136

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/03
	£
Total income	260 850
Total expenditure	300 504
Expenditure per pupil	2 808
Balance brought forward from previous year	55 332
Balance carried forward to next year	15 678

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8
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	100
Number of questionnaires returned	33

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	21	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	39	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	15	70	6	6	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	55	12	12	0
The teaching is good.	61	33	0	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	36	9	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	21	3	6	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	85	15	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	61	33	0	6	0
The school is well led and managed.	58	33	9	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	42	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	46	9	9	9

Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by parents.

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

57. Children enter the school at different times of the school year and most children have had some form of Nursery education. Children enter the Reception class part-time in the year they become four and then enter full-time in the term they reach five years of age.
58. Owing to the small numbers of children involved, the overall attainment of the children when they start in the Reception class can vary significantly from year-to-year. The current group of Reception children started school with below expected levels of attainment, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development and in their communication, language and literacy. Children make good progress in many areas of their learning and, by the time they enter Year 1, are attaining the expected levels in most areas of their learning. The exception to this is in their communication, language and literacy where standards remain below expectations, although the children make good progress. The small number of children with special educational needs make equally good progress in their first year in the school. Their needs are identified early and they are supported well. The teacher and the learning support assistants give the pupils concerned well targeted support in lessons and much of their work is specifically geared towards the targets that have been set for them in their individual education plans.
59. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and much of the provision that was judged to be of a good quality at the time of the last inspection has been improved even further. The teacher has a very good knowledge and understanding of how best to support the children in their learning and very detailed assessments are made of the children and this information is used to effectively guide the children in what they need to learn next. The teacher makes creative use of the quite extensive classroom space to provide the children with interesting and frequent opportunities to take part in imaginative play at different times of the day. This has a positive impact not only on the children's speaking and listening skills but also on their personal, social and emotional development as they learn to share ideas and equipment and understand the need to work productively on a task they have been set. Pupils are managed very well and learning support assistants and other visiting assistants are used very effectively. Their work is carefully guided by the teacher ensuring that the support the children receive is consistent. Good progress has been made since the last inspection in developing the school's facilities for the children to learn through the use of outside play activities. The outside play area is used well at many different times of the day and the quality of the learning resources is good, which helps to maintain the children's interest and enthusiasm in their day-to-day learning.
60. The curriculum is very well planned for the children. Much of their learning is pitched very carefully at their levels of interest and effective reference is made to the national guidance given to schools to help plan learning for children of this age. Work is often planned in themes such as 'Teddy Bears' and the teacher is effective in ensuring that the children's experiences in one theme are successfully reinforced across a range of activities. Stories involving 'teddy bears', for example, are often used as a basis for communication, language and literacy work but much of the children's mathematical or creative learning will then centre around the use of bears. Where possible, the teacher makes effective use of the local community and various visitors who are often invited into the school to talk to the children about the work that they do. This helps to broaden the children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
61. There are effective links with the parents of the children some of whom assist in the classroom at different points of the week. The teacher prior to the children formally starting

school regularly makes both formal and informal contacts with them that include home visits. Many parents appreciate the time and effort that the staff put into such work and this helps to ensure that for most children starting at the school is smooth and unobtrusive. The quality of the provision in the Foundation Stage is very much a strength of the school and the children are very well prepared to commence the more formal aspects of the National Curriculum when they enter Year 1.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. As a result of the very good teaching, children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and by the end of the Foundation Stage reach standards in line with the Early Learning Goals. Many children enter the school with below average levels of attainment in this area of their learning. The teacher plans very effectively to provide the children with regular opportunities where they can play and interact purposefully and creatively with one another. Good use is made of imaginative play in this respect. The children respond very well to such opportunities and by the end of the Foundation Stage play and share equipment sensibly and effectively. They understand well, for example, the need to use aprons when taking part in clay or painting activities and many of the children can put these on and replace them after use ready for their classmates to use. Good encouragement is given to the children to dress themselves for physical education, although many of them need support in getting ready for such activities and ensuring that their clothes are placed in a neat pile ready to put back on after physical education work. The high expectations of the teacher for the children to work effectively with others and only to seek the assistance of another adult as a last resort, effectively ensure that many of the children develop good skills in working independently and persevering on the work that they are set. The children have good attitudes to their learning and levels of co-operation are high. The children are well prepared for their age to work independently by the time they enter Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

63. Although the children make good progress in the development of their early communication, language and literacy skills, attainment is below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the time the children enter Year 1. Teaching, however, is very good and is particularly successful in encouraging the children's early confidence in developing their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. The teacher makes very careful notes and annotations when assessing the children's progress and this information is used extensively both to plan their subsequent learning and to keep a close check on their progress.
64. The teacher provides the children with frequent and well-planned opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. The creatively developed role-play area features very prominently in the children's day-to-day learning and the teacher makes good use of many opening sessions of daily lessons to develop the children's early speaking and listening skills. As a result, most children are confident in speaking aloud to a member of a wider group but not all of them are aware of the need to listen effectively to what their classmates may be saying. Some, for example, call out without permission but this is often because they are eager to learn.
65. Children make good progress in their early understanding of reading, but attainment is below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Higher-attaining children recognise the main features of a book and know the difference between an author and an illustrator. Most children understand that books contain words formed from the letters of the alphabet which most children recognise and can say. Children are given good support by the adults who support them in their reading and are successfully developing their understanding of simple phonics to help them read the words on a page and gain a simple understanding of what the

book may be about. Books of different types feature prominently in the organisation of the classroom which children are encouraged to pick up and browse through at many different points of the day. This proves highly successful in developing many of the children's positive habits and early enthusiasm for reading as a pleasurable activity.

66. It is in the development of the children's writing, where the progress made by the children is less significant, despite the teacher's emphasis on promoting the children's skills in this area of their learning. Good emphasis is given, for example, to developing the children's co-ordination skills in holding a pencil correctly and using this to form simple letters and words. Most children, however, by the end of the Foundation Stage are still at the stage of copying the writing that an adult lays out for them, although greater proficiency and accuracy are achieved in how they do this by the time they enter Year 1. Higher-attaining children can write their own names and construct simple sentences using full stops and capital letters correctly.

Mathematical development

67. Good progress is made by children in their understanding and use of a range of mathematical ideas and by time they are to enter Year 1, they are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals in this area of their learning. Teaching is very good and is very much rooted in providing the children with a good range of everyday mathematical equipment to develop and consolidate their understanding of key concepts. The children's learning is very well planned with good use being made of other areas of learning such as the creative work that the children undertake to support their understanding of mathematics. This enables the children to develop their understanding of larger and smaller thus aiding their mathematical development at the same time.
68. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children recognise the numbers and can count to ten. Most can write the numbers in the correct order. Higher-attaining children are supported well and can count to and back from twenty using a suitable number line. In addition, they recognise a number that may be one before or after a given number and with support the children are able to solve very simple addition problems using pencil and paper methods. Good use is made by the teacher of the classroom practical area to support the children's learning. By using play doh to roll 'teddy bear' shapes, for example, the children successfully develop their understanding of concepts such as 'longer' and 'shorter' or 'thick' and 'thin'. Good use is made of the sand and water areas and the children make satisfactory progress in their understanding of concepts such as 'full' or 'empty'. By discussing with the children their general day-to-day routines, the teacher successfully develops the children's understanding of 'night' and 'day' and children are able to recognise the days of the week and that weeks become months. Children have a satisfactory understanding of two-dimensional shapes and can point out the different mathematical shapes that may be seen in their classroom.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. Children make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. Teaching is very good and is successful in extending the children's awareness of the world around them. Children in their understanding of the passage of time make good progress. By making good use of books such as 'My Baby Sister' the children successfully develop their understanding of what babies need, what they wear, that they need food, rest and exercise in order to grow and as they do so, their needs change. The children's birthdays are celebrated as a class and this helps to ensure that the children understand that people do grow older with each passing birthday and that these are celebrated each year. Children in their understanding that there are other living creatures in the world make equally good progress. They know that smaller creatures such as ants, spiders and ladybirds inhabit the world and that they need water, food and a place to live in order to thrive. They understand well that some of these creatures are to be seen more often depending on the season of the year. The children have a good understanding that plants and flowers such as sunflowers are living things and that the effectiveness of their growth very much depends on the amount of sunlight or water they have access to.
70. The children are given good opportunities to explore at an appropriate level the customs of different religions. They know, for example, that Christmas is a special time of the year and are able to recall at a basic level why this time of the year is so remembered. Although children have been introduced to the festivals of other religions, they have a limited ability to recall and remember what they have learned.
71. There is further progress to make in terms of the children's understanding and use of information and communication technology equipment to support their learning. They are provided with sufficient opportunities to listen to commercial tapes through using a tape recorder and this successfully develops their understanding that information and communication technology is not just about computers. In addition, increasing use is made of the school's digital camera to take photos of the work that the children are doing and this successfully develops the children's perception of how cameras can be connected to computers and images taken. However, pupils' progress is slowed owing to the age and condition of the classroom based computers as well as some of the accompanying software. This is quite old and although it is used to develop the children's co-ordination skills, for example, through using a mouse when drawing a simple graphic, the slow response time of the machine hinders the pupils' progress.

Physical development

72. By the time they enter Year 1, the children achieve the Early Learning Goals in their physical development. The children make good progress in this area of their learning and teaching is very good. The teacher makes particularly good use of the facilities outside the classroom and is creative in how these are organised in order to support the children's learning. Good use is made of the additional playground space for further physical development work. Each week children participate in what is fondly known to the children as the 'Wheelie Wednesday'. This is where the children are allowed to bring in their own bikes and the children take part in various well-planned activities designed to boost their confidence in using this equipment. As a result, the children are quite capable of moving around safely in a given space and are mindful of the space that others use. When taking part in physical education lessons in the school hall, the children use the space quite creatively and demonstrate sufficient skill in putting together a simple sequence of movement when listening to a piece of music and subsequent instructions. They can tip-toe around the hall floor showing a developing sense of control and co-ordination and they are suitably developing the ability to listen and effectively work with a partner. Children make good

progress in terms of the development of their fine motor skills using a smaller range of tools and equipment. Most children, for example, are able to use scissors and glue with a fair degree of dexterity and co-ordination when asked to do so.

Creative development

73. Children make good progress and by the end of the Foundation Stage achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area of their learning. Teaching is very good and ensures that the children receive rich opportunities to develop the creative elements of their learning while in the Foundation Stage. The children regularly take part in imaginative play as well as participating in singing activities and using a wide and interesting range of materials in order to promote their understanding of early art and design techniques. Children are taught well to mix paints and their ability to draw and apply paint is good. Much of the children's learning is effectively planned through a range of different themes during the course of an academic year and this gives them scope to learn a different range of skills in relation to their creative development. The current theme of 'Teddy Bears' enables the teacher to provide the children with scope to use play-doh to make different sized shapes of 'bears'. At the same time, children are given good scope to experiment with a range of different paints and to apply these when painting pictures of bears. Children very much enjoy taking part in creative play such as playing and re-enacting the parts 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. Children are provided with good opportunities to take part in singing simple songs and rhymes and they very much enjoy experimenting with a range of untuned instruments, some of which they identify and can name.

ENGLISH

74. In the National Curriculum tests in 2002, standards in reading and writing were well below average at the end of Year 2. When compared with similar schools, standards were also well below average. Inspection findings indicate that at the end of both Year 2 and Year 4 standards are below average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Taking into account their prior attainment pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress in Year 1 and Year 2, and good progress in Year 3 and Year 4. The weaknesses in the pupils' performances have been analysed, and the school has carefully evaluated what needs to be done to improve pupils' learning in English. As a result, standards have improved. At the time of the school's previous inspection, standards at the end of Year 2 were well below average in all areas of work, and weaknesses were also noted in many other aspects such as teaching, assessment, resources and leadership. These shortcomings have been largely rectified, and, as a result, very significant overall improvements have been made in the subject since the previous inspection.
75. By the end of Year 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average. Pupils sit quietly during lessons, whilst listening to their teacher reading stories or giving instructions. However, their lack of language skills means that a number of pupils do not always understand clearly what they have been told. When given the opportunity, a minority of pupils speak clearly and confidently, and these pupils feel able to provide extended answers and comments. The majority of pupils, however, speak either in single words or in short phrases, lacking the vocabulary or the confidence to express themselves at length. By Year 4, standards in speaking and listening are below average. Most pupils listen carefully, and then clearly demonstrate their understanding by responding to questions. However, a small number of pupils find it difficult to listen and maintain their concentration for any length of time. A number of pupils demonstrate their speaking ability by producing answers and observations confidently and concisely. A significant minority of pupils, however, are not keen to speak, finding it difficult to explain themselves clearly.

76. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in reading are below average. A good minority of pupils read their texts accurately, sometimes introducing suitable expression into their reading, and confidently explaining what they have read. A number of pupils read their books successfully, but with little expression or fluency. Other pupils read individual words, but have some difficulty in reading the full text. Most pupils have appropriate phonic skills that enable them to attempt to read words that they do not know. Some of these pupils, however, have limited word comprehension, so that even when they read a portion of text correctly, they are unable to explain clearly the meaning of what they have read. By Year 4, pupils' reading skills, overall, are below average. A good number of pupils read accurately, with some producing most suitable expression into their work. In talking about what they have read, these pupils make appropriate reference to characters and events in their books. Other pupils, however, still find reading difficult, finding it hard to pronounce all the words and to introduce suitable intonation into their work. Many pupils are, however, now able to use contents and index pages to help them find information in reference books.
77. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in writing are below those expected. Many pupils write portions of text, including stories, news and poems. A significant majority, however, do not use capital letters and full-stops consistently correctly or independently, to add structure to their writing. Many pupils find spelling difficult, but the majority usually produce spellings of simple words that are phonetically acceptable. Pupils' handwriting skills are reasonably sound, although a number of pupils produce letters that are sometimes incorrectly formed and variable in size. However, a small minority of pupils are now starting to join their letters in a neatly produced script. By Year 4, pupils' writing standards are below average. Most pupils produce both factual and imaginative writing, often producing work of some length. However, pupils are sometimes inconsistent with their use of punctuation, and many pupils find difficulty introducing enough variety and imagination into their vocabulary to improve the quality of their writing significantly. Higher attaining pupils, though, often produce work that is interesting and thoughtful. A number of pupils join their letters in a clear and neat handwriting style, although a significant minority of pupils often revert to printing, especially when not doing their 'best work'. Others, whilst they join their letters, tend to show wide variation in the quality of the work produced. Many pupils have difficulties with their spelling, but most are becoming increasingly confident in using dictionaries to help them improve this skill.
78. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Year 1 and Year 2, and good in Year 3 and Year 4. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers now have a good subject knowledge overall. Lessons are suitably planned and organised, with teachers carefully following the requirements of the national literacy strategy. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to listen to stories and various forms of instruction, and they make good use of intonation in their voices, as well as humour, to help maintain pupils' interest. Where teaching is good, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to speak at length and develop their speaking skills, for example, by making particularly good use of questioning. In other lessons, however, teachers do not always provide pupils with enough chances to speak, tending to ask questions that only require one or two word answers.
79. Teachers are now most careful to provide appropriate reading books for pupils, and all pupils have books suitable to their needs. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Detailed records are kept of the books read, and pupils are regularly provided with new ones. Most of these books are interesting, and this is contributing to the progress that pupils are now making. Pupils are provided with appropriate opportunities to read, and most suitable support and teachers, learning support assistants and parent helpers, provide encouragement. Pupils are usually keen to read, and even when they find the text difficult most are prepared to tackle the words presented.

80. Teachers throughout the school provide an appropriate range of writing activities and opportunities for their pupils, during lessons both in English and in other subjects, such as history, geography and religious education. However, on occasions too long is spent on the introduction to the lesson, which limits the time available for pupils to tackle their writing activities. Pupils respond appropriately to the opportunities provided, in all aspects of the subject, and they make at least satisfactory gains in their knowledge and skills. Where teaching is good, lessons are brisk in pace, pupils are provided with clear advice about improving their work, pupils work well for extended periods, and they are able to make good progress. Good relationships are developed between teachers and pupils throughout the school, and teachers provide appropriate support during lessons. In this they are helped well by the learning support assistants. Pupils' attitudes to English are good, and sometimes very good. Most work well on their own, and in groups when required, and they generally persevere with the work set. A number of pupils are keen to produce a neat and careful standard of presentation in their books, but a significant number take less care, in particular showing some inconsistency in their work and teachers' expectations of how pupils formally record their work are too low, particularly for higher-attaining pupils. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but they do not always provide clear advice to pupils about improving their work. In particular, they tend to be too generous with their praise, especially in relation to presentation. Limited use is currently made of homework, to provide pupils with further opportunities to practise and develop their skills.
81. The school uses the National Literacy framework as its scheme of work, and all the various aspects of work are suitably covered. Appropriate plans are produced by staff, but whilst suitable allowance is regularly made for the needs of lower attaining pupils, the same does not always apply in relation to the needs of higher-attaining pupils. The co-ordinator is well informed, and she provides appropriate support to her colleagues when it is requested. Through studying samples of pupils' work she has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in that work. She also has the opportunity to monitor the work being tackled by pupils in their classrooms. Her leadership is good, and she has made an important contribution to the improvement in standards now being seen. A good, and much improved, range of assessment procedures is in place, with teachers keeping a variety of information about each pupil's performance. The information which is recorded is used effectively to identify pupils' current attainment and the progress they have made. It is also used to help the planning of appropriate future work for average and lower attaining pupils. It is used less well for the others. Good use is now made of other curricular subjects to help develop pupils' literacy skills. Pupils are provided with some opportunities to use computers to word-process their work, but the lack of such opportunities for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 restricts their learning. Pupils are also provided with opportunities to use the library and the current provision and quality of books is good and much improved since the time of the last inspection. The subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. During their writing activities, suitable opportunities are sometimes provided for pupils to develop their spiritual understanding. A particularly good example of this arose in Year 4, where pupils were asked to reflect on, and write about, their thoughts about living through the Blitz.

MATHEMATICS

82. The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 show the pupils' attainment in mathematics to be well below average when compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools. The tests also show that the number of pupils achieving the higher level at age seven (level 3) was well below average. This is because there is some lack of challenge in the work planned for the higher attaining pupils and they are not

achieving as well as they should. Inspection evidence shows that, for the pupils who are currently in Year 2 and Year 4 standards are below the national average for their age group. These standards are not as high as they were at the time of the last inspection but the school is coming out of a very unsettled period and standards are now beginning to rise. This is mainly due to the improved quality of teaching and the more settled staffing situation.

83. The pupils make satisfactory progress overall with some good progress made by the pupils in Year 4. The good level of support provided for the pupils who have special educational needs means that they make good progress as they move through the school. Over the three years since 2000, the school's results show that the boys have achieved slightly better than the girls but from the scrutiny of work and lessons observed during the inspection there is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.
84. By the age of seven the pupils know and can use the vocabulary of number successfully and they confidently use terms such as digit, tens, difference and subtract. The majority of the pupils can count in tens, twos and fives but their skills in doing so are not quick and they lack confidence when undertaking such work. The pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 use number fans to slowly learn and to reinforce their understanding of addition and subtraction facts. They know how to create their own addition and subtraction sums using numbers up to and beyond 20 and they can apply these skills when working with money. The Year 2 pupils know how to subtract numbers up to one hundred using number lines and by counting on but few, including higher-attaining pupils are confident in solving number problems beyond 100. The average and higher attaining pupils have a sound knowledge of place value up to 100 and, when comparing two two-digit numbers, can explain that the bigger number has the higher tens digit. Almost all of the pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of a range of common two and three-dimensional shapes and the Year 1 pupils are beginning to understand and use the vocabulary of shape when they speak of 'faces', 'edges' and 'surfaces'. The pupils are generally able to handle data and to answer simple questions from information on a block graph.
85. By the age of nine and by the time pupils leave the school, most of them work confidently with numbers in the thousands and are beginning to use different methods of calculation for addition and subtraction as well as simple multiplication and division. The higher attaining Year 4 pupils can explain the processes used in their calculations. For example, 'Sixty is an even number so it must be in the 2 times table. Also, 10×2 is 20 and 60 is 3×20 .' When completing work on thermometer scales some of the Year 4 pupils are beginning to understand and use negative numbers and their work shows that they can use and apply their learning to solve problems. Almost all of the Year 3 and Year 4 pupils recognise number relationships and number patterns but many of them do not recall multiplication tables and number facts sufficiently quickly for this to either improve their mental skills or the general pace of their learning. Additionally, information and communication technology in mathematics is used mainly when the pupils are handling data to produce graphs and charts. It is currently under-used as a tool for learning in other areas of mathematics.
86. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory overall. During the inspection the teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching and this represents a good improvement since the last inspection. In all the lessons, the teachers and the pupils are quite clear about what is to be learned. Deadlines for completion of the work and the effective use of open-ended questions are other good features of some lessons. In the best lessons the teachers build well on the pupils' previous learning in order to extend it further, and this results in some good progress being made. In a very good lesson with the Year 4 pupils the teacher used progressively challenging examples to ensure that all the ability groups within the class could take part and maximise their learning. She also used the whiteboard effectively to present a clear explanation of where the decimal point goes when

separating pence and pounds that reinforced the pupils' learning and helped them to complete their tasks successfully. The teacher brought the group together to assess learning and to reinforce the pupils' understanding through the good use of questions and the sharing of strategies and methods of calculation. Almost all of the teachers use the plenary session well to praise the pupils for their efforts as well as to share, reinforce and assess the learning that has taken place.

87. Where teaching is not as good, the mental, oral session does not move at a sufficiently brisk pace in order to improve and sharpen the pupils' rapid recall of number facts, tables and counting skills and learning for the more able pupils is sometimes affected by a lack of sufficiently challenging activities. More complex questions targeted specifically at this group and additional work to stimulate and stretch them would enable them to achieve more. In some classes, teachers' expectations of the quality and the quantity of the pupils' recorded work are too low. The work in many books is untidily set out and some is frequently unfinished.
88. All the teachers have received training in the numeracy strategy and throughout the school, lessons are well planned and effectively taught. The teachers assess the pupils each half term and also use national test material at the end of each year. There is good leadership and management of the subject. The headteacher and the co-ordinator analyse the results of National Curriculum and other tests carefully in order to track groups of pupils, to set year-group and whole school targets and to identify areas for improvement. They readily acknowledge that standards still need to rise at a faster pace and that the pupils' speed and facility in recalling basic number facts and tables needs to be consistently taught and reinforced. All the pupils have individual learning targets and these are shared with parents. However, the quality of the marking of the pupils' work is variable and not all of the comments are sufficiently valuable in informing the pupils of what they must do to improve further. Both the headteacher and the co-ordinator have monitored teaching and learning in the subject and, together with a more stable and consistent quality of teaching, this should help to secure further improvements in standards.

SCIENCE

89. The 2002 end of Year 2 teacher assessments indicated that attainment was in line with the national average and average when compared with similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that standards are below expectations at the end Year 2. While pupils make satisfactory progress in terms of developing their knowledge and understanding there are too few opportunities provided by teachers that allow pupils to develop their skills of scientific enquiry and pupils make unsatisfactory progress in this aspect of their scientific learning. In Year 3 and Year 4, progress is good and pupils are on course to reach standards in line with expectations by the time they leave the school. Teaching, particularly in Year 4 is good and pupils are given greater scope to take more initiative and to take on more responsibility in setting up their own investigations and to pursue their own lines of scientific enquiry. Standards are broadly the same as those noted at the time of the last inspection, which were below the national average. The most recent focus within the school has been to raise pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. The headteacher is aware of the need to raise standards in science and ensure that the progress of all pupils, particularly those who demonstrate the capacity to be challenged more, is greater.
90. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a basic understanding of electricity and know that although this can be dangerous it is necessary in order to make many everyday items in the home operate. Few pupils can draw a simple circuit and explain clearly how the circuit actually works in making a light bulb operate. Pupils know that certain materials such as water can

be changed to ice and back again while for other materials such as toast the change cannot be reversed. The pupils' generally weak ability to remember what they have learned makes it difficult for them to recall and retain vocabulary often associated with their science work such as 'irreversible.' Pupils have a more secure understanding of other living creatures. The good use of the school grounds and the well-developed pond make a good contribution to pupils' understanding of living things. They know that a pond serves as a home to creatures such as frogs and other mini-beasts and that other creatures have babies that grow into adults. The weakest feature of pupils' attainment is their ability to conduct open-ended investigations and their development of appropriate vocabulary often associated with such work. Few pupils, including higher-attaining pupils, can explain clearly what is meant by a 'fair-test' and what is likely to happen to the validity of such a test if some of the variables when undertaking such work are changed.

91. Pupils make more rapid progress in Year 3 and Year 4 and by the end of Year 4 standards are in line with national expectations. By exploring conductors and insulators, pupils understand that materials such as copper and iron are good conductors of electricity. Pupils have a basic understanding of how to separate materials using sieves and they can give good examples of the sorts of materials that are man made and which are natural such as different types of rocks. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of forces and they know, for example, that friction is an example of a force that is used to slow down moving objects. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to undertake investigation work which gets more detailed and challenging as the academic year progresses.
92. The quality of teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 is satisfactory and in Year 3 and Year 4 it is good. One of the main reasons for the dissimilarity in teaching quality is due to the expectations of teachers. At Key Stage 2 these are noticeably higher than at Key Stage 1. This is to be seen in what pupils formally record in their science books. At Key Stage 1, there are sometimes large gaps in terms of the number of weeks between pupils formally recording their work. In addition, at Key Stage 1 higher-attaining pupils are often presented with the same work as that for other pupils and as a result, they do not make the progress of which they are capable. In all lessons, however, work is made interesting for pupils and this helps to build on the high levels of interest many demonstrate for the subject. Teachers make good use of interactive displays that encourage pupils to pick up and explore natural artefacts and this makes a positive contribution to their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Lessons are well organised. In one Year 1 lesson seen during the inspection, for example, the teacher provided the pupils with a good range of everyday objects including cheese graters, toothpaste, and potato mashers and allowed them to explore whether a pull or push is exerted when using these. Such activities allowed the pupils to build on their early knowledge and understanding of forces and allowed them to gain a clear understanding of how the concept of a force is to be witnessed in their everyday actions. A further feature of the good teaching often seen at Key Stage 2 is the increased use of computers to support pupils' learning. As part of a topic on the habitats of living creatures, the Year 4 teacher provided pupils with good scope to explore a branching database where the pupils had to answer questions in order to work out which mini-beast they were exploring. Throughout the school, the quality of teachers' marking does not currently provide pupils with clear and further guidance on how they may improve their work. In addition, some pupils' presentation is somewhat untidy and spoils the overall quality of their efforts. Higher expectations by teachers of the pupils in this regard could help to lift the quality of pupils' work further.
93. The headteacher is currently the co-ordinator for the subject, one of a number of co-ordinating roles she carries in the school. The overall leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and the headteacher has a clear grasp of what still needs to be achieved to boost attainment. This includes ensuring that all teachers make greater use of assessment information in order to plan what pupils are to learn and increasing the role of

parents in supporting their children in their learning of science. Given the demands on the headteacher's time needed to strengthen other aspects of what the school provides, there has been little monitoring of teaching and learning in order to get a clear picture of what is working well in one class in order to improve learning in another. There is scope, for example, for the subject to make more of a contribution to the pupils' literacy development. Resources are satisfactory and there is a good range of books in the school library about various science topics that are used to good effect by teachers in terms of how they are displayed. Pupils use these regularly to browse and this has a positive impact on their literacy development.

ART AND DESIGN

94. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve standards that are in line with national expectations. By the end of Year 4, standards are above expectations. At both key stages, this represents good progress since the previous inspection when standards were below those expected for pupils aged seven and nine. Since her appointment to the school, the headteacher who has a strong interest in art and design, has rigorously tackled the shortcomings identified in the previous report. This has resulted in considerably raising the status of the subject throughout the school. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2, progress is good. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all the art work that is planned and they make similar progress to that of their classmates.
95. By the end of Year 2, pupils are provided with a suitable range of learning experiences to develop their skills and understanding in the subject. They are provided with a range of everyday objects to observe closely in order to develop their drawing skills. These include observing closely bicycles and to try and realistically draw what they see. However, despite such opportunities pupils' drawing skills are below expectations by the end of Year 2 and few understand how to apply pencil techniques such as shade and tone in order to improve the quality of their drawings. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to produce art work using printing techniques and they have a good understanding for their age of how art work can be produced using salt dough in order to make simple structures. Pupils are introduced to the work of a wide range of different artists which is used well as a stimulus to develop the pupils' understanding of how different artists use and apply a range of different paints and techniques in producing art work. However, the pupils have difficulty recalling and remembering what artists they have studied and this limits their progress in this area of their learning. Their learning of how information and communication technology and art and design can be used to generate art is also weakened by the too few opportunities for pupils to exercise their skills using computers during the course of everyday lessons.
96. In Year 3 and Year 4, pupils make more rapid gains in their learning. By the time they leave the school, they use computers and associated software to design simple pictures in order to produce Mother's Day cards. Pupils have well-developed drawing skills and they are provided with a good range of natural and man made objects in order to practise and refine these skills. For example, by looking carefully at daffodils, pupils used a range of oil pastels to good purpose resulting in realistic drawings of the daffodils. The pupils' learning of art and design is often creatively planned to enable them to develop certain artistic skills at the same time. Year 3 pupils, for example, were recently encouraged to listen to the work of Debussy in music and then draw lines and simple pictures in response to how the music made them feel. The teachers, to promote pupils' understanding of sculpture, have recently used the concept of 'Chairs' as a stimulus for this. Pupils were given good scope to look at the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh and explored the styles and materials he often used in making furniture. Pupils were then given the opportunity to explore the style, shape and form of a range of everyday chairs and then drew simple drawings of their observations. These were

then used to construct their own chairs using Plaster of Paris. In addition, pupils were encouraged to explore a range of sculpture from other more traditional artists such as the statue of 'David' by Michelangelo or 'The Thinker' by Rodin to that of more modern artists such as the 'Two Women Reclining' by Henry Moore. Such work results in pupils making good progress in their learning of the stages that work in art has to go through before settling on the final creation.

97. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. The headteacher undertakes most of the teaching in both key stages and has a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject. She effectively plans work that pupils find interesting and this results in pupils, who are highly motivated in lessons, producing work that reflects their ability. Good links are made with other subjects in order to reinforce pupils' learning of artistic techniques. In science, for example, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are currently exploring 'mini-beasts'. To develop their understanding further, the teacher gives the pupils good scope to use the school's grounds to observe and sketch a range of insects with a view to using these to make carve moulds of the creatures into which Plaster of Paris was poured in order to create a simple sculpture. Lessons are well organised and pupils are provided with a good variety of tools and equipment to produce their work. Although teaching is much improved since the previous inspection, the greater use of sketch books and information and communication technology equipment, particularly in Key Stage 2 offers the potential to speed up the pace of pupils' learning still further.
98. There is good leadership and management of the subject. The newly devised policy, for example, provides a clear view of how the subject is to be planned and the school has effectively implemented national guidance to help with the planning of pupils' learning. However, further work needs to be undertaken in respect of assessing pupils' progress in the subject. At present, the ways in which this is done are very informal and would make it difficult for a teacher new to the school to get a clear idea of the exact stage of pupils' progress and where to pitch subsequent work. Much of the pupils' work is prominently displayed adding further to the status of the subject. The increased status that the subject holds in the school has ensured that art and design adds much to the pupils' spiritual, social, moral, cultural as well as their personal development as they have, for example, explored the works of artists from other countries.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

99. Standards in design and technology are below expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 and progress for the majority of the pupils, including those with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. The subject has not had a sufficiently high profile over recent times and together with frequent staff changes this means that the required skills and knowledge have not been taught consistently and progressively as the pupils move through the school. For example, there is no planned introduction to an increasing range of tools and the pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to evaluate and modify their designs do not show year-on-year improvement. Standards have not been maintained since the last inspection when they were judged to be generally satisfactory.
100. The pupils in Year 1 have investigated hinges and show some understanding of the need to allow movement in two directions. However, there is little evidence of their learning being applied to models. Similarly, by the end of Year 2 the pupils have too little an understanding of what needs to be done to move from their first ideas into making a finished article. For example, their books show ideas and designs for a house but there is no evidence of their learning being extended to producing an actual model. In Year 3, the pupils begin to apply their limited skills and knowledge as they design and make monsters from boxes. They

show a satisfactory understanding of pneumatics as they devise ways to make their monster move. This involves the use of syringes, balloons and plastic bottles to make the lid of the box rise. They can draw diagrams of the project with clear labels and their work generally shows some skill in evaluating how their designs could be improved. In the main, however, standards in this aspect of their work are below expectations. As part of an art and design project the Year 4 pupils made models of chairs in the style of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Their work shows detailed planning and evaluations that reveal problems and subsequent modifications.

101. In the one lesson observed during the inspection the quality of the teaching was good. The teacher was enthusiastic and motivated the pupils well. The main learning objectives were clearly explained to them and the teacher built well on the pupils' existing knowledge of fabric, joins and seams. However, such teaching is the exception rather than the norm. Because of the school-wide inconsistencies in the teaching and learning of the subject and the pupils' unsatisfactory attainment, teaching over time is judged to be unsatisfactory overall. While some links are made by teachers in developing links with other subjects, such as art and design, these are too few. Too limited use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils in their learning of the subject and at present the school has yet to develop effective ways to monitor and use the information to build on pupils' progress as they move through the school.
102. In some areas of design and technology there is a lack of teacher confidence and expertise and this adversely affects the pupils' progress and the standards they achieve. For example, the elements of the curriculum involving components, systems and control are not being covered in sufficient depth.
103. The impact of leadership and management over time has been unsatisfactory. Current planning for design and technology is based on the national guidelines and the school does plan to cover all the required elements of the National Curriculum programmes of study. There is an action plan for the subject and the school is planning to produce a new policy for the subject. However, staff changes and limited time given to the subject mean that the targets for action have not been fully addressed and shared across the school. Resources for the subject are unsatisfactory with insufficient tools, wheels, motors and construction kits, which would support effective teaching and learning in the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

104. Standards in geography by the age of seven and nine are broadly in line with those expected nationally and the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection in 2001.
105. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 1 and enjoy following the travels of 'Barnaby Bear' and the pupils learn about different methods of travel as they plan his journey to France. They identify items needed when travelling and can apply this knowledge in discussions about holidays and why people travel. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a secure understanding of the features of the local area and compare these with life in different locations such as the imaginary Isle of Struay or the village of Tocuaro in Mexico. They are beginning to learn geographical facts and skills by comparing and contrasting the different features of each location and have a satisfactory understanding of the similarities and differences of life in areas other than their own. For example, in the different modes of travel, where people work and the types of houses they live in. They show some awareness of places beyond their own locality but for some of the lower and average attaining pupils this is

generally limited. By the end of Year 4, the majority of pupils have a satisfactory understanding of why symbols are used on maps and can identify some of these when exploring a map. Most of the pupils are able to identify the countries that make up the British Isles and give examples of the major cities that are to be found there. They can also identify some of the physical and human features of the area around the school and the work of the higher attaining pupils shows a sound understanding of how environments can change or be changed, and not always for the better. In Year 4, the pupils compare and contrast life in St Lucia with their own locality. The pupils' work in geography is suitably enriched through visits to places of interest.

106. The quality of teaching at both key stages is satisfactory. Teachers have satisfactory geographical knowledge and they ensure that the pupils become familiar with and use the correct geographical vocabulary when undertaking geography work. Teachers' planning shows that appropriate emphasis is given to teaching the required skills and knowledge. In the main, pupils are encouraged to participate in discussion and teachers are successful in developing pupils' understanding of how the geographical features of a country impact on the lifestyles of the people concerned. In some instances at Key Stage 2, however, some challenging behaviour of a significant minority of pupils can impact the flow of teaching. This slows the pace of the lessons and restricts the learning for the pupils. Teaching quality is further weakened by the too low expectations teachers generally have of pupils in terms of how they present their work. This can be somewhat scrappy and mars the overall quality of their work.
107. Planning is based on the national guidelines and this ensures that all the elements of the geography curriculum are covered. The co-ordinator monitors the teachers' planning regularly and is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning in the subject. Most of the priorities of the subject action plan have been addressed but as yet, there has been no observation and evaluation of teaching. The co-ordinator has looked at ways of assessing the pupils' achievements in geography but formal, end of topic assessments of skills and knowledge are not in place. This makes it difficult for teachers to get a clear idea of the precise stage of pupils' progress in the subject making it difficult to plan what pupils need to do next in order to move on in their learning. Resources for the subject are satisfactory but information and communication technology is not widely used to support the pupils' learning.

HISTORY

108. At the end of Year 2 and Year 4, levels of attainment in history are in line with those expected nationally and progress for the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. This is an improved picture of attainment from the time of the previous inspection when standards by the end of Year 4 were below those expected of pupils of a similar age nationally.
109. Work in the pupils' books reveals only a limited amount of recorded work this academic year. However, discussions with the pupils reveal that they have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding about the past gained through the examination of old toys and the comparison of household items such as cookers and irons. By the end of Year 2, pupils show that they are beginning to understand how we find out about the past through sources of evidence such as letters, diaries, books and pictures. For example, they recall learning from the letters of Florence Nightingale and the diaries of Samuel Pepys. When studying postcards, pictures and photographs of the 1950s almost all of the pupils can compare life then with life as it is now and use the detail in the photographs as clues and can express their opinions orally as

to why certain elements may have been as they were. For example, several of the pupils are able to discuss and compare train and car travel as well as types of holiday accommodation.

110. By the end of Year 4, almost all of the pupils have an enthusiasm for their work in history and are keen to talk about what they know. They have a satisfactory understanding about aspects of life in Victorian times and some good links are made with geography when they learn about the ancient Egyptians and the significance of the River Nile. The pupils also learn about life in Britain during World War II and their writing about how they might feel during an air raid reveals sound insight and understanding into the problems experienced by people at that time. Interviewing and listening to someone who was a child during the war years further enhance their knowledge and understanding of this topic.
111. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. Where teaching is very good such as in the lesson seen in Year 4 during the inspection, the teacher successfully built on the pupils' existing knowledge and used questions well to help them to articulate their thoughts and feelings about war. She praised their efforts in planning suitable questions and the pupils responded very well and were interested and excited by the first hand memories recalled by their visitor. The quality of the teaching is less successful when the pupils are listening for too long and are not actively taking part in a task to reinforce or support their learning. From the scrutiny of work, it is evident that the teachers' expectations of the standard of presentation of the pupils' written work could be higher.
112. Work in history is planned according to national guidelines and includes all the elements of the National Curriculum programmes of study. The co-ordinator is conscientious and leads the subject well. She has carried out a scrutiny of work in the pupils' books and has worked alongside colleagues in order to evaluate teaching and learning. The information from her observations forms the basis of the priorities of the subject action plan. This includes developing the school's procedures for assessing the pupils' progress, which are currently unsatisfactory thus making it difficult for teachers to plan what pupils need to undertake in order to build on their prior learning. If the action points in the plan are tackled and implemented then standards should rise further. The subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development as they learn for example, of some of the moral implications of war and the impact that this has on people. Resources for history are satisfactory with an adequate collection of artefacts, photographs, posters, books and videos.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

113. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards are below expectations. By the end of Year 4, the picture is more positive and standards are in line with expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs make unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, largely as a result of the too few opportunities to use computers to support their learning in daily lessons. At Key Stage 2, pupils are given greater scope to use computers in lessons and this ensures that their learning is more rapid resulting in pupils making satisfactory progress and reaching higher standards. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below expectations at both key stages. Good work has been undertaken since the previous inspection in raising teachers' understanding of how computers can be used to support learning. However, while the pupils benefit from the weekly use of the school's small computer suite, the lack of classroom-based machines has limited overall progress for pupils in Key Stage 1. Where resources in classrooms are better, such as in the Year 4 classroom, pupils make more significant progress.

114. By the end of Year 2, pupils have an unsatisfactory understanding of how to use computers to support them in their day-to-day literacy work. Few know how to use the features of a word-processor such as font styles or colours in order to change the appearance of their text. Pupils know how to save their work and can obtain a hard copy of their efforts without the assistance of an adult. However, pupils' general keyboard skills are slow and this further restricts the amount of work that pupils produce when working at the computers. Pupils have too limited access to the Internet or to use electronic compact disc software to support their reading and writing skills and this further limits their overall progress. Few, for example, can readily use the Internet to locate information and teachers make too little use of this tool to develop pupils' understanding of how computers can be used for research.
115. By the end of Year 4, pupils' understanding of how to use computers and their knowledge of how other forms of information and communication technology equipment impacts on their daily lives is much more secure. Pupils explain, for example, the benefits of mobile phone technology and appreciate well how mobile phones allow greater ease and flexibility in communicating with others. By the age of nine, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the use of icons when using software and they ably use the menu structure in order to move around the different layers of programs. They know how computers can be given simple instructions in order to perform simple tasks. The use of a logo computer program develops this understanding well and pupils can enter simple procedures to create particular mathematical shapes. Pupils are given some scope to use a word-processing package to support their literacy development but in the main, pupils' ability to use such software to support their learning in other subjects such as history and geography is insufficiently developed. The pupils' understanding of software and terminology associated with data bases is developing well and they use and explain clearly how such software can be used to enter, store, locate and retrieve the information entered. Weaker aspects of attainment include pupils' understanding of the Internet and how this can be used to support their day-to-day studies. At present, the school's facilities to enable the pupils to use this are too slow and often crash causing frustration for teachers and pupils alike. As a result, pupils' research and independent study skills using information and communication technology are not as developed as fully as they could be.
116. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory and at Key Stage 2 it is good. The training that staff have received since the previous inspection on raising their awareness of how computers can be used to support pupils' learning has ensured that their knowledge and understanding of different software is secure. However, at Key Stage 1 the pupils have too few opportunities to use computers in daily lessons to consolidate the skills they develop when they are taught in the school's computer suite. As this is generally on a once-a-week basis, the scope for pupils to consolidate this learning is limited. In addition, too few lesson plans highlight how information and communication technology can be used in individual lessons to support the pupils in their endeavours. In Key Stage 2 and in Year 4 in particular, pupils have more regular access to computers and this impacts positively on their attainment and confidence in using a range of software to support their learning. At Key Stage 2, teachers are generally more effective in identifying the possible links in other subjects to help move pupils on in their learning and plan activities that successfully achieve this. At both key stages, teachers make insufficient use of the Internet to support pupils' learning. The school experiences technical difficulties in accessing this and as a result, pupils get too few opportunities to use the Internet to support their everyday studies and develop independent study skills.
117. There is satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. The co-ordinator supports colleagues well and the status the subject holds has been much improved since the previous inspection. A newly devised policy provides clear guidance to the planned provision in the school and there has been successful adoption of the national guidance given to

schools to help plan pupils' learning as they move from class-to-class. To build on this recent good work, there is a need to ensure that each classroom has sufficient resources to allow pupils to consolidate what they learn in the computer suite. In addition, the school has yet to develop effective ways to assess pupils' progress in the subject as they move through the school. This makes it difficult to monitor and track the progress that pupils make in the subject and for teachers to plan effectively to build on what pupils already know with a view to moving them on a faster pace.

MUSIC

118. Standards by the end of both Year 2 and Year 4 are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. No difference was noted in the performance of boys and girls. Overall standards have been maintained since the time of the school's previous inspection.
119. By the end of Year 2, pupils readily sing a variety of songs, with satisfactory control over rhythm and pitch. They put suitable expression into their singing, they add suitable actions where appropriate and they perform well together. A small number of pupils are developing the confidence to sing a solo part when required. Pupils in Year 2 explore sounds, using an appropriate range of untuned percussion instruments and chime bars, and they confidently compose a short musical sequence, which they rehearse and then repeat for other members of their class. Pupils in Year 1 use a similar range of instruments to represent 'rain' and 'sun', which they then use to accompany their singing of 'Tiny Little Seed'. Pupils readily listen to music, and they can identify some of the instruments being used. By the end of Year 4, pupils sing a range of songs, showing satisfactory control over both breathing and diction. When singing, pupils keep together well, and they show suitable variation in both tempo and dynamics. Pupils readily perform their work from memory. Pupils in Year 3 confidently clap a variety of beats, and then successfully identify the correct notation involved. They readily produce an ostinato, and then successfully identify it in a piece of music that they hear. Pupils happily listen to a range of recorded music. Most have developed a sound musical vocabulary, and the majority are confident in using this to discuss the quality of the work that they hear. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
120. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with good examples also being seen during the inspection. Good use is currently being made of an advanced skills teacher, who is supporting the work of pupils in Year 3 in particular. Lessons are suitably planned, with an appropriate range of resources being provided for pupils to use. Pupils are generally kept busy, and this clearly benefits the learning they make. Just occasionally, the pace of the lesson slows, and this limits pupils' chances to participate. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory, with clear instruction and demonstration usually being provided. They also emphasise the correct musical terminology, and this helps pupils to understand the different features of their work. Teachers provide much help and encouragement, and this enables pupils to make satisfactory gains in their musical knowledge, understanding and skills. Pupils join in the activities with interest and pleasure, showing appropriate creative effort where required. Overall, their attitudes are good. They enjoy their music, singing well, playing instruments with enthusiasm and working well with other pupils when required. They are keen to listen to music, and many are able to offer opinions about what they hear. Pupils are appreciative of the work of other pupils, and they are quick to applaud their performances. Where teaching is good, the teachers' subject knowledge is secure, they provide a good variety of learning experiences, the pace of the lesson is brisk and pupils make good progress during the lesson.

121. The school has an appropriate scheme of work, based on government guidelines, and all areas of work are suitably covered. There is satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over the subject, and she is presently working alongside the headteacher. She is aware of the work being undertaken, but has not yet had the opportunity to observe work in other classes, to see for herself the standards being achieved. Few procedures are yet in place for assessing the work of pupils, with teachers only keeping informal notes on some aspects of individual pupil's work. However, a new procedure is being trialled' in Year 3, with a view to its introduction throughout the school. The school presently makes limited use of information and communication technology to enhance provision in the subject, although pupils in Year 3 have used computers to produce short pieces of music. The hearing of music from different countries helps to extend pupils' cultural development. As at the time of the last inspection, there is little extra-curricular provision for music. However, tuition is now available in the playing of brass instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

122. Standards by the end of both Year 2 and Year 4 are in line with national expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. No significant difference was noted in the performance of boys and girls. Standards are as they were at the time of the school's previous inspection.
123. By the end of Year 2, pupils move confidently around the hall, showing suitable awareness of space and other pupils. Pupils in Year 2 successfully travel on both hands and feet, demonstrating a variety of skips, jumps, hops and landings. They confidently balance on different parts of the body, showing appropriate stillness. They readily work with other pupils in carrying out their movements. Pupils in Year 1 successfully travel with a ball and they confidently pass it to a partner. Most show suitable accuracy in their passing and hitting. Pupils recognise the need to warm up for, and recover from exercise. By the end of Year 4, pupils successfully perform a range of gymnastic movements, such as jumps, turns and rolls, carrying out their movements both on the floor and on apparatus. Pupils in Year 3 readily produce a sequence of these movements. However, whilst all pupils carry out their movements correctly, some pupils do not yet introduce enough quality into their work. Pupils in Year 4 confidently develop their skills of running and throwing. Most pupils show appropriate techniques in their throwing activities. Pupils readily measure their performance and then attempt to improve on it. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 attend swimming lessons during the year. They all become confident in the water, and about 50 per cent of pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the end of the year.
124. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with good examples also being seen during the inspection. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers undertake sound planning, and they make good use of a suitable range of resources to help pupils develop their skills. Members of staff change appropriately for lessons, and they all join in and demonstrate for pupils. They have sound subject knowledge, and make suitable demands of the pupils' performance. Clear instruction is provided, and this allows all pupils to make satisfactory gains in their skills. Where teaching is good, and where pupils are kept particularly busy, and where skills are carefully coached, pupils make good progress in that lesson. Teachers are careful to involve everyone fully in the lessons, and through sympathetic use of groups, for example, all pupils play a full part and make suitable progress. Pupils usually join in appropriately, enjoying themselves and making a satisfactory physical effort. A small number of pupils, however, are sometimes inclined not to take the activities seriously. Lessons are generally conducted at a brisk pace, and teachers usually show good control and management skills, especially where a range of activities is being undertaken. Teachers often use pupils to demonstrate good practice, but, as at the time of the previous inspection, the chance is not always taken to discuss the quality of the work seen, which would help pupils identify the areas where they might improve themselves. Teachers and learning support assistants provide help and advice to pupils in all aspects of their work. They also emphasise the need for safety. In turn, pupils generally show good attitudes, usually work well alone and with a partner or group, and carry equipment carefully and safely.
125. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The school uses the government guidelines as the basis for its scheme of work, and all aspects of work are suitably covered during the year. Some evaluations are made of pupils' work, but the current procedures for assessment are informal and little information is available to help develop pupils' skills further. This shortcoming was also noted at the time of the last report, and procedures remain unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator is keen, and she supports her colleagues with advice when requested. Opportunities are also provided for some observations of lessons to take place, which helps her to identify some of the strengths and

weaknesses in pupils' work. Activities involving counting and measuring, especially in games and athletics lessons, give support to the school's initiative in numeracy. The involvement of pupils in a variety of team and group activities helps to develop their social skills. The school makes some arrangements for the provision of extra-curricular sporting activities, which involve both boys and girls.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

126. Standards by the end of both Year 2 and Year 4 are in line with those expected in the local Agreed Syllabus. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are now making good progress. No differences were noted between boys and girls. At the time of the previous inspection standards were reported to be below those expected. Significant improvements have been made since that time. During the current inspection no lessons were seen in Year 3 and Year 4. Judgements are made, therefore, after discussions with pupils and a study of their previous work.
127. By the end of Year 2, pupils are familiar with aspects of four major world faiths, the Christian, Hindu, Islamic and Jewish faiths. They are able to relate some of the stories of famous religious figures, such as those of Jesus and Mohammad. Pupils explain that religions have different books that are important to them, and they identify some of the similarities and differences between the Bible, Qur'an and the Torah. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding that religions have various ceremonies and special occasions, and they can, for example, describe in great detail why Christmas is so important to Christians. Pupils in Year 2 identify the importance of 'special places', and they readily discuss the places that are important to them. Pupils in Year 1 understand the need to belong to a variety of groups, and they recognise in particular the importance of their own family and friends. They are happy to explain different naming ceremonies, especially those relating to Christians and Hindus. Pupils are aware of the need for caring, both for people and the environment.
128. By the end of Year 4, pupils are suitably informed about a number of world religions, including the Sikh faith. They readily name important figures in these religions, such as Abraham and Guru Nanak. They confidently identify and discuss similarities and differences between religions, such as in clothing and ceremonial. Pupils in Year 4 readily name various religious buildings, such as the Mosque and Synagogue, and they confidently identify some of the requirements for entering those buildings, such as removing shoes or covering one's head. Pupils in Year 3 know that all religions have distinctive traditions and life-styles, and, for example, they identify the importance of food to all religions. They are particularly knowledgeable in explaining the importance of the Seder Plate to Jews. Pupils recognise that all religions have special ceremonies and festivals, and, for instance, pupils identify the importance Diwali and Hannukah to Hindus and Jews respectively. Pupils are aware of the need for love and care, in their dealings with others, and they recognise the importance of sharing. Pupils, throughout the school, clearly understand the need to be tolerant of other people's dress, lifestyle and ritual.
129. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Lessons throughout the school are well planned, and thought-provoking and interesting ideas are often presented to pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and through clear instruction and a careful use of questioning to involve them all, pupils are able to make good gains in their knowledge and understanding. Teachers provide a variety of tasks for pupils, and they make good use of appropriate, and much improved, resources to involve pupils and to make them think for themselves. Pupils are generally keen to provide a variety of thoughtful answers and observations. Just occasionally, a very small number of older pupils show less interest in the work. Teachers are careful to introduce pupils to all the

correct terminology used in different faiths, and most pupils show confidence in using the appropriate terms. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are usually good, and they are careful in handling and studying resources. Most pupils take care with the presentation of their work, although a number take less pride in its appearance. Teachers mark this work regularly, but they do not always provide detailed comments of praise and advice to encourage pupils further.

130. The school closely follows the locally agreed syllabus, together with the government's curriculum guidelines, and all areas of work are now adequately covered. The school is successful in developing pupils' understanding of different faiths, and visiting speakers and trips to religious buildings play a significant part in this provision. The work undertaken successfully supports all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through the written activities provided for pupils, religious education provides suitable support for the school's initiative in literacy. The school is beginning to make some use of information and communication technology, to enhance pupils' learning, such as when pupils in Year 2 studied a video on aspects of Judaism. However, little use is presently made of computers. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. Little information is recorded to judge either pupils' current understanding or to identify the progress they have made. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and committed, and she is fully aware of the work being undertaken in the school. Recently she has had few opportunities to observe teachers and pupils at work in the classrooms, to see for herself the standards being achieved, although such activities have been undertaken in the past. Overall, however, through the advice and support she provides for her colleagues she has contributed significantly towards the improvements that have been made in the subject. Her leadership of the subject is good.