

INSPECTION REPORT

TODDINGTON ST. GEORGE LOWER SCHOOL

Bedfordshire

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109608

Headteacher: Mrs. H. Cook

Reporting inspector: Rajinder Harrison
RgI's OIN: 18059

Dates of inspection: 7th to 10th July 2003

Inspection number: 246926

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Manor Road Toddington Bedfordshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Christine Schuster
Date of previous inspection:	20 th to 24 th October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18059	Rajinder Harrison	Registered inspector	Educational inclusion, English as an additional language, Science, Art and design.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What the school should do to improve further.
9056	Val Cain	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
31975	Kay Margaret Andrews	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, Music, Physical Education.	Pupils attitudes, values and personal development.
31862	Julia Coop	Team inspector	Special educational needs, English, History, Geography.	
20003	Susan Metcalfe	Team inspector	Mathematics, Design and Technology, ICT, Religious Education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
20466	Alan Tattersall	Team inspector	Hearing Impaired Unit.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Toddington St. George Lower School is a larger than average sized primary school. It serves Toddington and the surrounding villages, located between Luton and Milton Keynes, although a few pupils, including some hearing-impaired pupils, travel in from a much wider area. The area is mixed in socio-economic terms, but most of the housing is owner occupied and most pupils come from relatively advantaged homes. The school caters for 327 pupils, aged from three to nine years. The school also has a special resource base that provides support for pupils with hearing impairment. As a consequence the school has well above the national average number of pupils with statements for special educational needs. There are fifty-six pupils who receive special educational needs' support. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, at six per cent, is below the national average. The vast majority of pupils are White-British but a few come from other ethnic backgrounds and three come from families where English is not the home language. The number of pupils moving in and out of the school is low. The high turnover of teachers, with six new staff joining the school in the last two years and temporary staffing arrangements in place, results in some disruptions in management of provision. Attainment on entry to the nursery is as expected for children at this age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school providing an overall good standard of education for all of its pupils. The school's family ethos and its aim to raise standards are reflected well in its day-to-day work. Pupils of all ages and abilities have very positive attitudes to learning and achieve well. Pupils with hearing impairment make very good progress. Good teaching helps pupils' attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 4. The school is led and managed well. Valuable and effective support from the governors, parents and the community contributes to the school's success. Financial management is very good. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above national averages.
- As result of good teaching, pupils of all abilities achieve well and standards in most subjects are above expectations.
- Provision for pupils with hearing impairment is very good and the whole school benefits from their very good integration.
- The school is led and managed well.
- Support staff make a very valuable contribution to all that the school achieves.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school, attend very regularly and enjoy the good learning opportunities provided.
- Relationships are very good and pupils develop healthy respect for others.
- Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

What could be improved

- The provision for children in the nursery who have birthdays in the summer-term and therefore have limited preparation before entering Year 1.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in October 1997, significant effort has gone into addressing effectively the key issues identified in the previous report. Overall improvement has been good and the school is well placed to improve further.

Very thorough assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science have resulted in standards in these subjects being well above average at the end of Year 4. These procedures are being applied to other subjects but because of continued staff changes the practice remains inconsistent. However, teachers' planning appropriately takes into account the needs of pupils of all ages and abilities, including the higher attainers and those with special educational needs, well. Effective monitoring procedures enable teachers to review the standards individual pupils achieve through regular scrutiny of their work in lessons and in their books. The information gathered enables better target setting at every stage of their learning.

Standards in art, geography and history have improved and are above expectations. The school has established an effective senior management team and is about to revise this structure yet again to provide more stability in light of staff turnover. The governing body has increased in strength and monitors the work of the school effectively.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

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

(Similar schools – those with a similar number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals).

The school has maintained well above average standards in reading and mathematics over the last three years for pupils at the end of Year 2 as reflected in the National Tests in 2002. From teachers' assessments in 2002, pupils achieved well above average standards in science. The school does particularly well with pupils gaining the higher level three in the tests. Inspection findings confirm these standards. By the end of Year 4 pupils achieve well above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Overall improvement is above the national trend. These gains stem directly from the good teaching and from the very rigorous assessment and monitoring procedures that are established in the core subjects. Targets in the core subjects are very challenging and they are continually set and reviewed for individual pupils. The information gained through careful analysis of all assessment data allows the school to set achievable targets. The school performs better than similar schools and is successful in achieving its targets.

National Curriculum assessments in 2002 for pupils aged seven were above average in writing. The school made writing a priority this year and standards are improving across the school. Speaking and listening skills are a strength and have a very positive impact on learning. Evidence in other subjects indicates standards are above expectations in all but music, religious education and physical education where standards are in line with expectations. These subjects have had limited time given to developing and monitoring the provision. Standards at the end of Year 4 are well above average in core subjects and above expectations in all but physical education and music. Pupils' very good literacy skills and overall good teaching result in this success. When compared with similar schools overall standards are well above average. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and the majority attains above expectations by the age of nine. Hearing impaired pupils receive very good support for their needs to enable them to make very good progress and most achieve standards in line with their peers. The few pupils who have English as an additional language achieve similarly to their peers.

Children under five enter school with expected levels of attainment in all areas of learning. They are generally confident learners and as a consequence they achieve well. This good progress and positive attitudes to learning continue throughout the school and many pupils are motivated to work independently because they enjoy learning. However, the youngest children in the reception year make slower progress than their older peers in the year group because they only have one term of full time provision before entering Year 1. The overall standards they achieve are lower.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very positive. Pupils are very happy at school and are keen to work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The school has no incidence of exclusion. Pupils are very courteous and show great respect for others. Children respond well to the high expectations.
Personal development and relationships	Good overall. Relationships are very good. Pupils and adults show good care and kindness towards each other. Particularly good is the very effective integration of pupils with hearing impairment in all aspects of school life.
Attendance	Very good - pupils enjoy coming to school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Fifty-seven lessons were observed during the inspection. The majority of these lessons were judged to be good. Teaching is particularly good in Years 3 and 4 because expectations are very high. In very good lessons, pupils were fully engaged in their learning, work was challenging and they took a very active role in discussions. In satisfactory lessons, where there is a lack of pace or the work provides limited challenge to some groups of pupils, the pace of learning slows down.

The teaching of English and mathematics is generally very good. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well and pupils apply these confidently across other subjects. Speaking and listening skills are a strength. Teachers' secure subject knowledge, planning and very good assessment strategies enable them to set work that matches pupils' needs effectively. The school maximises the commitment of very good support staff who work with pupils across the ages and ability range to ensure every child achieves well. Communicators attached to specific children with hearing impairment are a very valuable asset in supporting other pupils in the class thus ensuring full integration at all times. Overall teaching for these pupils is very good and they make very good progress. Whilst teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good, children who have summer term birthdays only have one term of full time nursery provision and, as a consequence, often make limited progress compared to their peers when they enter Year 1. The oldest pupils in the infant class develop high levels of self-discipline and confidence because they have the opportunity to work in the mixed age Year 1/Reception Class.

Learning is good overall. In the best lessons it is very good because teachers engage pupils' interest very effectively. Pupils generally work very hard and try their best to meet their teachers' and their own expectations. Very good relationships ensure pupils gain the confidence to seek help when necessary. Pupils are mindful of the needs of others, especially lower attaining pupils and work with all partners very sensibly. They are generally clear about targets they have been set and are reminded to check their work against these expectations. Marking is inconsistent but at its best it is supportive and constructive and helps pupils improve their work. Pupils of all ages and abilities are confident learners and are quick to respond to positive acknowledgement of their hard work and effort. Their attentiveness to staff and each other's presentations is generally very good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in the infant and junior classes. Children of reception age experience a satisfactory range of learning opportunities but the youngest children do not have as wide a range of experiences as their older peers do. Visitors to the school enrich the curriculum well and activities outside lessons are very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good for pupils with hearing impairment and good overall. Support staff are used very effectively. Individual education plans are satisfactory but need refining. Partnerships with parents and other agencies are good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal, moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for their spiritual development is satisfactory. Staff act as positive role models and expectations for pupils to learn from this are very high. Opportunities for pupils to take more responsibility in the day to day work of the school are limited.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good overall. Assessment procedures in core subjects are very rigorous. Assessment in the other subjects is developing well. Provision for child protection and pupils' welfare is good and personal development is monitored very effectively. Attendance is monitored very carefully.

The school has good links with parents and many help in the school. Information provided for parents about their children's progress is satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good management and leadership from the headteacher result in effective teamwork among the staff. The school's aims to create a caring school where pupils work hard are achieved well. Staff new to the school are integrated very effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are involved in the work of the school effectively. They understand its strengths and areas for development well. They monitor the school's performance and financial resources well. The Governors' Annual Report to parents and the school prospectus have some minor omissions.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good analysis of test results and other information are used to monitor pupils' progress and identify areas for development. The school's development plan steers improvement very effectively.
The strategic use of resources	The school maximises its resources to ensure it achieves 'best value' in all its work. Spending is targeted very carefully to improve the environment and develop the curriculum. Limited use is made of the school's technology facility for administration purposes. Value for money is good.

The school is very well staffed, but turnover of teaching staff is high. Learning support assistants are deployed to maximum effect. Accommodation is good, being clean and attractive. Resources for ICT hardware are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school, behave well and take good care of each other.• Teaching is good, the school expects children to work hard and they make good progress.• The school is led and managed well.• The school is successful in enabling children to become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The quantity of homework their children receive.• A small minority of parents does not find the school approachable.• Information regarding their children's progress.• The range and availability of activities that the school provides outside lessons.

The inspection team fully endorses the parents' positive views. Provision for homework is good. Most parents rightly feel their relationships with school are very good. Inspectors agree that a very small minority has raised issues that have not been resolved effectively. The written reports to parents are satisfactory but targets need setting out more clearly. The school provides a very good range of activities outside lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils achieve well throughout the school and attain above average standards overall. In the 2002 National Curriculum Tests and assessments, standards were well above average in reading, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2. The school performed much better than schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained steady improvement above the national trend. By the end of Year 4, overall standards are above those normally expected and are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in all three subjects have improved since the previous inspection. This improved level of achievement reflects the school's good procedures for planning, and the very good assessment procedures established in the core subjects. Inspection evidence confirms these findings.
2. The school places important emphasis on ensuring the effective integration of pupils of all abilities. Most hearing-impaired pupils of all degrees enter the school with levels of attainment below that of their peers. They make very good progress in classes throughout the school because they receive very effective support. Most achieve standards in line with their peers. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory, but the careful target setting for every pupil throughout the school, ensures the vast majority of pupils make good progress. Higher attaining pupils are challenged well in most lessons and a good number achieved the higher level 3 in reading and mathematics in 2002. The school has few pupils who speak English as an additional language, and none of these pupils are new to English. These pupils make progress across all subjects in line with their peers.
3. Attainment on entry to the nursery is wide ranging but overall is that normally expected for children of this age. The children make good progress in the nursery and reception classes in all of the areas of learning. By the time they enter Year 1 the vast majority achieve above average attainment in the early learning goals. A good number are working effectively at the early stages of Year 1 reading, writing and numeracy activities. However, some of the youngest children, who have only one term of full time provision are less well prepared for Year 1 when compared with their older peers because they do not have the breadth of provision that older children have. These children meet the early learning goals and attain standards that are average. In addition the oldest children in the reception year benefit from working full time with pupils in the mixed age Reception/Year 1 Class. This results in the youngest children being disadvantaged throughout the school and many do not attain in line with their peers.
4. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed well at a very good pace. Speaking and listening skills are of a high standard and pupils are encouraged to express ideas and offer suggestions in the shared class activities. Pupils acquire a good range of writing skills, which they extend to other subjects, for example, writing accounts in history; and recording and reporting on investigations in science. They learn ICT skills enthusiastically, and enjoy using, for example, paint programs and research tools. These activities enable them to practise their use of desktop tools and enhance their independent study skills effectively.
5. In English, results in the 2002 national curriculum tests show that standards were well above the national average in reading and above those of similar schools at the end of Year 2. Particularly encouraging is the number of pupils attaining the higher level 3. In writing, standards were above the national average and in line with similar schools. Standards reported in the previous inspection have been maintained. Evidence shows that the school's efforts to raise standards in writing have been successful, and more pupils are now attaining the higher levels than previous years. This pattern is repeated in all year groups and by the end of Year 4, standards in English are well above average overall. All groups of pupils in the school, including those with special educational needs and the few who speaking English as an additional language, achieve very well in relation to their ability when they started in the nursery. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is well above average. Pupils in the school are very

articulate and enjoy talking about their work and they have an expressive and varied vocabulary. Standards in reading are also well above average by the end of Years 2 and 4. Much of this is due to the very good teaching of basic skills and the very effective way that teachers challenge pupils to recognise the underlying meaning in the stories and refer to the text to support their thinking.

6. In mathematics, results in the 2002 national curriculum tests show that standards were well above the national average and well above those of similar schools at the end of Year 2. Standards remain well above average by the end of Years 2 and 4. The school has implemented the numeracy strategy very effectively. Teachers feel standards in mental mathematics, three-dimensional shape and problem solving are particularly good, and pupils enjoy the challenges they are presented with in class-work and homework. They acquire a good understanding of the key processes they need to apply in various contexts and take care to work answers out accurately and with clear explanations. By the end of Year 2, the pupils handle number operations very confidently, and have an above average competence with their tables. These skills continue to develop well, as pupils move through to Year 4. Good use is made of number skills and data processing in design and technology and science. The use of ICT to support data handling and recording has improved significantly since the last inspection, and attention is being given to extend use of this facility.
7. Standards in science well above average at the end of Years 2 and 4. The number of pupils gaining the higher level 3 at the end of Year 2 is well above average. Pupils of all abilities make good progress. The work scheme places high emphasis on teaching skills, not just facts, and pupils apply prior knowledge well in new situations. They are challenged to think and reason their ideas and offer explanations for their answers. For example, in the lesson in Year 3, exploring why plants require specific conditions in their environment in order to grow healthily, pupils were asked to identify features they considered were important factors. Use of ICT supports teaching effectively and pupils carry out recording and research tasks using computers, competently. The pupils from Year 1 researching habitats for different mini-beasts enjoyed exploring material on the computer and recorded their findings very accurately.
8. Standards in art and design are above average expectations at the end of Years 2 and 4. Pupils are taught appropriate skills in a very creative and structured way and make overall good progress. Effective use of art and design computer programs and opportunities for pupils to view the work of many artists develops pupils' cultural awareness effectively. Standards are above expectations in design and technology and effective links are made with the work pupils do in art. Pupils enjoy exploring materials, designing projects, and making things in which they take pride. Standards in ICT are above expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 4 and overall progress is good. The school has made very good in-roads in developing ICT provision and teachers' knowledge and understanding. Standards in history and geography are also above expectations. Pupils gain a good understanding of the skills required to explore the world around them and how to use artefacts and other source materials to gather information and draw their conclusions and opinions. The standards they attain in religious education are in line with expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and are above expectations Year 4. The subject helps pupils consider the faiths of other cultures and traditions and come to a good understanding of the importance some people place on their beliefs effectively. Standards in music and physical education are in line with expectations throughout the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning and enjoy attending school. Their behaviour and personal development are good and almost all pupils are very happy. Relationships between adults and pupils and amongst pupils are very good. This is an improvement on what was found at the time of the previous inspection where this aspect was good overall. Relationships between the hearing impaired pupils and other pupils and staff are excellent. The same is true of pupils from minority ethnic groups. Pupils work together well and enjoy helping each other. Hearing-impaired pupils are delighted with the friendships they form and are totally integrated in lessons and at play. Many pupils learn signs to communicate more effectively with hearing impaired peers. Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve well above expected levels of

attainment in their personal, social and emotional development. This is because staff work consistently to develop these skills and encourage children to enjoy school.

10. This keenness for school continues as pupils move through the school and as a result pupils' throughout achieve well and gain in confidence and maturity. Staff deal very sensitively with any difficulties pupils experience and have high expectations of them for hard work and good behaviour. Pupils settle well to their work, listen attentively, are often excited by their activities and on occasions are seen to want to continue working after the lesson has finished. They co-operate really well when working in pairs and groups, taking turns appropriately and sharing equipment properly. They say they enjoy working in this way because it helps them to think things out. They respond very well to the good opportunities for independent working and enjoy the attention they receive if they produce work in their own time. During the inspection, pupils in Year 3 worked intensely outside to study soil and environmental conditions to find a suitable spot to plant their honeysuckle and marigold plants. They thoughtfully considered various sites, sharing ideas and working co-operatively, enjoying coming to some very plausible conclusions to share in front of others. Such opportunities help them become mature independent workers. Pupils in Year 4, when asked what were their best experiences in school, say, without hesitation that they like being the oldest pupils in the school because they are given so much more responsibility around the school and this makes them feel very grown up. However, they feel they would like to do more 'jobs' in the school to help teachers and younger children.
11. Behaviour is good overall throughout the school, often very good. No instances of unacceptable behaviour were seen in the playgrounds or around the school during the inspection. Pupils say the playground is a friendly place and they have lots of friends. They do say, however, that there is a small element of older boys who indulge in minor incidents of rough play and rudeness and, although it does not upset them, this causes them some concern. Records show the school deals very seriously with this unacceptable behaviour and where a pupil has been unkind or rough towards another pupil, they are expected to apologise. Pupils know right from wrong and feel they are treated fairly at all times. Overall the school is an orderly, calm community where pupils are very polite and courteous. They are helpful towards each other and caring of younger pupils. Pupils appreciate being involved in the drawing up of their own class rules and they like the way their achievements and successes are celebrated in assemblies.

Attendance

12. Levels of attendance remain very good and are above the national average. The main reasons for absences are illness and some holidays taken within term time. Unauthorised absence is very rare. The high levels of attendance have a positive impact on learning and attainment.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The overall quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection where a number of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. Teaching is now good overall and particularly good in many lessons in Years 3 and 4. Very good and excellent teaching was seen across the school in a range of subjects. This marked improvement in teaching is due to a number of factors including rigorous monitoring of pupils' learning to ensure they work to their set targets. In addition there has been regular monitoring of teaching especially in English and mathematics where standards are well above average. Weaknesses in the curriculum have been identified systematically and appropriate support and training provided to ensure teachers' knowledge and understanding is secure. Staff are keen to help pupils achieve the very best they can, and pupils appreciate all that the school does for them by responding very positively at all times.
14. Pupils with special educational needs are supported sensitively by learning assistants and communicators who are extremely well informed and very well deployed. They regularly take responsibility for individual or group work. The help they receive ensures these pupils make good progress. The quality of teaching provided for hearing impaired pupils in the main school and resource base is very good. There is very good teamwork between staff to support these

pupils in all lessons. They ensure effective listening conditions, make effective use of the correct equipment and use signing when required to ensure that these pupils are fully integrated and achieve their best. As a consequence these pupils make very good progress and their presence in the classes benefits their peers in that many of them also learn some signing skills. The few pupils who have statements of special educational needs receive very good help in achieving the learning targets identified by the special needs co-ordinator. However, because teachers do not currently write pupils' individual learning plans, targets are not clear or specific enough to support teachers' planning as well as they might. Consequently, on occasions, teachers do not always ensure that they provide work at a level that pupils can cope with independently. A few pupils become over reliant on help to complete tasks. This has an impact on their confidence and learning over time. The hard work and effort these pupils make is always celebrated by peers, demonstrating further the kind respect everyone has for each other.

15. The teaching of English and mathematics is very good and the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are taught very well. Writing skills are applied well across the subjects. The good pace at which number skills are developed in the infant classes, enables pupils to handle the four operations of addition, subtraction, division and multiplication very confidently as they move on to higher level mathematics. Pupils regularly practise the ICT skills they acquire through some effective teaching delivered by the learning assistant deployed specifically to do this. They enjoy opportunities to research ideas and explore relevant programs that help them gain further information about work they do in lessons.
16. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and children make overall good progress in all areas of learning. They engage in a good range of activities that help them make a positive start to their formal education. All staff are very knowledgeable and work together enthusiastically. They take time to explain routines and show children what is expected from them from the wide range of good learning experiences they organise. Children are managed well and the very good relationships that prevail between adults and children have a very good impact on learning. The majority of children are prepared well for Year 1. However, because the school operates admissions over three terms, the youngest children only have one term of full time preparation before they enter Year 1, compared to their older peers who have three terms. Nursery assistants work hard to accelerate learning for the youngest children but the majority do not make as good progress as the oldest children. In addition, some of these older children have a year working alongside pupils in Year 1 in the mixed age Reception/Year 1 Class and so their overall progress is much better in the main school.
17. Teachers' planning is thorough, paying good attention to the development of skills as well as ensuring knowledge and understanding develop well. In the majority of lessons, it is clear what is being taught and learning targets are explained clearly to pupils of differing abilities. Pupils generally understand what they are learning and why. Through skilful questioning, they are encouraged to think about what they already know and are encouraged to build on their prior knowledge. For example, in a science lesson in Year 3, pupils explained very clearly why they might grow specific plants in certain positions and environments, drawing on their knowledge of local and global climates and geographical features. The teacher expected them to give detailed reasons for their ideas. They recognise that desert plants tend to be fleshy and spiky because they have to conserve water. Because the activity was presented in a challenging, but supportive manner, pupils gave confident and enthusiastic responses. In an excellent numeracy lesson in Year 3, the teacher's very high expectations, positive encouragement and clear enthusiasm for the task in hand, resulted in a lesson where pupils thoroughly enjoyed the success they all achieved. The puzzle was practical and demanded that pupils share ideas and logical reasoning skills to achieve successful results. The element of competition added a touch of excitement pupils thoroughly enjoyed. Effective use of ICT applications is planned and pupils explore this facility effectively when working on individual projects. For example, pupils in Year 2 have spent time researching the life cycles and habitats of mini-beasts and apply what they know to their work in design and technology and art. Their 3D models of these creatures reflect very good detailed observations of proportions and colours of body parts and many very carefully select materials that best suit the purpose. There are many examples of where teachers plan units of work that complement each other well, thus making the most efficient use of the time available for each subject.

18. Throughout the school, teachers ensure lessons are interesting, involve all pupils appropriately and expectations are high. Lessons are often 'fun' and teachers take care to plan for a good range of tasks and activities, explaining these clearly. They ensure resources and support staff are deployed to maximum effect. Teachers give clear guidance and support to all adults who help, about the targets each pupil is to achieve. They provide good opportunities for pupils to carry out independent research and work at home. Parents support their children's learning very effectively and a good number help in school on a regular basis. In the few lessons judged to be satisfactory, pupils were presented with tasks they did not fully engage with. The highest attaining pupils were not challenged well, whilst the lowest attaining pupils lost interest because the presentation was too long. However, pace of lessons is usually good, and because teachers are confident in what they are teaching, the strategies they use are very effective. At the end of most lessons, teachers assess pupils' progress by asking questions to explain what they have learnt and how much they understand. In some lessons, teachers use this time to set the scene for the next lesson and this provides pupils with a very good context for what they are doing and why. The very good assessment procedures, in the core subjects especially, and constructive marking of pupils' work, inform teachers' day-to-day planning well. Targets set for English and mathematics are reviewed each half term. Procedures are applied consistently across the school and teachers collect relevant data to monitor individual pupil's progress. Assessment information in other areas although often informal, is also compiled regularly.
19. Pupils' learning is generally good. In the core subjects it is very good. Teachers place good emphasis on developing pupils' thinking and personal organisational skills. Children from the start of nursery are shown how to follow routines and organise themselves in order to pursue the activities provided, sensibly and efficiently. By Year 4, pupils are expected to plan their own time and work collaboratively where appropriate, for example, in art and design and technology lessons, where resources need to be shared. Some pupils sometimes take on projects that require them to work independently or in small groups and the levels of co-operation are very good. Because relationships are very good, most pupils have no difficulties working together, and seeking help from adults when appropriate. Good and often very good behaviour and pupils' enthusiasm for learning, inspired by some very good teaching, help pupils remain well motivated in most lessons so that they make good progress. They show respect for each other by listening to everyone's views, for example in class discussions and group presentations. They generally settle quickly to work, and take care to not disturb others. Most are very keen to learn. A good number attend clubs including art and drama, many learn to play musical instruments and many take part in a range of sporting activities including football and judo.

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

20. The curriculum meets requirements and continues to offer the good quality that existed at the time of the previous inspection. All subjects, including religious education and the Foundation Stage curriculum for children under five, are taught on a regular basis. Many opportunities are given for pupils to use and develop their good literacy and numeracy skills further in other areas of the curriculum. This makes a positive contribution to the raising of standard in these subjects. The amount of teaching time, especially that allocated for science and the foundation subjects, is good.
21. Curricular provision for children who are in the Foundation Stage does not move them on as a cohesive whole. Older reception children who are in the main building work separately from their peers in the nursery building and do not currently come under the umbrella of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator. The youngest children in reception who are in the nursery building are disadvantaged because they have less time in school than older reception children. Very recently small groups are being withdrawn to work with older reception children for a small part of the school day. Nevertheless, they still do not get the full range of Foundation Stage experiences that the older children get and therefore, are not fully prepared for the formal curriculum in Year 1. Because of the school's good provision in the nursery, these younger children make good progress in their one full-time term. Evidence shows, however, that by Year

- 4, a significant number have not made up the ground to catch up with their older classmates, and some fall further behind.
22. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved since the previous inspection and is good overall. Good links with a wide range of outside agencies ensure that relevant advice and guidance is received. The school acts quickly to use this advice to the benefit of the pupils. As a result, detailed guidance is provided to classroom assistants, to aid their work with pupils, and their progress is closely monitored. However, despite these good features, targets on pupil's individual education plans could be more specific, measurable, attainable and relevant so that they can be more easily shared with pupils and parents. In addition, whilst pupils undertake individual programmes of work, current teaching arrangements result in pupils regularly missing whole school assemblies. This is not a satisfactory situation and has an impact on pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Hearing impaired pupils follow the full range of subjects. The withdrawal from main school classes for extra support with subjects such as literacy is vital for them and provides them with huge benefits in their access to language and literacy. However, occasionally they miss out on learning in other subjects such as religious education.
23. The curriculum is organised well and ensures that the learning and practice of specific skills and the development of understanding are linked effectively to the acquisition of new information. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well throughout classes to support other subjects, including literacy and numeracy. ICT is also used to support pupils' researching skills in subjects such as history and geography. All subjects except music and the Foundation Stage have policies and detailed schemes for work. In some subjects, history for example, too many themes are currently planned and as a result, pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to study topic in sufficient depth in order to raise standards further. The school is aware of this need to further adapt and refine activities to ensure that topics are appropriate to extend pupils' investigative and enquiry skills effectively.
24. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Pupils in all year groups have regular opportunities to discuss issues that are relevant and significant to them. Celebration and achievement assemblies enable teachers to discuss standards and draw pupils attention to acceptable standards of behaviour and relationships. They are beginning to develop an understanding of what being a member of a community means through discussions and role-play. Sex education and the development of an awareness of the danger of the misuse of drugs and medicines along with staying healthy are tackled appropriately in science, religious education, food technology and whole class discussions. Pupils are involved with the Young Enterprise Scheme and have an annual visit from the 'Life Education Bus'. They take part in the 'buddy system' whereby new pupils and those with a specific need, such as needing language support, are matched to a classmate who supports their learning in and out of class. Pupils as young as those in the nursery are involved with writing class rules. A school council, for pupils in Years 3 and 4, has been established and pupils take this work seriously.
25. The quality of extra-curricular activities is very good, an improvement since the last inspection. The school has good links to the community and positive relationships with the middle school and the pre-school playgroup. Many visitors, including a good number of parents, support teaching in subjects such as PSHE and history by coming in to do specific presentations. The teachers organise a range of interesting visits to places of interest so that pupils have opportunities to explore the world around them effectively. There is a very good range of well-organised clubs and after school activities that are well supported and valued by both parents and pupils. These include the breakfast and after school clubs, football, karate, book club, recorders and drama. A significant number take up playing musical instruments and the school supports all those who wish to participate. Every effort is made to involve pupils with special educational needs and hearing impairment who wish to join in. Good use is made of the local environment to support learning in a range of subjects including history, geography and art. There is a well-planned programme to support pupils' personal, social and health education and the 'Life Skills Bus' enhances this further. These additional opportunities give pupils valuable opportunities to develop new interests and skills and enhance the basic curriculum effectively. Pupils are actively involved in fundraising for both national and local charities and participate in a range of social

activities the school hosts. Local firms give vouchers to support the Christmas Bazaar and Summer Fete. Trainee teachers, other students and work experience pupils visit the school regularly.

26. Provision for pupils moral, social and cultural development is good. This is a better position than was seen at the time of the previous inspection. Provision for their spiritual development is satisfactory. Whole school assemblies and other occasions such as class discussions regarding pupils feelings and views about moral and social issues, provide many good opportunities for pupils to think about and reflect on these matters and how they impact on their lives and on the world around them. Assemblies do not always meet requirements when pupils are withdrawn regularly for extra literacy work, which means this part of school life is not always open to them. At the time of the last inspection it was judged that few opportunities were available to pupils for them to experience a sense of awe and wonder in lessons. This has improved and a number of occasions were seen where pupils were so engrossed and excited by their work, they did not want to stop at the end of the lesson. An example is when pupils in Year 2 created delightful facial expressions on their mini-beast models and were delighted with the results of their efforts, which were original and quite imaginative.
27. Provision for moral development is good. Teachers take time to teach right from wrong and discuss any difficulties pupils may have sensitively. Pupils consider how to resolve personal problems by learning to share their feelings and seeking advice and guidance from relevant people. Sometimes these lessons are omitted because other lessons take priority. Pupils' views are taken into account when they draw up rules for their own classrooms and this helps them to behave. The re-formed School Council puts forward suggestions to improve aspects of the school, and these are listened to and acted upon. Teachers are good role models, pupils recognise adults will help sort issues and problems when they arise. Pupils are listened to and treated fairly. They are encouraged to think about people less fortunate than themselves and support a wide range of charities, including 'Red Nose Day' and other children's charities. The school is a friendly and orderly place as a result of this good provision.
28. Provision for social development is also good. This is because children in the reception and nursery classes are given such a good start with their personal, social and emotional development and this benefits them as they move up through the school. Pupils are shown how to work and play well together in pairs and in groups and this forms an important part of their learning, encouraging tolerance and co-operation. A very positive emphasis is placed on the importance of courtesy and good behaviour. Negative incidents are dealt with through discussions designed to help pupils see things from different perspectives. Incidents occurring at lunch and break times during lunch are recorded and pupils are encouraged to apologise where there has been wrongdoing. Buddy systems and celebration assemblies all help to reinforce the school's expectations. Pupils have opportunities for personal responsibility, for example, setting up and choosing music for assembly, but there is a need to push the boundaries even further. Social skills are developed further through the pupil's good involvement in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The school provides very good opportunities for hearing impaired pupils to develop socially throughout the day and at after school clubs. There are occasionally good opportunities for them to meet deaf adults as role models.
29. Provision for cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The school has successfully developed a wider cultural dimension in its planning for all subjects. Recently a range of texts and artefacts were purchased to support this area and although more still needs to be done, these are already having an impact on teaching and learning. The curriculum is being modified to include more opportunities for pupils to benefit from the richness of other cultures and traditions. In religious education all major world religions are covered in the programme of work. In one delightful lesson a Chinese boy was encouraged to share his first hand experiences of Chinese 'New Year' celebrations with his peers. The activity promoted good self-esteem as the pupil responded confidently, keen to tell his friends what he knew. Pupils are also taught to appreciate their own culture through a wide programme of visits into the community to heritage sites, churches and museums. They are encouraged to take part in community celebrations such as the Fiddle Festival and the County brass band festival. In particular they are taught to appreciate and value the cultural heritage of their own village.

Regular visits from local community services such as fire service, road safety and police services all make a good contribution to pupils' overall development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The provision for assessing, monitoring and supporting pupils' academic and personal development is very good overall. Assessment procedures have improved considerably since the previous inspection, and are very good in English, mathematics and science; this is having a very positive impact on pupils' learning in these subjects. Teacher assessments match very closely the results pupils attain in the National tests and assessments at the end of Year 2. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment in other subjects are generally good, although sometimes informal. Staff keep detailed records of pupils' attainment and progress in relation to national curriculum levels in each subject. The headteacher undertakes a very detailed analysis of the English and mathematics assessment information and this ensures that each year group is performing to its potential in these subjects. Assessments of each pupil are noted meticulously, by the headteacher, for different groups of pupils and this helps ensure targets are met effectively. For example, after a detailed analysis of the Year 2 National Curriculum test results, the school became aware that the more able pupils were not achieving as well in writing as in other subjects. In response, the school made changes to planning and provisional results indicate that more pupils are now attaining the higher levels in writing. The very good level of detail provided by the headteacher ensures that the school has a very valuable tool with which they track the progress of each pupil accurately, from the time they enter the nursery to the point where they leave the school at the end of Year 4. The recent analysis of pupils' attainment according to their birthday has revealed the significant difference in attainment of the youngest pupils in each year group. Currently however, this analysis by her is completed manually, which is very time consuming. The school intends to transfer such analysis to computer in the near future.
31. Assessment information is used very effectively to set targets for each pupil in English and mathematics. These targets are shared with pupils and their parents. This ensures that each pupil has an accurate understanding of their own performance and that parents are fully involved in supporting their child. In other subjects staff use information well to plan activities and maintain accurate records for each pupil, from class to class. This ensures that no time is wasted re-establishing levels of attainment at the start of each year and pupils settle quickly to work appropriately matched in their new class.
32. The provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs in the main school is good. Detailed records of their progress and achievement are kept and regular meetings are held with parents and all relevant people to ensure that they receive the best possible support and guidance. Annual reviews of their progress are held according to guidelines and specialist programmes are generally implemented effectively according to the statement requirements. Hearing-impaired pupils receive excellent care for their hearing needs. Learning is monitored very effectively. The systems to measure, for example, pupils' gains in vocabulary confirm the very good progress they make. Pupils receive very good support from the well-trained communicators that work with them throughout the day. These pupils are prepared very well for transfer to the next stage of their education.
33. Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage have been in a state of flux over the past year due to staff changes and absence. The new co-ordinator acknowledges that improvements are required to make assessment procedures consistent across the whole of the Foundation Stage so that the criteria outlined in the Foundation Stage curriculum are covered effectively step by step. Currently, different teachers devise their own daily on-going assessments and this makes the monitoring of pupils' personal and academic progress patchy. The co-ordinator has already started to improve practice and the new profile for children who are reception age has been introduced and carried out efficiently.
34. The quality of care provided for all pupils remains good. Parents confirm that their children are expected to work hard and that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. The inspection team agrees with these views. Procedures to monitor pupils'

personal development throughout the school are very good. Staff provide very good role models. They know their pupils well and give them valuable support and guidance throughout their time in school. Good effort is made to ensure pupils with special educational needs and other specific needs are cared for effectively and where necessary parents are informed if the school has any concerns about their child. Other agencies are involved where appropriate to ensure the best possible is done to support pupils at all times. Every effort is made to ensure effective inclusion of all pupils in all that the school offers by way of the curriculum and after school activities. For example, communicators frequently support after school clubs so that hearing impaired pupils can join in these. The youngest age reception class children do not, however, have access to the same level of provision as their older friends in the year group and this limits their overall satisfactory rate of progress.

35. The monitoring of attendance is very good. High levels of attendance are encouraged through the regularly awarding of certificates. There have been no exclusions. Unauthorised absence is very rare. Procedures for monitoring and promoting high standards of behaviour are well established and pupils respond positively. Procedures to monitor pupils' behaviour are good. Any instances of unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour are dealt with very effectively and such instances occur very rarely. Staff throughout the school follow agreed strategies and pupils are very aware of the school's high expectations of them. Rewards and sanctions are applied consistently to re-affirm consistent practice. Pupils have use of play equipment at lunchtime to encourage good co-operation and behaviour. Lunchtime supervisors have good relationships with pupils and their personal development is monitored effectively on an informal basis with useful comments contained in pupils' annual progress reports.
36. Arrangements for handling child protection issues are effective. Links with outside agencies are good with professional advice sought whenever necessary. Great care is taken to ensure younger pupils are handed over to parents or carers at the end of the day. Similarly, there is a well-established routine to ensure that pupils who travel on buses or are collected by taxi leave safely. Good links exist with the play-school to ensure a smooth transition to nursery. A comprehensive programme is in place to ensure that older pupils have an opportunity to visit their next school and to experience lessons prior to their move. Parents and pupils value the on site 'Breakfast and After School Clubs' that are well attended.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. Views expressed by parents both through questionnaires and at the parents' meeting are positive. A very small minority of parents feels that the school has not responded effectively regarding their specific issues and complaints and inspectors agree. Parents are supportive of the school and value its work. Parents are most pleased that their children like school, are expected to work hard, are helped to become mature and responsible and behave well. The school strives hard to work closely with parents; however, parents' concerns regarding information on their children's progress on annual reports are valid. The reports contain information on attendance and pupils' attitudes to learning, but do not give parents or pupils the opportunity to comment on the year's work. Targets for the core subjects are woven into the text but are not specifically identified. Areas for development are not always clear and there are no national curriculum levels for parents to compare their child's progress against the national average.
38. Parents are very supportive of their children's learning at home. Many hear their children read and help with spellings. They frequently ask for extra work and help with set projects. The links with parents of hearing impaired pupils are very good. Children who are in the Foundation Stage settle into school very well. This is because induction procedures are so good and both parents and children are welcomed into school well before the children are due to start. Parents are actively encouraged to become involved in their children's learning and reading at home is already very well established. A large notice board in the nursery is very useful in informing parents what is going on in the different areas of learning. Links with parents who have children with hearing impairment or other special educational needs are generally very good. They are kept fully informed as to their child's progress and are encouraged to review individual education plans at the formal meetings and at other times if necessary.

39. Parents are kept well informed on general issues through regular newsletters, topic information, PTA letters, the notice board and meetings. Parents are invited to meetings before children start school, on consultation evenings and meetings regarding national tests and curriculum information evenings, all of which are well attended. The school prospectus and Governors' Annual Report to Parents are satisfactory but lack full attendance details.
40. Parents have a very good involvement in the work of the school. Several help on a regular basis with supporting reading, general class help, organising the Book Club and with swimming and other visits. Additionally, help has been given to re-decorate the school and to create a nursery garden. Some parents come in to speak on curriculum topics, including a nurse, a journalist, and a local historian. The school has a waiting list of parents interested in becoming a governor. A thriving Parent Teacher Association (PTA) hosts a range of social and fundraising events, the main ones being the Christmas Bazaar and Summer Fete. These are supported very well and raise substantial funds for the school. Monies collected are carefully used to provide trips and resources including books, computer equipment and many other useful items. The PTA is presently looking to support the library/ICT extension by purchasing resources not covered by grants.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, supported well by strong commitment from the governing body and all staff, has led the school successfully through a period of challenging changes including considerable staffing issues and the overall standards pupils attain are higher than at the time of the previous inspection. She has worked determinedly to establish effective practices and provides clear educational direction for the school. This is reflected in the comprehensive school development plan, which drives priorities forward successfully. Subject co-ordinators and other key staff are very clear about the expectations placed upon them and the headteacher provides good support and guidance in order to help them succeed in their roles. The school ensures a caring and secure learning environment where children are encouraged to achieve well.
42. A particular improvement is the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance. Information gathered through the various monitoring strategies is used well to make improvements in the curriculum. Most subject co-ordinators, along with the headteacher, have had good opportunities to monitor provision and hence raise standards. The information they gather, as they review their areas of responsibility, is shared with all staff. However, the school has endured considerable staff changes in the last two years, but even more specifically this year. This has resulted in some new co-ordinators being established and some of them have had very limited opportunities to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and standards. Plans are in place to address this in the next term. Areas for improvement are identified and acted upon effectively in the school's performance management procedures, which identify particular objectives for development for individual members of staff. Classroom assistants are to be fully integrated into this successful process next year and many of them already have good opportunities to access training to support them in their work in the classrooms. They value the very good opportunities they are given to discuss their work alongside the full teaching team and feel fully integrated in the day to day work of the school. Every encouragement is offered to help them identify strategies that allow individual and groups of pupils to make the best progress possible. Induction procedures for the numerous new teachers that join the school are very good. Subject co-ordinators ensure planning, that is consistent with the school's procedures, is shared with new staff in order to minimise any effect on pupils' learning and progress as far as possible. Whilst the analysis of data and other information is very good, much of this is carried out manually by the headteacher. The school's range of technology is not deployed effectively to conduct administration tasks efficiently and where all staff have access to the information gathered.
43. The management of the special needs provision by the headteacher is effective and helps to ensure pupils progress at a similar rate to their classmates. The headteacher fulfils all the administration duties diligently. However, individual education plans do not include very

specific targets, and some pupils regularly miss whole school assemblies to undertake individual work with teachers and learning assistants. There are very few pupils with English as an additional language but their progress is monitored well and they are given the help they require to make progress in line with their peers.

44. The headteacher, teacher in charge of the resource base for the hearing impaired pupils and the LEA provide a very effective team to manage provision. There is very good provision with a qualified specialist teacher, nursery nurses and educational communicators for the number of hearing impaired pupils in the school. They have very good communication skills such as signing, to cater for the range of pupils' needs, including those with cochlea implants. Teachers and classroom assistants receive very effective guidance and training from the specialist teacher to enable them to very effectively support hearing impaired pupils.
45. The governors fulfil their statutory duties well. There are a few minor omissions in their Annual Report to parents and the school prospectus regarding detailed attendance information. Governors are very supportive of the school and make sure that the agreed policies are in place. They have a well organised structure for looking at all aspects of the school's work, and offer critical advice and guidance where necessary to ensure the school continues to enjoy high standing within the community. They have worked hard to secure sufficient funds to develop the new ICT facility and resources area that is ear-marked for shared community access. They understand the school's strengths well and recognise the hard work the headteacher has made to improve the school since the last inspection. Governors play an effective role in shaping the direction of the school through their involvement in policy development and in identifying priorities for improvement in the school development plan. They have every confidence that staff are working well as an effective team to provide pupils with good quality learning experiences. A very small minority of parents complains that the school has not effectively handled specific concerns they have raised. Appropriate complaints procedures are clearly stated in the school's documentation but not followed through effectively in these instances. The vast majority of parents are very happy with the way the school conducts its business.
46. The school has a good number of teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum and pupils' needs. Effective use is made of peripatetic teachers and other support staff to add value to the work of the school. The school has a very good number of well-trained classroom assistants who support pupils in and out of lessons very effectively. Administrative support in the school is good and most parents feel they are welcome if they have any queries or problems.
47. The accommodation is good with good improvements having been made since the last inspection. There are now no health and safety hazards as reported in the previous inspection report. The present library, although adequate is a thoroughfare and not conducive to quiet reading. Plans are in place to address this during the summer break. Facilities for the disabled are good. The grounds are extremely spacious, pleasant and well maintained, and attractive displays of their work throughout the school remind pupils of what they have achieved effectively. An environmental area is planned to include a pond area to provide pupils with a wider range of habitats to explore.
48. The school is well equipped for most areas of the curriculum. These resources are generally of good quality and are used well to support teaching and learning for all pupils. Pupils with hearing impairment have very good resources and equipment to support their very good progress. There are some areas that are in need of improved resources and the school is addressing these. For example, there are only eight computers in the ICT suite. This means it cannot be used for whole class lessons, although computers in classrooms supplement provision. Overall resources for children who are in the Foundation Stage are good, but there is a lack of large climbing and balancing apparatus and this deficit restricts overall progress.
49. Financial planning is of a very good standard. The headteacher has very effectively established procedures to appraise carefully, all new initiatives in relation to likely costs and implications for the school. Financial management is very carefully linked to development planning and the educational needs of the pupils. The small number of specific grants the school receives are used fully for their intended purpose, such as creating an environmental area and improving and

extending the library, which is to be undertaken in the near future. The school's finances however, were placed under considerable pressure by the sudden high staff turnover in the past year, which left the budget for supply teaching severely overspent. However, the headteacher handled this very effectively, and as a consequence, the school has a small carry forward.

50. The school applies the principles of best value very well. In particular, the headteacher very carefully analyses performance and uses data very effectively to evaluate the standards that pupils are achieving and to target where improvements are needed. This has resulted in an improvement in national curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 and good and sometimes very good levels of achievement in relation to pupils' ability when they start in the nursery. Parents have been effectively involved in the consultation regarding the new development of the ICT facility for community use and this provision will benefit pupils in the school when not being used by adults from the local area. Together with the governing body, she has a very clear understanding, and well thought out rationale, for ensuring the school achieves good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51. **The school is effective in delivering a good standard of education to its pupils. In order to improve further the staff and governors should:**

Ensure that the children in the Foundation Stage, who have birthdays in the summer term, are prepared as well as others in their same year group before they enter Year 1.
(*See particularly paragraphs: 3, 15, 20, 22, 29, 33, 51, 52*)

Minor Issues:

- Ensure all subject co-ordinators have opportunities to monitor teaching in their areas of responsibility. (*paragraphs: 41, 77, 89, 92, 98, 107*)
- Make better use of technology in the school to support teaching and administration procedures. (*paragraphs: 29, 41*)
- Improve the quality of pupils' progress reports to ensure targets are shared clearly with parents. (*paragraph: 36*)
- Ensure the Governors' Annual Report to parents and the school prospectus contain all the relevant data on attendance. (*paragraphs: 38, 44*)
- Improve resources in religious education, ICT software, books for the library, and large play equipment for children in the Foundation Stage. (*paragraphs: 59, 65, 95, 107*)
- Ensure assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are consistent in all classes. (*paragraphs: 32, 52*)
- Ensure all pupils participate in collective worship unless parents request otherwise. (*paragraph: 25*)
- Improve the quality of the targets in the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. (*paragraphs: 3, 42*)
- Ensure issues and concerns raised by parents are dealt with effectively. (*paragraphs: 36, 44*)
- Ensure policies are updated appropriately for all subjects. (*paragraph: 22*)
- Provide further opportunities for pupils to take more responsibility in the day to day work of the school. (*paragraph: 9*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	48

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	20	26	6	0	0	0
Percentage	9	35	46	10	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	50	277
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	56

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	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	40	33	73

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	35	37
	Girls	33	33	33
	Total	66	68	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (94)	93 (94)	96 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	35	37
	Girls	33	33	33
	Total	67	68	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (90)	93 (100)	96 (98)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	267	0	0
White – Irish	3	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	397.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	125
Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	154
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6.8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	825725
Total expenditure	824193
Expenditure per pupil	2882
Balance brought forward from previous year	14685
Balance carried forward to next year	16217

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	12
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	10
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.4
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	260
Number of questionnaires returned	102

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	34	4	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	45	47	3	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	49	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	44	18	5	8
The teaching is good.	43	49	1	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	53	16	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	37	5	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	44	1	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	32	46	16	1	5
The school is well led and managed.	55	39	1	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	51	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	39	22	1	16

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

52. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and children achieve well as a result. All children are admitted into the nursery in the term in which they are four. Most are admitted part time initially. The oldest children have two years in school before moving to Year 1, but the youngest children have one-year part time and one full time term. Children move to reception classes on a termly basis but the younger, summer born children remain in the nursery until they are old enough to transfer to Year 1. Children are constantly changing classes and this makes co-ordination of the Foundation Stage difficult. Currently, reception age children are in three different classes. The oldest are in a class with younger Year 1 pupils. The next group is in a very small reception class. The youngest, summer born children stay in the nursery until they enter Year 1. As a consequence, these children do not have as wide a range of experiences as their older peers do. Although they make good progress in the time available to them, they do not generally achieve the same levels of attainment as the older reception children. Children with special educational needs and any who learn English as an additional language are identified very quickly and supported well in order to make good progress. Baseline assessments in the nursery are detailed, although do not always follow the same procedures as adopted by the reception classes. The information is used to steer children's learning effectively.
53. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a clear view of the developments that are required. She has already started to make a number of appropriate improvements including ensuring good quality resources are available to support all areas of the curriculum effectively. Currently, she teaches a Year 2 class for three days a week and this has restricted her involvement in managing the Foundation Stage. For example, she has not monitored teaching and learning in all the classes. She has observed the youngest reception age children and as a result planning has been adapted to give them more structured experiences to accelerate their learning.

Personal Social and emotional development

54. Children in both the nursery and reception classes achieve very well in this area because of the very good teaching that they receive. The vast majority well exceed the early learning goals in this aspect. Provision in this area is a strength and a friendly atmosphere prevails. Children arrive punctually and are keen to get started on a good range of activities provided. Some younger children are reluctant to leave their parents or carers but with sensitive staff intervention soon settle well. Children are polite and say please and thank you at appropriate times, following very good examples set by the adults who work with them. They are encouraged to be independent and make choices in their activities. As a result, older children have a very high degree of independence. Relationships are very good and they work together well in pairs and in small groups, happily sharing their equipment. Staff interact purposefully with children, encouraging and supporting them in their work and showing them how to help each other. Behaviour is very good. Children are involved in the drawing up of class rules that are consistently applied by all staff, for example, not shouting out and taking turns. Children's views are listened to and they feel valued. They are very attentive and very caring of each other and very keen to take responsibility around the class. They show pleasure when they are successful and enjoy praise and celebration of their achievements. They also begin to appreciate the values and beliefs of others, for example, when they retell familiar stories from the Bible and when they consider ceremonies from different places.

Communication, language and literacy

55. Teaching and learning in this area of development are consistently good. Teachers' planning is very good and is delivered enthusiastically. Teachers share very clear learning objectives so that children are very clear as to what they have to do. Children make good and sometimes very good progress and exceed the learning goals successfully by the time they enter Year 1. Children in the nursery are articulate and eager to describe their experiences in good detail, for example, an aeroplane journey. There is a very good emphasis on teaching new vocabulary and children

enjoy exploring language. They respond very well to the very good opportunities that are provided for them to speak, for example, when they thoughtfully discuss the role of the lighthouse keeper. They listen sensibly when other children are talking and are eager to add their own bits to the discussion. Older children develop very good listening skills and confidently join in discussion with a good range of vocabulary especially those that work in the mixed age Reception/Year 1 Class. Occasionally, good opportunities to further develop speaking skills are missed when teachers only ask questions of children who offer to present information.

56. Children of all abilities enjoy books and stories and the youngest nursery children describe, in simple terms, what has happened in stories they have recently heard. They enjoy listening to stories because of the expressive way that these are read and engage their interest. The oldest reception children are competent independent readers. They talk about stories they have read in a very mature manner, recognising features such as characters and plots. They have a good phonic knowledge and some use this skill to sound out unfamiliar words. Standards are above average, and for a significant number they are well above average. Children in the nursery make a good start to writing because they have many good opportunities to engage in writing tasks and independent writing practice. Older reception children, as a result of this good practice, become competent independent writers and standards are above average. They all learn to write their names independently and the majority write interesting sentences clearly and legibly and use punctuation accurately. Children of all ability levels and ages make good, often very good progress, including those with special educational needs. In particular, the progress of children with hearing impairment, who are in the Foundation Stage, is very good. This is because targets in their individual education plans are so well matched to need and because they receive very good quality support. Younger reception children however, although they have made good progress with their reading and writing, are not as advanced as older peers. This is because they have had less time in school and overall they achieve standards that are average.

Mathematical development

57. Most children start in nursery with average standards. They make very good progress and their work shows that by the time they are ready to enter Year 1, the majority attain standards that are above expectations, sometimes well above. Teaching is well organised and challenging. It ensures activities are very practical and interesting. Well thought through tasks result in nursery children accurately counting objects to 5 then 10 and carefully weighing objects using balances. Younger nursery children play enthusiastically with support staff to count and buy items in the shop and accurately add and subtract and record items to 10 and beyond. They count on and back confidently and identify numbers that are before/after given numbers. Because expectations are high, children respond well. They are helped to gain confidence and enjoy exploring aspects such as regular shapes and colours and learning to tell time accurately. Adults intervene frequently to question and challenge children and the levels of attention individual children have ensures they work effectively to achieve well. Occasionally, when children are getting all the answers right, teachers do not fully challenge them to try bigger numbers. When they experiment with different sized containers to see which will hold more or less, older reception children begin to use relevant vocabulary, for example, “overflowing”, and “too full”. Adults encourage accurate use of new words to ensure technical vocabulary is retained effectively. All children gain a good knowledge of number rhymes and songs, which they sing enthusiastically as they consolidate their learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

58. Children enter nursery with skills that are in line with expectations, and sometimes better, in this area of learning. Teaching is very good. Staff carefully build on what children already know and by the end of reception, the majority of children have skills that exceed expectations. ICT skills are developed well and younger children control the mouse appropriately and work independently to create recognisable pictures and shapes patterns, write their own names and record work from their mathematical tasks. Nursery age children develop good scientific skills and become aware, for example, of the world around them when they discuss objects in gardening magazines, identify plants and flowers that they know, then plant seeds in the attractive outside garden. Staff help them investigate how materials change, for example, when ice cubes melt. They learn to sort materials into recognisable groups and a good emphasis is placed on them giving sensible

reasons for their decisions. High expectations promote thinking and encourage the children to explain their thoughts to others, and this enhances their maturity to use language effectively. Activities regularly link ideas from one area of learning to another effectively. For example, children explore light, and read stories about lighthouses so that each bit of learning reinforces understanding and awareness effectively. Reception age children carefully record the results of investigations to find out, for example, how many objects a magnet will pick up or how quickly different seeds grow. Children learn how things change over time when they compare themselves as babies to how they are now. Staff use ideas that children can identify with and relate to, wherever possible to ensure best progress for all ability groups.

Creative development

59. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is also good. Staff take great trouble to prepare activities that excite and interest children. New work is presented very effectively and engages children's attention well. For example, nursery children study and reflect on the shapes and colours of large shells and become totally absorbed, delighted and fascinated all at the same time. They show real excitement as new challenges are introduced and learning often makes a good contribution to their spiritual development. They are shown how to explore things in close detail and effectively reproduce their observations in their drawings and paintings. They mix colours well to paint bold and interesting models of different transport and explore a variety of materials, for example, to create an exciting seaside collage. Colourful self-portraits illustrate the attention they pay to detail and accuracy. Sensitive interventions give children the confidence to persevere even when unfamiliar procedures are introduced. Older children develop manipulative skills well by weaving patterns with black and white paper linked to their project on 'light and dark'. Children enjoy musical activity and learn a good range of songs and rhymes, which they sing tunefully. Nursery age children enjoy exploring the sounds that percussion instruments make, often working independently of any adult help as they practice previous learning. Older children accurately clap and tap out rhythms and sustain accuracy even when transferring to shrugging shoulders and or shaking hands.

Physical development

60. Teaching and learning in this area is good and children of all abilities achieve expected levels in this area. They have many opportunities to engage in vigorous physical activity, which they thoroughly enjoy. Improving provision was a priority for the school and much has already been done. More good quality equipment has been purchased and a large outdoor storage area has been erected in the nursery. There is still room for improvement. Children have great fun playing on wheeled toys to ensure they develop a good sense of control and balance. Staff show them how to be aware of others as they chase around and this also helps them consider the ways they should respect the needs of others. The school recognises that there is insufficient large climbing and balancing apparatus for children in the nursery to develop skills of co-ordination, balance, confidence and control and this also restricts progress. Older reception age children benefit from using apparatus in their PE lessons in the hall and small apparatus in games lessons outside. For example, in a good lesson children confidently engaged in warm-up and explained the reasons for this. They all displayed good spatial awareness and tried hard to keep control of a bat and ball. Staff are very encouraging and supportive at all times. Fine motor skills develop well, for example when children handle scissors appropriately to cut out shapes. Children with special educational needs are fully included in all physical activities. Communicators for children with hearing impairment give very good support in ensuring that children fully understand what is expected of them.

ENGLISH

61. Standards reported in the previous inspection for pupils in Year 2 have been maintained. Inspection findings show that reading standards are well above average and standards in writing, above average, and this concurs with the results of the 2002 National tests and assessments. The school's efforts to raise standards in writing have been successful, and more pupils are now attaining the higher levels than in previous years. This pattern is repeated in all year groups and

by the end of Year 4, standards in English are well above average overall for pupils of that age. Standards in writing are above average, and this remains the weakest element of the subject. All groups of pupils in the school, including pupils with special educational needs and the small number of pupils speaking English as an additional language, achieve very well in relation to their ability when they started in the nursery. Hearing-impaired pupils, because of the very good individual support, are fully included in lessons and make very good progress in all areas of the English curriculum.

62. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is well above average. Teachers provide many very good opportunities for pupils to discuss a wide range of issues and topics so that in all year groups, pupils speak confidently in a range of different contexts. Pupils in the school are very articulate and enjoy talking about their work and they have an expressive and varied vocabulary. In Year 2, for example, pupils enthusiastically discussed the relative merits of different books written by Roald Dahl, more able pupils clearly explaining why they liked his style of writing. Teachers are very adept at questioning in order to bring out the best in pupils' responses and many opportunities are planned for pupils to act in role. As a result, as pupils move through the school they are increasingly able to justify their opinions and they have mature ideas about a range of topics such as bullying. For example, their ideas, in response to a book written by Anne Fine, showed that they have a deep concern for the issues in the book. They listened very carefully to each other's ideas about how the angel in the story might help the victims and responded thoughtfully. The good discussions also supported pupils' moral development very effectively.
63. Standards in reading are also well above average by the end of Year 2 and 4. Much of this is due to the very good teaching of basic skills and the very effective way that teachers challenge pupils to recognise the underlying meaning in the stories and refer to the text to support their thinking. Very good parental support, interesting resources and the very positive attitudes pupils have to reading are also significant factors in the high standards attained. By the end of Year 2, the most able pupils are reading fluently with expression, and they have a high level of understanding. Less able pupils also enjoy reading and are able to read unfamiliar words using a range of strategies, although they do not always understand the words and do not check the meaning. By the end of Year 4, most pupils read with fluency, accuracy and expression. More able and average attaining pupils read beyond the literal meaning and have a very good knowledge of a range of authors, and can compare their styles. Lower attaining pupils also enjoy reading. Because they have a range of books that interest them at a level that they can read, they become confident readers. However, they tend not to check if what they are reading makes sense, and this impacts on their understanding of the plot and hence the standards they attain.
64. By the end of Year 2 and 4, pupils attain standards in writing that are above the national expectations. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities to write in a variety of styles and they are given clear guidance about how to put a story together for example, and this impacts positively on the standards they attain. By the end of Year 2, pupils' spelling is good because of the interesting way in which this is taught. Higher attaining pupils write at length and use a very good range of vocabulary well to gain the interest of the reader. For example, one piece started "It was the middle of the dark freezing night, I woke up with a knock on the door" before continuing with a detailed and interesting story that had a clear theme throughout. By the end of Year 4, many pupils have a good grasp of how to use punctuation imaginatively to bring their writing to life, spelling is good and many pupils sustain their ideas and write interesting accounts that emphasise a developing sense of plot and character. All pupils are encouraged to use expressive vocabulary, and generally make good starts to their writing. Following the school's recent emphasis on improving writing, pupils' ability to write extended pieces of work is improving. However, the main reason that standards in writing are not as high as other aspects of the subject is because lower attaining pupils are unable to sustain their ideas after an interesting start. In addition, many are too reliant on classroom assistants to help them with spellings for example, and as a result, do not gain confidence to work unaided.
65. The quality of teaching is very good and there are many strengths. Basic skills are taught very effectively, in a fun and lively manner. Teaching is challenging, and pupils are very clear about what is expected of them. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and their love of books,

language and teaching methods enables them to use skilled questioning in class and to instill in pupils a love and interest in the subject. Marking is good, and is at its best when it celebrates pupils' efforts, but at the same time provides pointers for development. For example, in one book a teacher wrote, 'what a wonderful story, but perhaps you could think about...' before setting a target for future work. The pupil who went on to write an improved piece of work had clearly taken this comment on board. Classroom assistants are used very effectively to support lower attaining pupils. In particular, communicators for the hearing impaired pupils, work quietly and unobtrusively, which ensures that these pupils are not disadvantaged and are fully included in all aspects of the lessons. Where teaching is not as strong, activities are not always planned carefully enough to match the ability of lowest attaining pupils, who then become restless. Resources to help their independence are not always readily available, as a result they are too reliant on the classroom assistants to complete the tasks.

66. The leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject through her monitoring of lessons and pupils' work. She identified that writing is an aspect requiring further development and recent initiatives introduced, are beginning to have a positive impact on the pupils' attainment. Although pupils have a range of opportunities to write in other subjects, and increasingly use information and communication technology for research and recording, she sensibly recognises that these opportunities are often incidental. To raise standards further, she recognises a need to identify and plan the development of literacy skills in other subjects systematically, so pupils have increased opportunities to apply their skills. The library is used well by pupils to undertake personal research, however many of the books are old and outdated and the information in these books is not always current.

MATHEMATICS

67. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 4 are well above expected levels for their ages and abilities and their progress is very good. This indicates good improvement since the previous inspection where standards were identified as good. Generally, pupils enter Year 1 having achieved the early learning goals for their mathematical development. They make very good progress in all areas of mathematics, especially in using and applying their mathematical knowledge into the wider curriculum. They use their problem solving skills in subjects such as science, history and design and technology. They understand mathematical questions and use vocabulary well to show their developing reasoning skills. Pupils of all abilities, including those whose mother tongue is not English and those with special educational needs, including those with a hearing impairment achieve very well, with regular and effective support provided for those pupils who require it. The grouping of pupils by ability from Year 2 has contributed greatly to these very high standards. Teachers plan work that very accurately matches and challenges all pupils appropriately.
68. Teaching is very good and lessons are interesting and very interactive. Using the outline of the national numeracy programme, pupils daily 'wake up' their mathematical awareness with a range of mental activities. Using enjoyable but challenging counting games such as identifying odd and even numbers, looking for patterns in groups of numbers including the pairs of numbers to make 10, 20 and even 100, counting forwards and backwards in 4's and 9's, pupils have fun. They understand the usefulness of having mental agility rather than always needing to have pencil and paper to work out problems. The short, formal, whole group teaching that follows the mental warm up is well used by teachers to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the rest of the mathematics curriculum. Similarly good plenary sessions are used to question pupils to check that the intended learning has been achieved. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1, for example, were learning the vocabulary of mass, using uniform but non-standards units of measure such as plastic cubes to weigh and compare the weight of different items such as the guinea pigs' carrots, toothbrushes and packs of cards. This practical approach helped pupils visualise what they were learning, and make clearer sense of it. Pupils in Year 2 link word problems to money, writing equations to represent their spending and change from 50p, £1.00 and for the more able, £2.00 and because their literacy skills are good, they express their sums very accurately. By Year 3, pupils read a range of scales and link them to the capacity of different containers, they learn to keep several pieces of information in their heads and organise and use the data in different ways

including identifying different lines of symmetry of simple shapes. Teachers provide them with relevant opportunities, in science for example, to apply this practice. By the time pupils are in Year 4, they plot and read co-ordinates and work out the compass directions to navigate between places, for example, the camping area, the mountain and the forest. This session was particularly enjoyable as pupils ended with a blank piece of squared paper to write their teacher a coded message using what they had learned about co-ordinates.

69. Teachers consistently plan practical and investigative approaches to make learning relevant and pupils understand how and why, for example, particular patterns operate. Pupils' recorded work and evidence from displays round the school confirm the broad and challenging curriculum offered as well as the use of mathematics across the curriculum. Year 3 pupils, for instance, had used their skills well to design Tudor mazes and symmetrical gardens as well as comparing coins and their values with today's money. Work on symmetry and reflection, especially when using the work of artists such as Monet appears in art, while tally charts, frequency tables and graphs record science and geography work. Even the youngest pupils show their mathematical knowledge with repeating shape patterns and colours onto caterpillars, linking their science work to their work in mathematics. Information and communication technology (ICT) also supports work in mathematics. Pupils have a range of programs to enable them to practise skills, while the learning support assistant for ICT based in the small suite develops pupils' control and manipulative skills using a 'roamer' (a mobile computer unit) and logo programmes.
70. The quality of teaching is very good overall, especially for older pupils. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and plan pupils' work very effectively. They use day to day evaluations of pupils' progress very carefully to ensure pupils progress well. Teachers plan very effectively in year groups and, they also have very good access to the highly knowledgeable co-ordinator, to ensure they challenge the learning of all pupils. This is especially effective in challenging higher attaining older pupils within their sets. Teachers plan a range of activities that ensures basic skills are well established and manage pupils extremely well, so that the behaviour of the very few who have problems, is effectively supported and does not interfere with the learning of others. As a result of very high quality teaching pupils, make very good progress in acquiring skills and understanding. They put some considerable effort into their work, work purposefully and at a very good pace. Because teachers share the objectives of lessons with pupils, they develop very good knowledge of what pupils have learned and pupils have confidence to use their skills in the wider curriculum.
71. The co-ordinator provides excellent subject leadership. She has guided teachers, new to the school, through the national numeracy project requirements and ensures that the school's aims of high standards are reflected in the work in this subject. The co-ordinator has oversight of all the assessments of pupils' progress both statutory and within the school. From these and an analysis of teachers needs from in class observations and support she is able to draw up training to support and develop the quality of teaching further. Her commitment to improving the subject and her ability to prioritise to develop teachers' knowledge and understanding further are reflected in the actions she takes. For example, the budget is used to purchase resources necessary to support teaching effectively, and she has regular opportunities to work alongside teachers in their classrooms to support and develop their confidence and skills further.

SCIENCE

72. Pupils' standards of attainment in science at the end of Years 2 and 4 are well above average. The results in the National teacher assessments in 2002 for pupils at the end of Year 2 were also well above average, because a very good number of pupils attain the higher level 3. This good improvement since the last inspection has been brought about by a continued improvement in teaching, particularly assessment and target setting, a high emphasis on developing pupils' skills of investigation and the effective use of resources to stimulate interest and enthusiasm for science.
73. Pupils' overall response to the stimulating and interesting activities that their teachers plan for them is always good and often in very good in higher quality lessons. Pupils of all abilities

achieve well, and the higher attaining pupils make very good progress especially in their ability to apply prior learning when considering new situations. Pupils listen to teachers' instructions and information attentively, and are eager to take part in discussions and activities. In a good lesson in Year 2, they examined details such as leaf and stem structure accurately to describe physical features such as hairs, veins and spikes. Previous work shows that there is a good continuous development of scientific knowledge throughout the school. By the end of Year 2, the great majority of pupils understand that materials change when heated, and that ice melts and turns back to water. They know that water when heated turns to steam and when cooled changes back. The highest attaining pupils say that condensation has occurred, for example, because steam has landed on cold surfaces and gone back to water. Through investigations, they explain that change can be reversed sometimes, for example, when chocolate melts, but not when bread is toasted. Pupils of all abilities distinguish between living and non-living objects and the highest attaining pupils identify similarities and differences between plants and animals. They construct a simple circuit to light a bulb and fully understand the danger electricity might present in the home.

74. Pupils' interest is maintained in Years 3 and 4 through well planned resourceful activities that challenge and enthuse them. Pupils in Year 3 have a good understanding of transparent, translucent and opaque materials, with all pupils giving good examples of materials that have these properties. A very successful lesson in Year 4 built on pupils' previous learning very effectively to establish how materials can be separated using different filtration and sieving techniques. They knew some materials dissolve and apply relevant technical vocabulary confidently when describing investigations they have carried out. The high emphasis placed on learning knowledge and information through investigations helps pupils understand why things happen as they do. This high level of thinking that is promoted throughout the school, but more especially in the older classes encourages pupils to solve problems by exploring their ideas rather than being told facts. Pupils' investigation skills are well above average for their age and they are confident in exploring their own predictions and hypotheses fairly and accurately. For example, in a good lesson in Year 3, pupils explored the school grounds carefully to consider where they might plant particular plants successfully. The lesson gave pupils very good opportunity to think through the practical issues step by step, and explain the reasons for their answers, linking their knowledge of local and global climates in their reasoning. Pupils have a clear understanding of fair testing, and confidently design tests considering variables carefully.
75. The overall quality of teaching is good, with a high proportion of very good teaching. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The best teaching is characterised by challenges that encourage pupils to think and puzzle things out logically using information they already know. Teachers encourage them to find out and explain their ideas in their groups as well as in whole class discussions. They build into their teaching opportunities that encourage collaboration and the sharing of expertise. Teachers make effective use of their own subject knowledge in the way they frame questions to encourage all groups of pupils to explain and expand their ideas and opinions. They are skilful at targeting the right question to the right pupil so that all contribute in a meaningful way to the lesson. For example, pupils with special educational needs are always fully involved through the good support they receive from teachers, communicators and peers. Pupils benefit tremendously from the introduction of national guidelines for the teaching of skills and knowledge. This has resulted in a systematic and progressive development of skills through a wide range of investigations pupils undertake. Activities are planned well to challenge pupils' thinking and the overwhelming majority of pupils respond positively. Teachers try hard to ensure pupils understand the relevance of what they are learning, for example, to healthy living when looking at foods and diets, and links to the school's good personal, social and health programme are promoted well throughout the science curriculum.
76. The well-qualified co-ordinator, who is relatively new to the post, understands what needs to be done to monitor work across the school further. As yet there has been little monitoring of teaching in science. Very good systems of assessment are in place to monitor individual pupils' progress effectively in order to set targets. Teachers make good use of pupils' skills in literacy in discussion and written work, numeracy and ICT skills, for example, in the use of graphs to record data from investigations. Resources are good in quality and quantity and are used well to support teaching and learning.

ART AND DESIGN

77. Standards of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 4 are above those expected nationally for their age. The quality of work seen throughout the school is good and there is good emphasis given for pupils to experience the wider range of art forms, such as modelling with clay, the construction of 3D forms and the exploration and decoration of fabrics using print techniques of various complexities. Pupils of all abilities achieve well and enjoy exploring new skills and techniques. Progress is good throughout the school and pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to explore the subject.
78. Pupils apply a wide range of materials to create texture and depth to their work throughout the school. Particularly striking is the time given to develop pupils' observational skill, so that they draw or model artefacts in close detail. This element is exploited well throughout and pupils develop a very good level of patience and persistence, for example, when working on paint and pastel images of fruits and plants. Attention to detail is re-iterated in their observational drawings in science, where, for example, in a lesson in Year 2, some pupils recognised the hairs on a stem altered in texture from top to bottom. Teachers provide pupils with lively experiences in colour blending and creating tones that pupils use to reflect light and shade, in their pencil and charcoal sketches in, for example, the work on drawing mushrooms and other still forms. The quality of portrait work is, for the highest attaining pupils, well above that normally seen from pupils of these ages. Teachers provide very good learning opportunities when they weave in design and technology and art tasks carefully to explore and extend pupils' understanding of how they can create their own styles. In a stunningly simple lesson in Year 2, pupils linked their science work on mini-beasts to create 3D models of various creatures having previously spent some time considering materials including, papier-mâché, clay, beads, and other materials. The final stage of decorating exemplified very effectively how much attention had been paid, for example, to plait a tail for the grasshopper to give it greater intricacy. Every pupil created their own designs and applied a wide range of skills well. Pupils' skills of painting and printing are very good. Teachers provide very good opportunities to explore monochromatic and three or more colour compositions both on paper and fabric, and in Year 4, the combination of printing, beadwork and design are reflected imaginatively in the African wall hangings they have created. The subject helps them appreciate cultural diversity effectively.
79. By the end of Year 4, pupils are enriched by a breadth of effectively taught skills and are well informed about different artistic styles and visual elements of colour, line and tone. They mix tertiary colours to create landscapes and explore patterns and crafts of other cultures and times. Pupils make effective use of ICT to generate images that reflect work covered through other media, for example, repeat pattern making to create symmetrical patterns for wrapping paper designs as well as general sketches of still forms. Sketchbooks are used very effectively to encourage pupils to take time to compose initial ideas before applying these to their work. In a very good lesson in Year 3, pupils used Edouardo Benedictus art-deco designs to explore fine details that might eventually lead to rich fabric patterns. The teacher's expertise skilfully guided them to explore colours and shapes of lines to create a complex effect as they considered fore and background shades that created greatest impact.
80. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subject and focus very effectively on core skills such as drawing and designing. Teachers demonstrate techniques clearly and help pupils evaluate their own work, thus providing detailed guidance before setting pupils off on independent work. Every effort is made to encourage individuality and confidence in expressing their own thoughts and ideas. Resources are used very effectively to inspire and guide pupils and a wide range of materials are used to help pupils consider which they feel best reflects the work they create. Pupils are eager to use their imagination and research the Internet for information about a range of artists. Wherever possible, teachers encourage collaboration and pupils discuss and seek ideas from their peers frequently. Time is given to evaluate their work and teachers encourage pupils sensitively to consider how they might develop or improve on what they create. Those pupils who need additional support work closely with the teaching assistants and the teacher. This careful attention enables them to progress as well as their peers.

81. There has been considerable improvement since the previous inspection when standards were satisfactory. Subject leadership is very good and all teachers respond well to areas for improvement identified from the monitoring of pupils' work. The curriculum is planned well and there are clear aims about the skills, knowledge and understanding for each year group. The co-ordinator's expertise and enthusiasm has given teachers greater inspiration to concentrate on the progressive development of skills throughout their teaching. The maintenance of art folders for pupils of different abilities is good, and standards are matched to national expectations to acknowledge achievement.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. By the end of Years 2 and 4 pupils' attainment is above the standards expected for their ages and abilities. The achievement of all pupils is good showing that the school has made good progress since the previous inspection where standards were identified as satisfactory for younger pupils and good for those older by the end of Year 4. Pupils with special educational needs including those with a hearing impairment along with those of higher ability and from homes where English is not the mother tongue also make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The deputy head teacher has ensured pupils make good progress by supporting teachers to deliver high quality lessons. Her temporary co-ordination of the subject has been very effective. The deputy has skilfully built on the policy, a scheme of work and planning as laid down by the co-ordinator by addressing staff training needs from her observations of teaching. As mentor to new staff, she has ensured a sharing of expertise by identifying good practice and taken the opportunity to work alongside teachers in their classes. The temporary co-ordinator has monitored teachers' planning and pupils' work well, taking the opportunity, when observing lessons, to discuss work with pupils and listening carefully to suggestions for improvements. The teachers use the national curriculum level descriptors to track pupils' progress. Leadership and management are very good.
83. Teachers plan together in year groups so that there is a consistent approach to the work across each year group. They ensure that the key skills, of planning and evaluating to help pupils identify designs that are effective are taught early on so that pupils learn to consider options and reason ideas out carefully. Pupils learn a good range of sewing and joining techniques and how to select from a good range of materials, that best fit the task. They explore winding mechanisms to enable 'Incy Wincy Spider' to climb up his water spout, make books using a range of mechanisms from 'pop up' to 'lever movements' and work with food materials to design menus linked to other curriculum areas such as science and physical education. Time is given for pupils to test their work and revisit their plans to modify and adapt. During the inspection, for instance, pupils in Year 1 looked at a range of playground equipment and designed and made their own models. They thought of the movement of each piece and the materials needed to ensure health and safety, including the surface under the equipment. Older pupils in Year 4 examined a range of money holders, considered different materials, joins and fastenings as well as shape and size. They evaluated their plans to improve their designs and tested for fitness of purpose. Links to subjects such as history and geography are incorporated well, with older pupils having made Viking Longboats and models of Viking villages while younger made puppets to re-tell favourite stories from their literacy work. Mathematics and ICT are applied well to support learning, with pupils using measuring and cutting skills on materials and researching designs using design programs and the Internet.
84. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers teach basic skills well and have high expectations that pupils will work carefully and thoughtfully, with due regard to their own and others' safety. Pupils put some considerable intellectual, physical and creative effort into their work, working productively and at a good pace. They have positive attitudes to their work and proudly draw the attention of visitors to their models, explaining how, for example, winding mechanisms work and how their vehicles have been constructed.

GEOGRAPHY

85. Pupils' attainment is above the expected national level for their age at the end of Year 2 and 4 and standards have improved since the previous inspection. All pupils including those with special educational needs, those speaking English as an additional language and hearing impaired pupils achieve well and make good progress.
86. By the end of Year 2, most pupils use map skills well in their work and construct detailed plans of the playground with different types of keys, for example. They confidently use maps and atlases, to locate places in the United Kingdom and have a good understanding of the physical and human features in the local area and of the contrasting seaside area of Tenby. They plan routes and talk confidently about ways to improve their local environment as a result of the interesting activities planned for them. Pupils build effectively on these skills and by the end of Year 4, most pupils locate places using two figure grid references, produce maps to identify land use and describe the human features of places studied. As a result, they increasingly realise how land is used in a variety of ways. Field Trips and the local area are used effectively to interest and enhance pupils' social, cultural and geographical skills and consequently through their studies of contrasting areas such as Milton Keynes and Stanton in Peak, and world climates, they understand how the different localities affect people's lives.
87. The quality of teaching is good and teachers are effective in promoting the use of technical vocabulary and basic skills well. Good use is made of the local area and trips farther a field to enhance pupils learning and understanding. As a result, pupils are interested in the subject and keen to research topics in their own time. However, although these are effective features, current curriculum planning does not allow for some topics to be taught in depth, as a result pupils recording of their work is not always well developed. In addition, often pupils work is not marked carefully enough to show them how to improve their knowledge and understanding. Consequently, the potential to raise standards further is not fully utilised.
88. The subject is led satisfactorily by an enthusiastic but only recently appointed co-ordinator, who has not yet had time to develop the curriculum. Nor has there been the opportunity to monitor teaching, learning or standards so as to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the provision. Individual teachers monitor pupils work informally although plans to improve assessment strategies are in hand.

HISTORY

89. Pupils' attainment is above the expected national level for their age at the end of Year 2 and 4 and standards have improved since the previous inspection. All pupils including those with special educational needs, those speaking English as an additional language and hearing impaired pupils are achieving well and are making good progress.
90. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a keen interest in the subject and have a good sense of chronology through, for example, comparing Victorian toys to those of today and sequencing Teddies in order of age. They use dates and key subject vocabulary with good understanding, when they compare seaside holidays in the past to their own experiences. Pupils continue to be greatly interested in the subject in Year 3 and 4, and talk enthusiastically, and with a good level of knowledge and understanding, about life in Tudor times, the periods of Roman, Viking and Anglo Saxon invasions, and how Toddington has changed over time. They research topics using a variety of sources and more able pupils understand the value of primary sources of evidence.
91. The quality of teaching is good, and teachers' own interest and enthusiasm for the subject and their good subject knowledge is used effectively to motivate and interest pupils. As a result, a good number of pupils choose to research topics at home without being asked. Teachers plan an interesting range of opportunities and use resources well to enhance teaching and learning. Visits to museums, the Roman town of Verulamium, for example, and visits from a local archaeologist, not only support learning but also effectively support pupils' cultural and social development. There are some good incidental opportunities planned for pupils to use their literacy skills, for

example to write letters as if they were Henry VIII, or present their research about Vikings to the class. The use of information and communication technology for research is also effectively developed and pupils engage with this facility very keenly. All these factors ensure standards are above average. However, there is the potential for standards to be higher. Current curriculum planning, for example, results in pupils studying all the invaders and settlers rather than selecting some to explore in depth. Thus pupils in Year 4 have a good factual knowledge of these topics, but they do not understand the difference between fact and opinion or have depth of understanding about the impact of the invaders on the life and culture of this country.

92. The subject is led by a recently appointed co-ordinator who has not yet had time to impact on the subjects' development. She has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. Assessments of how well pupils achieve remain largely informal but teachers know pupils well and guide them effectively. As she is not a subject specialist an appropriate training course has been booked to develop her skills and subsequently review the curriculum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

93. Standards are above those expected nationally for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 4. At the time of the previous inspection, attainment at the end of Year 2 was above national expected levels but broadly average for pupils in Years 3 and 4. There have been improvements in provision, such as developments in the curriculum, increased resources and staff training since the previous inspection. The school has extended the range of activities provided, and pupils have responded positively to these changes. All pupils have equal access to the suite regardless of age, ability or mother tongue. Those who are left-handed have mice switched to enable them to access programs with the fluency of their right-handed friends.
94. Teaching is good and pupils of all abilities make good progress. As the suite is small, with only eight computer units, it is not possible to directly teach skills to the whole class at one time. The school employs a highly skilled learning support assistant to work most of her time in the suite. She teaches pupils how to access and manipulate different computer facilities. She enables them to practice and develop their skills using a range of programs on the computer's hard drive, through opening CD ROM and teaches them how to use the Internet for research and send electronic mail. The school ensures Internet access is safely screened. Each classroom has at least one, and most classrooms have two, computers and peripheral equipment. Teachers ensure that the skills pupils learn in the suite are practiced within classrooms during lessons in different curriculum areas. Frequently, while the ICT support assistant is working with a group in the suite or on another piece of programmable equipment such as the 'roamer', the teacher in the classroom encourages pupils to extend what they have learned in their discrete ICT lessons. Six pupils in Year 4, for example, were working in the suite, learning to receive and send electronic mail to the nearby junior school. In the classroom, the rest of the class were consolidating their learning by comparing electronic mailing with other types of communication including using the post to send a letter, sending parcels using different carriers, using the telephone and facsimile machines and even messages in a bottle! Pupils in Year 2 use, for example, different research equipment and internet search engines to find out about mini-beasts, comparing the speed and ease of access between information on a CD ROM. and in an encyclopaedia. Pupils are skilled at using a mouse to highlight icons and passages on the screen, using a keyboard to write and insert pictures and diagrams using 'clip art' and drawing programs such as 'Dazzle' to make their work attractive. Pupils enter, save and exchange their ideas with others in the school and each classroom has a good display of pupils' work in different subject areas. Pupils' progress in ICT is monitored effectively. This information is used well by staff to plan lessons but does not impact at present on the medium term plans.
95. A new co-ordinator for ICT has been appointed recently and has very good expertise. The detailed action plan for the subject is focused on the building and equipping of a new suite to enable whole class teaching. A range of new hard and software will supplement the digital camera, microscope and the weather measuring equipment already on order. The suite is to be equipped with interactive white boards, more stable Internet access and build upon the risk analysis undertaken in the current suite.

MUSIC

96. Pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 4. This is similar to what was found at the time of the previous inspection, although a number of concerns were raised then regarding challenging pupils' listening and composition skills. These have been addressed satisfactorily. The school now employs a musician to deliver the entire music curriculum across the school. She does this successfully, is a very good role model for pupils, and makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. The quality of her teaching is good although time limited. Lessons are purposeful, ensuring that all pupils, including those with special educational needs are fully engaged in enjoyable music making. Lessons generally move at a good pace because of this and the behaviour of most pupils is good. Her time is supplemented by the teachers' own delivery of music with their classes. However, a significant number of teachers feel they have limited knowledge and some pupils say these lessons do not happen regularly. Teaching is satisfactory overall. The school does not fully benefit from the expertise of this visiting teacher because, during her sessions, most teachers take this as non-contact time. By removing themselves from her sessions individual teachers do not take the opportunity to learn from her, and hence improve their knowledge and skills in order to raise standards, hence pupils' overall progress is satisfactory.
97. Pupils' singing is enthusiastic and tuneful and enhanced by the good opportunities to sing in assemblies and concerts. Sometimes, however, older pupils cannot see the words of songs from the back of the hall and are unable to take a lead in singing. Older pupils have regular opportunities to choose the music for assemblies, but insufficient time is given for pupils to listen to their selection or to offer any observations regarding the quality of what they hear or the impact it has on them. Pupils benefit from the good skills they learn, for example, on posture and breathing control. They maintain good pitch and rhythm in their performance and fun, for example, when singing in rounds and parts. By the end of Year 2 pupils use a good variety of actions to accompany their singing. They have a good sense of rhythm. They concentrate well on their singing because the musician accompanies them so well with her guitar, and also because learning is engaging and fun. They perform a wide repertoire of songs from different times and cultures, for example, they hold a steady calypso beat accurately, and develop a good awareness of the different musical styles performed in a range of ages and countries. They are very excited by an Austrian yodelling song, choosing many different animals to supplement the verses.
98. Pupils in Year 4 describe the different types of music they listen to with interest. The range includes jazz, country and folk music, and African music. Recently they used tuned instruments to compose their own "Blues" songs after comparing the work of classical and jazz composers in themes, for example "Morning" by the Andrews Sisters and Greig. Pupils are encouraged to bring in their own instruments to accompany performances and say this makes music more interesting. They describe in detail how they evaluate each other's music, using appropriate terminology correctly. When learning some new songs for a performance at the middle school, they readily memorise and recall musical patterns and add their own clapping accompaniment enthusiastically. They enjoy music but sometimes, they say, lessons are marred because some older boys behave inappropriately and this spoils the occasion for others. In one lesson, pupils were concerned that a pupil with hearing impairment had not arrived and would miss the beginning of the lesson. They greeted him warmly when he did arrive and helped him to settle quickly. These pupils benefit enormously from the social and musical interactions they share with their peers.
99. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, although opportunities to monitor teaching are very limited. The musician delivers a good range of experiences to support pupils' learning and skills develop effectively throughout the school. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupil's spiritual, social and cultural development, particularly in provision for study of music from different genre and styles and from different cultures and times. The co-ordinator has also developed a brief assessment system that identifies talented pupils so they are encouraged to develop their musical talents further. Regular assessment for other pupils is informal. The school offers instrumental tuition in woodwind, brass and string. There is a very good uptake of these lessons and pupils' performance skills develop very effectively.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

100. The attainment of pupils is in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 4, as found in the previous inspection, but a number of improvements have been made regarding the concerns raised at that time. Pupils of all ability levels make good progress, including pupils with special educational needs. In particular, the inclusion of pupils with hearing impairment is very good because they are paired with peers who help them engage in all activities effectively. They receive very good support from communicators to ensure their full involvement.
101. By the end of Year 2 pupils experience a good range of physical activities. They demonstrate specific gymnastic skills such as “bunny hopping” well and hold balanced, star, curled and stretched shapes in the air appropriately. In games lessons, younger pupils work very hard to chase and dodge a partner, dribble a ball with a bat, and strike a ball from a stationary position and the guidance from the teachers and other adults is good. Sometimes, pupils are so engrossed in practising their skills they do not want to stop when the lesson ends. Teachers encourage them to gain confidence and try, although not all achieve success immediately. Pupils work co-operatively, are highly motivated and behaviour is very good. They are very excited about the forthcoming sports day and enjoy practising athletic skills of running, jumping and hopping. Resources are plentiful, enabling all pupils to be fully engaged in practical work.
102. By the end of Year 4 pupils successfully build on skills learned earlier. Pupils are motivated and interested in the “fun” activities that are prepared for them. They have good relationships with their teachers, and are eager to please and listen attentively to instructions, paying very good attention as to how to improve, for example, their jumping skills. Teachers demonstrate and pupils watch carefully asking and answering questions following their observations. Pupils are regularly called on to demonstrate good practice to classmates. In an excellent lesson in Year 3, pupils exclaimed with excitement as the teacher described the adventurous activity planned - negotiating a crocodile infested river using specific jumps they had learned. There was a tangible sense of fun and competition and pupils made excellent progress. Teamwork and co-operation feature regularly in lessons and pupils develop a good sense of ‘fair play’ through games such as ‘kwik cricket’. They apply their gymnastic skills well to perform interesting sequences of slow and languorous movements to cool down, displaying good posture and control. The majority of pupils swim at least 25 metres by the end of Year 4 and the school ensures all pupils have the opportunity to participate in swimming.
103. Teaching is good overall. Where teaching is most effective teachers have a very good subject knowledge and great enthusiasm for the subject, which is effectively communicated to pupils. Lessons are very well planned with a very good focus on developing and practising skills. Learning objectives are thoroughly shared with pupils, who show they are quite clear as to what they have to do. Lessons move at a good pace and no time is wasted. For example, changing time is used to discuss with pupils the reasons for warm-ups and other health and safety issues. Lessons are particularly effective where pupils are encouraged to demonstrate their skills and where other pupils evaluate them. This does not happen in all lessons however. Sometimes valuable time is wasted where pupils are allowed to queue up for a turn. Occasionally, limited class management strategies slow down the pace and hence pupils’ progress.
104. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She has helped the school through a period of considerable staff turbulence by ensuring lesson plans are available for all teachers. This provides continuity and progression in developing pupils’ skills. Monitoring has identified areas for further development including provision for dance. Staff training is good. For example, three teachers have attended a swimming course and give extra support for pupils learning to swim. Professional coaches have been brought in, not only to teach pupils specific skills, but also to train staff and this is having a positive impact on standards. Higher attaining pupils have successfully been encouraged to become involved in sporting activities in the community, such as playing for the local football team. Extra-curricular provision has been increased and includes some professional coaching to ensure that higher attaining pupils reach their full sporting potential. New assessment procedures enable teachers to track pupils’ progress but the full impact of these procedures on raising standards has yet to be realised.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

105. Pupils attain the levels expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Year 2 and make satisfactory progress. The curriculum for pupils in the infant classes is relatively new in its contents and has not been fully established. Pupils, at the end of Year 4, achieve above expected standards in relation to the Locally Agreed Syllabus. As a result of the strong teaching they receive in some of these classes, and the expectations being much higher to think and reflect on their own views and ideas about discrete faiths, their progress is good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from homes where English is not the mother tongue, enjoy their work and are fully involved in the wide curriculum, directed by the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The school has maintained the standards reported in the previous inspection.
106. By the end of Year 4, pupils understand how different occasions, special to a range of faiths, are celebrated and develop a good sense of diversity. They listen to a variety of stories and are aware of common elements such as people coming together, wearing special clothes, eating special foods, giving cards and presents and sharing stories. They know that most faith groups have naming ceremonies, special books, buildings, rites and faith leaders. In particular they know that the Bible is in two parts, that the Old Testament deals with God's relationship with the Hebrew or Jewish people and that the New Testament tells the story of Jesus and the growth of Christianity. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were thinking of new life. Having listened over the weeks to the creation story from the Bible, spring festivals such as Holi from the Hindu faith and Easter for Christians, the focus for the week was the Chinese New Year story. Having heard the story, pupils made small dragons from tissue and card to celebrate the naming of the years by the animal race across the river. Such detailed interest gives pupils a good awareness of beliefs and traditions in different cultures and countries and learning is satisfactory and often good because pupils' natural curiosity is raised. Younger pupils take themes such as bravery and listen to, enjoy and understand stories such as Daniel and the lions' den. They know that because he trusted his God, he was kept safe in a dangerous situation. As a consequence, pupils' ability to reflect on how these ideas apply to their own development is good. Older pupils have a more discrete curriculum, learning in detail about Christianity and Judaism. However, general topics linked to places of worship, feasts and festivals and worship brings in Sikhism, Hinduism and Islam, with pupils having the opportunity of learning of the faiths and lives of people from different backgrounds in Britain today.
107. Staff approach their teaching with sensitivity and consideration, respecting pupils' different backgrounds. Teaching is good overall. Teachers have good knowledge of the faiths and work hard to ensure learning goes deeper than factual knowledge into how belonging to a faith group influences lives. They ensure that basic skills such as the correct vocabulary for different ceremonies and artefacts are used as well as respect given to symbols of the faith. Pupils' written work is generally neat and well presented with carefully drawn illustrations. Pupils have positive attitudes, behave well and have good relationships one with another. From the underpinning themes they explore in religious education, they learn to show high respect and tolerance towards the differences between people from diverse faiths and cultures.
108. Subject management is satisfactory. The action plan for the subject has focused upon updating the policy in line with the recently published Locally Agreed Syllabus and the provision of books and artefacts to facilitate revisions to the curriculum. The co-ordinator has arranged visits to faith centres in the area and visits from a Rabbi and a vicar. Visits have been made to the synagogue, local churches, the Hindu centre and the Mosque in Luton. Assessment procedures, linked to the Locally Agreed Syllabus, are not yet established because they have only recently been published. Monitoring of pupils' work is currently informal but successful in recording pupils' attainment but limited time has been given to monitor teaching across the school.