

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FARNHAM ROYAL CHURCH OF ENGLAND COMBINED SCHOOL**

Slough

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110435

Headteacher: Mrs D Harmer

Reporting inspector: Mrs R S Rodger  
10347

Dates of inspection: 10-13 February 2003

Inspection number: 247004

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Road Farnham Royal Slough
Postcode:	SL2 3AW
Telephone number:	01753 644471
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J H H Bradley CBE
Date of previous inspection:	17 November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10347	Mrs R S Rodger	Registered inspector	History Geography	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils' taught? How well is the school led and managed? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
9399	Mr R Watts	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils?
30000	Mr J Tresadern	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Special educational needs	
11419	Mrs J Underwood	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Music	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
19774	Mrs M Docherty	Team inspector	English Art and design English as an additional language	Assessment
19897	Mr A Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Physical education Educational inclusion and racial equality	How good are the curricular and learning opportunities offered to the pupils?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Farnham Royal Combined school is situated on the northern outskirts of Slough in Buckinghamshire. Pupils attend the school from the catchment area of the parish of Farnham Royal. The parish includes affluent South Buckinghamshire and the more socially and economically mixed northern fringes of Slough, which is designated as an Education Action Zone. The school is above average in size with 365 pupils on roll, 186 boys, and 179 girls. The school has 15 classes, all of which are single aged. There are two classes for each year group. Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup> is below average. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is average. About one third of the pupils are from a range of culturally diverse backgrounds. One hundred and twenty two pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Fifty-two pupils have English as an additional language of whom eleven pupils are in the early stages of learning English and receive support to learn English. There are five Traveller pupils, one of whom receives support. The main languages spoken are Panjabi, Urdu, Gujarati and Hindi. Nineteen per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, including 11 pupils with statements of special educational need, which is well above the national average. Pupils have a range of special educational needs, including communication and interaction, cognition and learning, behaviour, emotional and social development and sensory and physical. Pupil mobility is above the median quartile. Thirty-three pupils joined the school and 24 left the school through the year. The school has had a considerable turnover of staff in the past two years; fourteen teachers left the school and fifteen have been appointed, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher. There are four overseas-trained teachers, including two who are working towards gaining qualified teacher status. Recruitment and retention of staff are ongoing problems for the school.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a good school with significant strengths in the vision and drive shown by the recently appointed headteacher. Pupils achieve very well in Years 1 and 2 and well in Years 3 to 6. Standards are above average in English throughout the school and in Years 1 and 2 in science. High attaining pupils are provided for well. The overall quality of teaching is good in Years 1 to 6 with significant strengths in Year 2. Pupils' attitudes, values, and personal development are very good. Behaviour is good. The school has very effective strategies for teaching literacy skills. The provision for out-of-school activities and the involvement with the local community are very good. The school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The headteacher is a very effective leader, well supported by the staff and the governing body.
- Standards in English are above average throughout the school.
- Standards in science have improved in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching is good throughout Years 1 to 6 and very good in Year 2.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning.
- Spiritual and social development is very good.
- A very good range of out of school activities, including performing arts, and involvement with the local community enhances the curriculum

#### **What could be improved**

- The provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The provision in the Foundation Stage.
- The accommodation when funds permit.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in 1997. Improvements to the school since the last inspection have been good. Attainment in information and communication technology has improved. Standards in art and design are now satisfactory. The school is now involved in a music, art, dance, and drama project. There is a systematic programme of checking teaching closely linked to priorities in the school improvement plan; this is having a good impact on improving the quality of teaching of reading and science which were given a high priority last term. The school improvement plan, compiled since the start of the year, is based on a detailed analysis of the strengths and

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<sup>1</sup> This is the stage between three and five years of age. The children in the school start in the reception class which is half way through the Foundation Stage.

weaknesses in the standards attained in the 2002 national tests; the plan, rightly, has the core task of raising standards at its heart. Issues related to the financial management of the school remain much the same.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	D	C	D
mathematics	C	D	D	D
science	C	D	E	E*

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

The results of the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 6 last year indicated in the table above were average in English and below average in mathematics and in the bottom five per cent of all school's nationally in science compared to similar schools<sup>2</sup>. Current standards show a good rate of improvement in English, which is now above average, very good improvement in science and a satisfactory rate of improvement in mathematics. Pupils achieve well throughout the school with very good achievement in English, mathematics and science in Year 2; this is because of very good teaching. The overall trend in attainment is broadly in line with the national upward trend in the past five years. Standards in Year 2 in the 2002 national tests exceeded national averages in reading and were average in writing and mathematics. An above average proportion of pupils attained the higher Level 3 in reading. Teacher assessment in science was above average by Year 2, but a below average proportion of pupils attained the higher Level 3, compared to similar schools. Current standards in geography, history, design and technology, art and design, music and physical education are average throughout Years 3 to 6. Current standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, writing, and science. They are average in mathematics and all other subjects. Achievement in information and communication technology is good. Standards in the Foundation Stage are below average in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. They are average in all other areas of learning. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily throughout the school. The pupils in the early stages of learning English generally make good progress and keep up with their peers in all subjects. Higher attaining pupils have their needs met effectively and make good progress. The school has set challenging targets for improvement for 2003. They have been reviewed since the start of the year. Pupils are on line to meet them at their current rate of progress in lessons.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are attentive and keen to learn. They are confident, concentrate and work hard. Bilingual pupils are proud of their linguistic achievement.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. In lessons and around school pupils generally behave very well. They listen and follow instructions attentively.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships are strong. Pupils show high levels of consideration for each other, especially to those with physical disabilities. Pupils are tolerant and supportive of those with other beliefs or from other cultures.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above average. The rate of absence is much lower than the national average. Pupils are punctual.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<sup>2</sup> Schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal.

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is very good in Years 1 and 2. It is good throughout Years 3 to 6. There are particular strengths in the teaching in a Year 6 and Year 2 classes. Praise is very effectively used to motivate and encourage pupils. A high level of challenge, clarity of instructions, and probing questions feature consistently in very good lessons. Staff members have high expectations. The quality of teaching in the Foundation stage is satisfactory overall. Plans are clear with appropriate reference to the stepping-stones<sup>3</sup> and early learning goals. Relationships are good particularly between the learning support assistants and the class teachers. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and some pupils with English as an additional language is only satisfactory. The targets set for pupils with special educational needs are not well matched to their learning needs. No teaching is unsatisfactory.

#### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in Years 1 to 6 and satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. A very good range of out-of-school activities and involvement with the local community enriches the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Unsatisfactory. The support for some special educational needs pupils is not good enough when they are withdrawn from lessons. The provision is insufficiently coordinated, leading to inconsistencies in learning, with progress only just satisfactory overall.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Mainly good but with a few aspects for improvement. Pupils with English as an additional language generally make good progress and keep up with their peers. Those in the reception class, however, only just have their needs met satisfactorily.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for spiritual and social development is very good. Provision for moral and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school is a happy and secure place where pupils enjoy learning. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good for English, mathematics, and science.
Partnership with parents	Good. The links with parents are effective. Newsletters are useful and informative. Parents give good support to the school

#### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future direction of the school and is taking determined and rigorous actions to raise standards. Senior staff members are effective and support the headteacher well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors are very active in supporting the school and ensuring pupils receive all the school is entitled to.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. A thorough monitoring of the strengths and weaknesses has informed priorities in the school improvement plan; the impact of last term's priorities is evident in school.

<sup>3</sup> Children achieve the yellow, blue, green and grey stepping stones as they progress towards the early learning goals in six areas of learning



The strategic use of resources	Good. Funds are used appropriately to support improvements to the school.
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A very large budget surplus has accrued in recent years. Additional support staff and reading resources have been purchased to use some of the surplus that is still too high. Accommodation is unsatisfactory: the two computer suites are poorly sited, the school plans to rectify this as soon as planning permission is granted to build additional rooms. The outdoor provision for the Foundation Stage is inadequate.

#### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and they make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour in school is good.</li> <li>• They would feel comfortable about approaching school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>• Their children are expected to work hard.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of work to do at home.</li> <li>• The information they receive about their children.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive comments made by the parents. The amount of homework given is about right and matches the national recommendations. The reports parents receive are very informative about pupils' personal development. They are less clear about the level of attainment in relation to national expectations.

## HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

### The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of attainment on entry to the reception classes are below average. This picture is similar to the last inspection. Current standards in the reception year are below average in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Children are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1 in these areas of learning. The quality of teaching in these key areas of learning is only just satisfactory and is not good enough for children with low attainment on entry to catch up with national expectations by the time that they enter Year 1. In the other areas of learning, standards are average in personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; and physical development. The children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in these latter areas by the time they start Year 1.
2. Achievement is generally satisfactory in all areas of learning apart from communication, language and literacy and mathematical development where it is not good enough. Children are provided with too few opportunities to write independently. They know very few initial sounds and recognise very few simple words when reading. The children do not enjoy sharing books as much as is found generally. There are too few practical number activities for the average and lower attaining children who have an insecure knowledge of numbers.
3. The results of the 2002 national tests in Year 2 were above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics when compared to all schools nationally. Compared to similar schools, standards were well above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was above average in reading, but below average in writing and mathematics. The school is tackling the underachievement in writing and mathematics, which is given a high priority. Standards have risen steadily over the past four years in reading, writing, and mathematics. Teacher assessments of attainment in science were above average. However, a below average proportion of pupils attained the higher Level 3 compared to similar schools. The results of the teacher assessment in science showed an above average proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected level, although too few pupils achieved the higher Level 3.
4. Standards attained by pupils in Year 2 in lessons are above average in speaking and listening, reading, writing and science. Pupils make very good progress in Years 1 and 2, especially in Year 2 because of consistently very good teaching. The recently introduced structure for teaching reading in guided reading sessions is particularly effective in promoting a good understanding of books. Standards of attainment in mathematics are average. Standards in science are above average in lessons, with a high proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3. This is very good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards in information and communication technology and art and design are now in line with expected standards; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Standards in Year 2 in all other subjects: design and technology; history; geography; music; and physical education have been maintained since the last inspection and remain in line with expected standards. The school gives a very high priority to raising standards in the core subjects with less time allocated to teaching some of the foundation subjects. Achievement is very good throughout Years 1 and 2.
5. The attainment of Year 6 pupils in the 2002 national tests was average in English, but below average compared to similar schools. Attainment was below average in mathematics and in the lowest five per cent of all schools nationally in science. An average proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics, but a well below average proportion did so in science. The trend in the schools national test results in the past five years has been in line with the national upward trend. The school has set challenging targets since the appointment of the new headteacher and is on line to meet them in the 2003 national tests as a result of the high priority given to improving the quality of teaching and consequent improvements in attainment. Achievement in lessons is generally good and standards are improving in all subjects. Standards in English are just above average. Standards are now in line with nationally expected levels in mathematics, science, information and communication technology, design and technology, art and design, history, geography, music and physical education. There has been a good improvement overall since the previous inspection, much of this in the current year. Higher attaining pupils achieve well in all subjects.

6. The levels attained by pupils with special educational needs are mostly below average. Their achievement is generally satisfactory in relation to the difficulties they face but there is some variation between classes. For example, in a Year 2 lesson a pupil applied himself well and explained clearly, and at length, the process he had used to reach the correct answer by adding three figures together. However, a pupil working in an English lesson engaged herself in small, off-task activities for a considerable amount of time and paid no attention to what was being read by others before it was her turn to read.
7. Standards attained by the majority of pupils with English as an additional language are generally in line with, and sometimes better than, national expectations for seven- and eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science. Records indicate good progress, particularly in English. Standards in other subjects are typical for their age group. In more practical and visual subjects, bilingual pupils can explore with the freedom of expression that the subjects allow. For example, in art and design bilingual pupils often demonstrate high levels of artistic expression through their drawing, painting, and model making.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

8. Pupils' have very good attitudes towards the school and their education. Parents who responded to the questionnaire were very positive that their children enjoy school and this is borne out by conversations with pupils. Many of them said, "learning is fun". In the many good or better lessons, pupils are attentive and keen to answer questions, with older pupils making perceptive comments that enable the teacher to move learning forward. For example, in a science lesson in Year 5, a pupil gave a very good explanation of the differences between solids, liquids, and gases before the teacher had reached that point. This encouraged all pupils to have confidence in their own abilities. In many lessons, the tasks are challenging and appropriate to what they already know, so that the pupils concentrate well and work hard. In a few lessons pupils rely too heavily on adult support, rather than persevering in solving problems themselves. Pupils are very enthusiastic about doing things outside the classroom, such as the many 'helping out' jobs and the good range of after-school activities.
9. Bilingual pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. The school's inclusion policy ensures that they are fully integrated into the work of the class, including discussions, and, like many of their classmates, they are keen to rise to a challenge in class activities. In reading in Year 6, pupils demonstrate a keenness to understand the meaning of the text, even where more figurative or literary language makes the task more demanding. Many pupils use two and sometimes three languages in different contexts and are proud of their linguistic achievement.
10. The behaviour of pupils is good, bearing out the opinions of parents. In most lessons, pupils behave very well, listening to the teacher or classroom assistant and quickly following instructions. The few pupils who require it respond well to a combination of a quiet reminder to pay attention, encouragement and praise when they do so. In a few lessons, a small number of pupils were too noisy and very occasionally, as in a physical education lesson, some refused to participate fully. Pupils' behaviour as they move around the school and in assemblies is very good. At dinner times, although pupils have to eat their packed lunches in their classrooms, the atmosphere is calm and there is a pleasant social atmosphere. One pupil has been excluded on a number of occasions for violent behaviour. He is currently being reintegrated into school on a part-time basis. Pupils accept the validity of the school rules because they have the opportunity to discuss the reasons behind them. They recognise the difference between right and wrong. Older pupils are starting to develop a sense of moral judgement as they recognise the impact of their actions on others rather than just obeying to avoid retribution.
11. The personal development of pupils is very good which in turn leads to very effective relationships within the school. Pupils are very sympathetic and considerate to others, for example to pupils who have physical disabilities. In most lessons, there is very positive rapport between adults and pupils. Pupils respond well to the efforts of staff to build this, and to the positive role models that they provide. Pupils are learning to work collaboratively and appreciate good work from their fellow pupils, sometimes breaking out into spontaneous applause, as they did for a particularly good performance in a music lesson in Year 2. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities offered, for example acting as receptionists during the lunch break, where their telephone manner is exemplary.
12. Pupils play well together in the playgrounds and there are few incidents of conflict, although the robust play in a rather crowded hard-play area leads to several accidental bumps and grazes at lunchtime. No incidents of bullying, racism or social exclusion were observed during the inspection and pupils said that these were rare. In this school with its range of different cultures, pupils are tolerant and supportive of those with other

beliefs or from other cultures. Pupils have learnt about religions in lessons and older pupils are prepared to stand up for their personal beliefs. They have a good knowledge of European culture, and of minority ethnic cultures that they will encounter in other parts of Britain.

13. Attendance is good, with overall absence being much lower than the national average. Unauthorised absence is slightly higher than average. Most pupils are punctual. Good attendance contributes to the good progress pupils make.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

14. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in Years 1 and 2. It is good throughout Years 3 to 6. There are particular strengths in the teaching in one Year 6 class and in Year 2. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, but pupils make insufficient progress in literacy and numeracy because of the inappropriateness of some activities and lack of resources.
15. The quality of teaching in the Foundation stage is satisfactory overall but with aspects for improvement, which is not as good as the last inspection. Plans are clear with appropriate reference to the stepping-stones or early learning goals. Relationships are good, particularly between the learning support assistants, the class teachers, and the children. Questioning is generally used effectively to develop language and vocabulary and to extend children's knowledge. However, the range of activities offered to the children is often limited. All tabletop activities use similar kinds of equipment because of lack of space and facilities for sand or water play. There are no designated areas for exploring writing, painting and large construction toys nor is there a well-resourced role-play area. Because of these shortcomings, opportunities to develop independence are very limited. Much of the learning is more suited to older children. The pace of some lessons is slow and children lose interest. Where teachers are keen, children respond positively and there is a hum of excitement. For example, in an information and communication technology lesson children explored a painting program enthusiastically. Day-to-day assessment is satisfactory and this helps the teachers to amend their plans to ensure tasks are matched to children's needs. However, there are occasions when work is too challenging for the lower-attaining children and they need support to complete the task. Work scrutiny highlighted the fact that much of the work was the same for all children regardless of need.
16. Strengths of the teaching in Years 1 to 6 include the very effective use of praise to motivate and encourage pupils; a high level of challenge; clarity of instructions and probing questioning. Staff members have high expectations. For example, pupils are expected to speak correctly and are rightly checked when they do not. The short recapitulation session at the end of most lessons is used well to reinforce learning. In Year 2, for example, pupils were encouraged to evaluate the impact of the height of a slope on the speed of the cars rolling down it. The pupils' evaluations were further enhanced by the teacher's explanations as to why diagrams should be labelled. Learning support assistants are used effectively to support small reading groups; the impact of recent training was very evident. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 builds well on pupils' prior attainment. Behaviour in lessons is frequently very good. Pupils are highly motivated to learn as a result of the practical nature of some work, especially science and design and technology investigations. Pupils are beginning to use targets to help check what they have learned. This is helping pupils understand how they can improve their work. Work is very thoroughly marked and provides good guidance to help pupils improve. Classroom assistants have a good impact on pupils' learning throughout the school.
17. The teaching of basic skills is good and an improvement since the last inspection. Additional time allocated to reading and basic literacy skills is used well to focus on aspects of the subject requiring improvement. Homework is given regularly and effectively supports pupils' learning.
18. Staff members generally have secure knowledge and understanding of the national strategies. This understanding is more secure in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6. Planning makes specific reference to national objectives and is very well matched to the full range of attainment, with higher attaining pupils sometimes completing different work to others. As a result, pupils learn effectively. For example, in Year 2 pupils followed a demonstration to show how to tackle reading unknown words and put more expression in their reading. Very good questioning helps pupils demonstrate that they understand why words are emboldened. Staff model writing and encourage pupils to try hard and gives them confidence to make mistakes and rectify them later.

19. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is only just satisfactory. The targets suggested for pupils with special educational needs are not always matched well to their learning needs. Resources are not used as well as they could be in reading sessions where pupils shared one book. The methods used sometimes precluded the pupils from making satisfactory progress. For example, when reading too quickly to a small group. Teaching is also less effective when the seating arrangements hinder the ability of teachers and teaching assistants to give support to all the pupils.
20. Teaching of bilingual pupils is good. Tasks in class are explained well. Good use is made of the whiteboard and visual resources to allow pupils full access to the meanings of the lesson. The specialist teacher works with pupils who have been identified as under-achievers, using the local education authority's resources to assess pupils' performance. These assessment scales are more sensitive to the needs of bilingual pupils and can target under-achievement more precisely. From this performance data, the language specialist is able to identify pupils who need support and contribute to the school's efforts in raising standards. This support is provided in class and with pupils who are withdrawn for short focused sessions on English language study work.
21. Pupils are generally keen to complete their work. Pupils learn effectively when lessons progress at a brisk pace and they understand what they have to do. Older pupils know how well they must work to reach expected levels of understanding. Marking includes assessment so that the pupils know how well they have achieved. This is an effective strategy and encouraged pupils to take responsibility for their own learning.

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

22. The school provides a well-balanced curriculum that prepares the pupils well for secondary school. Whilst the school maintains an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics it succeeds in giving the pupils a broad education. The creative arts are seen as important parts of this provision. Last term, the school held a successful performing arts show, in which the pupils had the opportunity to display their talents in singing, comedy, poetry, gymnastics, dance and drama. However, the school recognises the desirability of increasing provision for swimming which at the moment is limited to Year 3 pupils in the autumn term. About ten pupils currently take advantage of opportunities for instrumental music tuition. Total weekly teaching time meets national recommendations for primary school pupils. The school meets its statutory obligations to teach religious education and to provide a daily act of collective worship. Provision for information and communication technology has improved since the previous inspection.
23. Planning of the curriculum is good, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. There are clear policies and schemes of work for all subjects of the National Curriculum. The national strategies for literacy and for numeracy are well established and they are contributing to rising standards in English and mathematics. The teachers encourage the pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills as widely as possible in other subjects. Planning in subjects other than English and mathematics is satisfactorily based on national guidelines. There is a clear 'curriculum map', or long-term plan, which shows the topics to be covered in all subjects over the year. The teachers plan carefully, in more detail, for the work that the pupils will do each term and each week.
24. Provision for the activities out of school is very good. The teachers, with the help of classroom assistants and volunteers, enrich the pupils' learning by organising a very wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs. The parents appreciate this provision. About 50 pupils are members of the school choir which has sung for charity at the Observatory, and there are clubs for recorders, keyboards, cooking, craft, dance, drama, Tae Kwon-Do, French, study skills, football, rugby and netball. The school football team play occasional friendly matches against local schools. The curriculum is enriched further through school visits and by visitors to the school. There is an annual residential visit to the Isle of Wight for pupils in Year 6 and a short overnight visit to London for pupils in Year 5.
25. The school makes very good use of the community to enhance the pupils' learning. There are very close links with St Mary's Church. The vicar regularly leads acts of collective worship in school and the pupils celebrate festivals of the Christian calendar in the church. Other local clergy are frequent visitors to the school. The pupils participate in various community activities. At Christmas, for example, they entertain members of the local Third Age Luncheon Club and members of the Langley Club for the Blind. There are worthwhile links with the local Japanese language school and the school participates in Slough's Education Business Partnership. The teachers make good use of the locality to extend learning in history and geography.

26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is insufficiently coordinated, leading to inconsistencies between classes and age groups, and is unsatisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs experience a curriculum that is broadly the same as other pupils but with emphasis given to literacy and numeracy. Pupils are generally included well in the work of the school. However, some pupils are withdrawn from classes for special support teaching that does not relate directly to the lessons from which they are taken. This results in pupils missing substantial amounts of time in subjects that the rest of the class is learning.
27. There are good links with the local upper and grammar schools. Staff members from these schools share their expertise with the teachers and they come to talk to pupils in Year 6 before transfer. The pupils have the opportunity to spend a day in their secondary school during their final term. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in Saturday morning courses organised at the upper school by the Buckinghamshire young persons' university. There are useful links with other schools within the locality. One such link, which is being developed, is a joint sports programme, which seeks to extend the pupils' canoeing skills. The school hosts work experience students from local secondary schools and colleges.
28. There is good provision for the pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. The pupils have regular opportunities to discuss issues which are relevant to them, such as feelings, friendship, being special, working hard and being proud. This helps to develop their confidence and self-esteem. The school has recently applied for the Healthy Schools Standard. The pupils learn about the need for a balanced diet as part of a healthy lifestyle. There are clear policies for sex education and drugs education. The pupils are made well aware of the dangers of drugs misuse. The teachers answer questions about human growth and development openly and honestly as they arise, with due regard to the pupils' age and maturity. There is formal sex education for pupils in Year 5. The school nurse helps to teach this. A 'police week' is held during the summer term, when local police officers talk to the pupils and take them on visits to places such as the law courts. This contributes to the pupils' understanding of good citizenship.
29. Provision for both spiritual and social development is very good and an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' spiritual awareness is increased through assemblies where the wonders of the world and creation were the theme for the week of inspection. Pupils are given opportunities for reflection to think about the beauty around them and the needs of others. Local clergy, representing a variety of Christian faiths, regularly lead assembly and help to broaden pupils' understanding of Christianity. During circle time, pupils discuss a range of relevant issues and through this learn to respect the views and opinions of others, especially those of other faiths and cultures. Areas for spiritual awareness are highlighted in the teachers' plans. Teachers know their pupils very well and through praise and encouragement help to raise all pupils' self esteem, giving them confidence to perform in class or assembly and to answer questions. The Christian ethos of the school permeates all areas of learning.
30. There are considerable strengths in the school's provision for social development. For example, Year 6 pupils have to look after younger pupils during wet play times and lunchtimes; they answer the office telephone at both break and lunchtimes and set up the hall for assembly. The school is organised into four houses; each has a captain and a vice-captain, who are responsible for organising house activities and the half-termly meetings. The school council has recently been reinstated and is planning how to persuade pupils to walk to school so they can apply for the "Going for Gold" award. Pupils are expected to care for their school and keep the environment tidy. Opportunities are provided across the curriculum for pupils to work together in pairs or small groups. The involvement of pupils in activities outside of school, such as representing the school in sports teams, music, raising money for those less fortunate than themselves and taking part in residential visits all help to develop their social skills.
31. The provision for moral development good. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and in time set aside for discussion, any arising issues are debated. Through the recently implemented behaviour policy, there is a consistency across the school for dealing with difficult pupils. All adults in the school have been trained. Rewards in the form of stickers or house points are given for good work, effort, behaviour, and thoughtfulness. Special assemblies celebrate pupils' successes with the award of certificates, merits, and stars. During the inspection, a pupil was awarded a star for admitting to doing something inappropriate and then apologising afterwards. Good behaviour is praised and encouraged. The school rules are simple, easily understood, and regularly referred to in assembly. Each class has its own set of rules based on these.
32. The provision for raising pupils' awareness of different cultures is good. The local area is used for study, both environmental and historical and visits are made to places of interest. Pupils listen to a variety of

music in assembly and study the work of various artists. Other cultures are studied through geography: a good example was observed during a Year 6 class geography lesson when a pupil was talking about personal experiences in St. Lucia. Because of the cultural mix within the school pupils and parents are encouraged to share their faiths and cultures at relevant times during the year, such as Diwali and Eid. Although there are few displays around the school to celebrate other cultures, pupils in Year 2, when considering famous people included examples of black people as well as Florence Nightingale. Pupils have visited local churches, a synagogue, and a mosque. These visits and the willingness of pupils to share their faiths enhance pupils' understanding that they live in a culturally diverse society. The specialist teacher for minority ethnic pupils is currently building up some multi-lingual resources and dual text books, which will allow bilingual pupils to develop their bilingualism, and also to acknowledge pupils' linguistic repertoire to the rest of the school. Such opportunities will allow the school to appreciate and value an important aspect of the cultural life and experiences of bilingual pupils.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

33. The school is a happy and secure place where pupils enjoy learning. Parents are happy to entrust their children to the school's good procedures. All staff members are well trained to look after pupils' general welfare and specifically those who are sick or who have accidents. Child protection procedures are good and meet local guidelines. The designated teacher and all staff are trained and aware of the action to take should the need arise. Pupils are made aware of risks they face in life and how to protect themselves. The school has good procedures for ensuring the safety of staff and pupils. Risk assessments are carried out on activities both within the school and when pupils are off the premises. Some minor safety issues relating to access to one of the computer suites were discussed with the headteacher.
34. Procedures for managing pupil behaviour are good through a formal system of rewards and sanctions. Pupils' self esteem and self-discipline are raised to a high level as they move through the school. Staff members consistently and effectively use praise to motivate pupils to behave well and help others to improve where there are lapses. On the few occasions when it occurs, teachers deal with bullying with firmness. The positive and caring ethos encourages pupils to treat each other with consideration. Incidents of racist abuse are rare and dealt with well by explaining to the pupils involved the effect they have on the victims. The school uses personal and social education lessons, assemblies and good role modelling by staff to promote high standards of personal development amongst pupils. When exclusion has been found necessary, the correct procedures have been followed and the school has made every effort to re-integrate the pupil and put in place strategies to improve behaviour. Pupils are rewarded for good attendance and the teachers support and encourage those who have difficulties. Although attendance is satisfactorily monitored and teachers check on reasons for absence, the class registers do not provide a consistent record of these reasons, as they should. The school has not yet adopted a policy of 'first day contact' with parents when pupils are absent without a stated reason; this is important, particularly as walking to school is encouraged.
35. Clear criteria are followed in identifying pupils with special needs and the staged identification, assessment and review process is well established and used appropriately. Pupils are moved appropriately between stages as their learning needs change. Overall, individual education plans are just satisfactory. Some plans lack targets that are focused appropriately on the particular needs of pupils and some are written with targets that are insufficiently short term, specific and measurable. Each pupil is provided with an individual education plan that is prepared by the co-ordinator in consultation with the class teacher. The involvement of special agency personnel at this stage is very limited. Parents are consulted about draft plan proposals and modifications made if necessary. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are present at all review meetings.
36. Pupils with special educational needs are formally assessed every half term in literacy and numeracy. In addition, pupils' achievements are monitored and recorded at the end of lessons by the teaching assistants and a weekly record is maintained in consultation with the class teacher. However, many pupils with special educational needs spend the morning of each day working in small groups that are withdrawn from their classrooms. While their work is related to the numeracy and literacy lessons followed in their classes this practice inhibits the working contact between the pupils and their class teachers. There are good relationships with support and medical agencies. The school receives particularly good support from the speech and language specialists from the local education authority. Help is also received from the authority's behaviour support team with which the school is linked in a project that not only involves help for

pupils but which includes staff development for teachers and mid-day supervisors and will provide support for some parents too.

37. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good for English, mathematics, and science. The school uses the results of national tests, along with non-statutory annual assessments to identify standards achieved and the progress pupils are making over time. In all other subjects, there is inconsistency in the implementation of assessment procedures. The school has recently introduced a scheme of work for each subject of the National Curriculum. This resource includes an assessment framework that identifies key learning objectives for the end of each unit of work. Inspection evidence, however, indicates that this procedure is inconsistently used across the school. In mathematics, English and science progress is recorded using a "traffic light" coding system to indicate how well pupils have understood the work covered. Using this simple but effective system teachers are able to track individual progress and to have an overview of the needs of the whole class from which they can identify teaching priorities.
38. The school uses the results of national tests that all pupils take at seven and eleven to identify curriculum priorities and school improvement targets. This has led to the effective implementation of literacy strategies, which have already improved standards for eleven-year-olds in writing and which are now focused on raising standards in reading. The analysis of pupils' performance in national tests is supplemented by the ongoing assessments in mathematics and English, including half-termly tests in spelling, phonics, reading and unaided writing. From this information, teachers are able to identify improvement targets for individuals and teaching priorities in curriculum planning. The school analyses results in the national tests by ethnicity and gender.
39. Each pupil has an English and numeracy target that helps him or her focus on improving personal performance. In the best practice, teachers remind pupils at the beginning of each lesson to take account of their targets as they work, and this is an effective strategy. Again, there is inconsistency in the implementation of this approach. Most teachers, however, use the whole class review session to assess how well pupils have achieved the learning objective. In guided reading, teachers use an assessment proforma that allows them to assess pupils' overall reading skills. This is an effective tool, but currently teachers are not all confident in using this strategy.
40. The school has developed a strong and effective marking system. Written comments give feedback to pupils on the work they have completed and pointers for improvement. Much of the marking focuses on the learning objective of the lesson as well as pupils' individual targets. Teachers clearly expect pupils to complete tasks and use marking comments to improve work. The school is investigating the use of a computerised tracking system that will record pupils' progress through the National Curriculum stages. From this data, the school will be able to predict each pupil's likely performance and introduce intervention strategies to boost performance at key stages in their learning. Currently this is done from teacher assessments. Booster classes and the effective deployment of teaching assistants is in place and helping the school raise standards, particularly for those pupils who are under-performing. The assessment of pupils with English as an additional language is fed into the whole school assessment programme and is satisfactory. The specialist teacher works closely with the class teachers, who are able to support pupils' progress throughout the day when they are working without the specialist support.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

41. Parents think that this is a good school and the inspection confirms this opinion. Parents spoken to during the inspection were pleased with what the school provides. In the questionnaire, the responses were generally positive. Parents think that their children are expected to work hard, and are motivated by good teaching. They enjoy school. Parents are happy about approaching the school with questions or concerns. The only minor areas of concern were the amount of homework and the information parents receive about their children's progress. The inspection found that the use of homework was at least satisfactory and that reports could be clearer about how well pupils' achieve in relation to national expectations.
42. The school has effective links with parents. General information is regular, useful and well presented in attractive and readable newsletters. Pupil reports give satisfactory details of progress in all subjects. Comments on personal development are good and give perceptive and honest opinions. Targets for improvement are not consistently specific and there are few comments about the level of attainment in relation to national expectations. Parents are told of the content of future work to enable them to help from



home. The school has held some workshops to help parents understand teaching, for example of reading, and about twenty parents took part in a reading project to help them help their child. Parents have recently been consulted about behaviour management as part of a review and refocusing of the school's strategy.

43. Parents give good support to the school. They help their children make good progress in reading throughout the school. They support homework and guide their child through home research into topics. Parent consultation evenings are well attended, so that the parents have good information to enable them to support and encourage their children. The parent teachers' association raises prodigious amounts for school resources and organises activities that make the school a central part of the community. Parents are very pleased with arrangements for the support of pupils with special educational needs. They know whom to contact and are welcome to discuss the progress of pupils formally and informally as they wish. They receive good guidance on activities to undertake with pupils at home. Parents are invited to all formal meetings.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

44. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. Despite some changes of senior staff, the headteacher has created a strong senior management team with a very clear sense of direction and includes staff from each key stage. The headteacher has tackled the falling standards with great vigour and strong sense of purpose. Decisions that affect the work of the school are taken democratically. A strong sense of teamwork is evident throughout the school. An audit of the school's strengths and weaknesses took place early in the school year to identify key priorities. The priorities have been effectively used as a basis for an effective, well-focused school development plan with the result that the school is in a strong position to build on strengths and bring about improvements. The key priorities for the school in the plan are: standards; improving the quality of teaching and the curriculum; caring for pupils; partnership with parents; and leadership and management. The headteacher has kept raising standards at the forefront of her thinking. The roles and responsibilities of staff have been improved, although in some subjects where the co-ordinators have recently been appointed there is room for improvement.
45. Governors have a very clear, well-informed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They recognise the need to be less concerned with matters related to the building and more informed about the standards achieved and in particular to take steps to rectify the slight fall in standards last year in national test results. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively. Many of the governors are well experienced and have a good understanding of the principles of best value. They try to ensure that these principles are applied efficiently, especially regarding the appointment of staff.
46. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance is very good. Analysis of national test results has taken place to identify key strengths and areas for improvement. The progress of individual pupils is tracked to check they achieve the challenging targets set for them. Target groups are identified and given intensive support. The arrangements for grouping pupils by their prior attainment are currently under review, because it may not be the most effective way to group pupils. The arrangements for performance management are firmly in place. The headteacher has had performance objectives set for her by the governors. All staff members are involved in setting their own objectives. A high priority is given to improving standards in the core subjects through training, dissemination of the training and checking the quality of teaching, planning and pupils' work. Consequently, there are subjects still requiring attention and co-ordinators who have a less secure understanding of their role.
47. The management of special educational needs is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has full time responsibility for special educational needs. However, this is managed inefficiently and she has too little time to carry out the administrative duties associated with her role. The school is currently undertaking a thorough review and re-organisation of its record keeping system, however the overall quality of records kept and the system to maintain them is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator does not currently have access to a fully centralised set of records for each pupil, some records are of poor quality and there is no system for tracking the progress of individual pupils. Funding provision is satisfactory.
48. A specialist teacher works with pupils with English as an additional language. The support is generally satisfactory. Careful record keeping allows her to chart progress and to identify areas of need that can be picked up in class and in other "booster" sessions.

49. Induction procedures for new staff are very effective. Newly qualified teachers receive very good support from the school as a whole and from assigned mentors. They, together with those teachers who are presently unqualified, receive good advice and support to further their professional development. The school, with its strong collegiate, supportive ethos, is a suitable establishment for the training of teachers.
50. Financial procedures are satisfactory overall, but with shortcomings. Day-to-day financial management runs smoothly. The school relies heavily on a local educational authority-supplied computer system for budgetary control; this provides extensive financial management information, which has been used effectively. Unfortunately, computers have been stolen on two occasions in the past six months. Unsatisfactory contingency arrangements have left the school unable to monitor effectively or to make plans based on accurate up-to-date information. In the past year, the school has spent heavily but wisely, based on an audit of needs for staff and resources, from a large surplus of £160,000. The surplus has reduced and more efficient use of funding is made than in the recent past. The school makes satisfactory use of modern technology.
51. Although each class has a base most of which are sufficient in size for the number of pupils, the layout of the building and some deficiencies make accommodation unsatisfactory overall. Facilities for the two reception classes are insufficient and one of these classes, as well as the main computer suite, acts as a corridor in bad weather. Even when the weather is good, pupils from some classes wanting to use the library have to walk the long way round. The two outside classrooms are worn and have no toilets. Some rooms in the 'old school house', whilst providing valuable space for supported groups, are very cramped and have difficult fire exit routes. Accommodation for teaching pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has a designated room but this is too small to permit working with more than one or two pupils at a time. Other teaching spaces used are either places that are also used as general circulation areas, or small rooms with inadequate space. There is good hall for physical education and a reasonable playing field but the hard play areas are insufficient for playtimes when the field is wet. The outdoor play facilities for younger children are very restricted. Wall spaces are made interesting and instructive with displays and standards of cleanliness are high. The pupil teacher-ratio is currently better than average and there is a higher than average number of classroom assistants. Teaching resources are generally satisfactory but inadequate for geography, physical education, and art and design. The library has too many old and worn books and is insufficiently accessible as a study base.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. The school should now:

- ❑ **improve the provision for special educational needs by:**
  - reducing the time pupils miss lessons for individual support outside the classroom;
  - improving the individual education plans for statemented pupils by linking them more closely with the targets in their statement of special educational need;
  - involving specialist support staff to write individual education plans;
  - providing training for the special educational needs co-ordinator on the management of special educational needs.  
(This discussed in paragraphs: 6, 18, 19, 25, 34, 46, 53, 68.)
  
- ❑ **Improve the provision in the Foundation Stage by:**
  - providing more opportunities for worthwhile independent learning;
  - improving the teaching of communication, language and literacy;
  - improving the resources and accommodation for outdoor learning as soon as funds allow;
  - increasing the opportunities for practical activities in mathematical development;
  - giving more attention to the purpose of imaginative play areas in the classrooms;
  - enhancing the role of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator.  
(This is discussed in paragraph 53)
  
- ❑ **Improve the accommodation when funds permit** (Paragraphs 50, 54, 112)
  
- ❑ **In addition, the governors should consider the following minor issues for inclusion in their action plan:**
  - use available funds more effectively to improve the education provided by the school;
  - the roles and responsibilities of newly appointed subject leaders.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

99

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

32

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	16	35	47	0	0	0
Percentage	1	16	35	47	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

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll	365
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	12

#### Special educational needs

YR-Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	70

#### English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	52
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#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	33
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	95.6
National comparative data	94.1

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
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	19	26	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	19
	Girls	22	25	25
	Total	40	42	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (67)	93 (53)	98 (73)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	19
	Girls	22	20	25
	Total	39	37	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (58)	82 (67)	98 (71)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	31	18	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	22	22
	Girls	17	12	15
	Total	37	34	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (72)	69 (67)	76 (71)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	20	18
	Girls	15	15	13
	Total	38	35	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (62)	70 (68)	63 (80)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	11
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	15
Indian	33
Pakistani	22
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	272
Any other minority ethnic group	2

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

**Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.33
Average class size	26

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	338.67

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	2002
	£
Total income	787,673
Total expenditure	728,803
Expenditure per pupil	1,883
Balance brought forward from previous year	102,110
Balance carried forward to next year	160,980

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	14
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	15
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	365
Number of questionnaires returned	233

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	31	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	36	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	44	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	48	17	3	1
The teaching is good.	67	30	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	39	12	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	25	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	20	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	56	39	4	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	68	30	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	36	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	43	8	1	6

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents believe the headteacher is very positive about pupils' achievements and helps to develop pupils self esteem. Their children enjoy school.

## **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**

53. The standard of the school's provision for its youngest pupils was not judged in the previous inspection so no comparison can be made. The quality of teaching was good; now it is satisfactory. There are more classroom assistants now. All children begin school in the September of the year when they have their fifth birthday. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is in two parallel reception classes. There are 52 children in the reception classes on a full time basis. The majority of children attending these classes have had some form of pre-school experience.
54. The accommodation that is provided for these children is very limited: there is no wet area for painting, water or sand trays in one classroom. The wet area in the other room is too small to facilitate this type of play. Display boards are too high for children to see any work put up. One classroom is a corridor, which creates problems when it is raining and children from other classes use it as thoroughfare. There is difficulty of access for a wheel chair. The secure outdoor play area has been reduced in size and is too small for 52 children. Resources are unsatisfactory: there is no well resourced, inviting designated role-play area in either classroom; there are limited small construction kits and large building blocks and few big books for literacy. Some of the books are in need of replacing.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

55. Attainment on entry to the reception class is average in personal, social and emotional development. By the time they leave the reception class the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in this area. This shows satisfactory achievement. Children enjoy coming to school, have adjusted well into the routines of school life, and respond to the rules. They are keen to learn new skills and when activities are interesting, they put effort and concentration into completing them. Emphasis is put on helping children to understand the consequences of their actions. They share resources but do not always work well together. For example, children using the same construction kit did not share. The children develop a sensitivity and awareness of other people, their different religions and customs and ways of life. Children are encouraged to share their experiences with the class. For example, some children celebrated Eid and shared their experiences when they returned to school. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

56. Teaching in this area of learning is only just satisfactory. The children make typical amounts of progress over the year in the main but this is not enough, given their low attainment on entry, for them to catch up with the average level for their age by the end of the reception year. The children develop their spoken language skills at a steady pace as a result of time allocated to talking in pairs. Children take part in discussion during 'circle time' and during the literacy sessions when books and initial letters sounds are shared. They enjoy retelling stories such as "The Gingerbread Man" and the rhyme about "The House that Jack Built". A few of the children are confident articulate speakers, using appropriate vocabulary and sentence construction but many are less confident. There are too few opportunities for the children to talk in self-initiated activities. Many children do not enjoy sharing books. They are aware that words communicate meaning but few are able to recognise simple words. The children know very few letter sounds and many are unable to sound out simple words because this aspect of the area of learning is not given a high enough priority day-by-day. Several children do not know the names or sounds of the letters in their own name. Higher attaining children read a small number of words but often need to sound them out before having the confidence to say them.
57. Children know that print is a form of communication. They are beginning to form letters correctly and many can write their name. However, there are too few opportunities for children to write independently. Consequently, children lack confidence and do not readily attempt to write in their play. The expectations for the children are too low. Many children do no more than write over adult script and then copy underneath. Frequently, this is no more than their name. One higher attaining child was observed writing a few words. Progress, especially in developing reading and writing skills, is barely satisfactory because children have so few opportunities to write for themselves, and, apart from the few higher attaining children, will struggle to achieve the early learning goals. The quality of teaching, though just satisfactory, is nevertheless not good enough given the low attainment on entry. Expectations are too low. Teachers lack



knowledge of the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy and the provision to learn independently is very limited.

### **Mathematical development**

58. This area of learning is only satisfactorily taught. Consequently, children do not make the progress they should and they are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave. A significant number of the children do not recognise many numbers because there are too few opportunities for counting and matching numbers practically. Classroom assistants support the children appropriately to develop their counting skills. Barely half the children can count to 20. Few are secure counting back from 20. Children identify missing numbers, put that number in the appropriate place on a number line, and explain why. Children name simple two-dimensional shapes such as circle, square, triangle and rectangle. They learn how to create repeating patterns and to copy patterns. Higher attaining children understand “one more than” and “one less than” and are on course to achieve the early learning goals for number, whereas the lower attaining children will struggle as they are not secure in their understanding of number.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

59. The children enter the reception class with a satisfactory basic general knowledge. They build on this knowledge by exploring the world around them, finding out about caring for others, what life was like in the past and what has happened to them since they were babies. The children are likely to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the time they start Year 1. They learnt about the importance of caring for others when studying pets. Good opportunities are provided to learn about caring for the environment through stories. The children are encouraged to share their experiences of faith and culture to help develop respect and appreciation of others. They have visited the local church, met the local police officer, and discussed issues relating to safety on the roads. Both classes have specific lessons in the computer suite using a program called “dazzle” to create pictures. The children are fascinated by the possibilities of this program and during one session frequent ‘oohs and ahs’ are heard as something different happened. The children have good mouse control and are able to move items round the screen with ease. They use the “dustbin” to clear the screen and change the colour of the paint or the shape used. The quality of teaching and learning is good, although the opportunities to use the outdoor environment to support learning in this area are very limited.

### **Physical development**

60. Attainment is average and the children are likely to meet the early learning goals in this area of learning by the time they start Year 1. A range of worthwhile activities is provided. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The children have good body control as they move around the hall in different ways. They jump, hop and skip with ease. Opportunities to use wheeled toys outside are restricted due to lack of space. The children develop their manipulative skills appropriately through cutting activities and learn how to use scissors to cut out shapes. Handwriting practice, small construction kits and colouring activities also develop these skills. Most children hold their pencils correctly but some struggle to make recognisable letters and colour within the lines.

### **Creative development**

61. Attainment is average and the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1. There were very few activities planned to promote learning during the inspection. Displays show children have used different materials to make snowmen and pigs. There is limited evidence of children using other media such as paint, although they have used felt tips, crayons, and play dough. Children have drawn self-portraits but with little detail of facial features. The children used boxes to build houses as part of a topic about materials. Role-play areas are poorly resourced and children are not keen to play in them during independent learning time. The role-play area has been a home corner, post office and is changed to relate to the chosen topic. The teacher has identified this as area that needs to be developed. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

## ENGLISH

62. Standards of attainment in the 2002 national tests in Year 2 were above average in reading when compared with national expectations and well above average compared to schools in similar contexts. They were average in writing. Standards by Year 6 were average compared to the nationally expected level and below average compared to similar schools. National test results have risen over the past five years at a similar rate to the national upward trend, and the school is confident that it will achieve its ambitious targets in the national tests in 2003. Inspection evidence of pupils' current performance indicates that they are indeed achievable, and progress is good in all aspects of the subject. Standards are likely to exceed national averages by the end of the year.
63. The school is aware of what it needs to do to raise standards and has already taken effective action to raise attainment in reading and writing. A detailed analysis of performance in national tests and end-of-year assessments in English has taken place. As a result, the school is focusing its efforts on specific areas, which have already had an impact on writing standards in Year 6. Inspection evidence indicates improved standards from the last inspection and from last year's national tests. This is because of the good and often very good teaching pupils receive, supported by the adoption of an effective planning format and a high focus on raising standards in reading and writing. Improvements are supported by the school's assessment arrangements that are helping teachers and pupils understand, not only what has been achieved so far, but what individuals need to do to improve personal performances in reading and writing. These pointers are set out as literacy targets which pupils are able to talk about and to assess their own progress in achieving them. For example, one pupil acknowledged that she nearly always remembered to write in paragraphs.
64. Attainment in speaking and listening is good. Based on their below average attainment on entry to school, pupils make good progress. Pupils listen carefully to the teacher and to each other and discuss current topics with confidence. By the time that they are seven, pupils are able to discuss what they are doing and talk to each other to explore ideas further. For example, in a very good Year 2 lesson pupils talked about the details which needed to go into an information pamphlet designed to explain an experiment on the movement of cars down a ramp they carried out in science. One group discussed how they might suggest movement in a diagram, and pupils used words such as "faster" and "steeper" to demonstrate comparisons appropriately. By the time they are 11, pupils discuss features of the texts they are studying to develop an understanding of writers' style. For example, in a good Year 6 lesson pupils listened carefully to a science fiction story discussing its characteristics, including the fantastic setting and the unnatural actions of alien characters. They listened carefully to each other's ideas and collaborated in planning a feedback to other children in the class. Across the school, whole-class sessions give pupils the opportunity to demonstrate through discussion how much they have learnt, and, from the good range of questions raised, how much more they need to know to achieve the learning objectives.
65. Attainment in reading is satisfactory in Year 1 and good in Year 2, with most pupils making very good progress. Pupils demonstrate a broad range of strategies for taking meaning from their texts and tackling unfamiliar words. By the time they are seven pupils display the strategies they are learning in guided reading activities. For example, in one Year 2 class pupils made well observed comparisons between settings when reading a book about the history of bath-times. They understood the purpose of the "blurb" on the back of the book, and that the book is factual rather than a work of fiction. Pupils demonstrated good strategies for reading new words, including sounding out clusters of letters, blending words and substituting an appropriate word to fit into the overall meaning and grammar of a sentence. For example, they read "America" for the less familiar "Alabama" without serious impact on the overall sense of their reading. In reading fiction they understand how punctuation, for example, speech marks, exclamation and question marks, brings out expression and deeper meaning. Pupils recognise the author's techniques of building up tension using short sentences, a row of dots, and bold words to bring additional emphasis. They scan illustrations to help them understand unfamiliar words and phrases, and respond to both texts and illustration to suggest clear understanding. One pupil exclaimed: "The boiler might blow up!" when scanning the hazardous heating arrangements in an illustration in the bath-time book.
66. Standards in reading are also good in Years 3 to 6, with pupils demonstrating the ability to read with fluency, accuracy and expression. They understand the importance of punctuation and are developing the ability to infer meaning beyond the literal. By the time they are 11, they are generally able to summarise the book they are reading and can talk about the characteristics of its type with good judgement. For example, a pupil reading an Enid Blyton story explained what she loved about this author's work. She summarised the story so far, but reassured the inspector that whatever danger the characters found themselves in they would come to no harm because they never did in her experience of this author's work.

Another higher attaining pupil discussed the motivation of a revengeful baby-sitter, and again summarised the story so far and likely outcome with the confidence and assertiveness of the well read. This pupil was alert enough to challenge the inspector's misspelling of the author's name, reassuring her that it could be spelled like that because "it sounds the same", showing very good knowledge of the sound system of English and of the vagaries of its spelling. A less experienced and lower attaining Year 6 pupil struggled with the unfamiliar word "determined", but recognised the likely meaning from the overall sense of the sentence.

67. Standards in writing are good and work in books indicates good progress in Years 3 to 6 and very good progress in Years 1 and 2. Pupils demonstrate skills in transferring learning from guided reading sessions to improve the overall quality of their finished writing. Assessment activities allow pupils to demonstrate their developing confidence in writing. They do not appear, however, to have sufficient opportunity to write more expressively and personally beyond these set tasks. There are not enough opportunities for children to explore ideas, follow their own interests, or argue a case in writing. By the time they are seven, pupils are applying spelling rules and beginning to build up complex sentences by the use of connecting words. Higher attaining pupils are learning to add powerful verbs and phrases to bring more meaning and interest to their writing. By the time they are 11 pupils draw on previous learning when writing about characters, for example making comparisons between the desperate early years of Mary Lennox from "The Secret Garden" and Oliver Twist and how their fortunes changed as the stories progressed. They demonstrate appropriate style well in writing informally to a pen-pal, or, with more formality, to the editor of a newspaper as a piece of persuasive writing. They use authors' techniques well in writing, for example suggesting a heart-stopping scream, "Ahhhhhhhh!!!!", and adding emphasis through the use of capital letters and exclamation marks. Higher attaining pupils demonstrate their confidence in manipulating written forms, for example turning a continuous text into a play script, using appropriate punctuation and stage direction, and also rewriting the story of Macbeth as an eye-catching newspaper article, using a contemporary journalistic style. Some pupils demonstrate their confidence by directly responding to a reader by good use of brackets and asides such as "Wow! I definitely can't get out now!"
68. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is satisfactory overall. However, progress is inconsistent between classes and year groups, particularly for pupils with special educational needs, because they do not receive the same high quality teaching in their small group lessons when out of the classroom. The individual education plans for some of the pupils with statements of special educational needs provide targets that are too general and not well enough matched to the needs identified on their statements. This reduces the impact of the work of learning support assistants.
69. The quality of teaching is very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers use a commercially produced scheme of work and its planning format is well established and consistently used. Teachers manage the different parts of the lesson well, with due regard to the overall learning intentions and the range of needs in the class. They use questioning well to check pupils' understanding and help them make progress. For example, in a very good Year 5 lesson the teacher understood when to intervene with probing questions to help children make links between a range of creation myths from different cultures. From this challenging work children came to understand that there are significant differences between oral and literary traditions and most cultural groups use stories to explain natural phenomena. Pupils understood that a myth with a Brazilian setting, including local features like pine nuts and snakes, had a significantly different setting from one from Nordic culture.
70. Teachers use assessment, including marking in books, well to chart pupils' progress. From careful analysis of assessment data, teachers identify targets to help pupils understand what they need to do to make progress. In most lessons, teachers identify the learning objective and record it on whiteboards for easy reference through the lesson. Most teachers record the key vocabulary of the lessons to ensure that children become familiar with new words and improve their spelling accuracy as they work on new areas of interest or on new concepts. This is a very important strategy and avoids pupils misspelling unfamiliar words in first draft writing. High expectations for well-formed joined-up writing are demonstrated in most teachers' practice. Pupils respond well to this challenge and by the time they are seven, many children have already developed a well-formed and legible handwriting style.
71. Teachers generally draw pupils' attention to their personal literacy targets at the beginning of lessons, reminding them to take account of the targets as they work. This is an extremely important strategy in the school's programme for raising standards. There was less evidence of teachers reviewing pupils' progress at the end of sessions against those same learning objectives and this strategy needs to be implemented

more consistently to help pupils understand what they have achieved. Teachers have adopted an effective approach to reading known as guided reading. This is a newly initiated development and, while most teachers have been trained in its techniques, in some classes the full potential of the approach is under-exploited.

72. Leadership in the subject is good and the two co-ordinators have opportunities to check work in books and the effectiveness of teaching in classrooms, including planning and assessment. They have also identified with good judgement the areas the school needs to focus on, and the school improvement plan identifies appropriate areas for development. Appropriate resources have been bought in to support teaching and teaching assistants have been trained in Further Literacy Support to help pupils in Year 5 who would otherwise not achieve nationally expected standards at the end of Year 6. The co-ordinators are aware of the change in assessment arrangements in national tests in May 2003 and are ensuring that assessment activities include story writing and a range of other writing tasks, for example instructional texts and letter writing. During literacy lessons, a third group of Year 2 is formed from a broadly banded group of pupils who need additional support. Resources and accommodation are less favourable for this group, and while teaching is effective, pupils miss out on the very good teaching in Year 2 classes. They also miss the shared experience of carefully sequenced lessons where learning from another area of the curriculum is built upon in English. For example, the writing of information booklets to describe a science investigation on velocity brings cohesion across subjects. The additional support would be better focused in class lessons.

## **MATHEMATICS**

73. Standards in Year 2 are typical of those reached by pupils of this age, which is the same as the findings of the previous inspection. In the 2002 national tests for seven-year-olds, standards were in line with the national average and with similar schools. Standards have risen steadily over the past four years, with considerable improvement since 2001.
74. Standards in Year 6 are typical of those reached by pupils of this age, which is also the same as the findings of the previous inspection. In the 2002 national tests for eleven-year-olds, standards were very slightly below average compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. Boys outperformed girls. Standards have remained static over the past three years, but they are higher than they were four years ago. The school has set a realistic target for further improvement this year.
75. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are fully included in learning in lessons and they make good progress in this setting. Progress for pupils with special educational needs is less effective when they are withdrawn. Pupils who are talented in mathematics are also making good progress. The pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning. Apart from a small minority of boys, the pupils behave well in lessons and they are keen to learn. Most of them take a pride in presenting their work as carefully as possible.
76. Pupils in Year 2 have quick mental recall of addition facts to 10 and often to 20. They find subtraction more difficult. High attainers have a good understanding of place value in two-digit numbers and most of the pupils order numbers correctly to 100. Nevertheless, they find it harder to place numbers correctly on a number line. The pupils use coins to make sums of money. High attainers use the fewest coins possible to do this and they calculate simple change. The pupils investigate number patterns, including odd and even numbers. They understand the idea of half. The pupils identify and name common two and three-dimensional shapes. High attainers recognise right angles in two-dimensional shapes and they know some of the properties of three-dimensional shapes. The pupils estimate and measure the length of classroom objects in non-standard units and in metres and centimetres. High attainers interpret information provided in simple tables and pictograms, but other pupils find this much harder.
77. In Year 6, high attainers apply their numeracy skills to solve real life problems, sometimes with the help of calculators. Others, particularly those with weak literacy skills, find this much harder, especially if the problem involves two or more steps. Most of the pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the multiplication tables. High attainers use appropriate written methods of long multiplication, but others often find this difficult. The pupils have a satisfactory understanding of equivalent fractions. They convert improper fractions to mixed numbers and high attainers convert simple fractions into percentages. The pupils calculate the areas and perimeters of regular and irregular shapes. Many pupils find it much harder to use coordinates and to rotate shapes around a point of origin. The pupils understand and use 24-hour clock times. They

represent data by means of bar graphs, bar line graphs and line graphs and they calculate the mode and range of a set of data. Most of the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the language of probability.

78. The pupils make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills in other subjects. In science, for example, pupils in Year 6 measure the effect of friction from different surfaces and rates of evaporation of water, whilst pupils in Year 3 record an investigation into the strength of various types of paper by means of accurate bar graphs.
79. Overall, teaching is good, which is an improvement from the previous inspection, when there was some unsatisfactory teaching. This teaching is helping pupils make good progress from a low base on entry to the school. The teachers plan their lessons well and they share the learning objectives with the pupils. Quite often, the teachers alter this planning, when they realise that pupils are having difficulties with certain topics. There is a good focus on developing the pupils' ability to make quick mental calculations. The teachers employ various strategies to achieve this. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher made effective use of 'bingo' cards to develop the pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher used a 'magic box' to make learning fun. This helped the pupils in their quick mental recall of addition facts to 10 and beyond. In another Year 2 class, the teacher made good use of place value cards, which helped the pupils to understand the importance of partitioning. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher made learning fun by describing shapes hidden from view in a bag. This helped the pupils in learning the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes. Key words are displayed clearly in classrooms and this helps the pupils to develop correct mathematical vocabulary. The teachers encourage the pupils to explain how they work out their answers and this impacts well on the pupils' understanding and sometimes helps them to see where they are making mistakes. The teachers encourage the pupils to see that there is often more than one way to calculate an answer. 'Think of a good strategy for solving  $8+7$ ' asked a teacher in Year 2 and this helped the pupils remember the method of 'near doubling'.
80. The teachers give clear explanations of the main teaching point and they organise group work well, usually matching tasks appropriately to the pupils' varying needs. Often, the teachers focus on one particular group, whilst encouraging others to work independently. Classroom assistants are used well to support some pupils. Lessons move along briskly, often with time limits set for activities. This keeps the pupils focused and, as a result, no time is lost. The teachers are making increasing use of computer programs to enhance learning, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. In a Year 4 lesson, for example, the pupils used the computers to measure angles accurately. This use of information and communication technology motivated the pupils well. The teachers make effective use of a other resources. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, the teacher made very effective use of an overhead projector, which helped the pupils to understand the rotation of two-dimensional shapes on a grid. The teachers ensure that there is adequate practical apparatus available for those pupils who need it. The teachers use plenary sessions well to consolidate learning and often to move learning on to the next stage. The teachers set regular homework to extend learning.
81. The teachers mark the pupils' work regularly and positively. Clear guidance is often given as to how the pupils might improve. For example, the comment, 'use the extended method for a while, until your addition is more reliable "(Year 5) and 'use a grid, then your answers will be accurate ' (Year 6).
82. At times, the pace of lessons is too slow. This is sometimes the result of interruptions from pupils, when they shout out answers or when they behave inappropriately. In some lessons, work is not always matched closely to the pupils' differing needs, so that high attainers are insufficiently challenged. A clear policy meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Planning is satisfactorily based on the National Numeracy Strategy. The recently appointed coordinator leads the subject well. He checks the quality of teaching throughout the school and he offers help and advice to colleagues as necessary. There is a clear action plan designed s to raise standards. There are good procedures for assessing and tracking the pupils' progress. Information gained from assessments and from a careful analysis of national test results is used well to plan the next steps in the pupils' learning and to set targets for improvement. There are adequate resources to support teaching and learning.

## SCIENCE

83. The attainment of eleven-year-old pupils is average. Nearly all seven-year-old pupils are on course to attain or exceed the expected national level by the end of the school year and this is above average. Standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection in Year 6 and better than those found previously in Year 2. However, in recent years standards attained in national tests fell well below the national average by the age of 11 and current standards in both Year 6 and Year 2 are clear signs of good improvement. This is the result of the implementation of a very good programme of action within the school development plan involving reorganisation of the subject curriculum using national guidelines supported by commercially produced materials. It is also the result of the effective leadership and management of the subject, thorough assessments of pupils' work to inform planning and the improved teaching, particularly up to Year 2 and in Year 6. However, there are still inconsistencies in the quality of teaching relating to subject knowledge and scientific enquiry, particularly in the junior years. The support received by pupils with special educational needs is entirely provided within lessons and enables them to make satisfactory progress overall. There is no significant difference in the attainment of pupils of different gender.
84. The current standard of work in Year 6 is an improvement on the results of the 2002 national tests. These tests showed that fewer than eight out of ten eleven-year-old pupils attained the nationally expected level. This is well below the national average. The standard of work in Year 2 is similar to that attained in most recently validated teacher assessments. These assessments showed that nearly all seven-year-old pupils attained the national level and this is above the national average for pupils reaching the national level or above. For pupils aged 11, standards declined rapidly in recent years while standards were rising nationally. Current standards of work indicate that this decline has been halted and that standards are rising throughout the school.
85. Pupils achieve very well by seven and satisfactorily by 11. By Year 2, pupils have acquired a basic knowledge and understanding of scientific enquiry, life processes and living things, materials and their properties, and physical processes. They carry out a simple enquiry into friction studying the distance a toy will roll on different surfaces, predicting the results, measuring the distances moved, commenting on the results observed and offering explanations. They describe the effects of exercise upon heart rate and understand the importance of exercise for health. Younger pupils write simple reasons why certain objects are made of particular materials using terms such as 'transparent' and 'waterproof'. They construct simple electrical circuits and explain why they will or will not light a bulb. By the age of 11, pupils have a broad knowledge and understanding of scientific enquiry. For example, Year 6 pupils with typical attainment investigate factors that affect the rate at which a solid dissolves. They make predictions, describe their method, measure their results, present detailed findings using tables and graphs, and draw conclusions. Their earlier enquiries explored materials that will and will not dissolve in water and their results led them to consider how undissolved solids can be separated from a solution. Many high attaining pupils completed work above the expected average national level. They demonstrated a detailed knowledge of micro-organisms. Well presented work showed a good understanding of the differences between bacteria, fungi and viruses, of their beneficial and harmful effects, and of the way these effects relate to food hygiene. In earlier studies into forces and friction using Newton meters, other pupils showed that their conclusions are rigorously based on evidence. However, some evidence lacks quantification and this inhibits the ability of the pupils to practise the search for patterns in the data and anomalies in their results.
86. The overall quality of teaching is good. It is never less than satisfactory and in some lessons is very good. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously and provides praise and guidance as appropriate. Teaching is effective when the teacher uses good subject knowledge to plan a lesson based firmly upon scientific enquiry together with clear learning outcomes relating to subject content and stimulating strategies that are well matched to the varied needs of the pupils. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson in which the pupils were highly motivated by the teacher's very effective development of an enquiry into electrical circuits for the purpose of creating a light for a lighthouse that could be switched on and off. Pupils of all abilities were engrossed in exploring how they could assemble the parts, they were given, which included a switch mechanism, to achieve their goal. This built upon their previously acquired learning of the workings of a simple circuit and challenged the abilities of higher attaining pupils who had to construct their own switch using paper clips. Teaching is also effective when teachers have high expectations of their pupils. For example, in a Year 6 lesson pupils were challenged to review how they could use the measurements they had recorded. The pupils co-operated well in pairs to make meaningful observations and work out how best they could draw a graph to present their results. Teaching is less effective when the teacher does not keep a firm control of the enquiry process in meeting the needs of pupils with different abilities, resulting in some pupils becoming confused and some becoming bored.

87. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is relatively new to the post but has good previous experience in managing the subject. In a short time the co-ordinator has identified areas of strength and weakness. He has started to monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment and is using this information to improve teaching and planning. Pupils are assessed regularly but while detailed records of attainment are maintained, there is no current system for tracking the progress of individual pupils. Resource provision is satisfactory and is in the process of being augmented further, especially for information and communication technology.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

88. Since only three lessons were observed, overall judgements are supplemented by scrutiny of work on display and of pupils' sketchbooks in some classes and by a photographic record of past artwork made available in the week of inspection. Standards are average overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below average and progress was unsatisfactory.
89. Good standards were observed in Year 1, where literacy work was linked with art through paintings of a range of beautifully executed landscapes. The vibrant colour and pupils' attention to the texture of the natural and built environments, for example the pyramids in an orange desert, was a good record of the standard of work achieved. This work also demonstrated how children come to understand that ideas and personal response to beauty can be recorded visually. In Year 3, pupils experimented with a painting technique known as "stippling". Using templates to rotate shapes across the paper, they allowed the vertically held paintbrush to dance lightly across the shape or pressed down to fan out the brush for a completely different effect. Pupils explored the technique with great control, overlapping, and stippling to create satisfying designs. In Year 6, pupils produced carnival masks. In a sequence of lessons begun several weeks before the inspection, they moulded the mask shape to achieve a hard basic shape. On this they used rolled paper to define facial features. One pupil realised that the weight of the mask's nose constructed from his original design would not allow him to fix it securely to the mask. He reviewed his work in the sketchbook, redefined and modelled a new nose and evaluated his efforts with good judgement. The pupils in this class could talk about the next stages when they would paint a base colour with a broad paintbrush and fill in decorative detail with a finer brush. Their final task was to decorate the mask, using ideas derived from the display of masks provided by the teacher and teaching assistant. In one Year 6 class, pupils linked their work to their study of St Lucia in geography, particularly of the Mardi Gras carnivals.
90. Work on display included projects completed by pupils since September. Such as work in 3-D shapes and tissue paper to create stained glass window effects. Year 6 studied the human body in action, using paint and ink to explore the range of body movements. They used photographs of pupils demonstrating different physical activities to help them represent "Art in Action". Younger pupils' work on portraiture indicated an appropriate focus on skin tones. A major project which every class took part in was the production of large-scale banners of a Christmas exhibition. Pupils worked with fabric paint, textiles, printing techniques, painting, drawings, and appliqué work of Christmas characters projected onto the wall and drawn on a large scale for exhibition. The work, appropriately saved as an archive for the school, is very impressive, and while clearly directed by an adult's plan, demonstrates the quality pupils achieved for this whole-school purpose. In contrast, in Year 1 there were fine pencil drawings of the local church, achieving a personal response to the beauty of the building.
91. The quality of teaching is good. Pupils are offered opportunities to develop technique, use tools well, and use ongoing evaluation to help develop the task. Teachers identify clear learning intentions, explain tasks carefully, and use appropriate language for techniques that pupils are going to use. Teachers encourage pupils to be adventurous in their artistic explorations and provide a good range of resources, including overalls and masks to prevent any dangerous inhalation of dust.
92. Pupils' attitudes are very positive. They work very carefully and with concentration, and show great discipline and responsibility in the use of tools and materials. They show great respect for each other's work, drawing inspectors' attention to class-mates' efforts and evaluate their own and others' work in terms of the learning objectives. There was little evidence during the week of inspection of the use of art for individual pupils to explore ideas creatively, to consider the work of different artists, or to experiment with a range of resources.

93. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The school has recently adopted a scheme of work and produced a policy. The subject was judged unsatisfactory in the last inspection and the school has been slow in developing those elements of monitoring and assessment that could help the co-ordinator identify priorities for the subject or teachers' in-service training needs. The school plans to create a curriculum map to ensure that pupils are given enough opportunities to explore ideas in a range of media and that certain artistic skills develop over time, for example portraiture, sketching from life and modelling. During the week of inspection, it was possible to see the development of drawing skills from the sketching of the local parish church in Year 1, and the fine drawings of footwear in Year 6, but there was little evidence of drawing in the other years. Personal portfolios to allow teachers to record individual progress, and a school portfolio with work levelled against National Curriculum expectation for each year-group, are important developments which the co-ordinator is keen to implement.
94. Work observed shows that pupils are following a programme of study from the scheme of work. There are noticeable gaps, however. Currently pupils are not given the opportunity to explore and evaluate the work of different artists and craftspeople from a range of cultures and eras. The school does not have certain resources, for example good quality reproductions of artists' work for pupils to review. Such resources would help pupils come to understand the artistic heritage of their own and others' cultures, which would not only develop their spiritual awareness, but would also widen their view of the visual world.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

95. Standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are typical of those reached by pupils of these ages. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. All the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Boys and girls attain equally. The pupils have positive attitudes towards work and they generally behave well in lessons.
96. By Year 2, the pupils design and make satisfactory models of vehicles and puppets. They understand the importance of making carefully labelled diagrams of their proposed design. They list the materials that they will use and they know some of the key words that they will encounter in their work. The pupils evaluate their finished products and say how they could have made them better. They use a variety of materials to make effective playground swings and slides and they use construction kits to investigate how vehicles move.
97. By Year 6, the pupils understand the need for design, making, and evaluation in the design and technology process. They combine work in science with design and technology, in designing and making satisfactory fairground rides, incorporating an electrical circuit, a battery, and a motor. They use a variety of materials to make effective shelters, complete with hinged doors and windows. In food technology, the pupils design and make imaginative, decorated biscuits. The pupils use satisfactory sewing skills to make felt purses. They design and make satisfactory photograph frames, incorporating a hinged stand.
98. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall. There are examples of good teaching. There is much more focus on the design process than was the case at the previous inspection. The teachers often use the subject to enhance learning in other subjects. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, the teacher made useful links with art and design and this helped the pupils to create imaginative designs for carnival masks. He encouraged the pupils to express the character of the person behind the mask. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher encouraged the pupils to make detailed evaluations of their biscuits. This helped in the development of speaking and listening skills, by letting the pupils talk about the difficulties and the successes that they had encountered during their work. This helped them to appreciate the importance of the accurate measuring of ingredients, correct cooker temperatures and cooking times. In this lesson, the classroom assistant made a very positive contribution to learning. The teachers emphasise the need to think of the customer and the need for effective marketing, both in terms of packaging and advertising. They encourage the pupils to compare their products with their original designs. In another Year 5 lesson, the teacher encouraged the pupils to be aware of the constraints in their design. This led to some good evaluations by the pupils; 'my biscuit broke because...'; 'I liked my design, but it didn't look like a face in the end'. There is very little evidence of the teachers using information and communication technology to enhance learning in the subject.
99. A clear policy meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Planning is satisfactorily based on national guidelines. The coordinator has made a good start in managing the subject. She has not yet had the opportunity to check the quality of teaching, but she offers help and advice to colleagues as necessary.



She has utilised the specialist expertise of secondary school staff to help develop the teachers' confidence. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing and tracking the pupils' progress. There are adequate resources for teaching and learning. An after-school craft club for pupils enriches the curriculum in Years 1 and 2.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

100. The evidence base on which to base inspection judgements is limited to one lesson observation and an analysis of work throughout the school. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations for seven and eleven-year-olds. The amount of work seen and the standards achieved are the same as they were at the last inspection. Pupils with English as an additional language make very good contributions to the subject when they are encouraged to share their own experiences. For example, a Year 6 pupil recounted her visits to several Caribbean islands as part of a unit of work on St Lucia. Pupils with special educational needs completed the same work as their peers, but have some additional support from a teaching assistant. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
101. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have studied the local area and understand some of the differences between physical and human features. They label features on a map accurately and show a satisfactory understanding of different land uses. Higher attaining pupils, begin to show a 'birds eye view' when drawing maps. In a unit of work comparing Slough to a Scottish island, pupils made good use of their literacy skills when compiling comparative lists of the differences in physical and human features. They begin to understand the symbols used when drawing a map.
102. Year 6 pupils use the subject effectively to apply literacy skills. For example, pupils applied their note-taking skills as they listened to a tape-recorded account of a St. Lucian describing living on the island of St Lucia. The knowledge and understanding of life on the island was well supplemented by one pupil's own account of her travels around the islands which effectively encouraged the pupils to discuss the similarities and differences between different Caribbean islands. A model of the land features also effectively helped pupils to learn about the terrain and ecological features. Pupils achieved very well in the lesson observed as a result of the very good, enthusiastic teaching they received.
103. The leadership and management of the subject are underdeveloped. The teacher responsible for the subject has been in post for a very short time and is a part-time teacher. She has a very limited understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has limited subject knowledge. She is aware of what needs to be done. Resources are unsatisfactory. There are too few maps to show different views of the school and insufficient atlases.

## **HISTORY**

104. Standards of attainment in the subject are broadly typical throughout the school, which is similar to the previous inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily because work is generally matched to their level of need. A judgement on the leadership and management of the subject has not been made as the co-ordinator was absent during the inspection.
105. Year 1 and 2 pupils begin to infer that the past was different as they compare pictures of the school in the past with the school today. An ex-pupil from forty years ago who vividly described school life in the past effectively brought this to life. Pupils read questions with confidence and clarity to help find out more about school life in the 1960s. Higher attaining pupils asked questions that are more searching. Pupils are keen to learn and enjoyed listening to first hand accounts of the past.
106. Throughout Years 3 to 6, good opportunities are provided to apply literacy skills. Year 3 pupils, for example, wrote about life in the Anglo-Saxon period drawing on a range of secondary sources such as a video and books available in the classroom. The chance to compare different interpretations of life at that time was not discussed and was a missed opportunity. Pupils learn to understand chronology and are expected to know the dates of events and who was reigning in different historical periods. By Year 6, pupils learn that life was very different in the past and, for example, begin to understand the consequences of poor sewerage and sanitation. They show a good understanding of the different ways of life in Victorian times and capture this imaginatively in diary writing.

107. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The school follows the nationally recommended scheme of work and teaches the subject alternately with geography. High expectation and a good use of secondary resources such as books, videos, and oral history all contribute to the pupils' high level of interest and enthusiasm for the subject. Effective use is made of classroom assistants to support pupils with special educational needs. Work is regularly assessed against the learning objective for the lesson. Teachers have good knowledge of the periods studied and make their lessons stimulating.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

108. Standards are in line with national expectations ages 7 and 11. This is an improvement on the standards found at the time of the last inspection. This overall improvement is the result of the use of national guidelines, increasing staff confidence in teaching the subject and the establishment of computer suite facilities. However, such developments are relatively recent and there are still inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, the use of the subject across the curriculum and the quality of resources. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are making good progress.
109. Achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. By Year 2, pupils manipulate text, write simple stories, and change fonts. They use their keyboard skills to support work in other subjects such as numeracy. They find information using CD-ROMs and save and retrieve their work. They create and colour pictures and patterns. For example, in a Year 2 lesson all of the pupils used the flood tool successfully to produce patterns ranging from simple designs to complex patterns and pictures. They all understood the need for accuracy in joining the lines of their designs and had the control skills to enable them to be accurate. Year 6 pupils use a range of skills developed over the previous four years to create a multimedia presentation. They retrieve items from the Internet, write text, generate pictures and graphics, and add their own sound commentaries. Higher attaining pupils talk meaningfully about their ideas for retrieving music from a CD-ROM for use in their presentation. Younger pupils make and use databases and spreadsheets and send e-mails. When writing text, lower attaining pupils make use of a program that supports their spelling, enabling them to write their own text successfully without constant breaks to seek help. However, the use of information and communication technology in some other subjects, such as science, is limited and the use of control systems and monitoring equipment is underdeveloped.
110. In order to raise standards, the headteacher and the co-ordinator have introduced the use of national guidelines supplemented by commercial materials, organised staff training and implemented reviews of the quality of teaching. Teaching is good in Year 1 and 2 and satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is effective when teachers use good subject knowledge and good knowledge of their pupils to ensure that all pupils can implement the basic procedures confidently. In a very good Year 6 lesson, the teacher carefully controlled the progress of the class through the basic skills they needed to undertake their task of using the voice-over procedure to record their own spoken dialogue onto a presentation. The pupils listened carefully to each instruction and concentrated on performing the operation correctly with the result that all the pupils proceeded to record their own messages successfully. Teaching is also effective when, within a carefully controlled lesson, higher attaining pupils are given the freedom and challenge to extend their learning. For example, in a Year 2 lesson pupils that are more able undertook a task from which they were able to make interesting comparisons between the relative advantages and disadvantages of computer drawn and hand drawn designs. In one Year 5 lesson, the teaching was less satisfactory because the data used for a spreadsheet exercise involved the pupils in lengthy and repetitive procedures that offered little challenge and failed to extend their learning. Planning for lessons is generally good and lower attaining pupils are well supported. Teaching is made more effective by the work of an experienced teaching assistant who has created specific programs such the one used for the multimedia study unit.
111. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is aware of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and since his appointment has implemented a programme of action within the school development plan to improve the subject. He has time release to fulfil his duties amongst which he monitors all medium term plans produced by teachers. He also monitors pupils' work and the detailed class records of the pupils' attainments. However, there is currently no system for tracking the progress of individual pupils. He has started to observe teachers in lessons and provide feedback and organised staff development. The action plan has a clear focus on raising standards and improving teaching. As a part of this, resources have been upgraded considerably including software for work with pupils with special educational needs, computer provision in the library, provision for teaching assistants to support their planning and the setting up of two computer suites. However, some study units and some subjects lack adequate software resources. The

quality of accommodation in the computer suites is unsatisfactory as one is part of a general concourse area and the other is in a very small room. Both inhibit the ability of teachers to monitor pupils' work effectively.

## **MUSIC**

112. The standards by the age of both seven and 11 are in line with national expectations and have been maintained since the last inspection. The youngest pupils competently keep the beat and follow the rhythm patterns and a few recall musical elements such as pulse, pitch, and the names of some of the untuned percussion used. In Year 2, pupils explore the use of sound to portray a storm. Older pupils use a simple nursery rhyme to see how variations in tempo affect the overall sound. In Year 5 pupils were experimenting with part singing and adding a range of instruments to make an interesting accompaniment. This was successful and effective. The oldest pupils explore the possibility of using a pop song to write their own lyrics. This they found quite a challenge that needed a lot of work to achieve. The standard of singing in class lessons is variable but that heard in assembly is good, particularly hymns sung in two parts. Singing is enthusiastic, mainly in tune, except for a few high notes that are incorrectly pitched and with clear words.
113. Achievement of pupils across the school is satisfactory. Pupils develop an appreciation for music and the relevant skills to enable them to enjoy and understand music. They are enthusiastic when the task appeals to them and cooperate with each other when asked to work together. The pupils are confident to perform their lyrics or rhythm patterns in front of their peers. The majority of the pupils listen carefully and respond to teachers' questions.
114. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good lessons observed. Where the teacher is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and chooses music that appeals to the pupils, they are motivated to give of their best. These lessons provide a good challenge and pupils respond positively. Questions are used effectively to extend or reinforce pupils' knowledge. Relationships are good and pupils are confident to perform their music. Where lessons are satisfactory, the music chosen does not appeal to the pupils, so there is a lack of interest. Opportunities are missed to improve singing techniques or to ensure a steady beat is kept to help pupils keep in time. The use of teacher expertise benefits pupils' learning. Cross curricular links are made particularly with history: for example pupils listen to Tudor music when studying Henry VIII and Elizabeth 1 and learn a Tudor dance.
115. The music co-ordinator has recently introduced a new scheme to provide more help and guidance for those teachers who are less secure teaching this subject. This will need to be evaluated to check it fulfils the needs of both the pupils and the school.
116. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn a variety of instruments. Out-of school- activities include two choirs for Years 3 to 6 and recorder groups. Pupils have many opportunities to perform for their parents in school productions, in the local church and for senior citizens. A number of musicians visit the school and organise workshops for the pupils. Every day in assembly, pupils listen to a range of music from all over the world. All these help to enhance the pupils' music curriculum.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

117. Standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are typical of those reached by pupils of these ages. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are fully included in learning and they make satisfactory progress. Boys and girls attain equally. Most of the pupils change into smart, school physical education kit and they participate enthusiastically in lessons. A small minority of boys have less positive attitudes. They do not listen; they tend to be silly and sometimes they behave inappropriately. Younger pupils sometimes become over-excited and noise levels rise.
118. It is not possible to judge standards in gymnastics, as this aspect is taught in the autumn term, nor in swimming, as this is limited to Year 3 pupils in the autumn term. The pupils respond imaginatively to music, expressing their feelings through sound body movements and short dance sequences. They are developing satisfactory basic skills in football, rugby, and netball. In rugby, they run with the ball and pass it backwards to a partner. In football, the pupils pass the ball with reasonable accuracy and high attainers head the ball confidently. Many pupils are developing good hockey skills. They know how to use the stick

correctly to stop the ball and to pass accurately. The pupils participate in a fitness circuit, incorporating a number of different exercises. Younger pupils play various 'fun' games, which help to develop their listening, running and dodging skills.

119. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good teaching. Lessons are well planned. The teachers manage changing sessions well, encouraging the younger pupils to show independence in this. The challenging behaviour of some pupils sometimes leads to interruptions and to a slowing in the pace of lessons. The teachers' subject knowledge is secure. This was apparent in a very good hockey lesson for pupils in Year 6, where the teacher gave clear demonstrations on the correct use of the stick for controlling and passing the ball and on adopting correct body positions. The teacher made constant references to parallel skills in football and this helped to motivate the boys. The teachers emphasise the need to warm up at the start of lessons and to cool down at the end. They pay due attention to safety. There is satisfactory teaching of specific skills. In a Year 6 dance lesson, for example, the teacher emphasised the need for space and height in movement and this helped the pupils to develop their response to music from the film 'Billy Elliot'. The teachers give the pupils opportunities to observe and evaluate the performance of others and this helps them to think of new ideas and to improve their own performance. In the Year 6 lesson quoted above, this helped many pupils to make their landings from jumps quieter. The teachers often use questioning well, in order to make the pupils think carefully. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher asked 'How can we make our movements happy ones? How was the man feeling at the start of the story?' This helped the pupils to devise satisfactory dance sequences to interpret the story of 'The Wind and The Sun'. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher asked 'Who remembers what a mime is?' and this helped the pupils to develop imaginative movements to represent the actions of robots and various animals.
120. A clear policy meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Planning is satisfactorily based on national guidelines. The co-ordinator leads the subject well. He recognises the need for more staff training and for increased resources. He has not yet had the opportunity to check the quality of teaching, but he shares his expertise with colleagues. There are good procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment, including an innovative 'PE Notepad', in which the pupils assess their own progress and set targets for improvement. Overall, accommodation is satisfactory. There is adequate, good quality fixed apparatus in the hall, but there is insufficient small apparatus and equipment. Learning is enhanced by a wide range of after-school sports clubs and by orienteering during a school 'activity week'.