

INSPECTION REPORT

GREAT HORWOOD CHURCH OF ENGLAND COMBINED SCHOOL

Great Horwood, Milton Keynes

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110441

Headteacher: Mrs. Lesley Whittaker

Reporting inspector: Carol Worthington
20609

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th January 2003

Inspection number: 247007

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 -11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Chairman of governors:	Mrs. Julie Whitehead
Date of previous inspection:	12 th January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20609	Carol Worthington	Registered inspector	Science Music Religious education	How high standards are How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed How the school has improved since the last inspection
9708	Sylvia Daintrey	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
12301	Joan Boden	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Geography History The Foundation Stage of Learning Special educational needs	
7813	Kevin Wood	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Art Physical education	How good curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils are

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This smaller than average village primary school caters for 161 pupils between the ages of four and 11. Nearly all pupils are white and there is none whose mother tongue is not English. Just over eight and a half per cent of pupils have special educational needs mainly because of moderate learning difficulty; one has a statement. These figures are below average. A small percentage of children come from traveller families. Attainment on entry is average. The long-serving previous headteacher left the school at the end of the autumn term and the current headteacher took up her post at the beginning of the spring term.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school which achieves high standards in English, mathematics and science through good teaching. The values set out in the school's mission statement are evident in pupils' very good attitudes and in the care they show each other. The new headteacher has inherited a thriving school; she and the deputy headteacher, who made outstanding contributions under the previous headteacher, already work together effectively. The school is efficiently run and gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 are well above average
- It promotes very good attitudes, values and personal development
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs
- The quality of teaching is good overall, with a high proportion of very good lessons given, especially at the end of Key Stage 2
- Leadership and management are good
- The governors make a good contribution to the running of the school
- Partnership with parents is very good
- The assessment of children's work and the support and guidance they receive are very good

What could be improved

- The use of literacy and numeracy across the whole curriculum
- The provision for the use of information and communication technology in all curriculum areas
- Provision for swimming in Key Stage 2
- The quality and number of resources in the reception class
- The use of assessment in children's independent activities the reception class

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 January 1998, since when it has made very good improvement. All key issues regarding standards, the curriculum, assessment, leadership and management have been met. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved, and standards are now average for children this age. The unsatisfactory aspects of leadership have been overcome, and leadership by the headteacher and the senior management team is good. There are now schemes of work for the whole curriculum, and assessment is very good. In addition, standards in English have risen from above average to well above average and in mathematics and science from average to well above average. The standard of teaching at the last inspection was satisfactory, with a high proportion that was unsatisfactory. Now it is good, with a high proportion that is very good and some that is excellent. Pupils' attitudes to school have improved to very good, as a result of very good provision for personal development through spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. The support and guidance given to pupils has improved to be very good, as has the school's work in partnership with parents. The new leadership has already drawn all members of staff into a strong team, which has very good capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Key Stage 2 Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	C	A	A
mathematics	A	B	A	B
science	A	A	A	A

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

The school's performance in the National Curriculum tests for 11 year-olds in 2002 was well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. In the tests for seven year-olds, the standard of reading was above the national average, of mathematics well above average and in writing it was in very high and in the top five per cent of the country. Comparison with similar schools shows standards at Key Stage 2 are well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. In Key Stage 1, standards are average in reading, above average in writing and well above average in science. Boys have done better than boys nationally, which has brought them up to the overall girls' achievement, so both do well in this school. The school met and exceeded its targets for English, mathematics and science in 2002. There has been a general rising trend in standards over the years since the previous inspection, except in 2001 when there was a sharp fall in English, particularly in Key Stage 1. This was because there was a larger number of pupils with special educational needs that year.

Current standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average for 11 year-olds and above average for seven year-olds. Standards in religious education are above average in Key Stage 2; the standard of singing is above average in both key stages. In all other subjects, standards are as expected for children this age, despite the relatively short time devoted to them. Literacy and numeracy are developed very well in all subjects at the end of Key Stage 2, but not so well in history, geography and science in particular for other pupils. Standards in the Foundation Stage are above average for literacy and numeracy, but only average for the rest of the curriculum because activities do not develop literacy and numeracy in a different context. By the time they leave reception, pupils have reached at least average standards in all the areas of learning for children that age and many exceed the goals in language and mathematical development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to learn, enjoy their activities and are motivated to do well. They accept the differences in each other and treat each other positively.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Most pupils behave very well all the time. A small minority of boys in the reception class sometimes lose a little self-control.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and by Year 6 they have developed impressive qualities of maturity and responsibility.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils from all groups attend sufficiently regularly to benefit

	from the school's provision. Unauthorised absence is below the national average.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall with some very good aspects; nearly two fifths of lesson seen were very good, with many that were excellent at the end of Key Stage 2. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is strong throughout the school and underpins the high standards in science in Key Stage 2. Teachers have good expertise in all subjects and this leads to at least average standards overall. These could be better if the high level of expertise present in the top two classes were disseminated throughout the school, particularly in Key Stage 1 and at the start of Key Stage 2, where literacy in particular is not developed well enough through the whole curriculum. In the Foundation Stage, the teaching of literacy and numeracy as separate subjects is very good. However, in other areas of learning, teaching is only satisfactory, limited by the lack of resources and equipment. Assessment in independent activities is only partial, so not all children do as well as they might. The teaching of children with special educational needs is good everywhere and they make good progress. Teachers make particularly good use of assessment to plan their lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is broad, balanced and relevant, and is enhanced by a very good range of extracurricular activities. In the reception class, provision for literacy and numeracy is good, but a shortage of equipment and resources limits other activities that can be planned
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils' high achievements in the core subjects owe much to the high quality teaching they receive in the concentrated provision for individual strengths and needs. Pupils identified with special educational needs, those from different backgrounds, traveller pupils, and the more able are, therefore, catered for equally effectively.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for all aspects of personal development, including citizenship, is very good through lessons, assemblies and displays. Pupils encounter the joy and wonder of learning in many lessons. They develop a high sense of responsibility for each other, the village community and the wider world. Despite its geographical situation, the school provides many opportunities for pupils to learn about the cultural mix in modern Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good assessment and pastoral care. This is a purposeful school in which pupils feel safe, happy and encouraged to learn. The needs of individuals are known and met well. The school's arrangements for assessing, monitoring, supporting and guiding pupils as they move through the school are very good and enable pupils from all groups to achieve well. The school's arrangements for ensuring the welfare, health, safety and protection of its pupils are satisfactory.

The vast majority of parents are very pleased with what the school provides and achieves for their children. The school's partnership with parents is very good and parents have a very effective impact on the work of the school and their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The previous headteacher left an effective school; the new headteacher is already making her mark, and working well with the deputy headteacher who gave excellent support to the previous headteacher and continues to do so, both in this capacity and that of literacy co-ordinator. The leadership of mathematics and science is good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body plays a very good part in shaping the direction of the school, helping to write school policies and attending staff training days. The governor for special educational needs makes an excellent contribution. Governors know that the statutory requirement for swimming is not met, but cannot find a suitable venue close enough for children to attend.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. All staff and governors are involved in this, and the school seeks constant improvement. Finances are closely matched to the priorities on the school development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school seeks to obtain the best value in all its work. It compares its performance with other schools and sets challenging targets for improvement. It consults parents and children about improvements and seeks the best price for goods and services.

Staffing is good, and includes two leading teachers of literacy and one of numeracy. Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall, but the reception class is under-resourced in provision for outdoor play and for all aspects of the curriculum except literacy and numeracy.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most parents were very positive about every aspect of the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the range of extracurricular activities the amount of homework their children are expected to do the mixed age class of children in Years 1 and 2

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views about the school. They found that the range of extracurricular activities is wide and that children have plenty of opportunity to take part. The amount of homework is the same as would be expected for children in similar schools. The amalgamation of classes is inevitable in a school this size where there are small numbers in particular year groups. There are ample classroom assistants, and teachers' planning is made specifically for each year group. Standards are above average in Years 1 and 2.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school's performance in the National Curriculum tests for 11 year-olds in 2002 was well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. In the tests for seven year-olds, the standard of reading was above the national average, of mathematics, well above average, and in writing it was in very high and in the top five per cent of the country. Comparison with similar schools shows standards at Key Stage 2 are well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. In Key Stage 1, standards are average in reading, above average in writing and well above average in science. Boys have done better than boys nationally, which has brought them up to the overall girls' achievement, so both do well in this school.
2. There has been a general rising trend in standards over the years since the previous inspection, except in 2001 when there was a sharp fall in English, particularly in Key Stage 1. The school attributes this to the large number of pupils with special educational needs that year, and statistically, one child's results make a significant difference to the whole because of the small number taking the tests. The appointment of the deputy headteacher has been instrumental in raising standards since then, through her close monitoring of teaching and provision of training to improve the teaching of literacy in particular.
3. During the inspection, high standards were seen in the core subjects, very similar to those achieved in the National Curriculum tests. In Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science were well above average. In Year 2, standards were above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards in writing are only just above average in Year 2 because of the predominance of worksheets which do not develop literacy in the whole curriculum.
4. Standards in speaking and listening are developing well in most classes by the use of 'talk partners' so that pupils learn the language associated with the specific topics. Another reason for the high standard of literacy is the way in which the National Literacy Strategy has been modified so that guided reading, handwriting and some work on grammar takes place outside the literacy hour. This ensures that pupils concentrate on writing during the designated hour. More time is thus spent on literacy than in most other schools, and because teaching is so thorough, especially at the end of Key Stage 2, standards are continually being raised.
5. The high standards in mathematics and science are due to good teacher expertise in these subjects gained from their training, particularly in mathematics where teachers are confident in the National Numeracy Strategy. Higher achieving pupils were taken out of lessons by the previous headteacher - whose specialisms were mathematics and science - and given higher level work. Many pupils achieved level 5 in science and mathematics in the recent Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests, and three reached the very high level 6 in mathematics. The provision of work to stretch higher ability pupils has been continued by the current teachers of upper Key Stage 2 to very good effect.
6. The extra time spent on literacy has the effect that there is less time available for the foundation subjects, but standards are being maintained at around average for all in

both key stages. There has been an improvement since the last inspection in information and communication technology (ICT), music and religious education. The standard of singing is above average because of the expertise of the specialist music teacher and teachers of younger children. The standard of ICT has risen because of the availability of the computer room and the effective training which teachers have received, but still needs developing in other subjects. The standard of religious education is above average in Key Stage 2 because much training since the past inspection has been effective and in upper Key Stage 2 in particular, the standard of literacy is such that the subject is enhanced by high level discussion and extended writing.

7. The high standard of numeracy also enhances those achieved in science and design and technology in particular. Pupils measure accurately using standard units to present the findings of scientific investigations in appropriate graphical form, but numeracy is not developed particularly in any other subject.
8. Standards in most of the foundation subjects, especially history and geography in lower Key Stage 2, would be raised if these subjects were used more regularly as a context to develop literacy, thus allocating more time to them. This also applies to science in Key Stage 1, where pupils' good writing skills are not fully utilised. This is also true of history and geography, but there are gaps in these subjects in lower Key Stage 2 which prevent standards rising to above average
9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the very good support they receive in lessons. Children from traveller families, who by the nature of their irregular attendance have special educational needs relating to continuity of education, are well supported by their teacher, classroom assistants and local education authority provision.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development are very good and a strength of the school. They have improved since the last inspection when they were good. Parents are extremely pleased with how their children make very good progress as they move through the school, developing keen attitudes to learning, high standards of behaviour, very caring and productive relationships with each other and impressive qualities of maturity and responsibility. This rate of progress is particularly notable in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6, and makes a significant contribution to the academic standards which pupils achieve at the ends of the key stages.
11. Attitudes and behaviour were very good or excellent in over one fifth of the lessons seen during the inspection. They were good or better in nine out of ten lessons. Pupils from the reception class onwards, including those with special educational needs, are interested in learning, enjoy their activities and want to do well. In a Year 1/2 music lesson, for example, the pupils much enjoyed rehearsing for a performance of a rap, building on the work they had done at Christmas. They responded very well to the teacher's high expectations of the quality of their performance and were eager to learn their parts at home. In Year 6, the pupils are highly motivated to succeed in all lessons. They are fully committed, for instance, to learning about the new requirements and marking scheme for the end of key stage handwriting test, and are very eager to answer the teacher's questions designed to check their understanding of the examining body's text. Attitudes and behaviour are good overall in lower Key Stage 2, but occasionally are not so good when the lesson's activity is carried out at a slow pace, and the teacher does not ensure that the needs of the different ability groups are addressed. A small

minority of boys in the reception class sometimes lose a little self-control and behave unacceptably. This occurs when they play with their food at snack-time, for example, or run around noisily at the end of a physical education lesson in the hall.

12. Pupils behave very well outside lessons, for example as they walk round the school, sit and listen in assemblies and play at break and lunch times. The very occasional incidents of misbehaviour and bullying are recorded appropriately and dealt with very effectively. There have been no exclusions or racist incidents.
13. Pupils with special educational needs have the same very good attitudes as the rest. The support they receive in lessons enables them to take full part, which raises their self esteem and boosts their confidence. The views of pupils with statements of special educational need are taken into account in annual reviews. This gives them a good opportunity to reflect on their past achievements and to contribute to their future learning plans.
14. Pupils have very warm relationships with each other and with all the adults in the school. This enables them to make particularly good progress when they work in pairs and small groups. Parents commented favourably on the way in which pupils accept the differences in each other and treat each other positively. Another notable feature is the manner in which the oldest and youngest pupils relate to each other when they read books together as part of the 'reading buddy' scheme. The oldest pupils have a range of other responsibilities around the school which they carry out sensibly and reliably. Pupils from Year 2 onwards have been involved in the first elections for a school council and are gaining valuable experience in putting forward and developing ideas for improving the school, such as the provision of games and equipment for lunch-time play. Children attending part-time in the reception class make sound progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They achieve well in some aspects, but are not given sufficient opportunities to make their own choices and decisions so that they can develop independence in their learning, for example in their creative work.
15. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average and has remained at a similar level since the last inspection. Pupils from all groups in the school attend regularly enough to be able to make good progress in their learning over time. Absences are usually short and due mainly to sickness and term-time holidays. The rate of unauthorised absence is below the national average because parents, including those of traveller children, are good at informing the school when their child is away. Pupils are generally punctual at the start of the school day. There is no significant difference in the attendance patterns of pupils with special educational needs and the rest of the school population.

HOW WELL PUPILS ARE TAUGHT

16. Teaching is good overall with some very good aspects. During the inspection, 43 lessons were seen, nearly two fifths of which were very good or better; five were excellent, all in upper Key Stage 2. There was one unsatisfactory lesson.
17. The teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy are a major strength which starts in reception and continues all the way up the school. This underpins achievement in all other subjects, although not enough use is made in history and geography, particularly in lower Key Stage 2 or in science in Key Stage 1. Under the very able direction of the literacy co-ordinator, who is also the deputy headteacher, the literacy hour is extended so that separate portions of each day are assigned to guided reading, grammar or handwriting. Teachers concentrate on writing during the literacy hour and this has

resulted in a great rise in standards since they dipped in 2001. The literacy co-ordinator was appointed soon after and has put in much training for teachers, utilising her own skill as a leading literacy teacher. Examples of pupils' very good literacy being instrumental in raising standards were seen on several occasions, notably in history in Year 6, where the teacher used pupils' confident speaking ability to the best advantage by planning good opportunities for them to talk about their research through books and pamphlets on the climate, landscape and buildings of Greece.

18. Teachers make very good use of numeracy in science. Younger pupils used bar charts to present data patterns found during investigations, sometimes using ICT, for example, to form pictograms of the eye colours of a class. Older pupils draw line graphs to show, for example the relationships between temperature and time as boiling water cools. All are familiar with common units of measurement, such as metres, Newtons and kilograms and use them correctly when learning about distance, mass and force.
19. Teachers confidently use the ICT room where the presence of the technician helps the organisation of some larger classes. Teachers are now beginning to use ICT in some subjects, but it is still used too little as a research tool in history, geography and religious education.
20. Teachers have generally good expertise in all areas of the curriculum and pupils therefore, make good gains in knowledge and understanding of all subjects. They assess work particularly well in the core subjects to enable children to make good progress and to plan the next stage of the curriculum. In Year 4, for example, the day's numeracy plans had been altered to take account of the fact that the concept of 'near doubling' when adding two digit numbers had not been fully understood by the class. Assessment is not used well enough in the free choice areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum, however, because it is not always recorded and used to increase children's progress through the early learning goals.
21. Teachers have high expectations throughout the school for standards of literacy and numeracy, and these are very high indeed for the oldest higher achieving pupils. In subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers sometimes lower their sights, for example in history and geography in Lower Key Stage 2 and science in Key Stage 1, where literacy is not developed well enough through these subjects.
22. All teachers manage their pupils well. They are inherently well behaved and have very good attitudes to learning which greatly assists their progress. The deputy headteacher has started discussion amongst teachers about suiting their methodology more closely to the learning preferences of their pupils and this is having a good effect in hers and some other classes, with frequent use of brainstorming and breaking concepts down into smaller parts which are better assimilated.
23. Teachers' planning takes good account of the individual learning plans of pupils with special educational needs. Support staff make a valuable contribution in lessons by discreetly helping pupils to join in with class discussions. Teachers ask questions specifically according to these pupils' needs. This boosts their confidence and moves them forward because they are building on success.
24. In some classes, however, particularly in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2, pupils sit for a long time on the carpet in some lessons when a greater variety of activities would result in better learning. In some instances, support assistants sit for long periods listening to the teacher when they could be more actively involved in taking groups of children for more intensive work. There are often periods in reception when support

staff could be better used. When they are fully involved in the planning, support staff know what their tasks are before the lesson and this enables them to be fully involved with pupils' learning. All teachers in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 make good use of homework to consolidate and extend work done in class and this is a powerful tool to raise standards, particularly for older children.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS

25. The curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad, balanced and relevant. It meets the statutory requirements in all aspects but physical education, where the opportunity to swim is not available in Key Stage 2. The very good provision for equality of access offers pupils a wide range of opportunities. Particularly strong is the provision for pupils with special educational needs, and for pupils' personal, social and health education. This highly inclusive school takes appropriate account of pupils' ages, attainment, gender, ethnicity and needs, and builds on pupils' achievements in its improvement planning. Subjects such as art, history and geography, and other cultural opportunities enhance the curriculum provision.
26. The curriculum planned for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. While it meets the needs of the children in most aspects, a shortage of equipment and resources limits the activities that can be offered to develop children's independent learning, apart from in language development. Although the teacher does the best she can, the children do not have enough opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills through experimentation and exploration. The outdoor area is secure, but children do not have free access to this because of the layout and the construction of the building.
27. The school responds to its particular circumstances by placing considerable emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy, and this maintains consistently high standards in these key areas. The school makes good provision for religious education that follows the locally agreed syllabus. A 'Book Week' is held annually to promote pupils' interest in reading. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved, with the establishment of a computer suite, but is so relatively new it has not yet had a beneficial effect on pupils' standards in this subject. The provision for literacy and numeracy across the wider curriculum needs strengthening.
28. The opportunities provided for pupils with special educational needs are very good and the school implements the Code of Practice fully. Pupils on the special educational needs register are set appropriately focused targets in their individual education plans. The support in school for pupils with statements is very good. These pupils are provided with suitably differentiated work and often the support of an effective learning assistant. The generally high level of care for all pupils is indicated by the full integration of those pupils who come from traveller families, who generally make the same progress as their classmates.
29. The programme for extracurricular activities is very good at present. The range of activities includes music, netball, gardening, and art and craft club. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good and enhances their experience. This Church of England primary school has very close ties with the local parish church. Its priest is a school governor and a frequent visitor. Pupils make educational visits to places such as Gulliver's Land, Woburn Safari Park and Holdenby House, so that their work in subjects such as history and geography is enhanced. Moreover, pupils in Years 4 and 6 are given opportunities for residential school journeys to Shorten Hills and Barton Hall, respectively. Those pupils unable to spend time away are given the opportunity to visit

the school journey party on a day trip, and also do similar activities as those who are away.

30. The effectiveness of relationships with its educational neighbours and other institutions is sound. There is mutual support for local church and playgroup at the summer fair and Christmas bazaar. The school's liaison with the secondary schools to which pupils transfer at the age of eleven is appropriate.
31. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved significantly since the last inspection when it was satisfactory. It is now very good in all four strands. Through training and discussion, teachers now have a greater awareness of how to promote pupils' personal development in all aspects of the curriculum and school life generally. Governors have a policy for sex education and the school provides a good range of health schemes, including attention to drugs and their misuse.
32. Pupils' spiritual development is very well promoted throughout the school. In lessons, there were many examples of pupils encountering the joy and wonder of learning and being given opportunities to reflect on their experiences. In science, for example, Year 6 pupils encountered the marvels of the human skeleton and Year 4 pupils were amazed at the way in which insulators keep things cold as well as hot. In mathematics, Year 5 pupils were pleasurably surprised when they found how the use of brackets gives them the power to make calculations in different ways. In design and technology, pupils in Years 1 and 2 reflected on what pleased them most in their work and what they would like to change. In religious education, pupils in Year 3 contemplate the power of Christianity to endure for two thousand years. The symbolism of the cross is powerfully promoted, along with symbols in other religions. Children in the reception class considered the story of Noah's Ark when making a display for the hall. Close links with the church further enhance pupils' spiritual development.
33. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Class rules are discussed, agreed and promoted consistently. Adults and the older pupils are very good role models. Moral issues, such as the sacrifice involved in going to war and the decisions required when judging which drugs are medicines, are very well considered in literacy and personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils are also encouraged to consider issues of racial equality through the life and work of Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi. Parents are very pleased with the way in which their children develop a high sense of responsibility for each other, the village community and the wider world. This is achieved through a range of schemes such as the reading buddies, the friendship benches, making and delivering harvest parcels for local senior citizens and fund-raising for national and international charities. Pupils are also taught to care for the environment by clearing litter, planting bulbs and taking part in conservation weekends alongside parents, governors and volunteers.
34. The school has improved still further its provision for pupils' social development which was good at the last inspection and is now very good. Pupils are encouraged to see themselves as special people who all work together to make their school a special place. A strong sense of community pervades the school, as was seen in the 'celebration' assembly when all the pupils in the school, including the part-time children in the reception class, came together to recognise and reward each other's achievements. Pupils are given very good opportunities to work with each other within lessons, and these are being further enhanced by the trialling of 'talking partners' in some classes. Pupils from different year groups come together very constructively in events such as sports day and the school quiz. Residential trips enhance social development, especially in Year 4, when a number of new pupils join the school. A

more recent initiative is the school council which has involved all pupils from Year 2 onwards in experiencing the democratic process of making choices, representing others and taking decisions through to completion.

35. Pupils' cultural development is very well promoted. Pupils learn about their own culture through the school's close links with the church and the village, events such as the Golden Jubilee celebrations and visits by professional theatre groups, and subjects such as art, music, English and history. Year 1 and 2 pupils, for example, compare life in the present-day to Victorian times, and older pupils consider how the Second World War affected the lives of children in this country. Opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and traditions are much improved since the last inspection, and are very well supported by the parents. Despite its geographical situation, the school provides plenty of opportunities for children to learn about the cultural mix of British society through visitors, artefacts and taught lessons. Pupils learn about Ramadan and Diwali, make rangoli patterns and totem pole designs, and listen to a rap performance artist. There is an email link with a school in France (run by the after-school French club).
36. Assemblies make an important contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Those seen during the inspection were at least good and often very good. They provided effective opportunities for pupils to hear stories, including, for example, the parable of the loaves and fishes, linked to the moral theme of sharing. Pupils are encouraged to take an active part by singing hymns, responding to questions, and writing and reading out their own prayers. Reflection is encouraged well through music, prayer and artefacts, such as a candle. Assemblies over the course of the year cover the main Christian festivals and those of other faiths and cultures, such as the Muslim New Year and St Patrick's Day.
37. In order to improve provision still further, the school should specifically plan for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development within subjects and the Foundation Stage, and monitor what is provided.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL CARES FOR ITS PUPILS

38. This is a caring and purposeful school in which pupils feel safe, happy and encouraged to learn. The needs of individuals are known and met well. The school's arrangements for monitoring, supporting and guiding pupils as they move through the school are very good and enable pupils from all groups to achieve well. Parents are pleased with the ways in which children new to the school, at whatever age, are helped to settle in and to make good progress in their academic attainment and personal development.
39. There has been a significant improvement in the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment which were a key issue for action at the last inspection. These are now consistent and regular in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Samples of pupils' work in these subjects are assessed against National Curriculum criteria twice a year and kept in assessment books for each pupil, alongside marked test papers in English and mathematics. This is very good practice. It enables teachers to see at a glance how well individual pupils are progressing and to use that information to set targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy. There is a well-established computerised tracking system which records data on pupils' baseline assessment and test scores. This is used to set whole-school targets and to identify and analyse areas of relative weakness, such as why Year 6 pupils in 2002 performed slightly less successfully in the mathematics tests than those for English and science. The school is making good progress in developing assessment procedures in other subjects, with some good practice in design and

technology. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. The children's attainment is appropriately assessed against the early learning goals but is only recorded in the two areas of learning concerned with literacy and numeracy. This is unsatisfactory and restricts the ability of staff to raise children's achievement in the other four areas.

40. The school supports pupils very well in improving their academic performance and personal development. Specific and manageable targets in English and mathematics, based on precise National Curriculum levels, are communicated to pupils and parents on clear target-setting sheets. Pupils are also involved in setting their own personal targets and in reviewing all their targets each term. There are effective programmes of support to help pupils at risk of under-achieving in spelling, mathematics and the Year 6 National Curriculum tests. There are also good arrangements for meeting the needs of, and stretching, high achievers, for example in mathematics. The school makes very good use of the local education authority's minority ethnic and traveller achievement service to support pupils from traveller families, especially in Year 6 as the time for transition to secondary school approaches. The support teacher is very experienced and is a very useful resource for the school when it needs to review strategies and resources. The very good relationships between all members of the school community, and the school's access to support from the Diocese, are significant factors in helping pupils overcome any personal difficulties, such as shyness or bereavement.
41. The school keeps a very good check on how well pupils with special educational needs are doing. The targets in individual learning plans are reviewed regularly and adjusted accordingly.
42. Procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour are very effective. Pupils in the main school know clearly what is expected of them and highly value the rewards which they can achieve for good work and behaviour. A notable feature is the Golden Book which records the achievements of all pupils in the school and is proudly displayed in the entrance hall. In some sessions in the reception class, the children are not always reminded of how to behave and interact with each other, for example when eating their snacks or when finishing a physical education lesson in the hall.
43. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are broadly effective. Parents are clear about the requirements for informing the school about absences, including term-time holidays. The secretary plays a valuable role in following up unexplained absences, both daily and weekly. This enables patterns of absence to be identified quickly and investigated further, sometimes with the assistance of the Education Welfare Officer.
44. The school's arrangements for ensuring the welfare, health, safety and protection of its pupils are satisfactory. There is a good number of trained first-aiders, and a good awareness of pupils' medical needs. The school promotes healthy living well through the curriculum and its healthy eating policy. The teacher responsible for health and safety has undergone recent training and the linked governor has expertise in the role. The school's handyman deals with minor hazards effectively. The new headteacher has had training and experience in child protection and appropriately reminded staff of procedures at the beginning of term. The school has correctly identified the need for all staff to be trained in child protection and this has been arranged to take place later in the term. Sound progress has been made in tackling a number of health and safety issues identified in the school's audit carried out last April and reported to the local education authority. The inspection team identified two health and safety concerns which have been reported to the governing body.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL WORKS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

45. The vast majority of parents are very pleased with what the school provides and achieves for their children. A high percentage of parents returned the inspection questionnaire and expressed very positive views about most aspects of school life, as did those attending the meeting with the registered inspector. They strongly approve of the way in which the school helps their children to make good progress and to develop as mature and responsible young people who are ready for the next stage in their education. They appreciate the improvements that have been made since the last inspection. A very small number of parents expressed some concerns about particular issues that they had encountered, but within the context of recognising that this is a good school. The inspection team is confident that the new headteacher will deal quickly and effectively with any worries which individual parents may have.
46. The school has a very good partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs. They are kept fully informed and are involved effectively in future educational plans for their children. Their views are sought and valued and, as a result, they appreciate what the school does for their children.
47. The school's general partnership with parents has improved since the last inspection, when it was good; it is now very good. Parents are very satisfied with the ways in which the school works with them. They feel very comfortable approaching the school and consider that they are kept very well informed. The inspection team agrees with these positive views. Parents receive very good information about school life and the curriculum through regular newsletters, parents' notice-boards, meetings, the prospectus and governors' annual report. They also receive very good information about their children's progress. Daily contact is made through the reading record and homework books, for example, and there are termly consultation meetings when targets are set and reviewed. Annual reports on pupils' progress give helpful detail, linked clearly to National Curriculum criteria where appropriate, about individuals' attainment and development at the end of each school year. Parents of children in the reception class have easy access to the staff at the start and end of the session.
48. Parents have a very effective impact on the work of the school and their children's education. They support the school's values and aims very well. They appreciate being invited to school events and meetings and make good efforts to attend. The Christmas production of 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' was particularly well attended and enjoyed by parents. Parents are involved well in hearing their children read and supporting them in their homework. The school has a very clear homework policy which gives guidance on the minimum and maximum times that should be spent on tasks and what to do if the child experiences difficulties. There is a very active Parent Teacher Association which organises a very wide range of social and fund-raising events, involving also the village and the pupils. Many of these raise significant sums of money for the school which have been spent most recently on outdoor play facilities and resources for information and communication technology. A good number of parents help in the school, particularly in the reception class where there is a rota of about 15 parents. The school annually seeks parents' views, which is good practice in accordance with best value principles. It responds well to parents' ideas; a French club was started after a suggestion was made to governors, for instance.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

49. Leadership and management are good. The previous headteacher, recently left, brought about improvement since the last inspection, which has been accelerated since the appointment of the deputy head four terms ago, and which is very good overall. All the key issues from the last inspection have been met and there has been very good improvement in standards, leadership and teaching in particular.
50. The new headteacher, only a week in post, has already started to make her mark on provision. She shows herself to be a good leader, working very well with her deputy. She devoted much time to the transition period by visiting the school's outgoing headteacher frequently during the previous term. She is herself a leading literacy teacher and observed all staff teaching literacy or numeracy during that term. This term, she has already monitored and evaluated the teaching in the ICT suite and devised plans for improvement.
51. The deputy headteacher has very good leadership and management qualities as shown by the very good work carried out since her appointment. She has completed a whole performance management cycle of teaching staff and initiated training in teaching methodology, particularly to do with thinking skills. Her expertise here is apparent in her own excellent teaching. She has also rationalised the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress so that this is now of a very good standard throughout the school. The deputy headteacher also co-ordinates literacy - in which she is also a leading teacher – very well. The co-ordinators for mathematics and science are both new but already checking provision for their subjects well. Other co-ordinators look after their subjects satisfactorily, at least.
52. The governors give good service and play a very good part in shaping the direction of the school; they showed great astuteness when selecting a new headteacher, going to re-advertisement until the ideal candidate applied. Governors know the school well through their attendance at training days. They help to write school policies and are fully involved in the school development process.
53. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The governor with responsibility for this area is very well qualified and gives excellent support. He regularly meets the special educational needs co-ordinator and monitors the work of the school closely.
54. The governing body knows that it does not meet statutory requirements for swimming in Key Stage 2. This is because the pool on the site of a secondary school in Buckingham has not been available, and the nearest pool is much further away and would be too expensive in time and money to get there.
55. Financial management is good, with expenditure matched closely to the educational priorities on the school development plan and monitored regularly by the governing body. Spending over recent years has been concentrated towards provision of teaching assistants in the large Key Stage 2 classes, and this has limited spending on other resources. The reception class is particularly poorly funded and this affects provision in the early learning goals of knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development where children's achievements are not as great as they are in literacy and numeracy.
56. The school management seeks best value in all its work; a governor analyses the PANDA report in order to compare the school with all those nationally and locally. The school is able to set itself challenging targets for improvements through this and the local education authority reviews. Funds are efficiently used on support for children

from traveller families who learn very well when they are in school. Parents are consulted annually about their perceptions of the school, and pupils' views are also sought through the school council. The very efficient running of the school administration systems by the office staff, who ensure competitive prices for goods and services, makes a good contribution to the attainment of best value. This efficient running of the school, together with its high standards, good teaching and leadership ensure that it gives good value for money.

57. Staffing is good; there are sufficient well-qualified teachers to cover the curriculum, and three are leading teachers in literacy or numeracy, whose expertise is shared in this and other schools. Induction and training is very good under the guidance of the deputy headteacher.
58. Accommodation is satisfactory. The number of classrooms is adequate and they are in good repair and decorative order, much enhanced by the displays of children's work. The library is not easily accessible as it is also the ICT room. The reception classroom in the old school building is in a poor state, however. It is badly affected by the damp, and the interior is drab. The wooden floors are not the best base for water play. There is no provision for disabled children. Outside, play facilities are meagre without a fixed climbing frame.
59. Resources are adequate for the main school but poor in reception for all the areas of early learning apart from literacy and numeracy.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

60. In order to improve further, the headteacher, staff and governors should
 - (1) Extend the use of literacy and numeracy across the whole curriculum, particularly in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2, by using foundation subjects as a context, and limiting the use of worksheets (paragraphs 3, 7, 8, 17, 21, 27, 84, 87, 100, 102, 115)
 - (2) Make provision for information and communication technology in all subjects, particularly to develop research skills and to ensure that the required components are met in all subjects, where applicable (paragraphs 6, 19, 100, 102, 121, 136)
 - (3) Make provision for swimming in Key Stage 2 (paragraphs 54, 126)
 - (4) Extend assessment in the Foundation Stage to include independent activities, so that all children's progress in these may be followed as they move towards the achievement of the early learning goals (paragraphs 20, 39)
 - (5) Provide a greater variety of resources for outdoor play in reception, including fixed climbing structures to enable children to develop balance and muscle strength (paragraphs 26, 78), and better resources for knowledge and understanding of the world and for creative development (paragraphs 75, 81)

When drawing up their action plan, the governors should consider these minor issues:

- Improve accommodation in reception to include provision for disabled children (paragraph 58)
- Make provision for Key Stage 2 class teachers to teach music (paragraph 125)

- Continue to develop teaching methods to include a great variety in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2, making more use of classroom assistants to supervise groups of children rather than whole class sessions on the carpet (paragraphs 24, 101)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	11	19	7	1	0	0
Percentage	12	26	44	16	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	161
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	14

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	12	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	24	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (92)	100 (83)	100 (92)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	24	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (92)	96 (92)	100 (92)
	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	12	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	12
	Girls	15	13	16
	Total	25	23	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (78)	79 (75)	97 (97)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	11
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	22	21	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (83)	72 (81)	83 (92)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	133	0	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	20	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.2
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	123.5

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Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	367893
Total expenditure	365900
Expenditure per pupil	2316
Balance brought forward from previous year	11399
Balance carried forward to next year	13392

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	151
Number of questionnaires returned	74

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	24	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	57	36	4	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	43	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	46	14	1	4
The teaching is good.	65	32	0	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	55	1	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	36	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	47	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	51	43	1	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	50	46	0	1	3

The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

57	41	0	0	3
47	35	11	0	7

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

61. Provision for children in the reception class is satisfactory overall. This appears to be in line with the findings of the last report, although an overall judgement was not made. The provision for language and mathematical development is very good, and children are prepared well for their formal education.
62. Children start in the reception class in the September proceeding their fifth birthday. They attend for mornings only for the first term, and begin full time education in the second half of the term in which they become five. All the summer-born children attend full time from the beginning of the summer term. On entry to the reception class, attainment is slightly above average when compared to that of other children their age. By the time they leave, almost all the children have reached at least average standards in each of the areas of learning. Their language and mathematical development are particularly strong, and many exceed the early learning goals. While standards are average in personal and social development, there is scope for all children to achieve a little more.
63. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is very strong in the areas of language and mathematical development, and satisfactory in the other areas. The teacher keeps a careful check on children's progress in language and mathematical development and moves them on well during guided sessions. However, this is not followed up in 'free choice' activities, so opportunities are missed to challenge higher ability children to do more. The teacher is supported effectively by the classroom assistant and parent helpers.
64. The relationships between staff and parents are very good, and parents are welcomed into the classroom at the start of the day. Parents are very happy with the school and what it does for their children during their time in the reception class. Several parents remarked on the progress their children had made in reading, writing and number work in the short time they had been in school. There are satisfactory arrangements in place to help children settle into school. Prior to them starting school, the class teacher visits the pre-school playgroup, which the vast majority attends. They also get a taste of school when they visit with their parents during the summer term. However, there are no home visits. The parents have a rota for helping in the class, and this extra support is very valuable in freeing the teacher to concentrate on particular groups.
65. The reception class is housed in a separate building and the teacher works in isolation. While there is a good relationship with the pre-school playgroup, there are not enough opportunities for the teacher to meet and discuss ideas with others. She has a clear idea of what needs to be done, but much more is needed in the way of support and resources if provision is to improve.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. Teaching is satisfactory overall and children make satisfactory progress. Staff are good at helping children to feel secure and to settle in quickly to understand the routines. The very positive relationships that teachers develop with the children help children to become confident and happy. The teacher has high expectations of their behaviour, and the consistent approach by all the adults helps them to learn what is acceptable and what is not. The effect of this is seen in the children's overall good behaviour for

most of the time. However, a small minority of boys still find it difficult to pay attention during class discussions, or to listen courteously when other children are talking. Most of the class share and take turns, but a small number of girls are easily upset if they do not get their own way. An example of this was seen in a physical education lesson, when they became tearful because they were not first in the queue to use apparatus.

67. A strength of the teaching in this area is the way that the teacher encourages the children to take responsibility, such as taking the register to the office and tidying things away after activity sessions. The children have good opportunities to use their initiative in choosing their own activities. The teacher is good at using role-play to develop children's concentration and encourage them to play well together and share ideas. When a new area is created, the teacher spends time with children to give them some ideas that they can build upon. Following these contributions, the children go back to the area, some playing for long periods at a time.
68. For the most part, children are expected to take care of their own personal needs, although occasionally adults are too quick to step in, for example to fasten up coats or to put on gloves. At 'snack time', good opportunities are missed to develop children's independence and social awareness. There is no sense of occasion that is evident in most classes for children this age. All the children bring their own snack, and support staff serve their milk. All the children are confident in talking to adults and to other children.

Communication, language and literacy

69. Very good teaching results in all the children achieving well and making good progress. The children whose starting point is not as high make very good progress. The constant flow of conversation between children and adults promotes speaking and listening very well. The teacher spends much time talking to children, asking them to explain what they are doing or inviting them to comment on activities or stories. Most of the children speak clearly and listen carefully when others are speaking.
70. Children make good progress in reading and writing because the teacher has good subject knowledge and uses a good variety of ways to develop their skills. She uses games to teach the initial letter sounds and reinforces learning effectively by having collections of objects, for example, whose names have the same initial sound. Children develop a good knowledge of sounds and many can use this knowledge to work out words. The teacher uses stories and rhymes well to stimulate the children's interest in books. There is a well stocked book corner where they often look at books with friends, discussing the pictures and reading words that they recognise. Most children are on course to exceed the expected goals for children of their age by the end of their reception year.
71. Children's writing is developed well through a good range of interesting and well chosen activities. In the writing corner there is a good supply of different writing tools, paper, scissors and glue. Children often take the opportunity to work here, writing and making their own books. When new letters are introduced, children are encouraged to write them using different media, such as paint, felt tip pen or crayon, or to model them with play dough. Some children make very good progress; one, for example, started with very simple mark-making can now write his name and a few other words independently. The teacher is very good at encouraging the children to 'have a go' at writing words for themselves, and knows just when to intervene to avoid children becoming frustrated. The highest achievers are well on the way to writing simple sentences.

Mathematical development

72. Children make good progress as a result of the very effective teaching. Most children have already reached higher standards than would be expected at the end of their reception year. They can all count to well beyond ten, and most count objects accurately up to 20. They understand the terms 'more than' and 'less than' and the majority say how many must be added or taken away from a group of objects to make it the same as another group.
73. The teacher works hard to help children to develop their skills of estimation. She does this through effective questioning such as, 'How many teddies do you think are there?' and "Who do you think has the most?' Children's answers show that they are good at estimating.
74. Activities to support other areas of mathematical development are constrained by the lack of resources. Although the teacher borrows equipment from the main school to develop children's learning in weighing and measuring, for example, she cannot plan regular activities to develop these areas. During the inspection, there was no evidence of children weighing or developing their understanding of capacity through sand and water play.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Teaching is satisfactory and this results in satisfactory progress. Children do not achieve as well as they might because they do not have ready access to a wide enough range of opportunities. Most of what they learn is as a result of direct teaching. They learn about the local area, and talk about some of the buildings, pointing out the church, for example. They know some Bible stories, such as Noah and The Ark. In their outdoor play they learn from the road markings and the street furniture about road safety.
76. The teacher uses the start of the day very effectively to develop children's understanding of the passage of time, using terms such as 'yesterday', 'last week' and 'tomorrow'. Through these sessions they have learned the names of the days of the week and the months of the year. They can describe the weather and know that the weather determines the type of clothing people wear.
77. Children learn about changing materials through baking activities, such as making pancakes, or biscuits in the shape of 's', referring to literacy. The teacher takes good opportunities to add interest to the sand and water play, such as presenting wet sand and dry sand. Through this the children learn that different materials have different properties and uses. The children make good progress in using computers and audio equipment independently.

Physical development

78. Teaching is satisfactory and children make satisfactory progress. All the children are on course to reach the expected goals. Most children could do even better if resources and the access to outdoor activities were improved. Children have a daily playtime with the Key Stage 1 pupils, followed by fifteen minutes play in the secure area. While there are sufficient wheeled vehicles, good quality resources to develop large scale movements such as climbing, swinging and balancing on large equipment are insufficient. There is partial compensation for this through the weekly physical education lesson; in the lesson seen it was clear that the children are developing a good

sense of spatial awareness. They get good practice in steering and braking as they ride along the marked out road.

79. Most children handle small tools well. They have good control when using pencils and paintbrushes, and most manage to put paste where they intend it to go. This is because the teacher provides them with plenty of opportunities to cut, mould and draw with different materials. Their work at the computer is speeded up considerably by their dexterity in using the mouse.

Creative development

80. Teaching is satisfactory and children make satisfactory progress. Most children should reach the expected goals in this area. The teacher is particularly good at developing children's imaginations. She does this mainly through her active involvement in role play situations, such as when she visits Great Horwood Hospital. She engages the 'doctors' and 'nurses' well in conversation giving them to a good basis for developing their ideas further. After one such instance, the children admitted a 'patient' who had a broken arm and gave him an injection and took his blood pressure before treating his arm.
81. Children have plenty of opportunities to paint and make models. While the provision in painting is good, enabling the children to experiment with different colours and express themselves freely, other work is too directed. The children do not have enough opportunity to choose their own materials, mainly because of the limited availability. When the children make models they invariably all produce the same.
82. The children have a good repertoire of songs, which they sing well. There was no evidence during the inspection of the children using instruments, although the teacher's planning indicates that they do have such opportunities.

ENGLISH

83. The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests in English showed that standards for 11 year-olds were well above the national average, and that of similar schools. The proportions of pupils reaching level 4 and level 5 were also well above average. Pupils have made good progress over the last five years, though there was a dip in 2001. Standards of pupils in Year 2 were above the national average in reading and very high in writing. Compared with similar schools they were average in reading and well above average in writing. Standards improved over the last year at a rate greater than the national trend, and considerably since the last inspection.
84. Inspection findings show above average standards for pupils aged seven, and well above average standards for pupils aged 11. The overall good progress made by pupils is attributable to the general good quality of teaching, very good assessment procedures and analysis of test data, the positive impact of the National Literacy Strategy, the school's current focus on literacy - especially writing - and the pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes. Standards in speaking and listening are above average in Year 2, and well above average in Year 6. Standards in reading, similarly, are above average at the end of Key Stage 1, and well above average by the time pupils leave the school. In writing, standards are just above average in Year 2, due to a heavy surfeit of unchallenging worksheets. Writing standards in Key Stage 2 rise steadily from Year 3, becoming above average by the time pupils reach Year 6. Standards of presentation, including handwriting, are generally good. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress overall, as, along with their peers, they respond well to

the general standard of good teaching. There were no discernible differences in the attainment of boys and girls. The school believes that high standards can be maintained, and inspection confirms the likelihood that this can happen. Writing, for example, was a focus last year when disenchanted boys were encouraged by their introduction to biographies and autobiographies such as that of Alan Shearer.

85. Teachers provide a range of opportunities for pupils throughout the school to develop speaking and listening. They often set up the introductory part of lessons so that pupils have time to confer with their 'talking partners' and discuss what they know and have learned; they acquire and use the language associated with the topic. A good example of this was seen in Year 2, where pupils listened well to the language in 'The Three Little Pigs' that helped them describe the houses of straw, of sticks and of bricks. Pupils in Year 4, recalling with enjoyment the story of Metalmiss, explain the intricacies of what Mr J said to Mr G, or what Metalmiss said about Mr G to Mr J. In Year 6, pupils enjoy the rhythms in the poem 'Jabberwocky' by Lewis Carroll, especially the repetition of 'Beware' in the first two verses. Talking partners discussed the rhyme and rhythm in expressive lines such as 'the vorpal blade went snicker snack'. They are enthusiastic and speak confidently when contributing to discussions. Throughout the school, teachers encourage pupils working in pairs or small groups to discuss their work with each other. As they get older, they increasingly take each other's views into account, as when Year 6 pupils begin their argument with 'Like Sam, I think...'. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on teaching correct terminology, as in a Year 5 ICT lesson when pupils understood key vocabulary associated with a spreadsheet. Similarly, pupils in Year 2 focused on tall, wide and curled shapes as they listened carefully to instructions in a gymnastics lesson. All pupils enjoy singing, enunciating well. The 'shared text' on the overhead projector, 'Peace, Perfect Peace', positively promoted the pupils' oral and listening skills, refined their reading skills and raised their self-esteem.
86. As pupils' reading on entry to the school is generally average, they do well to attain high standards. Pupils in Year 2 build upon their experiences of phonics learned in reception, and enjoy reading. Average and below average pupils, including those with special educational needs, quickly develop their knowledge and understanding of letter sounds due to the quality of the structured teaching that they experience. Above average pupils are very interested in reading; they confidently identified word families in a favourite story, 'The Three Little Pigs', for example, and expressed a preference for the book rather than the film of Harry Potter. In Year 6, average and above average pupils read very well, with increasing fluency and accuracy, and speak knowledgeably of a range of authors, including favourites such as Tolkein, JK Rowling and Jacqueline Wilson. The reading of the majority of pupils of this age is sufficiently well developed to enable them to cope with most texts. Even an average reader in Year 6, for example, has read all the Harry Potter books, 'The Hobbit' and 'The Lord of the Rings'. They are confident in using non-fiction books and understand and use the classification system in the school library to find books. Increasingly, pupils find the information they are seeking on the Internet.
87. Although it is above average, pupils' written English is the weakest aspect of the subject throughout the school. Work in books of pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 shows that they have made no more than satisfactory progress, mainly because of the restricted and undifferentiated regime of worksheets. Their handwriting, however, is consistently neat and well formed. Their writing lacks variety - mainly stories, poetry and the workbooks. The most able seven year-olds re-wrote 'Jill and the Beanstalk' with feeling, explaining in sequence what happened as Jill slept, 'in the night the beans grew into a beanstalk'. The written work of Year 6 indicates that pupils of all attainment levels have made very good progress so far this year. Above average pupils have produced descriptive

sentences that command attention, with one pupil, for example, writing 'The watery porridge was served out and a long prayer was said over the small table'. Some pupils of average ability also write well; one wrote of 'Laurie's scared, bewildered face', in his adaptation of 'Cider with Rosie' as a film script. Average and below average pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well supported by writing frameworks so that high standards are maintained. The range of writing is wide, and includes autobiography, poetry, writing interviews, and writing narrative. A below average pupil was working on his story, 'A Night to Remember', creating atmosphere and tension, 'It was midnight. Carl was asleep, and then he heard a big bang'. Pupils take particular care in presentation and their handwriting is careful and neat. Standards of spelling and grammar are good throughout the school. Literacy across the wider curriculum needs strengthening; there is no evidence of extended writing in geography, for example. Similarly, pupils have not taken many opportunities to use computer technology to improve their writing, though this is beginning to change with the introduction of the ICT Suite. Writing standards overall are just above average in Key Stage 1, rising steadily in Key Stage 2 when in Year 6 they are well above average where there is consistently very good teaching; with much of it excellent.

88. The quality of teaching is good overall; it is good in Key Stage 1, and ranges from satisfactory to excellent in Key Stage 2. Most teachers have high expectations of what each pupil should achieve. They use questioning effectively to draw out meaning and develop pupils' understanding. In a Year 4 lesson, the objective of which was to use the possessive apostrophe correctly; pupils were forced to think, and referred to the overhead projector to provide suitable examples, both singular and plural. They worked hard, and one pupil correctly wrote 'the ladies' watches'. At this point, the teacher gave much praise and encouragement. In most literacy lessons, pupils are placed in groups of broadly the same attainment level, and teachers plan work that is appropriately matched to pupils' abilities. As a result pupils are challenged to learn and they respond by working hard and productively, making good, sometimes very good progress. Below average pupils are well supported by learning assistants and, as a result, learn well. The teaching of spelling throughout the school is good. Teachers set homework and registration times to reinforce spellings, so that they consistently lead to improvements in pupils' written work. Teachers assess pupils' progress carefully and effectively, and use the knowledge gleaned to set challenging targets for improvement. However, no targets were observed in pupils' reading record books in Year 3. Most teachers share the learning objective with their pupils at the beginning of lessons so that they are clear about what they should know and do. Marking of work within the lesson also identifies clearly what is needed to improve standards and gives pupils a good understanding of their teachers' high expectations. In one barely satisfactory lesson in Key Stage 2, the teaching lacked clarity as the teacher spent too much time emphasising the concept 'fable' – already well understood by the pupils. Her knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy was not as secure as that of her colleagues and the lesson was unbalanced, with the carpet session lasting 30 minutes. Because the pace of the lesson was slow, pupils found it difficult to concentrate and the teacher struggled to manage the pupils satisfactorily.
89. The co-ordination of English is very good. The co-ordinator is herself a leading literacy teacher, and thus has detailed knowledge of the current state of English and the National Literacy Strategy. She carries out close supportive monitoring of planning and teaching, and brings energy and enthusiasm to the subject, attending courses and disseminating the content to staff in school. The effective analysis of test data has helped the school to identify very accurately what needs to be improved. Thus, a new marking policy has been introduced to promote consistency. Each year group has two assessment weeks per year. The number and quality of books are restricted at present

after a thorough cull. The school library now shares its space with the ICT suite, and conditions are cramped, but manageable. There is an effective focus on improvement throughout the school that is having a strong impact on the maintenance of high standards in English.

MATHEMATICS

90. Standards in mathematics are above average at age seven and well above average at age 11. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection when standards throughout the school were average. It confirms the picture that emerges from National Curriculum test results over the past four years, which show that standards have been consistently high in both key stages apart from a drop in Key Stage 1 in 2001, when there were more pupils that year with special educational needs. In the tests for 11 year olds in 2002, overall standards were well above average, with ten per cent reaching the well above average level 6. In the current Year 6 class, a higher percentage of pupils are on course to reach the expected standard. There is no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls.
91. The rise in standards since the last inspection is due to much sharper teaching and a clearer emphasis on mental arithmetic, brought about by the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Whereas, in the past, teachers did not challenge higher ability pupils sufficiently, these pupils are stretched to their full capabilities now. Teachers are good at organising their classes so that they or their support assistants can give help where it is needed, so all the pupils can get on. Pupils of all abilities achieve well, and the school makes good provision for pupils of significantly higher ability than the rest of their class by teaching them in older classes.
92. A significant strength of the curriculum is the wide range of contexts that pupils are given to apply the skills that they learn to solve problems and investigations. In a lesson in Year 5, for example, pupils investigated whether the position of brackets made a difference to calculations. They had fun finding out that in some cases, for example $22 + 13 - 4$, changing the position of the brackets does not affect the answer, whereas $(65 + 5) \times 5$ is very different from $65 + (5 \times 5)$. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects, such as design and technology when they develop their measuring skills to produce models, or in science when they measure temperatures and pulse rates and present their results in tables and graphs. There is a good emphasis on number work, but there is an equally strong emphasis on other areas of mathematics. Pupils build up a good understanding of shape, space and measures. Pupils in Year 6 measure and construct angles accurately, for example. They know the names of different angles and they know that, although there are different types of triangle, the sum of their angles is 180 degrees. They are proficient at handling data and know how to present their information in graphs and pie charts. Pupils are taught good habits from the early stages in setting out their work, and they present it neatly.
93. The teaching is good throughout the school. Excellent teaching was seen in the Year 6 class. Teachers are confident and, because they know their pupils so well, they know how to get the best out of them. The mental arithmetic sessions at the start of lessons are used very effectively to get pupils thinking mathematically. Invariably there is a sense of fun and enjoyment as pupils try hard to become faster at working out the answers. During these sessions, pupils write their answers on individual whiteboards. Pupils appreciate this because they all have the chance to answer. Teachers are very good at spotting pupils who are struggling, and surreptitiously take them back a step by, for example, targeting different levels of questions at different ability groups. All pupils,

therefore, gain from each session. Teachers also take good opportunities to revise past work during these sessions. In a lesson in Year 5, for example, when pupils were doubling and halving numbers, the teacher put up a grid of numbers and they had to give their answers as co-ordinates. Pupils get a good understanding of number because teachers always ask them to explain how they get their answers. In the lesson in Year 5, pupils were challenged with target numbers and given digits. Their task was to get as close as they could to the target using the given digits and explain to the class how they had arrived at their answers.

94. Teachers give clear explanations to pupils, and this helps them to assimilate new ideas, such as using different methods of calculating. They explain clearly to pupils what they are going to learn and keep them focused on this, checking at suitable intervals that they are still on course. A good example of this was seen in Year 6, when the teacher moved pupils on from partitioning numbers to multiply them. Most teachers use time at the end of lessons very well to check that the pupils have learnt what was intended. They do this very effectively by asking probing questions and giving pupils the opportunity to explain what they have been doing. Most lessons are conducted at a brisk pace. In upper Key Stage 2, pace and challenge are great. The teachers in these classes are particularly good at reinforcing mathematical language at every opportunity. The school has invested heavily in extra support staff so that pupils can have as much help as they need. When they are actively involved in the lessons the support staff, especially the trained specialists, make a significant contribution to the learning of lower ability pupils and those with special educational needs. However, they are not always used efficiently, sometimes spending long periods of inactivity during direct teaching time.
95. Information and communication technology is not sufficiently developed to support mathematical learning throughout the school. However, in a science lesson in Year 6, a group of boys worked independently to produce computer graphs of the data they collected about food values. Teachers use homework very well to support learning.
96. It is clear from the high overall standards in the past, and the improving standards now evident across all ability groups in upper Key Stage 2, that the leadership and management of the subject has been very good for the past few years. The school has very good systems for checking pupils' learning and using this information to plan the next steps. All pupils, therefore, build well on previous success. The school uses data from the analysis of test results to plug any gaps in the curriculum where there is an apparent weakness in pupils' knowledge and understanding. The present co-ordinator has only been in post for a term, but she has made a good start to carrying on the previous very good leadership and management.

SCIENCE

97. The standards achieved by 11 year olds in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for science were well above the national average and that of similar schools; standards achieved by the seven year-olds through standardised teacher assessment were also well above average. Both represent good improvement since the last inspection. There was no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and those by girls. Since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be in line with the national average, they have been rising steadily, in common with those of most schools. There was a slight dip in 2001; a large percentage of pupils that year had special educational needs, and because this is a small school, this had a noticeable effect on the results.

98. During the inspection, standards were well above average in Year 6 and above average in Year 2. This looks like a decline in Year 2, but shows the normal yearly fluctuation in ability; all 12 pupils should achieve the expected level 2. In Key Stage 2, the standard of work seen in Upper Key Stage 2 was impressive in showing the depth in which the curriculum is covered. Pupils draw magnetic fields produced by bar magnets showing that like poles repel and unlike attract. They know the functions of major food groups and what to eat for a balanced diet. Through good use of a temperature sensor attached to a computer they understand that water boils at 100 degrees centigrade and remains at that temperature while it turns into steam. Pupils' work shows they have good understanding of the skills of scientific enquiry, for example, they identify variables when devising an investigation into how the wingspan affects the way model aircraft fall.
99. In Year 2, the standard of scientific knowledge and understanding is above average; seven year old pupils know that a complete electric circuit is needed to make an electric bulb light up, and they identify some potentially hazardous effects of electricity. They readily identify parts of their bodies and link senses such as touch and taste to the correct parts. They describe properties of material as soft, hard, or rough. In both key stages, standards are improved by pupils' very good attitudes to their work and their enthusiasm for learning.
100. Numeracy develops particularly well through science, for example when pupils measure distances a toy car is propelled as they investigate the stored energy of an elastic band. Pupils make frequent use of bar charts and line graphs to display data. Literacy is also developed well as pupils get older; above average pupils in Year 5, for example, write very good descriptions of the nature of light. In Key Stage 1, however, little writing about science was seen. Year 2 pupils record mainly pictorially or by filling in worksheets, although the majority of seven year-olds is capable of above average writing during the literacy hour. Although there are some good examples of ICT use, there is not enough for research and data handling.
101. Teaching is good throughout the school, and very good to excellent in Upper Key Stage 2, where very high expectations result in very good progress and high standards. In these classes in particular, work is especially well matched to the individual capabilities of all pupils in the class. An excellent example was seen in a lesson on the functions of the skeleton where pupils with special educational needs were well guided by their specialist teacher. The rest of the class was given well planned work on the heart, so that pupils of all abilities were engaged, enabling the class teacher to take a small group of higher ability pupils to enrich their understanding of exactly how the heart pumps blood to and from the lungs and around the body. Planning for all abilities is not so finely tuned in Lower Key Stage 2, and although pupils are well motivated by imaginative teaching methods, such as investigating if different types of glove can prevent a 'frozen hand' from thawing, very often pupils spend too much time sitting on the carpet listening to their teacher and all do the same work at their desks.
102. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has only been in the school a term but is well qualified and experienced. The work done by the pupils in her class is of a high standard and she has already evaluated provision and made a good action plan whereby she may disseminate her expertise to others. Assessment is particularly strong, with many science tests featuring in pupils' assessment books, which contain formal tests for all core subjects, taken termly. The tracking of progress in methods of scientific enquiry is less formal but regular in Key Stage 2. Provision for science has improved since the last inspection; standards have risen. Areas for further improvement are the use of ICT throughout the school and the development of literacy and scientific enquiry methods in Key Stage 1.

ART AND DESIGN

103. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations in several aspects of work in art seen during the inspection, similar to those found at the last inspection. Pupils in Key Stage 1 use mainly pencil in their sketchbooks. Those in Year 1 try out ideas in paint and pastels of rocket pictures that they later use on the computer. Similarly, pupils in Year 2 use crayon and pencil to draw pictures of Clive the Clam after printing out their word-processed sheets. In lower Key Stage 2, pupils make observational drawings of Aztec gods and goddesses in pastel and crayon; they also use paint in representations of dreams. In upper Key Stage 2, pupils draw in chalks, inspired by the work of Turner, whose landscapes are marked by light on water.
104. The quality of teaching throughout the school is judged to be at least satisfactory, with some good features. Indeed, in the two lessons seen in Key Stage 2, the teaching was good. Lessons have suitably challenging content that encourages pupils to pay careful attention. In Year 4, for example, pupils design a journey picture after studying Aboriginal wall paintings, paying attention to colour, shape and texture. Most pupils use the obvious symbols of house, sun, fish and bird. Above average pupils are more imaginative, changing patterns to represent ploughed fields. Pupils in Year 5 are given good opportunities to see other artists' work on moving figures, such as the Dancers by Matisse, or the Red Horsemen by Liechtenstein. Their task was focused thereafter on athletes on Greek vases in a good lesson that inspired pupils to make good attempts at drawing moving figures.
105. Coordination of the subject has promoted art in the curriculum effectively, raising teachers' expectations. The curriculum provides equal access and opportunity for all pupils of all abilities, and meets the requirements of pupils with special educational needs, including those from traveller families. Planning in art provides continuity and skills development, but there is no rigorous assessment of pupils' progress. Resources and accommodation are good, as is the use of information and communication technology.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. Pupils in both key stages make satisfactory progress. Standards are in line with those expected of pupils this age. Although standards in Key Stage 2 appear to have declined the last inspection, this is not so; national expectations are now higher.
107. Although no lessons were seen during the inspection, it is clear from the work seen in pupils' folders and photographs of past work that teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. This brings satisfactory achievement by all groups of pupils; boys and girls in all groups do equally well. In Year 1, pupils make a good start to designing and planning. Their models of wheeled vehicles are linked effectively to work in geography and history. They make good attempts at drawing pictures of their intended outcomes and higher ability pupils label their diagrams to show the materials they will use. As they move through the school, design drawings are more detailed and of better quality.
108. Teachers plan interesting contexts for the work, which stimulate pupils' enthusiasm. Pupils work carefully to produce good products. In Year 3, for example, they make models with simple moving mechanisms, such as a reindeer whose eyes move by means of a lever. The theme of movement is developed by introducing simple pneumatics, when pupils use balloons attached to tubes and syringes, for example, to make a snapping crocodile. There are good links to mathematics as pupils develop

their measuring skills. In Upper Key Stage 2, accurate measurement is displayed in making musical instruments. Food technology is included in the younger Key Stage 2 classes, which provides a good link with work in science on balanced diets. A strength of the subject is the attention paid to pupils' evaluations of their work. They reflect carefully on their finished products and show increasing maturity in the honesty of their evaluations. When older pupils evaluate the work of others they are very careful to make positive comments as well saying what needs to be improved. Teachers value pupils' work and display it attractively. This gives the pupils a good incentive to work hard and produce their best work.

109. The co-ordinator's leadership of the subject is sound. She has only been at the school for a term so has not yet had much opportunity to influence standards. She is well qualified and has a clear vision for the subject. She is aware that, although resources are satisfactory overall, there should be a wider variety of materials. Although pupils' work is assessed, the information gained is not used enough to plan further work for different attainment groups.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

110. Standards in both subjects are as would be expected at the ages of seven and 11. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Pupils start well in Key Stage 1 and then make satisfactory progress. Achievement is satisfactory for all ability groups because the work is matched well to their abilities. Although the starting point is the same for all pupils, more is expected of those who are capable of achieving more. Lower ability pupils and those with identified special educational needs have good support in lessons, and this enables them to keep up with the rest of the class.
111. In Key Stage 2, pupils do not make the same steady progress. In the first two years, learning slows because the pupils do not cover enough work and the teaching, although satisfactory overall, is not as good as in other classes. The main weakness is that not enough is expected of the pupils. Those above average in particular do not achieve as well as they could because they are not stretched. Learning is accelerated in Upper Key Stage 2 because more is expected and teaching is sharper. As a result, all pupils make good progress and all abilities achieve well. Teachers in these classes are particularly sensitive to the needs of different ability groups. They plan their lessons carefully, so that they can give sensitive support to below average pupils while expecting those above average to do much more without direct help.
112. The curriculum in Key Stage 1 is well considered in combining history with geography, thus making the most efficient use of the time available and constantly enabling the pupils to reinforce the skills they learn in both subjects. In local studies, for example, good emphasis is placed on early mapping skills while pupils find out about the past. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand that they can do this from a variety of sources. They develop a suitable sense of change over time by comparing, for example, the tools and appliances used in the home then and now, and comparing their own toys with those of children in the past. This is linked imaginatively to geography as they learn about places further afield through the travels and exploits of 'Tigger' a modern toy.
113. In Key Stage 2, the two subjects are taught in alternating half terms as part of a two-year rolling programme of topics. However, in Upper Key Stage 2 the teachers are very skilled at reinforcing elements of whichever subject is not the current focus, so that pupils do not forget what they have learned. A good example of this was seen in Year 6 in the introduction to the topic on ancient Greece. Pupils concentrated first on Greece today, focusing on the climate and the main industries. They related tourism to the jobs

people do and to the climate. Through their own research they knew that many visitors are attracted by the ancient ruins. This set the context well for their study of Ancient Greece. In a lesson in Year 5, pupils compared two different localities - Ancient Athens and Sparta. Thus they were able to find out about life in the past, while at the same time developing their geographical skills.

114. Both subjects are enhanced by a good range of visits and visitors that also contribute very effectively to pupils' personal development. Pupils gain a very good insight into life in Victorian times through museum visits, for example, when they compare homes then with homes today. Pupils' spiritual development is nurtured effectively when they sample life in a Victorian schoolroom, for example, or when they listen to first hand accounts of what it was like to be evacuated during the war. Residential visits for pupils in Year 4 and Year 6 are particularly valuable in bringing both subjects to life. Pupils enjoy a wide variety of practical experiences on these visits, such as visiting an Iron Age house or using their mapping skills on an orienteering course and completing a river study. Pupils appreciate the diversity of the curriculum. They are keen to learn and work hard in lessons.
115. Teaching is satisfactory overall up to Year 4 and very good in Upper Key Stage 2. Particular strengths in the teaching of these years are the contagious enthusiasm shown by the teachers, the brisk pace of the lessons that keeps the pupils alert, and the expectation that all the pupils will work hard. There is a tendency in the younger age classes for teachers to use worksheets that do little to enhance pupils' writing, but pupils in Year 5 and 6 have good opportunities to develop research and writing. Pupils write imaginatively while getting their points across to the audience. Putting the case for Sparta being more important than Athens, one girl wrote, 'We don't waste time arguing over who's in charge. There's one wealthy person and that's that.'
116. By Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge of the local environment and how it has changed over time. They have good mapping skills and can identify the major rivers in Britain. They know how rivers are formed and understand terms such as erosion, source, tributary and estuary. They can locate the major countries of the world and their capital cities. In history, they have a good understanding of what life was like in different periods and appreciate how things change over time. They use reference sources well to find out about the past.
117. Management of these subjects is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has been in post for just over a year, but monitoring is not rigorous enough - hence the lack of coverage in lower Key Stage 2 not being picked up. The school has invested well in text books and teacher resources for Key Stage 2. The lack of books was highlighted in the last report. The co-ordinator acknowledges that other resources, such as maps and globes, need to be replenished.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. At the time of the last inspection, attainment and progress were in line with expectations in Key Stage 1, but below expectations in Key Stage 2. Since then there has been considerable improvement in provision with the establishment of a computer suite. The subject itself has expanded with connections to the Internet and to email. Standards of attainment now, before the use of the suite is fully integrated into the general curriculum, are satisfactory, though improving, in each key stage. Standards have risen in Key

Stage 2 due to the strength of teaching, the adoption of a clearly mapped out scheme of work, and the improved regular access to the suite.

119. By the end of Key Stage 1, above average pupils experiment with shift and caps lock to write capitals, or use highlight to enable colour change or font size change. Average and below average pupils in Key Stage 1 use floodfill in their pictures of 'Bonfire Night' or of 'Rudolph'. By the end of Key Stage 2, above average pupils in Upper Key Stage 2 confidently identify formulae and enter them into a spreadsheet. They quickly find a method of totalling sales in their 'cost of a meal' model. Such skills are beneficial to their literacy and numeracy competence. In Year 5, pupils created pictures in 'Colour Magic', with one a striking image of twin towers attacked by a 'plane'. Pupils in Year 4 use a graphical modelling program to look at different types of graphs or charts.
120. Of the four lessons were seen, three were good and the other was excellent. Taking all evidence together confirms that pupils' skills levels are rising. In a good lesson in Year 2, pupils were enabled to use a word bank in 'Talking First Word', and so deepened their knowledge and understanding of font sizes, colours and type faces. Thus, teachers used well the options in the software to match the needs of below average pupils and those with special educational needs. In lower Key Stage 2, pupils consolidate their learning of different font styles in 'Word'. In a good lesson in Year 5, pupils demonstrated competence in entering labels, numbers and formulae into a spreadsheet to find costs for a complete physical education kit. In Year 6, pupils effectively polished their knowledge and understanding of 'Publisher' to create a plan of the school and to add improvements to their designs.
121. The ICT curriculum is well planned and its delivery managed effectively, especially through the new ICT suite. The co-ordinator is the new headteacher, who has already set sensible priorities. Resources are good; they are deployed and managed effectively and efficiently. Generally good use of the suite and the quality of the technical assistant promote pupils' skills that can be further developed on class-based computers. The teaching of skills is enhanced by the use of an interactive white board. The policy and scheme of work demonstrate how skills should be developed across the school. Moreover, a policy agreed with parents for the monitoring of access to the Internet represents good practice. The use of ICT in the wider curriculum needs strengthening, but there are good links with numeracy, music and art. No difference in the enthusiasm of boys and girls for the subject was observed. Procedures for assessment of pupils' attainment are in place at the end of each unit. Accommodation is now good, but consideration should be given to finding a new home for the library.

MUSIC

122. It is not possible to make a firm judgement on all aspects of the music curriculum, since the specialist music teacher was not able to be seen during the inspection. Nevertheless, enough singing was heard in assemblies, one class lesson and a video recording of the recent production to show that it is above average.
123. In whole school assemblies, pupils sing hymns in tune with enjoyment, despite there being no accompanist. They sing to a tape, beginning without anyone bringing them in. The singing in the production of 'Joseph', in which all Key Stage 2 pupils took part, showed that they had been well taught to enunciate words and pitch notes accurately. It was also remarkable for the dramatic expression depicting despair to exhilaration. The school has several talented singers able to perform solo as well as in the chorus, and these were all used very well. Good attention was paid to diction, rhythm and pitch in the only lesson observed in Key Stage 1. The standard of singing in 'Rockpool Rap'

was above average as a result of very good teaching in which the teacher's high expectations were obvious as she alternated between learning verses and repeating them, ensuring an understanding of the meaning of Italian terms, such as 'coda'.

124. The parents and governors consider music to be a strength, with high standards and a good range of extracurricular activities, such as choir, recorder and other instrumental lessons. The small amount of evidence seen does justify this opinion; indeed, the school has made great improvement since the last inspection, and regularly enters music competitions and wins trophies.
125. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has musical expertise but it is not apparent in, for example, leading the singing in assembly. Too much emphasis is put on the specialist teacher's work; class teachers in Key Stage 2 do not teach music, and so the curriculum lapses in the absence of the specialist.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. The standards demonstrated in the few lessons observed show gymnastics at the end of Key Stage 1 to be as expected for pupils of this age, and games skills standards at the end of Key Stage 2 to be above expectations. It is not possible to make a judgement on standards of dance, gymnastics and swimming in Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection, swimming has been removed from the timetable for pupils in Key Stage 2, and this breaches statutory requirements.
127. Pupils make very good progress in gymnastics as they move through Key Stage 1. They understand the need to warm up and cool down, and are aware of the reasons to do so. They use space safely, showing a good awareness of themselves and others. They incorporate a variety of body shapes, for example, as they travel around their different pieces of apparatus. Pupils show good concentration when running, jumping and balancing, demonstrating basic tactics and ideas of composition.
128. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good and sometimes very good progress in games. In Upper Key Stage 2, pupils are given good opportunities to develop individual and team skills in netball and rugby. Pupils show appropriate control when passing or receiving a large ball. Teachers' good planning enables pupils to make good use of the entire playground, moving safely. Pupils understand the effects of exercise on their bodies and that it promotes good health. By the end of the key stage, they collaborate well in devising ways of passing and catching at speed, demonstrating vigorous actions.
129. Behaviour in physical education is very good in Key Stages 1 and 2, and pupils use resources responsibly. Those with special educational needs respond with the same enthusiasm and make equally appropriate progress. The opportunities to work with partners and in team groups, and the constant expectation to work safely, strengthen the personal and social development of all pupils.
130. As not all aspects of teaching were observed, an overall judgement on teaching is not possible. Two very good lessons were observed, as well as one unsatisfactory dance lesson. Teachers plan effectively, identifying clearly what pupils should be able to do by the end of the lesson. This promotes their keenness and hard work. Teachers' management of pupils is good because the lessons have pace, ensuring that pupils are engaged purposefully throughout. Opportunities to be involved in tournaments with other schools, and residential experience at an activity centre, enrich the provision in this subject.

131. The subject is well led by a recently appointed coordinator. No systematic monitoring of teaching and standards has been made, but teachers' planning is scrutinised to see that it complies with the school's curriculum map. Accommodation is good with outside facilities that enrich the subject. Resources are good with an effective range of gymnastic equipment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

132. The standard of religious education in the school is above that expected by the locally agreed syllabus for pupils in Year 6, and in line with it for those in Year 2. Eleven year-old pupils have gained a good knowledge of Christianity and other major world religions. They understand the significance of symbolism by devising their own 'coat of arms' and apply this to Christian symbols: the cross, baptismal water and fish. They also understand that there is symbolism in all other major religions, having studied Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism and Sikhism.

133. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils identify special people in their lives and apply their literacy well by making a little booklet for the exercise – one or two identify Jesus as special to them.

134. Teaching is good throughout the school; teachers have secure knowledge of the subject. They have received considerable training and assistance from the diocese which has raised standards that were judged unsatisfactory at the last inspection. In a very good lesson in Key Stage 2, pupils showed great interest and were eager to make contributions to the discussion about symbols from religions other than Christianity and the sense of mystery brought about by contemplation of a Sikh symbol released some interesting ideas from the pupils. One put forward that the double-edged sword shows that God is powerful and has no weak points. Pupils' well above average ability to listen to others and then put forward their own ideas clearly enabled them to argue their case with conviction and the standard of written work produced was also above average. This is a result of the very good way in which the teacher helps them to break all concepts down into manageable pieces and encourages them to think deeply.

135. By considering the nature of signs and symbols of God in people's lives, the subject makes a strong contribution to their spiritual development. By making very good use of visitors who practise other religions, for example a Muslim visitor who explained about Ramadan, pupils gain a good idea of the differences in culture which are present because of different religious practices. The school makes good use of the multi-cultural centre for this, which is important because of the predominantly white majority of pupils in the school, which makes it difficult for them to gain first hand experiences of cultural differences.

136. Leadership of the subject is good; the co-ordinator has a good action plan for development, centring on curriculum continuity and assessment. The latter is in early stages of development; the curriculum is firmly based on the agreed syllabus. Literacy is well developed through the curriculum, particularly at the upper end of Key Stage 2, but ICT is rarely used and remains an area, with assessment, for further improvement.