

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PAUL'S C of E COMBINED SCHOOL

Wooburn Green

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110469

Headteacher: Mrs Ruth Goddard

Reporting inspector: Mrs Patricia Davies
22460

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 5th June 2003

Inspection number: 247010

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Stratford Drive Wooburn Green High Wycombe
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Paul Craig
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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22460	Mrs P Davies	Registered inspector	English Art and design Educational inclusion	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
8990	Mr D Tytler	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
14991	Mr A Hardwicke	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Provision for pupils with special educational needs	
27654	Mrs R Scahill	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Music	
22092	Mr D Watts	Team inspector	Design and technology Physical education Areas of learning for the Foundation stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is now about average in size, with 230 pupils currently on roll, aged five to eleven, and a further 56 children who attend part time in the nursery class. Numbers in the nursery have fallen because of changes in local policy for the admission of three-year-old children. There have been significant changes to the school since its last inspection, including the loss of Year 7 as a result of a reorganisation of secondary education in Buckinghamshire. Large classes in Years 3 to 6 have also been reduced. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed and there have been some recruitment difficulties. The pupil population is largely stable. Most pupils live close to the school in privately owned homes. No child is eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, is below the national average. Some of these pupils have emotional and behavioural difficulties and particular physical needs. A small proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A very small percentage have English as an additional language but most of these speak English fluently. When children first enter the nursery class at the age of three their overall attainment is above that expected for children of this age, and higher than it was at the last inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Paul's is an effective school with enthusiastic pupils and a dedicated and hard-working staff. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils achieve well overall, particularly in English and mathematics, and in music and physical education (PE). Pupils in the current Year 6 are reaching standards that are well above national expectations in English and mathematics. Standards in science are in line with national expectations. Pupils behave well. Leadership and management are currently sound overall but with significant strengths. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Year 6 pupils attain high standards in English and mathematics.
- Teaching and learning are very good in the nursery and good overall. As a result, children have a very positive start to their education, and all achieve well overall.
- There is very effective provision for social and moral development, and this has a strong impact on pupils' very good relationships, the high level of respect they show for one another, and their interest in their work.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support, which enables them to make good progress.
- The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities and experiences, and by good use of links with the community and partner schools.
- Strong links with parents are enhanced by giving them information of very good quality.

What could be improved

- Opportunities for pupils to learn about science by investigating for themselves in order to increase their achievement in all aspects of the subject.
- The analysis and use of information from tests and assessment to give staff a detailed picture of trends in pupils' performance, which they can use to adjust strategic and curriculum planning and raise standards further.

The school is already addressing these points. The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in March 1998 there has been a good level of improvement in most areas of its work. Capacity for further improvement is good. Pupils continue to achieve well and standards have improved in English, mathematics, music and PE. Children make very good progress in the nursery where, in response to the last report, the curriculum has been significantly improved. The school has sustained its strengths in behaviour, attendance, extra-curricular activities, personal, social and health education, and provision for moral and social development. It has improved upon

its strengths in teaching, and in pupils' attitudes, personal development and relationships. There has been a similar level of improvement in the monitoring of pastoral care, in provision for spiritual development and multi-cultural understanding, and in support for special educational needs (SEN). Positive views expressed by parents at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. Other key issues have generally been tackled well, with a good impact on improving the level of challenge in mathematics, but with limited success in extending the pupils' investigative skills in science.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools			Similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	A*	B	A	B	Well above average A Above average B Average C Below average D Well below average E
Mathematics	A	C	A	A	
Science	B	D	B	C	

Test results for Year 6 pupils have been well above the national average in most years since 1999. Any relative dips in results are attributed to year groups with higher than normal proportions of pupils with special educational needs. The strongest results are for mathematics, where a well above average proportion of pupils gained the higher Level 5 in 2002 and results have risen at a pace faster than the national trend. In contrast, results in science and English have not kept pace with the improved national trend. However, predictions for the tests taken this term indicate that a greater proportion of pupils should reach the higher Level 5 than last year in mathematics and science and significantly so in English. Targets for the expected Level 4 were ambitious last year and the same is true for this year. Last year's results fell a little short of the targets, and predictions indicate the same small margin of discrepancy this year. Test results for Year 2 pupils compare very favourably with national averages for all schools and for similar schools. This is particularly the case with reading, where results have been almost consistently in the top five per cent nationally. There is some evidence that Year 6 boys do better than girls in science, and Year 2 boys do better in reading. The current Year 2 pupils attain above national expectations in English and mathematics and Year 6 pupils reach standards well above expectations in these subjects. In science, standards are broadly in line with expectations in Years 2 and 6 because pupils do not make enough progress in developing investigative skills, and this shortcoming affects performance across the subject. All pupils make good overall progress in English, mathematics, music and PE, and they achieve well overall. Achievement is very good in reading. Standards are above national expectations in music and PE, and meet those expected of pupils of a similar age in other subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; they make an important contribution to pupils' overall good progress. Pupils of all ages are very interested and involved in all the school's activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in lessons and around the school. Behaviour at lunchtimes is usually of a high standard. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good, and oppressive behaviour is virtually unknown. Personal development is good.
Attendance	Very good. Punctuality is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching and learning are good overall, but with some variation in quality. Teaching and learning are never less than satisfactory in the lessons, and are either good or better in the majority. Variations in teaching occur across subjects, classes and year groups and, sometimes, within job shares. The very strongest teaching and learning are in the nursery, and within Years 3 to 6, where occasionally these are excellent. Most Year 2 pupils are well taught, but the use of too many worksheets inhibits learning in other classes in Years 1 and 2. In all classes, pupils' considerable enthusiasm and effort make a significant contribution to their learning, particularly where their interest is skilfully managed and directed by challenging discussion and practical, creative or independent activities. Work is often well marked, with useful comments about how to improve, and homework is regularly given. Where teaching is satisfactory, rather than either good or better, the pace slows, activities are not challenging enough for more able pupils, or pupils are sometimes noisy and restive; these factors impede good progress. There are particular strengths in the teaching of music and PE because of the contributions of specialist staff. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are well taught, and particularly reading skills and subject vocabulary. Within lessons, effective support for pupils with SEN and EAL enables them to learn well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall but enhanced by extra-curricular provision and a good use of the community and other school links. Not enough emphasis is given to investigative science, the systematic development of art and design activities, design and technology (DT) in Year 6, and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. There is an effective balance between in-class support and well-judged help to pupils out of class, based on a thorough knowledge of their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall, especially provision for social and moral development. Staff act as good role models and assemblies have strong moral themes. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pastoral care is good. There are very good procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development, and those for eliminating oppressive behaviour are of a high quality. Assessment systems are thorough and records detailed, but information is not used purposefully enough to gain an overview of performance or to focus on particular areas of the curriculum where improvement is needed.

The school has maintained its strong links with parents. The quality of information they receive is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives good leadership. Her vision for the school is clear and she leads and manages change and improvement purposefully. She and the new deputy headteacher already form an effective collaborative partnership. There is a strongly committed and receptive staff team. Special educational needs provision is very well led. Some subjects, including mathematics, science and ICT, have new or temporary coordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have taken decisive action where needed. They are knowledgeable, well organised and very supportive of the school's work. The strategy group plays a valuable part in drawing up the improvement plan, which is of good quality.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Sound overall. Robust systems have been established for monitoring performance. Analysis is becoming increasingly evaluative but does not yet focus sharply enough on areas in need of further improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good overall. Governors take great care to ensure that educational priorities are well supported. The school benefits from large donations from parents' fund raising. Governors are beginning to judge the cost effectiveness of spending decisions and they apply Best Value principles satisfactorily.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school's high expectations of effort and achievement. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with a question or problem. • Children make good progress. • Teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information they receive about progress. • The quality of the school's partnership with parents.

The majority of parents value all aspects of the school's work. Inspection evidence supports the positive views expressed above, but does not support the concerns of a significant minority of parents about the information they receive on their children's progress and the school's partnership with parents. The information the school gives to parents is better than in most schools. For example, annual reports are of a high quality. Various well-attended meetings are held to explain school policy or practice and, where necessary, individual appointments have been offered to follow up any remaining concerns.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall, all pupils at St Paul's continue to achieve well, including those with special educational needs, talents and gifts, and the very few with English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to the school is higher than was found at the time of the last inspection, but even so the good level of achievement has been maintained. Standards have improved in English, mathematics, music and physical education (PE). Achievement is good overall in English and mathematics, but is sound, rather than good, at Key Stage 1 because of variations in teaching quality. Pupils achieve very well in reading, but very good achievement in writing is inhibited by too few opportunities to write creatively and without prescribed boundaries. Pupils also achieve well in music and PE, and satisfactorily in all other subjects. Achievement in science is satisfactory rather than good because pupils do not do well enough in the investigative element of the subject, with the result that achievement is inhibited in other aspects of science.
2. Standards are above national expectations in English and mathematics in Year 2 and well above in Year 6. Standards are also above expectations in music and PE. Standards in science, design and technology, geography, history and information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with national expectations. There was not enough evidence to allow an overall judgement for art and design. Standards in ICT in Year 6 are lower than was found during the last inspection. This is because time given to training for the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has limited the time needed to keep pace with the rapid developments in ICT.
3. Attainment on entry to the nursery and the reception year is above that expected of children of a similar age. Baseline information for the reception group indicates that, within this picture, writing is a relatively weaker area of attainment. By the end of the reception year, most children reach the expected goals for this age in all areas of learning, and over a third of the children attain standards beyond this level. Children make good progress overall in the Foundation Stage classes, and very good progress during their time in the nursery.
4. In national tests, results generally compare very favourably with the national picture for all schools. Where there has been a relative decline in test results, in 2000 at Year 2 and in 2001 at Year 6, this has been because those particular groups of pupils contained a higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Results have been particularly high in Year 2, where, in recent years, pupils have almost consistently produced results that fall in the top five per cent nationally for reading and within the top 25 per cent of schools for writing and mathematics. At least double the national percentage of pupils reached the higher Level 3 in reading and writing in the 2002 tests, and the proportion reaching this level in mathematics was well above the average for all schools. In comparison with those of similar schools, results were also well above average for all three subjects. Teacher assessments for science that year were very high.
5. There is a similar positive picture overall in the Year 6 results for English and mathematics when compared with those of all and similar schools. In the tests in 2002, for example, standards in these subjects were well above the average for all schools. In comparison with the results for similar schools, they were well above average in mathematics and above average in English. The strongest picture is in mathematics, where the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 was well above the national average and where, over time, results have risen at a higher rate than the national trend. Test results were above the national average in comparison with the attainment of these pupils when they took the mathematics tests in Year 2.
6. In the Year 6 tests, science is the relatively weaker subject as results have been consistently below those for mathematics and English. In 2002, science results were above the average for all schools, but broadly in line with those of similar schools and below the average on prior attainment. In contrast to mathematics, test results in science have not kept pace with the nationally improved trend. This is also the case with English results over time. Writing continues

to be the relatively weaker aspect of English, both in the Year 6 tests and in those at Year 2, where there has also been a falling away from the national trend.

7. The test results show no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls in mathematics, but there is some evidence of boys doing better than girls in science in Year 6 tests, and boys have tended to do better than girls in the reading tests in Year 2. No significant evidence of these trends was found during this inspection.
8. Last year's ambitious targets were missed by a small margin. They are equally ambitious this year, particularly the one for mathematics, which has been raised. Predictions for the tests taken this summer suggest that results will again fall just short of the expected target, but that results at the higher Level 5 will be much better overall, significantly better in English, and higher for science. These improvements reflect the good emphasis the school has placed on improving standards in these subjects. Fewer Year 2 pupils are expected to gain the higher Level 3, because the present year group has a greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. The school has maintained its strengths in pupils' very positive attitudes, their good behaviour, and the high quality relationships that exist throughout the school. Overall, pupils' personal development is better now than it was at the time of the last inspection, and parents appreciate this aspect of the school's work.
10. These strengths are found in every year group. Children in the nursery and reception classes, for example, are keen and excited to learn, and their attitudes and behaviour are very good. This enthusiasm for learning is built upon as pupils move through the school and in most cases is channelled into a focused, purposeful approach to their work. Very occasionally, this natural enthusiasm gets the better of them and there is some shouting out as they are anxious for their answers to be heard.
11. Pupils' very positive attitudes to work make an important contribution to the above average standards achieved by many. The few occasions when behaviour does not meet the high standards expected by the school are usually linked to a drop in pace. In some lessons this is because the work does not build on pupils' prior attainment or they finish tasks quickly and are left to their own devices. As a result, there is some low-level restlessness and a decline in concentration.
12. Behaviour is good in classes and around the school, and is sometimes very good on such occasions as assemblies. Behaviour at lunchtimes is usually of a high standard. Pupils can be trusted to work on various projects, such as independent work in the ICT suite, and to use the outdoor facilities sensibly and amicably, such as the trim trail and adventure playground. There have been no exclusions in the last 12 months and the school also takes pupils who have been excluded from other schools.
13. Pupils of all ages are very interested and involved in all the activities provided, including the well-attended after-school and lunchtime clubs. In the case of the drama club, the demand from pupils is such that there is a waiting list. Sports teams are well supported by the pupils, who want their school to succeed.
14. The very good relationships between pupils and between all adults and pupils ensure that oppressive behaviour, such as bullying, is virtually unheard of. Most pupils have a good understanding of how their actions can affect others. They listen carefully to each other and respect the views expressed. They frequently work well together in lessons. In a Year 6 PE lesson, pupils listened to the class teacher and watched demonstrations carefully. They worked responsibly and sensibly, showing a good regard for safety. In a Year 6 circle time discussion on likes and dislikes, pupils were encouraged to explore their own feelings and those of others. Pupils volunteered their feelings confidently, showing respect for one another's contributions.

15. Quite young pupils show a mature approach to their learning. Year 1 pupils feel confident enough to ask when there is something they do not understand, as they did in an English lesson. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils responded well as the teacher encouraged them to evaluate each other's work. This sense of responsibility grows as pupils move through the year groups, and they take on an increasing number of responsibilities to support the day-to-day running of the school. Chances to show initiative in lessons, however, are limited, particularly in science when there are too few opportunities for pupils to undertake experiments and investigations independently. In a lesson for younger pupils, for example, when they were asked to predict whether seeds would need water to grow and to give the reasons for their ideas, the teacher wrote both prediction and explanation on the board for all to copy into their books. In English also, pupils are given too few opportunities to write without any restraints or to use their own ideas as inspiration for imaginative and creative writing.
16. The school has maintained its high levels of attendance, which is well above the average for primary schools. Punctuality is also good and lessons start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and such that all pupils are enabled to achieve well, but the quality is inconsistent between and within key stages, across subjects and, sometimes, within job shares. All lessons seen during this inspection were at least satisfactory. Of these, nearly 60 per cent were either good or better, with almost 20 per cent very good. Teaching and learning were excellent in one lesson at Key Stage 2. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection, but with improvements in the higher proportion of good or better teaching and in the absence of any unsatisfactory lessons. The most significant improvement is in the nursery, where teaching and learning were satisfactory and are now very good.
18. Variations in teaching quality are reflected in overall judgements for key stages. Teaching and learning are good overall in the nursery and reception classes (the Foundation Stage) and at Key Stage 2, and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Much of the strongest teaching is at Key Stage 2, and particularly in Year 4 where, as a result, pupils learn very well. Good teaching in Year 2 ensures that most of these pupils progress well, but teaching in Year 1 is sound overall rather than either good or better and so the overall picture at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. The school is well aware of areas of relative weakness and has taken steps to support improvement.
19. Particular strengths in teaching are in music and physical education (PE). The contribution of staff with specialist knowledge in these subjects makes a positive impact on the good quality of teaching as a whole. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are also effectively taught, and particularly reading skills. English, mathematics and history are well taught at Key Stage 2 and soundly taught overall at Key Stage 1. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress in lessons because they are fully integrated into the work of the whole class. Teachers carefully ensure that work has the correct degree of challenge while, at the same time, giving the pupils enough support to promote positive attitudes and self-esteem. Learning support assistants in particular make very effective contributions to learning. Other subjects, including science, are satisfactorily taught. Not enough teaching of art and design was seen to enable an overall judgement to be made.
20. Children at the Foundation Stage are taught well overall. Lively and enthusiastic teaching in the nursery inspires and motivates the children. In this class there is a very effective blend of instruction, questioning and opportunity for exploration that is ideally suited to children of this age. Expectations of behaviour and learning are high and the children rise to these. When teaching is satisfactory rather than good within the reception group, children are not as effectively managed as they are in the nursery. Work routines are not as well established and this discrepancy leads to restlessness which, in turn, slows the pace of the lesson. When this happens, the level of children's concentration falls and they make sound rather than good gains in their learning.
21. Throughout the school, pupils' considerable enthusiasm, interest and effort make a significant contribution to learning. Where these attributes are skilfully managed and engaged, often by

chances to work independently, practically or creatively, the results are outstanding. In one such lesson, namely science in Year 4, pupils made excellent progress. A chance to investigate insect habitats for themselves produced great excitement and interest. There was very effective use of related software and probing discussion, which ensured that pupils were fully prepared for their practical tasks. Timely interventions and reminders contained the pupils' excitement and ensured that they were able to record, explain and discuss their findings well. In a very good English lesson, Year 6 pupils swiftly produced high quality poems when left to work independently. In another science lesson, again in Year 6, the pupils were given first-hand experience of plant and animal habitats in the park. This was reinforced by good use of the ICT suite to research information and carry out open-ended tasks. The result was a quality of learning which ensured that pupils of all abilities made very good progress.

22. In some lessons, good use is made of opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas together or work as groups. Where mathematics is taught well, practical strategies engage pupils' attention. This was the case in a numeracy lesson in Year 2, where pupils sorted months into their respective seasons and '*whispered*' with their fingers when counting. Both activities effectively reinforced previous learning. In this lesson, assessment from national tests had been used well to plan the activities. Indeed, in response to issues arising from the last inspection, all planning now identifies opportunities for assessment. Pupils' involvement in demonstration, evaluation, composing and performing are significant features of effective teaching in PE and music.
23. Independent work is often well marked, giving pupils useful points about how to improve. Such helpful feedback is inhibited when pupils complete too many activities on worksheets, which they do in English and mathematics in Year 1. Homework is regularly set, varied and linked to work in lessons.
24. Where teaching is satisfactory, rather than good or better, pupils are sometimes allowed to let their enthusiasm get the better of them. The resulting restlessness and noise occasionally impede good progress. Sometimes activities are not challenging enough for more able pupils in some lessons at Key Stage 1, or the pace of teaching slows and pupils' concentration falls.

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

25. Since the last inspection, improvements to the planned curriculum for Years 1 to 6 have been sound overall. For example, a two-year planning cycle at Key Stage 1 has addressed issues about mixed-age classes. The planned curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is broadly based and relevant to pupils' needs and interests. All National Curriculum subjects are taught and statutory requirements met, although overall curriculum time at Key Stage 2 is a little below the recommended level. However, there are some weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum. For example, there are too few opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out investigations of their own in science, and this weakness restricts the development of scientific skills and understanding. ICT skills are taught well in the computer suite, but pupils have insufficient opportunities overall to use ICT to support their learning across the curriculum. The range of learning activities in design and technology (DT) is limited in Year 6 and, as a result, standards and achievement in this subject are not as high as they could be. Evidence was found of a satisfactory range of art and design activities but little to show that the gradual growth of aspects and skills is planned for over time, or developed as part of a design process. Timetabling arrangements make such development particularly difficult in Year 6.
26. The school has maintained its strengths in special educational needs (SEN) provision, the personal, social and health programme, and extra-curricular activities. Pupils continue to benefit from the school's strong emphasis on music, and there are many opportunities for pupils to receive musical tuition in a range of instruments. This particularly positive feature of the music curriculum enables all pupils to achieve well but also allows higher-attaining and talented pupils to make very good progress. Although it is not a requirement, the school continues to offer French to pupils in Years 5 and 6. They are appropriately introduced to the language through speaking and listening activities and this allows them to make sound progress in preparation for their work at secondary school.

27. The Foundation Stage curriculum, particularly in the nursery, is good. This is a significant improvement and much commented upon by parents. It is well planned, with an interesting and stimulating range of activities. Those reception children recently placed in Year 1 are suitably catered for. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in the nursery and reception groups, and very good overall. Pupils are effectively supported in lessons because support staff are well deployed on the basis of a thorough knowledge of pupils' needs. There is also a good balance between in-class support and well-judged individual and group support outside the class. Good relationships are maintained with specialist agencies, whose help and advice is called on as necessary. The Intensive Learning Unit is a well established part of the school, and its attention to the individual needs of all pupils, including both less able and gifted and talented, ensures a consistent approach. Most of the few pupils with English as an additional language are fluent English speakers. On those few occasions where these pupils need some extra support, the school seeks help from the local education authority.
28. The school has adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies for the teaching of English and mathematics, and these strategies have been implemented well. There are good opportunities for pupils to apply and develop literacy skills in a range of subjects, such as history and science, although chances for fully independent creative and imaginative writing are still not frequent enough. Pupils apply and develop their numeracy skills well in other subjects such as geography and science. Booster groups in these subjects give valuable support to lower attainers.
29. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided. This includes country dancing, choir, drama, computers, football, netball, recorders and swimming. Lunchtime clubs are of a high quality, but are mostly for Key Stage 2 pupils. These activities enrich the curriculum and contribute well to pupils' academic, creative, physical and social development. There is also a very good range of educational visits to enhance units of study in a range of subjects. Planned and completed visits include the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, Hampton Court, Kew Gardens, local field study centres at Amersham and Shortenills, the National Gallery and The Barbican.
30. The school promotes equal opportunities satisfactorily. All pupils, regardless of attainment, background, gender, or nature of special educational needs, have full access to the range of learning activities. Pupils' needs are generally well met in lessons.
31. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. The school's well-planned programme is implemented throughout the school. Sex education and education in the misuse of drugs are given appropriate attention. The school holds a successful 'Fit for Life Week' when pupils, staff, governors and parents participate in a range of activities, including country dance, line dance, circuit skipping and relay swimming. Issues such as health, good hygiene, and keeping fit and safe are promoted well in subjects such as science, DT and PE.
32. Parents and the local community make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Parents have taken the lead in the mural paintings in nursery, reception and cloakroom areas. They clean the swimming pool and maintain the environmental area. Parents also provide valuable coaching in activities such as athletics and netball. Another community event in which the school plays a part is a local Green travel plan. Currently, the school is contributing to an inclusion project initiated by the University of London. Year 4 have opportunities to work with the London Symphony Orchestra.
33. The school has good relationships and links with partner schools. The school plays and performs with local schools and joins other schools for training. A specialist PE teacher from a local secondary school teaches in the school on a regular basis. As well as teaching the pupils, she has provided valuable training for staff in areas such as dance. Former pupils also help out in school, and students training to be teachers come for school experience.
34. The school continues to provide well for the cultural development of its pupils, and very well for their moral and social development. Provision for their spiritual development is now good, and this represents an improvement since the last inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory.

35. Last year the school reviewed the way it approached spiritual development and held a spiritual awareness day for all teachers and learning support assistants. As a result, spiritual development is now built into the curriculum. Music and drama, in particular, make an important contribution to this aspect of personal development, although the contribution made by art and design is more limited.
36. The clear message in all lessons and other school activities, such as sport, music and drama, is that it is important to sustain effort to succeed. In many lessons the teachers ensure that pupils are able to explore and expand their ideas through talk, explaining why and how, rather than simply what and when.
37. Circle time discussion periods are timetabled throughout Years 3 to 6. In a Year 6 session, children worked in pairs exploring likes and dislikes, confidently expressing their ideas while at the same time paying due regard to the views of their partners. They responded very well to the teacher's suggestion that they should find something good about what their partner disliked.
38. The school has established a secure, friendly and purposeful learning environment in which all members of the community are valued and respected. Every morning, pupils with specific concerns are invited in half an hour early to sit quietly with a learning support assistant to prepare them for the day, and parents are occasionally involved. A group of pupils is working with parents and others to provide a garden for quiet reflection.
39. A sense of responsibility for others is promoted through the school's support for a range of charities, both home and abroad, and pupils are able to explore the beliefs of others in their religious education lessons. Assemblies provide a daily act of collective worship and support other aspects of pupils' development.
40. Provision for moral and social development is very good, not least because of the good role models provided by the staff, who help pupils to understand that they have rights and responsibilities. Circle times, assemblies, and lessons in personal, social, and health education all contribute positively to pupils' moral and social development. Assemblies have a strong moral and social theme. Moral issues are discussed in geography and history when pupils compare different places and different times. Pupils become more morally aware as they grow older, as can be seen in the good behaviour in classes and in the very good relationships that exist.
41. The school's moral and social code is underpinned by its behaviour policy, which is understood and respected by pupils and generally applied consistently by teachers. Children respect the sanctions, which are applied fairly, and appreciate the rewards. There is a wide range of visits, including a residential trip for Year 6, and a succession of visitors to the school. These, together with the high quality clubs at lunchtime and after school, make an important contribution to pupils' moral and social development.
42. Whilst there is no school council, there are plans to introduce one shortly and training has taken place. In the meantime, pupils do have a range of roles and responsibilities within the school. Older pupils act as librarians and monitors to support younger children and help in assemblies. Each class has its own monitors. Children are asked for their views on which charities to support, and arrange their own money making activities.
43. The provision for cultural development overall is good. There are many opportunities for pupils to celebrate Western culture, including school visits and the contributions of visitors to the school. Opportunities also occur in lessons, such as music and drama, in after-school activities, such as the choir and string orchestra, and in sporting leagues and tournaments. Pupils are keen to take part in these activities and in the regular end-of-year performances, which are well attended by family and friends. Art and design makes a more limited contribution to pupils' cultural development.
44. The school has improved its provision for multi-cultural education, so that pupils are better prepared for life in a modern multi-cultural society. Provision is now good. Good links with a sports high school bring pupils into contact with a good mix of backgrounds. Harvest festivals

are used successfully to support multi-cultural education. Pupils discuss issues raised by, for example, abundant harvests in one part of the world and failed harvests in other regions.

45. The beliefs of other faiths are considered in RE lessons, and visitors to the school have included a leading member of the local Moslem community and Indian dancers. More such contributions are planned. The multi-cultural education for younger children is well supported by pupils, governors, and friends who travel abroad and send back postcards, photographs and souvenirs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The school provides a good level of pastoral care for its pupils, an improvement since the last inspection, and they are able to take advantage of all the learning opportunities provided. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is responsible for child protection. She has received appropriate training and has a good oversight of the school's provision. She ensures that all staff have a sound understanding of procedures but is now planning some more formal training.
47. Good procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance and behaviour are reflected in the high levels of attendance and in the good, sometimes very good, behaviour in classes and around the school. Arrangements for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are of high quality. They are consistently applied and are well understood by pupils, who feel confident in raising any matters of concern with adults in the school. The school has an explicit statement on racial equality, which is also well understood by the entire school community.
48. The individual needs of pupils are recorded and met, whatever the level of need, as was seen during the inspection. There are two fully qualified first-aiders and all staff have had emergency training. The medical room is of a good size and well appointed. All incidents and accidents are carefully recorded and parents involved whenever necessary. The headteacher has been on a safe management course, and the school is seeking to gain the quality mark in the healthy schools initiative, which is now the central focus of the care it provides. A recent health and safety audit has been successfully concluded and the school conducts its own annual reviews.
49. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. Teachers know their pupils well and endeavour to meet their needs. Personal development is carefully reported to parents in the annual reports on their children. The monthly review of all classes between the SENCO and the class teacher is a particular strength and underpins the overall good care and guidance available to pupils. In these meetings the progress and needs of all pupils in the class are reviewed and the outcomes recorded, including any issues concerning child protection. The necessary action is decided upon and passed on to all those adults who will have contact with the child. Good relationships with outside agencies are used to ensure appropriate support for pupils.
50. A thorough assessment system has been developed by the headteacher and assessment co-ordinator. Very detailed and comprehensive records are kept on all aspects of pupils' performance. As well as the statutory tests at Years 2 and 6, other tests include baseline assessment, end-of-topic assessments, progress tests in English and mathematics, and non-statutory tests. Good use has also been made of guidelines and advice given both by the LEA and through national initiatives. Much has been done to moderate examples of pupils' work, and some portfolios of levelled work have been produced. Senior staff also analyse the broader trends in national test data. This process has developed teachers' assessment skills well.
51. A target-setting system is used to provide individual targets, which pupils know, and which are often displayed in classrooms. The monitoring of pupils' progress through the target-setting and tracking process is improving, and the quality of data obtained from this process is increasing in accuracy. Teachers are good at explaining to their pupils what is to be learnt, and they regularly look back at the ends of lessons and ask if pupils think they have achieved their learning goals.

52. The use to which this information is put, however, is unsatisfactory at present. Although increasingly reliable and comprehensive information is available, it is not used purposefully. Subject co-ordinators, for instance, do not have an overview of standards in their subjects, and so cannot take strategic actions to raise standards and give greater attention to particular areas of the curriculum or particular groups of pupils. This is not the case with pupils with special educational needs, however, as procedures for early identification, assessment of needs, and monitoring progress of these pupils are very good. Class teachers keep copies of Individual Educational Plans to hand, and these are regularly updated and reviewed as required, with parents and pupils fully involved. The system of monthly meetings between the SENCO, learning support assistants and class teachers provides a thorough and very effective means of reviewing pupils' progress and influencing provision.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. The school has maintained its strong partnership with parents, which is a fundamental strength. The majority of parents appreciate all aspects of its work and give valued and valuable support. They give generously of their time to help with school events and in classes. Year 6 parents supported the collection of imaginative materials for use in making a collage of *Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds*. Parents also give substantial financial aid through the Parent Teacher Association. Parental donations have provided key resources, such as the ICT suite, and financed more books and new schemes of work for mathematics and science. Parents thus make a major contribution to their children's learning at school, and also at home through their support for homework and their use of reading and homework diaries.
54. Those parents who responded to the inspection survey or who attended the pre-inspection meeting were particularly positive in a number of areas. They were pleased that their children liked the school, for example. Expectations of effort and achievement were felt to be high, and the quality of teaching and the extent of pupils' progress were considered to be good. Parents also felt the school to be approachable should they have a question or problem.
55. Much of the previous concern about homework appears to have been resolved following recent improvements in response to the school's own questionnaire. Inspection evidence supports the parents' views and also concludes that the amount of homework is appropriate and that it is well used to extend learning in the classroom.
56. A significant minority of parents said that they were unhappy with the information they receive on their children's progress and the partnership with parents. Inspection evidence does not support these views. The partnership with parents is very effective in promoting children's learning and the information provided to parents is better than in most schools. The annual reports on children's progress are of high quality, personal to the child and readily understandable. Reports clearly explain what children know and can do, and set targets for improvement. There are also sections for parents' comments and for children to review their progress over the year and to indicate where they would like to see further improvement. Most children take this opportunity very seriously.
57. In addition, informative monthly newsletters keep parents well informed about school events. The school brochure is well presented and informative and there is a friendly and useful booklet for parents whose children are joining the nursery. The brochure and governors' annual report to parents meet statutory requirements.
58. There are two formal consultations a year and parents can arrange to talk to the head or class teacher to discuss the annual report. Parents have open access throughout the year to speak to staff, who are quick to raise any concerns they have rather than wait to be approached. Various well-attended evenings are held to explain school policy or curricular matters and, where needed, arrangements have been offered for individual appointments to follow up any remaining concerns.
59. The school ensures that parents of pupils with special educational needs are actively involved and fully consulted at all stages. They are regularly invited to discuss their children's progress,

and any changes in provision are explained and discussed. Parents of pupils with statements of special educational need are fully informed about support and other provision.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. There have been important changes to the school since its last inspection, and these have been well managed. Firstly, the number of pupils attending has become smaller. The most significant reason for this reduction has been the loss of Year 7 as a result of countywide reorganisation of secondary education. The school responded positively to parental concerns about large class sizes at Key Stage 2, in some instances nearing 40 pupils. The school has taken appropriate steps to reduce these high numbers, and from this coming September the school's standard roll will be reduced to keep numbers to a lower level. At the height of parents' concern about class sizes, some pupils left to join other schools, mostly within the private sector, particularly from the then Year 3 group (presently Year 5). Numbers at Key Stage 2 have now largely stabilised at the new level. More recently, county policy about provision for three-year-olds has also been changed, and this has depressed numbers in the nursery.
61. The second significant area of change has been that to school staff, including the appointment of a new headteacher and deputy headteacher. There have also been some recruitment difficulties because of the high cost of housing in the area. Recent mid-year staff changes have been thoughtfully handled to ensure as much stability as possible for pupils in the affected classes.
62. Although currently sound overall, there are significant strengths in the school's leadership and management so that the capacity for future improvement is good. The headteacher's vision for the school is clear and she leads and manages change and improvement purposefully. Educational direction is firmly focused on ensuring that all pupils have the chance to achieve well within a broad and exciting range of experiences. Since her appointment in January 2001, the headteacher has established a solid foundation of systems to support the development of robust monitoring and evaluation. She has also successfully built on the hard work and dedication of staff to create a strong mutually supportive and receptive team. She and the new deputy headteacher (appointed in January 2003) already form an effective collaborative partnership. There has been a good level of improvement in most areas of the school's work since it was last inspected. Existing strengths have been maintained and often enhanced. The school's strongly stated aims are generally well met. Pupils clearly enjoy the experiences and opportunities given them by the school, respond with great enthusiasm and achieve well overall.
63. The school is well aware of those areas where attention is needed to make improvement. For example, relative weaknesses within otherwise satisfactory teaching and learning in some Key Stage 1 classes are being addressed. Improvement to the Foundation Stage has been a conscious strategy to build improvement from the point at which children first start school. The development of ICT has been another priority for development and the new coordinator has thoughtful plans in place to bring about further development. Much energy has been given to improving achievement in science and writing. The school predicts that a greater proportion of Year 6 pupils this year will gain the higher Level 5 in these subjects in the national tests than did last year, but some issues remain unresolved. Analysis and evaluation of subject and assessment information have also been improved, but are not yet finely focused enough to pick up on the detail of trends and areas needing particular attention within the broader picture of provision and performance. All subject areas are enthusiastically and conscientiously coordinated, but improvements to key subjects, mathematics, ICT and science, for example, and to design and technology, are currently inhibited by newly appointed or temporary management. These shortcomings inhibit pupils from making very good overall achievement.
64. The new deputy headteacher is a very good teaching role model, and other senior staff are also effective teachers. Some share their skills with others. For example, the English coordinator has had other staff watch her teach literacy lessons as part of their professional development. Others, though, have not had enough opportunities to monitor and improve the quality of teaching and learning within their area of responsibility. For instance, this is true of the otherwise effective management of the Foundation Stage in relation to teaching and learning in

the reception year. Support for special educational needs (SEN) is very well led and managed and its effectiveness closely monitored by the coordinator. Regular meetings with teachers and effective liaison with a committed team of support assistants keep the SEN coordinator fully informed about individual pupils and their needs so that she is able to deploy staff and support as effectively as possible.

65. Lesson observation is mostly undertaken by the headteacher, but all staff take part in well established, regular evaluations of pupils' work and teachers' planning. Formally recorded analysis and comment have become increasingly evaluative, but do not yet focus sharply enough on areas needing further improvement. Neither is information always brought together in order to give a comprehensive overview of standards and achievement within individual subjects. This shortcoming inhibits the extent to which most coordinators are able to give well-focused strategic leadership in the development of their area of responsibility. The new deputy headteacher, who is also the coordinator for mathematics, has already started to improve assessment analysis and share these strategies with staff, but there has not yet been enough time for these improvements to be fully implemented.
66. The governing body has within it a wide range of skills and experience that is put to good use on the school's behalf. Governors are knowledgeable, well organised and very supportive of the school's work. They have taken decisive action where issues have been identified, for example in reducing class sizes at Key Stage 2 and pursuing alternative ways of maintaining numbers in the nursery class. The governors' strategy group plays a particularly valuable part in drawing up the school's improvement plan. This document has been improved since the previous inspection. Key priorities are wholly appropriate and realistic in scope and challenge. Success criteria are clear and well focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Information from the local education authority's annual review of the school and from Performance Management is used to monitor the school's work. Successful use has been made of consultation with parents to modify school practices, for example to allay concerns expressed about homework.
67. Great care is taken by the school and the finance committee, which is particularly well served by its chair, to ensure that all available resources are used to support the clearly identified educational priorities and cover necessary contingency plans. Where money is not immediately available, the budget contains a list of priorities to be addressed if extra resources are received during the year. An earmarked sum had been judiciously set aside to help cushion the financial effect of fewer pupils. However, falling rolls and the decision to reduce the school's standard admission number have been in part responsible for the school's resolve to set a deficit budget with the permission of the local education authority.
68. The governing body is beginning to evaluate the cost effectiveness of spending decisions through the governors linked to subjects or other aspects of the school's provision, but this is an area for further development. The school benefits from the large parental donations and ensures that it makes good use of all the monies available to it. There is satisfactory use of new technology in lessons and in school administration.
69. An audit in April 2001 found that financial systems in the school were satisfactory, and all the suggested improvements have been put in place. The school benefits from a skilled secretary/bursar, who plays an important role in the efficient day-to-day running of the school.
70. The school has an appropriate number of qualified teachers and support staff. Staffing issues have been well managed within some difficult circumstances. For example, the school has experienced problems recruiting teachers, mainly because of the high cost of local accommodation. This has led to part-time teachers sharing jobs in reception and in Years 3, 5 and 6. These staff members generally liaise well. The job shares do bring benefits to pupils, and to the school, as a greater number of teachers offer a wider range of experience and expertise. However, they sometimes lead to inconsistencies in expectations and practice and sometimes inhibit monitoring, for example in history. Performance Management is now well established, although individual objectives are often too broad in scope. Learning support assistants are well trained and effectively deployed. They work very well together and make a valuable contribution to the progress of pupils with special educational needs.

71. The school's accommodation is good overall and well used. The design of the building is modern, with most rooms radiating from the large hall that is put to good use for assemblies, PE and drama. Pupils continue to benefit from the large and attractive library and the space set aside for the intensive learning unit. There is also a computer suite, and the music room is well used for specialist teaching. However, as remarked in the previous report, some classrooms are cramped, particularly when there are more than 30 pupils in a class. The separate nursery is purpose-built and of good design, and offers very good accommodation both inside and outside. However, the outdoor play area for children in reception is narrow and this restricts some physical activities.
72. The school grounds are of a good size, with grass and asphalt areas providing good facilities for PE and play. Outdoor play equipment is varied and of good quality. The front of the school is attractive, with flower and shrub borders that are maintained by parents and pupils. The school has an outdoor swimming pool and this enhances PE facilities. An environmental area with a pond provides a useful resource for science studies.
73. Learning resources are good overall. They are very good in the nursery and good in reception, English, mathematics, science, music and PE. Learning resources are satisfactory in all other subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

74. To raise standards of achievement in all subjects and for all pupils, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- extend and improve opportunities for pupils to learn about science through independent investigation and exploration in order to increase their achievement in this and all aspects of the subject, by:

- ensuring that independent investigative activities are an integral part of all scientific work;

(paragraphs: 1, 6, 15, 21, 25, 102-110)

- improve the analysis and use of test and assessment information, so that subject coordinators and teaching staff have a detailed picture of trends in pupils' performance in order to adjust strategic, curriculum and lesson planning and raise standards further, by:

- further developing the present well-established systems for all staff to monitor and evaluate performance in each subject;
- increasing the quality of analysis and evaluative comment so that they focus sharply on areas in need of improvement within subjects and for groups of pupils;
- bringing information together to give an overview of standards and achievement in each subject.

(paragraphs: 52, 63, 65, 94, 101, 105, 112, 119, 124, 130, 135, 140)

Other areas in need of development, which the governors should consider for inclusion in the school's action plan, are:

- opportunities for fully independent creative and imaginative writing *(paragraphs: 1, 6, 15, 21, 86)*;
- the use of ICT in science and all foundation subjects *(paragraphs: 25, 80, 108, 132, 140)*;
- the systematic development of all aspects of art and design and opportunities to develop ideas within a design process *(paragraphs: 25, 114)*;
- a greater range of design and technology projects for pupils in Year 6 *(paragraphs: 25, 117)*;
- opportunities for coordinators to monitor and support teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility *(paragraphs: 64-65, 76, 124, 130)*;
- the extent to which the governing body monitors the value for money of its spending decisions *(paragraph: 68)*.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	74

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	10	20	22	0	0	0
Percentage	2	19	38	42	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	28	230
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	25

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

* Most speak English fluently.

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.9
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	02	7	26	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	24	26	26
	Total	31	33	33
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	94 (100)	100 (94)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	25	26	26
	Total	32	33	33
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	97 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	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
	02	20	14	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	17	18	19
	Girls	14	13	13
	Total	31	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	91 (83)	91 (78)	94 (94)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	18	17	17
	Girls	14	13	13
	Total	32	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	94 (86)	88 (78)	88 (94)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
206	0	0
0	0	0
7	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	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)	10.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	202

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	39
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	532401
Total expenditure	512423
Expenditure per pupil	1799
Balance brought forward from previous year	9351
Balance carried forward to next year	29329

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

242

Number of questionnaires returned

80

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	33	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	40	5	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	60	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	55	9	6	1
The teaching is good.	50	45	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	39	18	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	39	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	36	4	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	36	41	18	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	36	49	10	3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	54	5	1	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	40	9	0	5

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

75. There were 56 children in the nursery class and 32 in the reception year. Children are admitted to the nursery at the beginning of the term after their third birthday and there are good procedures to ensure that they settle as quickly as possible. This term a small group of reception children have been placed in the Year 1 class to avoid having too many children in the reception class. Children enter the nursery with a broad range of attainment and experiences but, overall, attainment on entry is above that expected of children of a similar age. It is higher than was found at the time of the last inspection, when it was judged to be average. Children transfer to the reception class at the beginning of the term when their fifth birthday falls. Baseline information for this group in recent years indicates that attainment overall continues to be above expectations, with a relative weakness in writing. By the end of reception most children reach the early learning goals, the national expected standards in all six areas of learning. Over a third of the children attain standards beyond this. All children, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, achieve well in all areas of learning.
76. Good overall leadership has ensured that there has been much improvement to the Foundation Stage curriculum since the last inspection, particularly in the nursery. Teaching and learning in all six areas are very good in the nursery, but good overall across the Foundation Stage because of greater variation in the quality of teaching within the reception year groups and job shares, which ranges from sound to very good. The curriculum is well planned and stimulating, and assessment systems are effective. Investment in developing the early years of children's education has been the result of a conscious strategy for building and increasing achievement right through the school. Key improvement priorities have been to improve writing and to extend liaison into Key Stage 1 and beyond. However, the coordinator has not had sufficient opportunities to observe and support teaching and learning in the reception year in order to gain a clear overview of the whole Foundation Stage.

Personal, social and emotional development

77. These skills are well taught overall. Where teaching is very effective in both the nursery and reception classes, routines are consistently applied. As a result, children's natural enthusiasm is channelled into purposeful and positive attitudes to work. Children in the nursery are excited and enthusiastic about the interesting activities they are given to do. They are keen to try new things and enjoy working together. A number can operate independently and most are very willing to share equipment, books and toys. In reception, children share and take turns when choosing and playing a range of musical instruments. When teaching in reception is satisfactory, rather than good or very good, routines are not well established. Where this is the case, some reception children do not maintain attention and concentration, and this limits their learning.

Communication, language and literacy

78. In all activities, teachers, support staff and helpers provide good opportunities to develop children's language skills. In one example in the nursery, the children listened carefully to the story of the 'Crunchy Munchy Caterpillar' because it was read with animation and good expression. Their close attention to the story enabled them to predict what might happen next, and use the correct vocabulary, such as *cocoon*, to explain their ideas. Indeed, children have a good range of vocabulary. For example, those in reception offered *massive*, *gigantic* and *large* as alternative words for *big*. Phonic knowledge is taught well so that by the end of reception, children show a secure understanding of letter sounds, for example, identifying words beginning with the letter *c*, such as *case*, *clip* and *cat*. These children enjoy listening to and acting out the stories that have been read to them by adults. As part of their strategy to improve writing, the school has made the development of early writing skills a priority for development although the initiative is too recent to have made a full impact on standards. Most reception children hold a pencil correctly for drawing and writing and produce recognisable letters, which are correctly formed. A few higher attaining children are beginning to develop the use of

sentences, but in general the standards in writing are not as high as in other areas of learning. Good progress is inhibited in some lessons for the reception children because restlessness and occasional silliness are not as effectively managed as in other lessons.

Mathematical development

79. Children make good progress in mathematical development because they meet a wide range of practical activities and basic numeracy skills are promoted well across the curriculum. In the nursery, for example, children's work on mini beasts was used very effectively to promote knowledge and understanding of number. Children counted the number of spots on ladybirds and bees going into a hive, counting confidently from one to five. Higher attaining children count to eight and know that a spider has eight legs. By the end of the reception year, most children reliably count to ten and beyond. A good range of objects and practical equipment is used imaginatively to help these children complete simple mathematical calculations. Higher attaining children recognise numbers one to 20, place them in order on a number line and add two numbers together accurately up to ten.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

80. Good and very good teaching of this area of learning in the nursery and reception classes is well organised and stimulating. There are high expectations of learning and a very effective blend of direct teaching and opportunities for children to explore and discover for themselves. As a result, children participate fully and gain much knowledge and understanding. For example, children in the nursery made very good progress during the lesson about mini beasts confidently identifying different creatures, and also particular characteristics such as the colours and number of spots on ladybirds. Reception children responded with interest to a lesson about the seaside. A good range of resources, including the effective use of a video, and well targeted questioning, enabled these children to make good gains in their knowledge of seashells and underwater creatures. More able children confidently explained how shells could be found on the beach. In reception, the children have planted coleus and broad bean seeds. They observe their growth and name the main parts of a plant such as *stem*, *leaves* and *roots*. These children identify different materials from which musical instruments are made, including wood, metal and plastic. In dance, higher attaining reception children know that the heart beats faster because they have been running. There is some use of ICT. For example, a computer 'paint' program allows reception children to create face paintings. They choose and paint in different colours and include shapes such as circles and squares to their image. However, there was limited use of ICT during the inspection in the Foundation Stage classes.

Physical development

81. Good overall outdoor facilities and equipment and lessons in the hall are well used to promote this area of learning. In the nursery, older children ride a range of tricycles and other vehicles with coordination and control. In response to music these children move confidently with an imaginative range of movements. Finer physical skills are also well developed. In making a book about mini beasts, for example older nursery children cut out illustrations and glue them, using scissors and glue sticks competently and with minimum supervision. Children in reception progress to riding two-wheeled scooters and demonstrate good balance and control. They handle construction kits well in building structures. During a PE lesson, reception children were practising throwing and hitting skills, using a soft ball and plastic racket. Good quality demonstrations and instructions by the teacher enabled the children to develop skills above those expected for their age. However, reception children make sound, rather than good, progress in physical development lessons when routines and expectations of behaviour have not been clearly established.

Creative development

82. Children in nursery and reception are given good opportunities to be creative in dance, music and art activities. Children in the nursery explore colour as they mix paint and produce attractive paintings of mini beasts. Sponges are used to create different effects. Skills are developed further in reception where children make masks for the *Ugly Bug Ball*. This group of

children have enhanced their understanding and appreciation of art through entering national competitions and visiting national art galleries. Teachers use music well in dance and during physical activities to stimulate creativity and movement. For example, in the nursery, children sing familiar songs such as *'The Grand Old Duke of York'*, marching to the music, and they imitate and create movements in response to music. Children in reception explore bells and unturned percussion. The teacher conducts as they sit in a circle and the children respond well by producing loud and soft sounds as required.

ENGLISH

83. In national tests, pupils attain high results in comparison with national averages for all schools and for similar schools. This has been particularly so at Year 2 where, in recent years, pupils have almost consistently produced results which fall in the top five per cent nationally for reading and within the top 25 per cent of schools for writing. There is a similar very positive picture overall in the Year 6 results. Where there was a relative decline in test results, in 2000 at Year 2 and in 2001 at Year 6, this was because of a higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Relative weaknesses in writing attainment when children first enter the reception group are reflected in test results. For example, in last year's Year 2 tests a much smaller group of pupils reached the higher Level 3 in writing than in reading and, over time, writing results have not kept pace with the national trend. There is a similar downward trend in English results at Year 6, where pupils also tend to do better in reading than writing. While there is no consistent pattern to the relative performance of boys and girls in other areas of the tests, boys have tended to do better than girls in the Year 2 reading tests.
84. The school's predictions for this year's national tests indicate that a smaller proportion of Year 2 pupils is expected to reach the higher Level 3. This is because this group has a significant percentage of pupils with special educational needs, currently the largest proportion in the school. However, the school's data predicts that a significantly greater proportion of the present Year 6 pupils will gain the higher Level 5 than did last year. Although the proportion is greater for reading, this nevertheless represents good improvement for writing. Inspection evidence supports this overall picture. Standards in the present Year 2 are above national expectations in all aspects of the subject. At Year 6, standards are well above expectations, and higher than at the time of the last inspection. These factors represent a good level of improvement.
85. All pupils continue to make good overall progress in English as they move through the school, and they achieve well. This is especially true of the development of reading skills, where achievement is very good. The pupils have access to interesting literature of good quality, in and out of lessons, and frequent reading opportunities with staff and parents. There is good teaching of phonic skills, and thorough exploration of text and stylistic devices. In combination, these features are producing fluent and enthusiastic readers. This is a strength that has been effectively maintained and built upon since the last inspection. Speaking and listening skills are also well supported through discussions in lessons, and by curriculum enrichment activities such as drama club and high profile productions like the current *'Bugsy Malone'*. No significant evidence was found of boys achieving better than girls.
86. Some robust measures have been taken to tackle achievement in writing and, overall, pupils make good progress in this area. For example, 'frameworks' are used to structure and support writing, and good examples of different genre are explored and 'modelled' by pupils. Spelling, grammar and punctuation continue to be well taught. There is a good range of writing opportunities, and key vocabulary is extensively promoted in English and in other subjects. However, the school has been less successful in responding fully to the last inspection's key issue about pupils at Key Stage 1 using their writing skills for more creative and imaginative work. At both key stages, there are too few opportunities for fully independent creative activities, without prescribed boundaries and arising from pupils' own ideas rather than those of other writers. This shortcoming tends to inhibit the chance of very good achievement for all pupils, and particularly the most able and gifted. The progress of Year 1 pupils is no greater than satisfactory because their response is further inhibited by the use of too many worksheets.
87. In all year groups pupils speak confidently and thoughtfully. Their wide vocabulary enables them to express their ideas and opinions with clarity and interest. They also listen well to each

other, for example when working in pairs and groups, or to adults during conversation and class discussion. In rehearsal for *Bugsy Malone*, older pupils delivered their lines with an engaging sense of character and setting.

88. Pupils quickly become absorbed in interesting stories and are keen to read. In English lessons, some of the highest levels of attention were seen during the sharing of texts. Year 2 pupils read expressively and competently decode any unfamiliar words, using contextual or phonic cues. They talk readily about the text, and higher attainers pick out key pieces of information. Non-fiction books or computer sources are often used for finding out facts. Most Year 2 pupils write confidently. Full stops and capital letters are used accurately and spelling is almost always correct or phonetically plausible. Most have joined, legible and well-formed handwriting. More able pupils produce well-ordered arguments and write with a lively style. Throughout the school, standards of presentation have been improved. Work in books is generally tidy and neat and, often, writing projects are well developed, for example, into book or brochure form. By Year 6 most pupils identify poetic devices with thoughtful ease, enabling them to create high quality poems in the style of different poets. They understand and use a wide range of subject vocabulary, such as *simile*, *alliteration* and *hyperbole*. Writing is fluent, with varied sentence openings, a wide range of vocabulary, and well argued content. A full range of punctuation is used for effect. When given the opportunity, pupils of all abilities reveal the liveliness and creativity described above.
89. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, but with variations in quality across classes and within key stages. All the teaching observed was either sound or better, with 40 per cent good and 20 per cent very good. Teaching and learning are strongest at Key Stage 2, where the most effective lessons occur. Although there is some good teaching of English at Key Stage 1, in particular for most of the Year 2 pupils, there are shortcomings in the quality of teaching which reduce the overall rate of progress across Years 1 and 2 to satisfactory.
90. In all classes, pupils' enthusiasm and attentive effort make a considerable impact on their progress during lessons. Where teaching is most successful, their interest and energy are well used and directed, through skilful questioning and discussion and carefully targeted work for all ability levels. For example, in Year 4 all pupils were fully included in discussion. Their ideas were readily accepted and positively commented on by the teacher. As a result, pupils were eager to answer questions. In Year 6, pupils were so focused and well motivated by their task that imaginative and skilful poetry was completed in a short space of time. Another strong feature of teaching is the opportunity for pupils to talk to each other about the text, or work with a partner. When this happened in Year 2, for example, pupils were so engrossed in their task that it was hard to make them stop!
91. Where teaching is less effective, pupils are sometimes given fewer chances to contribute. In these lessons, tasks lack challenge, particularly for the more able, and teachers do not have a chance to intervene or give support during activities, because they are working solely with one group of pupils. These factors slow the pace of progress to satisfactory. At the other end of the spectrum was the very effective Year 4 lesson, where the teacher kept a good overview of other group activities whilst still giving focused attention to one group.
92. Work is regularly marked and often focuses well on how pupils might improve what they have done. Reading is particularly well supported by homework.
93. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has made a positive impact on teaching and learning. Planning is good, with clearly stated learning objectives. Those pupils with special educational needs, and the very few pupils with English as an additional language, make good progress largely because of the close support they receive during literacy lessons from support staff or other adults. Additional targeted literacy support for small groups of pupils helps to raise the attainment of lower attainers. Basic skills continue to be well promoted, and opportunities for using and developing literacy skills in other subjects, such as science and history, are good. Book resources, too, have been much improved since the previous inspection, including examples of literature from other cultures and traditions. Reading choices are widened by access to the library on a regular, timetabled basis. The use of ICT, mainly for word processing and research, is sound.

94. Assessment systems and the collection of data are comprehensive, and regular moderation activities have sharpened assessment skills. Pupils have useful individual targets for improvement. The coordinator has played an important role in the good improvement made to the subject since the school was last inspected, and has shared her expertise well with other staff both formally and informally. However, the analysis of test and assessment information is not yet rigorous and detailed enough to give her a sharply focused overview of standards or trends in performance across the school, and this inhibits her contribution to improving provision and performance further.

MATHEMATICS

95. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 have risen since the time of the last inspection. In 2002 they were well above both the national average and the average for similar schools. More than half the pupils in both Years 2 and 6 attained the higher levels. Year 6 pupils have achieved well since their national tests at the end of Year 2, although they fell just short of their very ambitious targets. With the exception of one year, pupils' results have remained well above the national average and are improving in line with national trends. Over time there has been no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys.
96. The present Year 2 pupils are unlikely to attain such high levels because of the higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The majority of pupils know the relationship between addition and subtraction but only the most able use this to help them with mental calculations. Many do not know by heart addition facts to 10, and have to use their fingers to do these simple calculations. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of place value, and use their understanding of doubling and halving to multiply higher numbers. They find out about relationships and patterns between numbers.
97. The school's predictions indicate, and the inspection evidence confirms, that pupils in Year 6 are likely to maintain high results. Pupils are given challenging activities from the moment they start Year 3. The level of work is appropriate and they are given suitable support to make sure that they understand what they have to do. They continue to make good progress as they move through the school and are working at expected levels. They know their multiplication tables well and are particularly good at deciding on the best strategy to work out their answers to calculations and to solve problems. By Year 6, pupils work confidently, using their good understanding of all the required aspects of mathematics to investigate number and shape sequences and patterns. This indicates an improvement since the last inspection. All pupils now use and apply what they learn to investigations and problem solving in mathematics lessons and also in other subjects. For example, in geography they collect, record and interpret data in graphs and charts. Pupils' own enthusiasm and motivation make a significant contribution to the progress they make.
98. The quality of the teaching and learning is good overall, but stronger at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. In half the lessons during this inspection the teaching was good or very good. Planned work follows that which is outlined in the National Numeracy Strategy and this ensures that pupils receive a balanced curriculum which takes into account their different abilities. In Years 3 to 6, teachers reinforce learning through a variety of mental activities and pupils achieve well. Teachers have high expectations in these classes and plan tasks which the pupils find challenging. Pupils are expected to solve problems using their own strategies, and they are given good opportunities to explain how a particular strategy was used. In Years 1 and 2, many skills are taught through suitable games, which keep the pupils' attention and interest. For example, the confident use of counting skills was effectively reinforced for Year 2 pupils because they were challenged by imaginative strategies. Good progress was also secured because pupils were made aware of how much work they had to complete and were given the opportunity to evaluate the extent of their success. Worksheet activities for Year 1 pupils, however, are not always stimulating and inhibit good progress.
99. Teachers give clear explanations and emphasise mathematical language. Clear, crisp introductions motivate pupils well, and the brisk pace of lessons maintains pupils' interest and enthusiasm for their work. This was particularly true of a very effective lesson in Year 4. Careful

checking of pupils' work, increasingly challenging questions and a very positive and encouraging approach enabled pupils to use all four mathematical operations, and include the use of doubling to find the answer. Teaching assistants use teachers' planning and are fully involved in supporting pupils who need their help at all stages of the lessons. They explain work carefully to lower-attaining pupils and make sure they remain focused on their work. In a well taught lesson in Year 5, the teaching assistant was well used during the whole-group session to assess the knowledge and understanding of individual pupils. This lesson was also effective because earlier assessments of attainment had been used to adjust the content of this lesson. Careful and systematic explanation enabled these pupils to demonstrate their understanding of the concept of rotation and use different methods to show their conclusions. Homework is used well to consolidate the work done in class or over a period of time. Overall, marking is good and pupils are given guidance on how they can improve their work. Mistakes are corrected and praise given appropriately, although the marking of work sheets is not as helpful. Other relative weaknesses within satisfactory lessons include a lack of sufficiently challenging additional work where more able pupils sometimes finish work quickly and when teachers talk for too long so that pupils lose concentration.

100. Resources are used well and, particularly where activities are presented as a game, pupils enjoy learning. Teachers make effective use of the overhead projector when demonstrating or explaining new work. ICT is used well to support learning in mathematics. Where numeracy is used in other subjects, such as geography, it makes a good contribution to learning.
101. The organisation of mathematics across the school continues to be good. The co-ordinator is new to the school and has already identified areas for development. He has monitored pupils' work closely and assessments are carried out to find out what pupils can do. As yet, this information does not give all teachers an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. However, it will be taken into account in future planning. The information indicates the progress pupils make and has begun to be used to set individual targets for achievement. Pupils who need extra help are identified and suitable programmes are put in place to raise standards. For example, a computer program has also been introduced to help pupils who will benefit from extra support. The co-ordinator has clear plans and suitable priorities to develop the subject further.

SCIENCE

102. In the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2002, standards were above the national average for all schools, but only broadly in line with those of similar schools. When standards are compared with those attained by the pupils when they were in Year 2 they are found to be below the average. Teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils in 2002 indicated standards to be very high.
103. National test results over recent years have not risen with the national trend. However, predictions for the most recent Year 6 tests, taken this term, indicate that a greater proportion of pupils will reach the higher Level 5 this year. There is some evidence that Year 6 boys generally attain better test results than girls, but no difference in the performance of boys and girls is discernible in their current work.
104. Standards are in line with the national average in Years 2 and 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection. The previous inspection also found that pupils' attainment in investigative science was below expectations. Although the school has sought to address this issue as a key priority in its improvement programme, strategies have not been successful enough, because investigation is not yet an integral part of all scientific work. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have not sufficiently developed their understanding of how to make predictions, conduct a fair test, or work independently, choosing their own methods and materials. Their attainment at the end of Year 6 in scientific enquiry is therefore below that expected for their age. This shortcoming also affects their ability to achieve higher levels in the other areas of the science curriculum, and so has the effect of depressing standards in the subject overall.
105. Two major factors contribute to this. Much of the pupils' work is too heavily biased towards learning scientific facts, often through the use of worksheets where pupils are simply required

to fill in missing words or phrases. Although many of these pieces of work have the appearance of investigations they are often superficial and do not give pupils opportunities for true investigation. Some lessons also revealed a similar approach. They were too much dominated by the teacher talking and showing the pupils activities, instead of allowing them to do these for themselves. Shortcomings in the use of assessment information also inhibit the extent to which teachers are able to target areas for improvement. Although much assessment information is gathered, teachers do not at present make sufficient use of this information to guide their planning.

106. By Year 2, pupils understand that living things grow and reproduce, and that different creatures and plants are found in different habitats. In the Junior classes pupils continue to develop their scientific understanding. By the end of Year 6 they have studied micro-organisms and know how food is affected when left exposed to heat and air. They supplement their work with information about famous scientists such as Louis Pasteur, which they have found on the Internet and in encyclopaedias. They also learn about physical phenomena such as light and sound, and how these behave. Most pupils, however, still find it difficult to plan and carry out their own independent investigations without the teacher's guidance. This is because they have not had enough practice at working independently in this way, as they have progressed through the school.
107. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although there is some that is either very good or excellent. Where the teaching is lively, challenging and practical, pupils learn particularly well, but in lessons where work consists mainly of listening to the teacher or writing and completing worksheets, many opportunities for more effective learning are missed. In an excellent Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils were investigating the habitat of woodlice. The management of pupils' excitement was highly skilled and their enthusiasm successfully directed, enabling them to get the most from the interesting and enjoyable practical activities. Very good use was made of the computer to show a simulated investigation. Teachers are generally good at using correct scientific language, and they expect their pupils to do the same. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils used terms such as *stamen*, *stigma* and *pollination* when discussing the life cycle of plants. Such work makes a valuable contribution to pupils' basic language development.
108. Although some examples were seen of the good use of information and communication technology to support the work, this was not generally the case.
109. The school's conscientious work to improve achievement in science includes the adoption of nationally recommended guidelines for the subject, the introduction of new science scheme books, and an ongoing programme of upgrading resources so that all aspects can be covered. The curriculum now ensures that all pupils are given appropriate work and build their knowledge and understanding progressively. Teachers also have a better understanding of how children learn in science. There has been good development of the school's grounds as a resource, particularly for environmental science, and the 'nature trail' and wild area both make good contributions to the school's provision. There is a good range of visits to different areas where there are opportunities to enhance the science curriculum. The school also takes part in activities such as the Shell Science workshops, and receives visits by theatre groups in connection with work on electricity, forces and environmental issues. All these activities enrich the basic curriculum.
110. The headteacher has taken charge of the management of the subject, as the previous subject manager has left the school. This arrangement is seen as temporary, and it is hoped to find a more permanent replacement in the near future so that further improvements can be carried forward.

ART AND DESIGN

111. As only a small amount of teaching and learning was seen, and limited work was available to be examined, it is not possible to make overall judgements about standards and achievement or teaching and learning. However, in the small sample of work which was scrutinised, standards matched those found at the time of the last inspection, and were broadly in line with

those expected nationally of pupils of a similar age. Year 2 pupils, for example, have created a range of textures from different materials and used these skills to produce individual reproductions of a painting by David Hockney, with carefully matched colour and shape. 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds' inspired imaginative ideas from Year 6 pupils, who also translated it into collage. Observational work by higher attaining pupils is sensitively drawn and shaded.

112. Overall improvement to the subject since the last inspection is satisfactory. Pupils now have more opportunities to work with and choose from a wide range of imaginative materials, for example in the collage activities described above. To improve planning, national guidance is now used as a basis for devising activities, and the curriculum is enhanced by the use of visiting artists and local art projects, and by links with other subjects such as history. Half-termly monitoring of work and planning has been introduced and, over time, these assessments are becoming more evaluative and less descriptive. However, information about standards and achievement from these valuable sessions is not brought together to be analysed in order to give the coordinator a clear view of performance across the school, or allow for the identification of any gaps in provision.
113. Teaching and learning in individual lessons are sound. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were able to use modelling skills which had been well demonstrated earlier, and most grasped the technique competently enough to produce a 'pinched' pot according to specification. Subject vocabulary was well promoted, and pupils had some opportunity to discuss the difficulties they had met and how to overcome them. Progress in lessons is enhanced by pupils' clear enjoyment of their work, although this enthusiasm sometimes spills over into too much noise. When this happens, pupils are not consistently well focused and progress is satisfactory rather than good.
114. There is evidence of a sound range of activities overall, including skills, three-dimensional work, the exploration of work by other artists, and opportunities for evaluation. There is limited evidence, however, of any of these aspects being systematically developed over time. This shortcoming reflects the uneven provision noted in the last report. Work in sketchbooks shows little evidence of ideas being developed further and used for a final piece of work. The emerging collage work in Year 6 is inhibited by timetabling arrangements which foreshorten planning and evaluation time. Classroom space for these oldest pupils is too cramped for larger scale group activities.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

115. During the inspection, only two design and technology (DT) lessons were seen. Judgements about standards and provision are based on these lessons, the study of pupils' work, and discussions with staff and pupils. By the end of Year 2, standards are above those expected, and most pupils are achieving well. By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with those expected and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Achievement slows in Year 6 because the range of learning activities is limited. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards have therefore improved in Year 2 but remain at the same level in Year 6.
116. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress in developing design skills and making finished products to a good standard. For example, they designed and then produced a paper prototype of a glove puppet. Materials such as felt, cotton and wool were selected and stitched carefully to join the fabric. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were designing a vehicle for a specific purpose. They produced labelled drawings of their intentions and chose suitable materials and tools. Higher attaining pupils used technical vocabulary such as *chassis* and *axles* in their work.
117. Year 6 pupils have completed two projects this year and these show sound progress. Work from these completed projects shows that pupils are building competent design, make and evaluative skills. When making slippers, for example, they produced detailed sketches of their ideas and used flow charts to sequence their work. Materials such as card, satin and cotton were chosen and appropriate measuring, cutting and joining techniques used. Pupils evaluated their finished product and distinguished what worked well and what could be improved. In another project, Year 6 pupils made and then tested and evaluated the performance of balloon buggies. However, their progress is limited overall because they have not had the opportunity

to work on a greater range of projects involving, for example, pneumatics, gears and controllable vehicles.

118. Inspection evidence, and a study of pupils' work, indicates that teaching is good overall and that pupils make good gains in designing, making and evaluating. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. These aims are effectively shared with the class so that pupils know what they are to learn. In a Year 2 lesson observed, the teacher used models well to stimulate pupils' interest and to generate discussion in designing a vehicle. Pupils were well prepared for planning their own vehicle because they had good opportunities to discuss their ideas and, with skilful questioning from the teacher, they devised criteria for judging whether their project was a success. Pupils with special educational needs received effective support from a teaching assistant. In a good Year 4 lesson, the teacher used effective explanations and questioning to increase and check pupils' understanding of alarms, sensors and electric circuits. The pupils responded well and showed good knowledge. They were then given good opportunities to work in pairs to design and make a switch to trigger an alarm. Pupils worked collaboratively and applied their knowledge of switches and circuits well. They were productive, and most completed the task successfully.
119. There is no permanent coordinator for DT, and the subject is being overseen by the headteacher. Planning is satisfactory overall, based on units of work from national guidelines, although ICT is not used enough to enhance teaching and learning. The school does not maintain an annotated record of work to provide an overview of units covered and the standards pupils attain.

GEOGRAPHY

120. As it was possible to observe only one lesson during the course of the inspection, judgements are based predominantly on discussions with pupils, a scrutiny of their work and displays around the school.
121. As at the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment for pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are able to describe physical and human features of the seaside and compare them with their own locality. The work with Barnaby and Brian Bear successfully introduces pupils to a range of places across the world, from Scotland to New Zealand and from South Africa to Lapland.
122. Year 3 pupils have studied the areas within the school grounds, and shops in the immediate locality. They have followed the River Wye to where it meets the Thames and draw simple maps and signs to represent a journey. They continue a local study in Year 4 and extend their geographical knowledge to look at life in an Indian village, from which they make comparisons with their own life and locality. Year 5 pupils extend their geographical enquiry skills and their understanding of places. On a trip to Lymington, they make comparative traffic surveys with Bourne End and give reasons for the differences. Previous work by Year 6 pupils culminates in a residential field trip which has a geographical focus. Pupils learn key geographical terms and use them accurately in writing and discussion. They make good use of evidence by thinking in advance what sort of things they need to find out.
123. Pupils are enthusiastic about work in geography and enjoy learning because lessons are concerned with issues that interest them. This was true of the well-taught lesson in Year 5 where all pupils were absorbed in their work. By the end of the lesson pupils had made clear gains in their knowledge and understanding of different places. Geographical enquiry skills were effectively promoted through links with ICT and mathematics. The pupils recorded in graph form the traffic data they had collected on a field trip and explored and interrogated the information. High expectations of what they could achieve were exemplified in the use of challenging questions that, in turn, promoted more closely focused discussion.
124. The leadership and management of the subject are good and planning has been effective in maintaining the standards attained by pupils since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has monitored pupils' work, although she has had limited opportunities to observe teaching and learning. At present, many teachers keep records, but this practice is not sufficiently consistent

to enable the school to track pupils' progress over time. The coordinator has clear plans for the subject, which include details of how to improve assessment in order to give a clear picture of standards as pupils progress through the school.

HISTORY

125. Standards meet national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils make sound progress. These findings reflect those of the last inspection for Year 2, but not for Year 6, where standards were previously judged to be above expectations and progress to be good. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils are appropriately provided for in class, and tasks are well matched to their attainment levels.
126. There is sound overall coverage of the history curriculum and a good range of chronological and evidence-based work. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions about sources and to compare past and present. A sense of chronology is well taught, mainly through timelines and relevant vocabulary. History is taught in ways that encourage empathy and understanding. Pupils in Year 2, for example, were studying Florence Nightingale. They could make comparisons between the hospital in the Crimea and a modern hospital. Opportunities for pupils to select resources and engage in independent research have been improved since the last inspection.
127. Year 4 pupils discussed life and conditions at sea in Tudor times and different groups recorded the conditions and events from different points of view. They have studied all the required areas of the National Curriculum by way of interesting and motivating approaches. Year 6 pupils have completed individual research projects on people or events to link the two areas of history they are studying, the Victorians and Britain from 1948. These opportunities have been improved since the last inspection.
128. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory overall, with one very good lesson. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and lessons have clear learning objectives. In the very good lesson, pictures and displays were used effectively to introduce pupils to explorers and life at sea in Tudor times. Pupils were given the opportunity to make their own choice of reference material from a selection of books, and tasks were carefully planned for different levels of ability. The topic had clearly captured the pupils' interest. During the lively introduction pupils demonstrated the good knowledge and understanding they had already gained about Tudor life and some pupils had independently researched information about the *Golden Hind* and *Mary Rose*. Pupils were so excited by their work that they sometimes all talked at once and this impeded their progress to good rather than very good.
129. Pupils show real interest in their work and relate well to each other when working in groups. Pupils' enjoyment of history was well illustrated in a Year 5 lesson about Ancient Greek architecture where they were reluctant to stop their activity. In this lesson the development of pupils' historical knowledge and understanding benefited from good links with art and design and DT. For example, the models they made of Greek buildings consolidated their understanding of the different architectural features of Greek columns. Pupils are given some good opportunities to discuss topics, share opinions and extend their historical vocabulary, and literacy skills are effectively promoted through activities such as writing a diary about conditions during the Crimean War (Year 1). Weaker aspects of otherwise sound teaching and learning relate to a slowing of pace or less effective management of organisational routines such as clearing up at the end of the lesson.
130. Organisation of the subject across the school is satisfactory. The curriculum has been improved since the last inspection through the use of a nationally recommended scheme of work to cover all aspects of the subject. 'History days', such as the Roman day and the Tudor day, provide good links with other areas of the curriculum. For example, Year 4 pupils learned a Tudor dance and Year 6 pupils staged a Victorian music hall. Opportunities to use and develop language and literacy skills are effectively taken. Visits to museums and places of historical interest, such as the Ashmolean Museum and Hampton Court, further enrich the curriculum. Good displays around the school illustrate the work pupils have covered during the year. However, assessment is not used consistently and there is no overview of progress pupils

make as they move through the school. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans and pupils' work, but as she works part-time there has been little monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

131. By Years 2 and 6 pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally, and their progress is satisfactory. The standards for Year 6 are lower than those found at the time of the last inspection, when they were judged to be higher than nationally expected. Pupils are given a sound range of experiences in all areas of ICT, and the ICT curriculum itself is sufficiently broad and balanced overall. The school has a well-established ICT suite with sufficient computers for all pupils to have easy access, and this is well used for teaching basic skills. However, a number of factors have inhibited the school from fully keeping pace with the rapid development of ICT since its last inspection. For example, changes in staffing and to management in the recent past have meant that there has been limited continuity in the development of the subject. Training provided under the New Opportunities Fund was undertaken by all teachers, but was not always well targeted to meet individual needs, with the result that its impact was restricted. National priorities for training in the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have also meant that time for professional development in this area has been limited.
132. ICT is well used to support teaching and learning in mathematics. Computer sources are often used to research information and writing projects are word processed and presented imaginatively, for example as a newspaper, as they were in Year 6. There is some good use in other subjects, such as geography, but generally not enough emphasis is given to the use of ICT in science and other foundation subjects. During the inspection, computers in classrooms were often left unused and switched off and scrutiny of pupils' work also showed limited use of ICT. This contributing factor, and the others given above, inhibits good achievement. The school is fully aware of the need for further development of ICT. Recent actions are having a positive impact, but have not yet had time to raise standards.
133. In Years 1 and 2, basic computer operations are taught, such as controlling the computer with keyboard and mouse and entering and saving work. With support from their teachers and other adults, pupils use graphics software to produce simple pictures, and some combine graphics and text. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, most pupils plan and give commands to make things happen, such as when controlling a programmable toy. Most compare the outcome with what they thought would happen. These pupils also use ICT to communicate information through text, tables, images and sound.
134. In Years 3 to 6, pupils learn to use the Internet and encyclopaedia software to find information, and organise and exchange ideas in a variety of ways. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils used drawing software to produce plans of their classroom. They showed appropriate skills in using the 'copy and paste' and 'autoshapes' features of the software, and were able to discuss their ideas and ways of working. Pupils in Year 6 add to, amend and combine a range of information in a variety of formats, and use ICT to support their work in other subjects. In a science lesson, for example, they used the computers to produce guidebooks for a wildlife park and in English they produced a class newspaper.
135. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has taken responsibility for leading and managing the subject and has already made a good start to this role. The teaching of ICT has been a key priority in the School Improvement Plan. This emphasis has undoubtedly produced better practice but has yet to develop teachers' confidence to the point that they are able to make full use of ICT in all their teaching. Management of the subject is good, and thoughtful strategic plans are in place to take the subject forward. New assessment strategies are being developed to give teachers a good picture of pupils' performance. An up-to-date inventory of software has been produced and linked to the different areas of the curriculum, and new schemes of work have been adopted in line with national guidelines.

MUSIC

136. Music is a source of great pleasure and social development throughout the school. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain standards above the national expectations for music. This represents an improvement in Years 1 and 2 since the last inspection, the result of an opportunity for all Year 2 pupils to start learning the recorder. This opportunity not only raises standards overall but also introduces pupils to reading musical notation. Many pupils go on to learn a range of instruments from Year 3 onwards. By Year 6, pupils play a wide range of instruments and attain very good standards in their performing skills. Like most of their peers, pupils with special educational needs make good progress, whilst the more able and talented pupils make very good progress.
137. Year 2 pupils benefit from a good start in Year 1 where, for example, they are introduced to singing and chanting in rounds. By Year 2, pupils recognise simple musical notation and play and clap in time. They suggest ideas for different rhythms to accompany the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. They sing tunefully in assembly and with great pleasure, accompanied on the piano by one of the teachers. By Year 6, a high proportion of pupils play a variety of instruments, including the piano, violin, clarinet, flute, guitar and various brass instruments. Pupils are encouraged to play in assemblies and in class lessons and this raises the standard of music for all pupils.
138. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All lessons are well planned and by teachers with good musical knowledge. Year 5 pupils work well in groups, for example when composing eight bar rhythm patterns, and all make good progress when groups are combined and learning is shared. Pupils are very enthusiastic, although sometimes this inhibits them from listening to instructions and therefore detracts from their learning. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well with good support from the teaching assistants.
139. The school maintains a strong emphasis on music. The pupils are given good opportunities for musical development through a regular programme of concerts in the school, events in the community, and visits to London concert halls. The specialist tuition helps interested pupils, including the gifted and talented, to achieve appropriate standards. An enthusiastic string orchestra and wind band and choir give pupils the opportunity to play and sing together, which contributes valuably to their social development.
140. As yet, little use is made of ICT for composing. This is acknowledged as an area for development. The knowledgeable subject co-ordinators have developed a very good new scheme of work and they are well supported by other musicians on the staff. The tracking of pupils' individual progress is not well developed.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

141. A full range of PE activities is provided throughout the school. By the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards above those expected for their ages. Throughout the school most pupils are achieving well in this subject because it is well taught. Furthermore, the PE programme is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities, coaching by parents, and some specialist teaching from a local secondary school teacher. The school has maintained the above-average standards at the end of Year 6, reported during the last inspection, and standards have improved in Year 2.
142. In a Year 2 dance lesson, pupils explored a range of movements in response to a story of the rain forests and then to music. Pupils altered the speed, level and direction of movements and expressed the power, force and the destruction of the rain forests. They created, practised and refined a sequence of movement in pairs and in small groups. Collaborative work was well developed. Higher-attaining pupils produced a complex sequence of movements. Pupils in Year 4 demonstrate speed and precision in sprinting. They are developing good techniques in starting, finishing and changing a baton in relays. They evaluate their performance well and suggest ways to improvement. In a Year 6 cricket lesson, most pupils demonstrated retrieving and throwing skills appropriate to their age. They struck a full-pitched ball to the leg side cleanly in a batting exercise. Pupils work well together and have developed good sporting

attitudes. In an athletics lesson seen in Year 6, most pupils showed control and fluency in throwing a javelin and putting a shot. Pupils measured and recorded their performance and began to set achievable targets for improvement. Higher-attaining pupils demonstrated increased precision and fluency in throwing and putting. They evaluated and discussed their own work and made suggestions for improvement.

143. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to very good. Lessons are well planned and structured. Clear learning objectives are identified and these are effectively shared so that pupils know what they are to learn. Teachers' instructions are clear and informative. Pupils are keen and attentive, and follow instructions well. They are given good opportunities to practise and improve a range of skills, and they apply physical effort and make good gains in their learning. Teachers manage pupils very well and have established very good relationships. As a result, pupils are well behaved and operate responsibly and safely. Pupils are given good opportunities to appraise their own and others' work. In a very good athletics lesson in Year 4, the teacher had high expectation of pupils' performance and provided high quality instruction and demonstrations in sprinting technique, passing a relay baton, and dipping at the finishing line. Pupils responded very well to the challenges and practised these skills with much concentration and effort. The lesson maintained a brisk pace and pupils were given very good encouragement and feedback, which motivated and helped them to improve. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, teachers' demonstrations of skills are less effective. The pace of the lesson is only satisfactory and activities are not sufficiently challenging to meet the needs of talented pupils.
144. The subject is effectively led and managed by the co-ordinator. The planning of the PE curriculum is good and is appropriately based on recommended national guidelines. The school has an effective and manageable system for assessing and recording pupils' attainment. A good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the PE programme. These include country dancing, football, netball and swimming. The school competes well in matches between local schools and the netball team has been particularly successful this year. Both the 'A' and 'B' sides won the local leagues, and the 'A' team were the overall district winners. Parent helpers made a significant contribution to the netball achievements.