

## ERRATUM SLIP

### Robert Arkenstall Primary School

Unique Reference Number: 110635  
Contract Number: 247020  
Date of inspection: 09/06/03  
Reporting inspector: Michael Milton

**INSPECTION REPORT** - the following paragraph should read as follows:-

### PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

#### *Information about the school's pupils*

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	48

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ROBERT ARKENSTALL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Haddenham, Ely

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110635

Headteacher: Mr D Sharp

Reporting inspector: Mr M Milton  
1723

Dates of inspection: 9 to 12 June 2003

Inspection number: 247020

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Camping Close High Street Haddenham Ely Cambridgeshire
Postcode:	CB6 3UA
Telephone number:	01353 740253
Fax number:	01353 749556
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs P Turner
Date of previous inspection:	26 January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1723	M Milton	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How good are curricular and other opportunities? What should the school do to improve further?
11437	A Anderson	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
11901	P Lowe	Team inspector	Geography Religious education Foundation Stage	How well does the school care for its pupils?
22482	B Potter	Team inspector	English History Art and design Special educational needs	
32180	D Sleightholme	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

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London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Robert Arkenstall Primary School provides education for pupils aged from 4 to 11 years. It is of an average size for a primary school with 232 pupils and has broadly equal numbers of boys and girls. There are nine classes, and pupils in Years 1 and 2, and Years 3 and 4 are taught in mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Most pupils come from Haddenham which provides a large number of employment opportunities as well as sporting and cultural activities. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average, while the proportion with statements of special educational needs is above the national average. Pupils' special needs include moderate learning difficulties and physical disability. Nearly all pupils are of white UK heritage and no pupils learn English as an additional language. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average. In the last two years, the teaching staff of the school has changed completely but the current teaching staff is stable.

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

The school is effective as standards are above average overall, and the teaching and pupils' learning are very good. The high quality teaching and learning have only been in place for a relatively short time and have not yet had their full impact on pupils' standards. Pupils are on course to achieve higher standards this year than they achieved last year. The leadership and management of the headteacher and other staff with responsibilities are very effective in improving the quality of education that the school provides. The amount of money spent per pupil is a little above the national average for shire counties, but the school gives good value for money.

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

- Standards are above national averages in several subjects including English, mathematics and art.
- Teaching and learning are very good because of the very effective steps taken to improve teaching and the high quality planning on which teachers base their lessons
- Pupils' attitudes to work, their behaviour and relationships with teachers and support staff are very positive, and these contribute significantly to their very good learning
- The curriculum is very well planned and provides all pupils with good learning opportunities that include many activities in addition to normal lessons
- The school's assessment procedures and methods for tracking the progress of individual pupils in English and mathematics are used very effectively to improve pupils' learning
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide very good leadership that is committed to driving up pupils' standards and creating a high-performing, committed team of teachers and support staff

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

- Although standards in science are average, they are not as good as in English and mathematics.
- Although the school has started to improve its library, it is neither well stocked nor used sufficiently by pupils for research.
- The governing body does not have sufficient procedures to ensure that all of its responsibilities are effectively carried out and reported explicitly in its minutes.

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

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

Since the last inspection in January 1998, a new headteacher has been appointed and all the teaching staff has changed. The key issues for action from the previous inspection have been addressed, teaching has improved significantly and pupils' standards have risen. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. The local education authority has provided good levels of support to help the school improve. The commitment and capacity of the school's staff for further improving the quality of education are excellent.



## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	C	B	B	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	D	C	C	
Science	D	E	D	D	

Nearly all of the pupils in the Reception classes are on course to reach the expected standards for that age group and a significant minority to exceed those standards. The results of the national tests for Year 2 pupils in 2002 were well below national averages for reading and writing, and below average for mathematics. However, the 2003 results for the current Year 2 pupils have improved significantly. The standards of the current Year 2 pupils are above national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics, and in line with them in science. Overall standards at the end of Year 6 have risen since last year and now are above expectations in English and mathematics, and match them in science. Standards have risen because of improvements to subject leadership, to teachers' planning for lessons, to the training of teachers and to the quality of teaching itself. Overall, the pupils' results in Year 6 between 1998 and 2002 improved at roughly the national rate of improvement. Even though the school did not meet its targets in 2002 for the proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching the minimum standard expected nationally in English and mathematics, it has set itself challenging targets for 2003. Pupils' standards are well above national expectations in art as they develop good skills with the full range of media including pottery and sculpture. Pupils' standards in information and communication technology (ICT) match national expectations, and their standards in religious education are above the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus. Pupils' achievement is now good, and their achievement is improving because the quality of teaching is now very good.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. All pupils are interested in what they are learning and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Generally very good. Occasionally, a few older pupils cannot sustain their concentration during lessons. No pupils have been excluded in the 2002-3 school year.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Many pupils work constructively and co-operatively in groups, and work productively on their own. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are excellent.
Attendance	Pupils' rates of attendance are satisfactory and just above the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching for English is very good, and for mathematics, good. General strengths of the teaching are excellent lesson planning, relaxed but effective class management, effective use of learning support assistants to help pupils learn, and the provision of interesting, and sometimes imaginative, learning activities. Occasional weaknesses include insufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils and whole-class teaching that lasts too long. The teaching of the skills of literacy is very good, and pupils make effective use of these skills in other subjects. The teaching of numeracy is good and pupils often use these skills in science, design and technology, and ICT. The school is committed to meeting the needs of all pupils and achieves this in most cases through matching tasks to pupils' differing learning needs and providing carefully targeted support from teachers and learning support assistants. Pupils work with independence in groups that are not directly supervised and tackle tasks with very good levels of effort. Pupils usually have a very good knowledge of the progress they are making in English and mathematics because of the effective setting of short-term challenging targets.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum covers all of the required subjects, and provides pupils with good learning opportunities, which include a wide range of visits as well as visitors to the school. All classes are taught personal, social, health and citizenship education (PHSCE), and there is good planning for this. Effective links are made between different subjects such as ICT and art. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Most of these pupils achieve standards by the end of Year 6 that match national expectations.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good for spiritual, moral and social development. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good although a weaker aspect is the provision of opportunities to learn about the richness and diversity of cultures within the UK.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good procedures for child protection, ensuring pupils' welfare, and for assessing pupils' progress in English, mathematics and the Foundation Stage. There is a useful system for tracking the progress of individual pupils from year to year. Teachers know the needs of individual pupils well.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school has established effective links with parents, which make a positive contribution to pupils' learning at home and school. Parents provide the school with reliable, practical support in a good number of ways.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. They work very hard and effectively to raise pupils' standards and improve the quality of education that the school provides.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors work hard to support the school but do not have sufficient procedures to ensure that all of their responsibilities are effectively carried out and reported explicitly in the governing body's minutes. The school's prospectus and the annual report to parents do not contain all of the required information.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Consequently, the targets in the school's improvement plan are apt. Appropriate action is taken to remedy identified weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	The school's priorities for improvement are supported by careful financial planning. The LEA has not carried out an audit of the school's financial procedures since 1997. The school applies the principles of best value well.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Staffing and accommodation are very good. Accommodation is clean and very well maintained. Learning resources are mostly good and well organised, although the library is neither well stocked nor effectively used by pupils for research.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The standards their children achieve</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best</li> <li>• The 'special days' reinforce good behaviour and strengthen pupils' sense of community</li> <li>• The school's involvement with the local community</li> <li>• The school helps their children become mature and responsible</li> <li>• Behaviour is good</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable when approaching the school with a question or problem</li> <li>• They are kept well informed about how their children are getting on</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework their children receive</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons</li> </ul>

The inspection evidence supports parents' very positive views of the school. Inspectors find that the amount of homework set is satisfactory and that it is regularly marked. Inspectors judge that there is good provision of extra-curricular activities for a school of this size.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

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

1. In the 2002 national assessment for Year 2 pupils, the results for reading and writing were well below national averages for all primary schools and were very low in comparison with similar schools. For mathematics, results were below the national average for all schools and well below average for similar schools. There are the validated results for current Year 2 pupils in 2003 but comparative data are not yet available. However, the results for 2003 are significantly better than those for 2002. In 2002, the teacher assessment for science was average for pupils achieving the expected Level 2 and above average for pupils achieving the higher Level 3.
2. For Year 6 pupils in 2002, the results for English were above the national for all schools and average for similar schools. For mathematics, results were average for all schools and for similar schools. In science, results were below national averages for all and for similar schools. The school's results for Year 6 pupils improved from 1998 to 2002 at broadly the same rate as the national improvement in results. The school's targets in 2002 for the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in English and mathematics were not achieved. The school has set sufficiently challenging targets for 2003.
3. Pupils in the Reception classes achieve well because of very good teaching in all six areas of learning. Nearly all of the pupils are on course to meet the expected standards at the end of the year in Reception and a significant minority of pupils are on course to exceed these standards. Pupils settle quickly into the routines of their classes and work effectively in groups of different sizes. Most pupils are using their knowledge of phonics to write their names and simple sentences. This knowledge is helping them to make good progress with reading. Pupils have learnt to count to at least twenty and most are developing an understanding of addition and subtraction.
4. For the current pupils in Years 2 and 6, standards in English are above national expectations. This is a significant improvement on the results for 2002 for Year 2 because the management and leadership of English within the school is more effective and improvements have been made to teachers' planning, their subject expertise and the quality of teaching. In both age groups, pupils have many opportunities to use their literacy skills in other subjects, as when Year 5 pupils used the style of Dickens to write about a workhouse for history. During the inspection, significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls were not apparent.
5. Standards in mathematics are above national averages in Years 2 and 6, and these standards are higher than those in 2002 for the same reasons that standards in English have risen. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills in scientific enquiry, which is strong feature of the science curriculum especially in Year 5, and in design and technology which requires accurate measurement. Standards in science for Year 6 pupils have risen since 2002 because of improved planning, teaching, learning resources and subject leadership. The current standards at the end of Year 2 are lower than those reported in 2002 because higher-attaining pupils have insufficient opportunities to work at the higher Level 3.
6. Since the last inspection, standards have risen in most subjects and pupils' achievement is good. A key cause of the pupils' good achievement is that teaching and learning have improved and are now very good. However, this improvement is relatively recent and, in consequence pupils, for example in Year 6, have not benefited from very good teaching during all of their four years in the juniors between Years 3 and 6.
7. A particular strength of the school is pupils' standards in art and design, which are well above national expectations. By the end of Year 2, pupils have begun to work with the full range of media, including sculpture and pottery, through which they have developed their skills and

understanding very effectively. Year 6 pupils have used their skills to produce beautifully designed and decorated Victorian theatres. In their sketchbooks, they experiment with perspective and the subtle blending of colours.

8. Taking the average results for boys and girls in the Year 6 national tests between 2000 and 2002, girls achieved better results than boys in English, while boys' results in mathematics were better than those of girls. In science, the results of boys and girls were similar. There were no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls during the inspection. The small number of pupils from ethnic minority groups achieve as well as other pupils within the school. Gifted and talented pupils generally achieve well although there are instances in mathematics and science when these pupils are not challenged enough.
9. For pupils with special educational needs who took the national tests in 2002, there were no Year 2 pupils who achieved average results in either reading or writing. In mathematics three out of four pupils attained the expected standard. Nevertheless, when measured against their prior attainment, Year 2 pupils made good progress. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 who attained average standards was much higher, with all pupils attaining the required level in science, which is indicative of very good progress.

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

10. Pupils display very good attitudes in the classroom and around the school. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 physical education lesson, pupils worked with concentrated effort as they improved their skills of striking a tennis ball with a wooden bat. They worked with a high degree of co-operation in their groups and followed the teacher's guidance so that they made very good progress. Pupils respond very well to their teachers and other adults in the school. In an assembly for the whole school, they entered the hall quickly and without fuss, sat very quietly and listened thoughtfully to music prior to the start of the assembly. In the playground, pupils displayed consistently very good attitudes to each other as they played a variety of games. Pupils' very positive attitudes make a significant contribution to their learning as they are interested in lessons, listen carefully to adults, collaborate well in groups and work well without direct supervision. Almost without exception, they respond enthusiastically to the learning opportunities provided by lessons.
11. Pupils' behaviour is almost invariably very good in lessons and around the school. They are polite and considerate to visitors. There have been no exclusions from the school in the past year. At lunchtime, pupils behave consistently well both in the school hall and in the playground. They arrive at and leave school in an orderly manner.
12. Pupils' personal development is very good and their relationships with each other and adults are excellent. The underlying and very positive ethos of the school is a significant aid to pupils' personal development as the school values all pupils equally, fosters the learning of every pupil, seeks to promote the self-esteem of every pupil and offers good opportunities for collaboration. Older pupils help younger ones in the dining room. Two pupils from each class are members of the school council, and they take their responsibilities very seriously. On a rota basis, all pupils act as monitors for a variety of tasks in the classroom and around the school. Pupils' relationships with each other and with the teaching and support staff are mostly excellent and discussions with a number of children confirmed that they all like this school very much. Regular visits into the community on subject visits and a residential trip help pupils to develop their social skills and provides opportunities for pupils to develop their confidence of the outside world.
13. The pupils' rate of overall attendance is satisfactory and is currently just above the national average. The incidence of unauthorised absence is low and is below the national average. The vast majority of pupils come to school on time.
14. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes overall and a high level of self-esteem. Their behaviour is very good. Personal development and relationships are excellent. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with that of their peers.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. Judgements about the quality of teaching and learning are based on the 58 lessons observed during the inspection and the scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work and teachers' planning. The quality of teaching and learning is very good for the school as a whole, and this quality is found consistently in the Reception classes, Years 1 and 2, and Years 3 to 6. All of the teaching seen was satisfactory or better. Teaching and learning were good or better in about nine out of every ten lessons seen, and they were very good or excellent in almost six out of every ten lessons seen. Since the previous inspection, there has been a significant improvement to the overall quality of teaching and learning as this has improved from satisfactory to very good. The key issue from the last inspection to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' rates of progress in Years 3 and 4 has been addressed successfully.
16. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are very well established. The skills of literacy are very well taught, particularly as pupils use their skills effectively in all other subjects. For example, in a geography lesson for a Years 1 and 2 class, links were made to vocabulary learnt during the literacy hour lesson earlier in the day. The pupils used holiday brochures to learn about seaside resorts, and these brochures were used effectively to reinforce pupils' understanding of persuasive writing. In all mathematics lessons, pupils had good opportunities for speaking and listening as, for example, teachers asked pupils to explain the strategies they were using to answer questions. Numeracy skills are taught and used effectively, particularly in science and design and technology. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 had to measure accurately as they made moving models of fairground rides with gear wheels.
17. Teaching and learning are of a high quality because the teachers are committed to developing their professional skills, and have received support to achieve this through the systematic monitoring and support of teaching by senior managers and LEA staff, the provision of training, improvements to curriculum planning and assessment, and the strong leadership and management provided by subject co-ordinators.
18. The teaching in all sections of the school has many common strengths. Teachers' lesson planning is excellent and contributes significantly to the effectiveness of teaching because it identifies key questions for the teacher to ask, sets specific learning objectives for pupils, provides learning tasks that are well matched to pupils' differing learning needs, indicates how any adult support will be used, and ensures that the final part of the lesson, called the plenary, is used to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. As a result of this excellent planning, teaching is well matched to pupils' differing learning needs in English and mathematics especially. For example, in a very good Year 6 English lesson, lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs were given very effective support by the learning support assistant and the adapted task sheets so that all pupils covered challenging work on different viewpoints in a text. In all of the lessons observed, teaching was very effectively matched to pupils' differing learning needs in all subjects. However, the scrutiny of some pupils' previously recorded work in mathematics and science showed that there was a lack of challenge for higher-attaining pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good, particularly for the Reception pupils who follow the Foundation Stage curriculum and for English and mathematics. Teachers use this very good subject knowledge to give clear explanations, to set tasks that build on and extend pupils' existing knowledge and understanding, and to help pupils address weaknesses during the plenary sessions.
19. Learning support assistants are used effectively to support the learning of particular pupils and, in the best lessons, this includes supporting pupils during whole-class teaching. For example, in an excellent English lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teaching assistant interacted with lower-attaining pupils throughout the whole-class teaching and ensured that the key teaching points were grasped. Teachers all manage their classes very effectively and almost invariably secure very good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning from the pupils. This means that pupils listen carefully to their teachers and work well collaboratively even when they are not directly supervised, as when the teacher is focussing on the learning needs of one particular group. Also, pupils switch quickly between different activities so that, for example, the pace of learning does

- not flag as pupils move from whole-class teaching on the carpet to working in groups at their tables. Teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and of how they will behave, and these expectations are usually realised.
20. The evaluation of pupils' learning within lessons enables teachers to highlight aspects of learning for inclusion in future lesson planning and to identify pupils who are not achieving the projected level, thus enabling remedial action to be taken. Another common strength of teaching is teachers' marking which is helpful in identifying ways in which pupils can improve their performance although pupils rarely respond in writing to teachers' written comments in their books. Learning resources are often of a good quality, as when Year 1 pupils worked with a wide variety of fruits and vegetables as part of their work in science. For ICT, teachers produce interesting resources that are well matched to pupils' learning needs and capture their interest. For example, in a Year 5 ICT lesson, pupils enjoyed the challenge of adding relevant images, colour and sound to a Powerpoint presentation that just included text. The learning resources are well managed so that they are quickly available to pupils without any fuss and, in consequence, a brisk pace of learning is maintained without disruption.
  21. Many of these strengths were exemplified In an excellent music lesson in Years 1 and 2, when pupils worked in groups to create interludes for 'The Dark, Dark Wood'. They listened very carefully as the teacher read the short story, and responded to skilful questioning about how they might reflect the mood of the music in composition. They discussed the moods and atmosphere that the story suggested, and used the language of music confidently. There were very high levels of co-operation during group work, and this contributed to the excellent progress pupils made. When the compositions were complete, pupils followed the guidance of a conductor expertly as they took part in a performance. The teacher used this opportunity to lead an excellent evaluation of the composition, when pupils talked about what had worked well, and how they would improve it another time. One pupil said, "I think we could have built up our effect more gradually", and another said, "I think my bit was too loud and too fast".
  22. There are occasional points where improvement is needed in the teaching. Although whole-class teaching is clear with step-by-step explanations and although introductions prepare pupils thoroughly for the tasks that follow, they sometimes take too long and some pupils cannot sustain their concentration. There are instances when mathematics lessons are longer than the recommended time and, for some pupils, rates of learning slow as they find it difficult to sustain their concentration for the longer lesson. There are instances when higher-attaining pupils are not given work that is challenging enough in, for example, mathematics and science during Year 2. Occasionally, the plenary session at the end of a lesson does not involve all of the pupils and so contributes little to their learning.
  23. Very good teaching is serving very well the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Through very good teaching and support they are able to go a long way to achieving their potential. This helps them build their self-confidence and esteem and ultimately allows them to work with an increasing degree of independence.

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

24. The school provides a curriculum that covers all of the necessary National Curriculum subjects, including personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), and religious education which meets the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus. The school's curriculum meets statutory requirements. All subjects are carefully planned by small teams of teachers who work together on the planning of Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6. This is a good approach as it makes it easier for teachers to share subject expertise and good teaching ideas and activities. The plans that cover half a term or a whole term for each subject are detailed and well structured, and provide teachers with very good guidance about how pupils should develop their knowledge, understanding and skills.

25. A weakness is that occasionally the older pupils in a pair of year groups complete work at the same level as the younger pupils, as in science in Years 3 and 4 for example. The curriculum is enriched by some theme days. For instance, the whole school had a 'number' day, which involved parents working with pupils in the morning and a special session for parents about teaching calculation methods in the evening. An example of a theme day for a particular year group was an Egyptian day for Years 3 and 4.
26. The key issue from the last inspection to develop curriculum planning has been achieved successfully. Clear, specific learning objectives are identified in all stages of planning from termly to daily planning. Learning objectives are shared with pupils at the start of each lesson. All pupils in the Reception year now follow the required Foundation Stage curriculum, which is very well planned by the teachers. Assessment is used more effectively than at the time of the last inspection to provide greater challenge for higher-attaining pupils. There is a system for tracking the progress of all pupils from year to year in English and mathematics, and short-term challenging targets were introduced for all pupils in English and mathematics in September 2001. There is a policy for the education of more-able pupils, and the headteacher monitors their progress although it is a weakness that the progress of this group of pupils is not formally monitored and reported to the governing body.
27. The school's ethos encourages the personal development of all its pupils and fosters their good levels of achievement. Teachers and support staff have excellent relationships with pupils and provide effective learning support to individuals and groups. A strength of teachers' planning is that it includes matching work to pupils' differing learning needs, especially for English and mathematics. The schools' very good provision of appropriate and worthwhile activities meets the interest and aptitude of pupils with special educational needs. They have full access to the curriculum and are set achievable targets, which are incorporated in teachers' lesson planning.
28. Provision of extra-curricular activities is good. Most of the activities are on a Monday as staff have after-school meetings on the next three days. There are eight different activities provided by the school staff, together with some sporting activities provided by East Cambridgeshire Sports Development. Sports offered include football, netball, cricket and multisport. The school has won a Football Association award for its provision for football.
29. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) has improved since the last inspection and there are now weekly lessons in each class based on the LEA's guidance, which covers the requirements for sex education, education about the misuse of drugs and citizenship. PSHCE includes a weekly session in each class when pupils sit in a circle and discuss issues of importance to them. Also, each week there is a special day and, during the course of the school year, each pupil has the opportunity to have tea with the headteacher in the staff room while the rest of the class identify positive reasons that make that pupil special. The targets in the school improvement plan for 2002-3 for PSHCE have been successfully achieved.
30. The school has links with the local community that provide pupils with good learning opportunities. Funding from a local charity has provided a visiting artist who has worked with staff and pupils. A local author works with groups of pupils, and a potter makes her kiln available to fire the pupils' work. Young pupils visit a local allotment as part of their work in science. Many visitors come to the school to provide learning opportunities for the pupils. For example, pupils interviewed older residents of Haddenham about the Second World War and the school was involved in Cambridge University's science week. Other visitors included an historian from the Imperial War Museum at Duxford, a recycling bus, an astronomer, a reporter from the local radio station, firefighters, police and a nurse. Pupils also make a good range of visits to museums, art galleries and environmental centres. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity of a residential course at an outdoor activity centre.
31. Most pupils transfer to Witchford Village College. Pupils are involved in a sports day held at the college for its feeder schools. A sound curriculum link is developing for mathematics. In addition, the college has lent the school some science equipment. A specialist teacher from the college has taught tennis at the school. The Reception staff are in contact with four pre-school groups including nurseries.



32. The provision of opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, and is a major strength of the school.
33. The provision for spiritual development is very good. All pupils attend a daily assembly that includes an act of collective worship. Assemblies are well planned and there are appropriate themes for each week, such as friendship. Three members of the local clergy regularly lead assemblies. Assemblies are often fun and hold the pupils' interest. They also provide good opportunities for reflection and prayer about important aspects of human experience, including healing broken friendships, differences and similarities that people have, and choosing friends. Teaching is clear and relevant to the pupils' experience. In most assemblies, pupils sing spiritual songs well and this helps to create a calm atmosphere and a reflective time during the busyness of the school day. Several subjects provide good opportunities for spiritual development, including religious education, art, PHSCE and music. For example, in a religious education lesson, pupils were encouraged to think of the milestones in Jesus' life and to link these with their own milestones through special days such as birthdays. In an art lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, the pupils expressed amazement at the quality of some of Seurat's pictures. In the time in each class when pupils sit in a circle and discuss issues that are important to them, pupils learn to listen to and consider the views of others. The weekly special day provides a very good opportunity for all pupils to consider the uniqueness of individuals and to reflect on the positive characteristics of individual pupils.
34. The opportunities for pupils' moral development are very good. Teachers and support staff act as very good role models for pupils in the way they relate to and treat other people. The very caring ethos of the school is used very well to teach the difference between right and wrong and, in the Reception classes, pupils are taught from an early age to take turns and to share. As part of religious education, pupils discuss right and wrong in a variety of contexts. PHSCE includes education about the issues concerned with the misuse of drugs. The school's behaviour code is quietly and consistently promoted through all aspects of the school's life.
35. The school provides pupils with many opportunities to enhance their social development. For example, pupils practise their social skills in the dining room and in the playground where they eat and play sociably with their peers. There are many opportunities in lessons because pupils work frequently as part of a whole-class or of a smaller group. An excellent aspect of provision is the regular special day tea that selected pupils have with the headteacher. This is highly valued by the pupils and adds significantly to their personal development at the school. The wide range of visitors to the school and pupils' visits to places in Haddenham and further afield enhance the social development of the pupils. Pupils are very positive about their involvement with the local community through, for example, the delivery of harvest gifts, the carol concert for older people, and their response to the possible closure of the village library. Some pupils initiate charitable activities such as raising money for a local cancer charity.
36. There are good opportunities for pupils' cultural development. Pupils have many opportunities to study local and national culture through subjects such as English, history, geography, music and art. For example, during a guided reading session, pupils used a text about refugees from Nigeria. In geography, pupils learn about the ways of life of people in villages in India and Mexico, and religious education includes the study of the beliefs and practices of the world's major religions. Art and music are particular strengths of provision. A good range of visitors and extra-curricular activities support the cultural development of pupils at the school. However, the study of the richness and diversity of cultures within Britain is underdeveloped although the school does teach children about other faiths such as Buddhism.

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

37. The procedures for child protection and welfare are very good, as are the procedures for promoting good behaviour and good rates of attendance. The school effectively monitors and supports pupils' personal and academic development.

38. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place and the reporting person is known to all staff in the school. Relevant staff training in child protection matters has also taken place. The school teaching and support staff, who are well supported by a range of external agencies, provide a high degree of welfare support to individual pupils. Pupils' personal development is monitored formally and informally by staff, and steps are taken to support pupils' development from a good range of available strategies.
39. In the classroom, teachers and learning support assistants know their children very well and they are quick to observe any personal difficulties exhibited by pupils and to take appropriate, supportive action. The school operates a good first aid system for minor accidents and appropriate records are maintained. Regular fire drills are carried out and the school also maintains a log of pupil medical records including food allergies, which are made known to relevant kitchen staff. The school also carries out occasional health and safety audits of the site and appropriate records are kept. A few minor health and safety issues were identified during the inspection and the school is already reviewing these.
40. The school, with the occasional assistance of external agencies, is proactive in the monitoring of the individual levels of pupils' absence. The school promotes good attendance and parents are reminded to act responsibly when considering taking their children on holiday during term time. The school monitors lateness well and the system used for noting children who leave (or return to) the site during the school day is accurately maintained. A range of effective strategies are used to promote good behaviour, and the very rare examples of misbehaviour are monitored closely. The school monitors incidents of racial harassment and bullying, and responds effectively to the few isolated incidents that are reported. The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils are fully involved in the life of the school and benefit from the education it offers. The school acknowledges pupils' achievement through the praise given to them in the classroom and, more formally, in regular sharing and presentation assemblies.
41. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. A key issue from the last inspection included the more effective use of assessment in order to provide greater challenge for the higher-attaining pupils. Assessment is now an integral part of lesson planning and teaching. Pupils in the Reception classes are assessed against the early learning goals and during the year their progress is tracked and recorded. As each pupil then moves through the infants and juniors, the results of national tests and formal school tests are added to these tracking records each year and an academic profile is built up for each child. This tracking record includes National Curriculum Level targets in English and mathematics for each pupil at the end of each year with, in addition, a Level target for the end of Year 6 in science. Pupils' progress is assessed by means of half-termly assessment tasks in English and mathematics. This assessment leads to the setting of curriculum targets for each year group and then targets for groups of pupils. In other subjects, assessment takes place against two identified objectives each half term. Pupils are increasingly being given opportunities to assess their own work, thereby developing knowledge of their own learning. For example, in one class before the first English lesson of the week, each pupil considered the extent to which they had or were achieving their targets and, with the guidance of the teacher, considered aspects of their work on which to focus improvement.
42. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is very good. The school analyses all of its assessment information in order to highlight strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment. The analysis is used to set curriculum targets in English and mathematics, to set end-of-year National Curriculum Level targets and to provide appropriate support for pupils where necessary. The evaluation of pupils' learning within lessons enables teachers to highlight aspects of learning for inclusion in future lesson planning and to identify pupils who are not achieving the projected level, thus enabling remedial action to be taken.
43. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic performance are very good. Tracking records show the progress of each pupil from year to year in English and mathematics and, at the end of each year, record whether or not each pupil has achieved their target national

Curriculum Level. Senior managers and teachers use these records to monitor the progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils, such as boys and girls and the gifted and talented, although senior managers do not produce a formal written analysis of this tracking that could, for example, be reported to the governing body. Weaknesses in the tracking system are that the English target is not subdivided into targets for reading and writing, and only Year 6 pupils have a National Curriculum Level target for science. Regular monitoring of teachers' assessment folders by the assessment co-ordinator ensures that assessment procedures are consistent across the school.

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

44. The school is very successful in establishing and maintaining a very good partnership with parents, and this is a strength of the school. A significant majority of parents are very supportive of the school. With very few exceptions, parents are very appreciative of the school's endeavours on behalf of their children, and work in partnership with the school in order to serve their child's best interest.
45. Homework is used very well to support pupils' learning. The information provided by the school through the prospectus is presented to a high standard, but the last annual report of the governing body to parents was a little colourless. Both documents fail to include all of the necessary information. Annual reports to parents about their children's progress are of a good standard and include targets for improvement and comments from the children on their own progress. It is good that each term parents are informed about the main content of each subject to be taught.
46. Some parents are frequent visitors to the school. For example, they provide reliable classroom support and assist with visits. All parents have been invited to enter into a home/school agreement that is effectively designed to promote improved communication between the school, parents and children. The school is welcoming and operates an open-door policy, so that parents can have prompt access to the teaching staff and headteacher. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved in identifying their special needs and the school involves them in meeting pupils' targets for learning. They are invited to attend and contribute to meetings that review their child's progress.
47. Many parents play an important part in their children's education by listening to them read at home, in assisting them with occasional project work and providing the facilities and encouragement needed for homework. The Friends of the School Association is very supportive of the school and provides further social links between home and the school as well as raising substantial amounts of money for the school. Parental attendance at school concerts, celebrations and sports days is very good.

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

48. Leadership and management of the school are very good and they have made a significant contribution to raising pupils' standards and improving the quality of education that the school provides. The school has a very clear sense of purpose and knows what it needs to do to improve further the achievement of pupils of all ages, groups and abilities. All the teaching staff has changed since January 2001, and the new teachers form a motivated, high-performing team. The headteacher, ably assisted by the deputy headteacher and senior staff, have identified the school's key priorities accurately, and have successfully ensured that substantial improvements have rapidly been made to leadership and management, the curriculum, assessment and the quality of teaching and learning. The appropriate key priorities are included in the school improvement plan. This is a well-structured document on the whole but does not always indicate who has the responsibility for checking the progress towards each target and ensuring that this progress leads to better teaching and higher standards.
49. The roles of the subject co-ordinators have developed well and they are taking effective action to improve teaching and pupils' achievement in their subjects. The leadership of literacy and numeracy is outstanding, and this is having an impact on the quality of teaching and learning, and raising standards in these areas. The special educational needs co-ordinator is maintaining and improving the very good provision the school is making for pupils with special educational needs. The school has explicit aims and values, and works well to achieve excellent relationships and equality of opportunity for all pupils and staff.
50. The school analyses data from national and published tests very effectively and this information is used by senior management and co-ordinators to improve programmes of teaching and learning.

The school does monitor the attainment and progress of boys and girls, and other groups of pupils, but does not always formally record the outcomes of this monitoring. The school has started to take steps to raise the standards of boys in reading and writing in Years 1 and 2. The school is well staffed by a group of committed and dedicated teachers who are ably supported by a team of learning support assistants. The governing body has put in place a good performance management system for all staff that supports their professional development and contributes to school improvement. The headteacher gives informal feedback to governors about issues emerging from performance management, but this should be presented in a formal report in order to meet statutory requirements. The school places high priority on training staff, for example in relation to the numeracy strategy where the school's deputy headteacher has brought considerable experience and expertise. The induction of new staff is excellent.

51. The monitoring, development and evaluation of the education that the school provides is very good and this has been linked to subjects that are priorities in the school improvement plan. There is a systematic programme for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, with good support from the LEA. The quality of teachers' planning and pupils' work have been checked for English, mathematics and science, and co-ordinators have given staff clear feedback on strengths and points for development. Some of this monitoring work is of a particularly high quality. This monitoring and evaluation have made a significant contribution to improvements in teaching quality and have helped secure the excellent quality of teachers' planning.
52. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and its priorities for development, and carries out its key duties to a satisfactory extent. For example, governors agree the school's budget and consider monthly monitoring reports of expenditure, although their minutes do not always record that this monitoring has occurred. Governors discuss with the headteacher weaknesses in pupils' standards and in the education that the school provides, but do not always check that actions to address these weaknesses are being effective. Each governor is linked to a particular subject and meets the relevant co-ordinator twice each year, and this is a good way for governors to find things out for themselves about the school. Some governors make focused monitoring visits to the school but these are not always reported in the minutes of the governing body's meetings.
53. Recently, the governing body reviewed its role and the functions of its committees, and established a strategic planning group that will focus on strategic planning and the monitoring of the implementation of the school improvement plan. The minutes of the governing body do not always report that governors have checked the progress being made with the school improvement plan. The governing body has not ensured that the school's prospectus and the annual report to parents contain all of the necessary information.
54. The governors have an outline budget plan for 2003 to 2008. All educational priorities in the school improvement plan are supported well through careful financial management. Good use is made of specific grants that are used effectively for their designated purpose. The headteacher and governors have been successful in putting in bids for additional grants to support a range of school activities. The last auditor's report of the school's financial procedures was in 1997, but the school has regular visits from an LEA schools' financial adviser. The headteacher and governors have applied the principles of 'best value' well when assessing the school's priorities and agreeing new expenditure. For example, the school consulted parents over the mixed-age classes, and compares its standards with national and LEA data and uses the comparisons to identify priorities for improvement. It secures competitive quotations for work such as establishing the computer suite and the outdoor play area for Reception pupils. The school sets itself challenges through the targets it sets for groups of pupils and individual pupils.
55. The school is making very good use of new technology. All teachers have access to computers and often plan their work in teams in the school's computer suite. Staff use overhead projectors and data projectors in classrooms to support teaching. The administration offices have up-to-date equipment and this ensures that procedures are streamlined and efficient.

56. The staffing, accommodation and learning resources are very good. Resources are used well to support teaching and learning. Most subjects are at least adequately resourced, and there has been a significant investment in literacy and numeracy to support these key priorities over the last two years. Book resources have been improved this year, but the library is not used enough by pupils. Plans are being implemented to improve the resources for the Foundation Stage by providing outdoor play equipment. Most classrooms are bright, airy and are of a good size that supports teaching and learning well. There is a good amount of space outside, which is used well to develop pupils' learning in physical education and science. The swimming pool is currently out of use.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

57. Working together, the headteacher, governors and staff should:
- (1) further raise pupils' standards in science by implementing the improvements in the science development plan for 2003-4 and ensuring that Year 2 pupils have sufficient opportunities to work at the higher Level 3;  
(paragraphs 5, 25, 85, 87, 89 and 90)
  - (2) improve the use of the library by pupils for their own personal research as well as research as part of their classroom studies;  
(paragraphs 56 and 73)
  - (3) improve the formal procedures of the governing body by providing training for the whole governing body and ensuring that its agendas and activities include the key features of its responsibilities.  
(paragraphs 50, 52 and 53)

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

1. opportunities for writing at length, especially for pupils in Years 3 to 6;  
(paragraphs 71, 72 and 75)
2. the provision of more challenging work for some Year 2 higher-attaining pupils in mathematics;  
(paragraph 81)
3. the school's system for tracking the progress of individual pupils;  
(paragraph 43)
4. provision of first-hand opportunities for pupils to learn about the richness and diversity of cultures within the UK;  
(paragraph 36)
5. the formal reporting to the governing body of the progress made by different groups of pupils, such as boys and girls;  
(paragraphs 26 and 43)
6. the content of the school's prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents;  
(paragraphs 45 and 53)
7. the headteacher's report to the governing body on the implementation of its performance management policy.  
(paragraph 50)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	30	20	4	0	0	0
Percentage	7%	52%	34%	7%	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 more than one percentage point.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	232
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	13

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	48

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	19	14	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	15
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	22	21	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (90)	64 (88)	85 (90)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	15	16
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	23	28	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (88)	85 (90)	91 (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
	2002	13	17	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	12
	Girls	14	14	16
	Total	23	24	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (87)	80 (68)	93 (87)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	11	13
	Girls	13	15	15
	Total	22	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (71)	87 (61)	93 (66)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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



### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>
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***

<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
222	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
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
5	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)	10.15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.9
Average class size	25.8

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	166

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2002-3
	£
Total income	515,988
Total expenditure	513,076
Expenditure per pupil	2,185
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,000
Balance carried forward to next year	32,912

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	11
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	232
Number of questionnaires returned	65

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	29	6	2	-
My child is making good progress in school.	57	40	3	-	-
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	46	2	-	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	56	15	6	-
The teaching is good.	63	37	-	-	-
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	62	4	-	-
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	38	-	-	-
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	35	-	-	-
The school works closely with parents.	38	54	6	-	2
The school is well led and managed.	46	49	5	-	-
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	40	2	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	46	11	5	3

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR PUPILS IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

58. Pupils enter the Reception classes in the September before they are five. There are well-structured arrangements to ensure a smooth transition into the school. Most pupils have had pre-school experience in a nursery or a playgroup and standards on entry match those expected for pupils of this age. Pupils make a very good start to their learning, in a rich and supportive learning environment. They make good progress and achieve well in all six areas of learning by the end of the Reception year. Nearly all pupils are on course to reach the expected standards for their age group and a significant minority to exceed these standards. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. An enriched curriculum is in place, based on the early learning goals. Formal assessment takes place on entry to the Reception classes and, again towards the end of the year. Very good records are kept of pupils' academic and personal progress, and they are used to inform the planning of future work. The co-ordinator demonstrates very good leadership and management. She has a clear vision for the further development of the outdoor area as an extension of the classroom.
59. The quality of teaching is very good and leads to very good learning in all six areas of learning. Strengths of teaching are teachers' excellent planning, their very good subject knowledge and understanding, and very successful teaching of basic skills, particularly phonics and reading. Time and resources, including the use of adult support, are used very effectively to promote maximum learning. The quality and use of ongoing assessment is very good. All adults have high expectations and pupils show a high level of interest, concentration and independence. Since the last inspection, the school has made a good improvement to the quality of education it provides in the Reception classes.

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

60. Personal, social and emotional development is encouraged in all areas of the curriculum and is closely linked to religious education. Pupils settle quickly into the routines of the Reception classes, as they participate in carefully planned, well-focussed activities. Their knowledge of the school and their social development are enhanced through walks around the school and visitors, such as the school nurse, a mother and baby, grandparents, the librarian, vicar, minister and police officer. Pupils are encouraged to be independent users of the classroom and outdoor environment. Those who experience difficulties are carefully monitored and given very good support by teachers and teaching assistants, who work as a team. Pupils are encouraged to listen to what others have to say and take part in small group discussions and activities. Their developing sense of their own needs, views and feelings begins to include concern for others. Most pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and the effect of their words and actions on others. They gradually accept the need for agreed values and a common code of behaviour.

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

61. There are well-planned formal and informal opportunities to develop language skills in every area of the curriculum. The very good relationships between the staff and parents contribute to pupils' good progress. The National Literacy Strategy is proving very effective and the early emphasis on phonics and word-building skills is having a positive effect on pupils' language development. Most pupils recognise and know letter sounds and names, and are developing the ability to hear and say initial and final sounds, and sounds within words, using their knowledge to write their names and simple sentences. There is a good balance between direct teaching and practical activities to introduce and consolidate early reading and writing skills.
62. Most pupils make good progress in reading. They read a range of familiar words and begin to show some understanding of the elements of stories. Adults hear pupils read frequently and most

pupils benefit from being given support in their reading at home. They enjoy listening to taped stories, sharing books with adults and with Year 6 pupils, and joining in with familiar refrains. Pupils extend their vocabulary and use a widening range of words to express their thoughts and ideas. They develop good letter formation and have many opportunities to apply their writing skills, for example, when they write postcards, sentences about where they would like to go on an imaginary rocket and send a letter home from the moon.

### **Mathematical development**

63. Pupils show interest in numbers and counting, and they enjoy joining in number rhymes and songs. They compare two groups of objects saying whether they have the same number, and use size language, such as 'big' and 'little', 'more than' and 'less than'. Most pupils observe and use positional language and show an awareness of similarities and differences in shapes. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced very effectively. Pupils learn to count to twenty and beyond. Most pupils learn to relate addition to 'counting on' and successfully complete simple number sentences. They are able to find '1 more' or '1 less' than a number. Displays, the computer and practical activities are used effectively to clarify teaching points and develop number recognition and counting. Pupils' understanding of capacity and weight is developed through their experience with sand and water, using words such as 'heavier' and 'lighter'. Work is well matched to pupils' differing learning needs and they are encouraged to explain what they have learnt.

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

64. Pupils become familiar with the school's environment as they explore its grounds in different seasons. They show an interest in why things happen and how things work. A range of activities increases the use of their senses; for example, their sense of touch is developed as they select objects in the sand and water and explain what they feel like. They use their imaginations as they carry out role-play in the café and make a journey to the seaside on the train. On a visit to the park, they study the roundabouts and seesaw, and discuss how they work. Their understanding of forces begins to develop, as they examine how objects move by pushing or pulling. They develop their design and making skills as they plan and construct a puppet. Their knowledge of the recent past develops as they compare houses and toys from the past with those of today.
65. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning. A range of software is used to assist the development of reading, phonics, number, sorting, matching and sequencing. Pupils are able to switch on the computer, load a program and control the mouse to draw lines of symmetry and symmetrical images, changing the colours used. Several higher-attaining pupils work above expectations for their age, as they carefully make symmetrical pictures, including one of a face. They are taught to use the tape recorder independently. They know that switches control a wide range of machines, such as CD players and video recorders.

### **Physical development**

66. Pupils respond well to rhythm, music and stories by means of movement and gestures. They move with confidence, imagination, control and co-ordination. All pupils show respect for the personal space of others in the hall and playground. They use a range of small equipment to practise their throwing and catching skills, and progressively develop their skills in using a range of small and large equipment. Gradually, they learn to travel around, under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment. They climb on to apparatus, balance and jump off safely and use large apparatus to perfect the skills taught. Pupils learn about the importance of exercise and recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active.
67. Physical skills in the classroom are taught well. With support, pupils engage in activities requiring hand/eye co-ordination and use one-handed tools and equipment safely. They manipulate scissors to make string prints and a seaside collage. Pupils demonstrate increasing

skill and control in handling tools, objects and malleable materials safely. In the secure external area, they use climbing equipment and wheeled vehicles safely.

## **Creative development**

68. Pupils' creativity is developed within stimulating learning areas, which are well organised and resourced. Very good displays focus on the topics that pupils are exploring and the pupils' own work. Pupils explore colour, texture, shape, space and form in two dimensions as they study and draw spiral shells. Their skill in cutting different types of paper and joining card, paper and boxes is developing well. In their seaside paintings, they develop their ability to paint backgrounds using sandy paint and watery blue paint. They work well together in groups, negotiating plans and ideas, and selecting resources. As adults work alongside pupils and talk with them about their work, this helps pupils develop the appropriate vocabulary.
69. Pupils join in favourite songs and circle games with enthusiasm. They explore loud and quiet sounds with their voices, hands and instruments, learning how sounds can be changed. They know the names of a number of percussion instruments, such as a maraca, tambourine and wood block, and how they should be played. All pupils enjoy using instruments to provide rhythmic accompaniment to the singing of familiar songs and confidently take on the role of the conductor. They listen to music from other cultures, recognise specific tunes and rhythmic patterns and explore long and short sounds. Adults encourage them to use their imaginations and communicate their ideas through music and role-play, for example on an imaginary train journey.

## **ENGLISH**

70. The overall standards achieved by the current pupils at the ends of Years 2 and 6 are above national averages. Standards in reading, speaking and listening, and spelling are good. Pupils' standards in writing are not as good as those in reading. Overall, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well. The results of the national tests for Year 2 pupils in 2002 were well below national averages for reading and writing, but the results of the current Year 2 in 2003 are significantly better for both reading and writing. The proportions of pupils achieving and exceeding the expected standards for their ages are much higher than in 2002. These improved standards in the national tests are reflected in the current inspection findings and are the result of improvements to subject leadership, curriculum planning and the quality of teaching. Standards achieved in national tests for Year 6 pupils rose dramatically in 1999 and these above average standards have been consistently maintained since then. Pupils achieve well during Years 3 to 6, but make more progress in reading than writing.
71. Overall, by the end of Year 2, many pupils contribute well to the oral sessions that begin many lessons, giving complete and reasoned answers to the teachers' challenging questions. All pupils listen carefully and make relevant comments as they are encouraged by their teachers to give extended answers. Most pupils show very good knowledge and confidence in their use of basic grammatical terminology, and talk naturally about and can use their knowledge of phonics. Spelling rules and conventions are well taught and many pupils quickly achieve very good standards for their age. Handwriting is taught effectively and many pupils develop a confident style of joined handwriting by the end of Year 2. High-attaining pupils write accurately constructed sentences, including such features as speech marks, to produce well-sequenced writing for a wide variety of purposes. Average-attaining pupils write relatively brief stories and make some use of capitals and full stops to demarcate sentences, while lower-attaining pupils have legible writing but do not always leave spaces between words.
72. Many pupils are articulate and use language confidently by the end of Year 6, and write in complex sentences, showing very good understanding of such matters as main and subordinate clauses. They produce neat, well-organised and imaginative work showing a clear use of paragraphs, a wide variety of well-incorporated punctuation and interesting sentence construction, which adds character and quality to their work. Pupils write for a good range of purposes including play scripts, reports and newspaper articles but complete insufficient writing at length. Higher-attaining pupils are able to evaluate books critically, and, for example, carry out extensive work based upon the writing of Michael Morpurgo. Such activities as these are promoted by the

- excellent relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults, and these greatly enhance the pupils' above average standards in speaking and listening.
73. The school successfully teaches reading with its focused guided reading sessions that take place throughout the school. Pupils read a wide range of fictional and non-fiction texts. At the end of Year 2, higher-attaining pupils read fluently, make predictions and identify their favourite characters and justify their choices. Lower-attaining pupils generally read accurately but do not always use the full range of clues when seeking to read a new word. At the end of Year 6, higher-attaining pupils read accurately and expressively. They analyse characters and their motivation. Average-attaining pupils read fluently and with good levels of understanding. Lower-attaining pupils find it difficult to support their suggestions about aspects of a story by specific reference to the text. By Year 6, all pupils use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate information within non-fiction books, but a weak aspect of the school's provision is the library. Obsolete books have been removed and the current stock is small. Furthermore, the opportunities for pupils in the infants and juniors to use the library for independent research are unsatisfactory.
74. Teaching throughout the school is very good with very significant strengths in lesson planning, in matching work to pupils' individual needs and in the high expectation that teachers have of their pupils. All pupils are very well managed and behaviour is very good. Learning support assistants play a significant role in supporting the teachers to ensure the inclusion of all pupils. Occasional weaknesses in teaching are that whole-class teaching is too long and the teacher does not ensure that the oral contributions of individual pupils are audible to the rest of the class. The high quality teaching and the very good curriculum have brought about the improvements to pupils' achievement.
75. At present, insufficient opportunities are provided for extended writing, especially for the older pupils. This is an aspect of pupils' work that the school has identified for development. Teachers otherwise ensure that all elements of the curriculum are incorporated, including drama, role-play and poetry. Some Year 5 pupils have successfully adapted the poetic style of John Clare in their poems 'Meet me at the cinema', whilst some pupils in Years 1 and 2 have imitated the style of Grace Nichols in their poems about 'Morning'. Teachers are using ICT well as, for example, when pupils from Years 3 and 4 used computers to write sentences containing speech so that they could easily re-edit their work until they got the result for which they were aiming. There are many examples of the Internet being effectively used for research.
76. The English co-ordinator provides excellent leadership and management. There is a good range of monitoring to check that provision and pupils' standards are at the expected levels. Teachers were given excellent feedback following the monitoring of their weekly planning for English. As a result of teachers' very good planning, other subjects make effective use of pupils' literacy skills. Many subjects require pupils to learn their specialist vocabulary and use various language skills to research, to report and to write imaginatively, as in Year 5 when pupils are encouraged in history to use the style of Dickens to write about life in the workhouse. Assessment, target setting from very good analysis of data, and the tracking of pupils' progress are very good. Teachers' marking gives pupils clear guidance about the strengths of their work and how to improve, and makes a significant contribution to the overall quality of assessment. The school has made good improvement in English since the last inspection.

## **MATHEMATICS**

77. In the national tests in 2002, the results of the Year 2 pupils were well below national averages for all schools, while the results of Year 6 pupils were average for all schools and for schools whose pupils had obtained similar results at the end of Year 2 four years previously. For the current pupils in Years 2 and 6, standards of attainment are above national averages and pupils' achievement is good. Pupils with special educational needs make progress at a similar rate to their classmates. Almost half of these pupils achieve above the expected level by the end of Year 2, although of those, a higher proportion are girls. However, significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls were not discernible during the inspection. Following the previous inspection, standards in mathematics fluctuated and declined at the end of Year 2. However,



after the arrival of the new headteacher and mathematics co-ordinator, the school has rigorously addressed this situation. The school is on track to meet its 2003 targets for the proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving the expected Level 4, with a good proportion of pupils

attaining the higher Level 5. As part of its drive to raise standards, the school has set challenging targets for 2004. There has been good improvement to pupils' standards and rates of progress since the previous inspection.

78. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of the differences between odd and even numbers, and are developing the skills of estimating to help them solve problems. Most are confident in counting in tens up to 100 and they accurately subtract numbers with two digits from 100. Higher-attaining pupils are beginning to use decimal notation and recognise negative numbers. They understand place value to 1000 and use it in approximations. Most pupils have a good understanding of the aspects of shape, space and measure and recognise familiar two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. They are developing a good understanding of the vocabulary related to time, they order units of time from the longest to the shortest. Higher-attaining pupils know there are 52 weeks in a year, and the number of days in each month, including leap years.
79. At the end of Year 6, pupils have continued to make good progress in their understanding of numbers, using their knowledge of the value of each digit in a number to multiply or divide numbers by 10 or 100. Higher-attaining pupils work confidently with whole numbers and decimals to two places, multiplying and dividing them by 100 and 1000. Pupils use a good range of strategies when completing investigative work and have frequent opportunities to undertake problem-solving activities. Pupils arrive at correct answers, using several different methods of calculation. Many are less confident in working on questions dealing with ratio and proportion, and in their understanding of equivalent fractions.
80. The quality of teaching is good and, as a result, pupils' learn and achieve well. In some classes, the teaching is very good, and pupils make rapid learning gains. The quality of planning is excellent, and this contributes significantly to the effectiveness of teaching because it identifies key questions, sets specific targets for pupils, provides tasks that are suitable for all attainment levels, indicates how any adult support will be used, and ensures that the final part of the lesson, called the plenary, is used to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. For example, in a very good lesson with Year 6, pupils were choosing and using appropriate operations to solve number problems. The teacher set questions involving two-stage function machines where pupils were given an output number, but had to work out the input number. The function machines became more complex as the lesson progressed. The teachers' planning made provision for those who were attaining at a higher level by giving them opportunities to work on five-stage function machines. Both learning support assistants in this lesson were deployed very well. They used practical resources and appropriate mathematical vocabulary and methods to ensure their groups made very good progress. The teacher used the plenary session very well to address pupils' common misunderstandings. This was a very good lesson because of the excellent planning, clear step-by-step teaching that matched pupils' differing learning needs and because pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour contributed to the very good progress in learning made by all pupils including those with special educational needs.
81. There are instances of lessons when pupils' progress slows because the lesson is too long and the pace of teaching slows. In some other lessons, higher-attaining pupils are given work that is too easy for them. For example, in the exercise books of the higher-attaining pupils in Year 2, nearly every answer is correct, demonstrating a high level of understanding but insufficient challenge. Pupils in Year 2 have experienced a broad and balanced mathematics curriculum, but they would benefit by having greater opportunities for mathematical investigations, and problem-solving activities, especially those involving words.
82. The National Numeracy Strategy is well established in all classrooms. Staff are confident teaching mathematics in this way because they have received appropriate training and guidance from the school's co-ordinator. Teachers know their pupils very well, and use this knowledge to

good effect to set them appropriate challenges in the mental mathematics sessions at the start of lessons. Pupils are expected to explain their strategies when they solve problems. Good probing questioning enable pupils to acquire a range of strategies for tackling questions, and teachers' questions become increasingly complex. In a very good lesson, the teacher actively encouraged pupils to try out different strategies, and continually sought explanations from them

about the methods they had used, and how they knew their answer was correct. These oral and mental sessions are used well throughout the school, and they give pupils the skills to handle mental calculations confidently.

83. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills in other subjects. In design and technology, pupils measure accurately, particularly in Years 5 and 6. In science, pupils in Years 3 to 6 measure time, length, volume, temperatures and forces and record their results in tables, bar charts and line graphs. However, in Year 2 science pupils have insufficient opportunities to use their numeracy skills.
84. Leadership and management of the subject are excellent. The co-ordinator provides expert training, and support to staff in their collective efforts to raise standards. She has monitored the quality of teaching and learning, analysed the school's performance in optional and national tests, and fed this information back to staff so that teaching is targeted more effectively on weaker aspects of pupils' understanding and skills. Assessment procedures are very good and support pupils' development by setting them challenging targets, and by tracking their progress against group curricular targets. ICT is used well, for example when pupils use software in Year 5 to support their work on shape and space and when pupils create graphs in Years 1 and 2 to show where people went on holiday. There has been a significant investment in resources over the last two years, and this has improved the pupils' learning.

## **SCIENCE**

85. In the national tests for science at the end of Year 6 in 2002, pupils' results were below national averages for all schools and for those whose pupils had similar results at the end of Year 2. Since then, standards have risen and now match national averages for the current Year 6 pupils, because of improvements to the leadership and management of science, the planning for science teaching, the quantity and organisation of learning resources, and the subject expertise of teachers. In 2002, the teacher assessments indicated that the standards of Year 2 pupils were above average. However, the current Year 2 pupils' standards are only average because higher-attaining pupils have insufficient opportunities to work at above-average standards.
86. Most Year 6 pupils can describe and explain how different electrical circuits work, investigate the growth of microbes under differing conditions, and have a sound knowledge and understanding of forces. Many have a sound understanding of fair testing but need much prompting as they draw conclusions from their results. Year 5 pupils are making particularly good progress with their knowledge and understanding of fair testing. For one investigation, they selected their own methods and resources as they investigated the amount of salt in different types of crisps. Pupils with special educational needs explained the methods that they had chosen. Many of the pupils were aware of weaknesses in the methods that they had used. Overall, the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory during Years 3, 4 and 6, but it is rising because of the improvements that the school is making. Achievement is good in Year 5 because of the high level of challenge for pupils' learning, to which the pupils respond very positively.
87. In Year 2, pupils have grown plants from seed and recorded the growth of their plants. They have used some of the plants to investigate the effects of water and light on plant growth, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made predictions about how the plants will grow in different conditions. Higher-attaining pupils have explained their predictions. All pupils have started to record their results in tables. Pupils cover a sound range of work in

science and, for example, classify objects according to the material from which they are made, make simple circuits work and classify the care that different animals give to their young. Mostly, pupils' achievement is satisfactory but there are times when higher attainers should achieve more. Pupils with special educational needs are given sufficient support, and in consequence achieve well.

88. The quality of teaching and learning is good. There are several common strengths to the teaching. There is a good amount of practical work that involves the pupils in scientific enquiry and, in the best lessons, pupils have opportunities to plan their own investigations which helps them to learn a great deal. Classes are well managed, there is a brisk pace of learning and no time is wasted. Lesson planning is excellent and includes key questions for the pupils to think about. Teachers give pupils opportunities to discuss these in small groups or pairs before sharing their views with the whole class. Pupils have interesting resources to work with and these help to motivate them in their learning. For example, Year 1 pupils visited an allotment to see fruits and vegetables growing, and then worked with a wide range of these. Lessons often make links between the science work and everyday life, and this also helps to motivate the pupils.
89. There are some aspects of teaching that could be improved. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have insufficient opportunities to use their writing skills and higher attainers have insufficient opportunities to work at above-average standards. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' work is marked well, with specific comments about how pupils can improve their work, although pupils rarely respond to these comments in their recorded work. At times, lower-attaining pupils have incomplete work because they have had insufficient support in recording their science.
90. Teachers work collaboratively to write good quality plans for teaching science, although at times there is not enough difference between the work that pupils do in different years, such as Years 3 and 4. There is good enrichment by, for example, the involvement with the Cambridge University's science week. Satisfactory use is made of ICT including data logging in Years 5 and 6. There is a sound system for assessing pupils' progress and this is used consistently in all classes. The quality of leadership and management in science is good, and the monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' exercise books is of a particularly high standard. The targets in the subject development plan for 2002-3 have been successfully achieved. For 2003-4, the targets in the development plan are appropriate and include a sharper focus on National Curriculum standards for pupils in each year group. Good improvements have been made to science since the previous inspection, as teaching has improved and pupils' standards have risen in scientific enquiry.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

91. Pupils' attainment is well above national expectations at the ends of Years 2 and 6, and the achievement of pupils is very good. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, pupils have begun to work with the full range of media, including sculpture and pottery, through which they have been able to develop very effectively their skills and understanding. They show very good observational skills in the intricate detail with which they create their still life drawings of a piece of fruit. They select media appropriate to the task, for example they know that a soft lead pencil is a better pencil to use for shading than a hard lead pencil. Their drawings are very well proportioned and they position their work well upon the paper they have selected, showing a very good awareness of space. They collaborate well with other pupils whilst they are engaged upon joint efforts such as collage. The very good quality of their work is exemplified in the carefully designed and patterned clay tiles they have produced, and which were fired for them by a local potter.
92. By the end of Year 6, pupils' very good skills and techniques are used to produce Victorian theatres that are beautifully designed, made and decorated by groups of pupils. Pupils' sketch books are introduced in Year 3 and used very effectively to try out and record ideas, for example pupils experiment with sections of drapes and hangings to incorporate in the Victorian theatre. Pupils are accustomed to considering the work and techniques of great artists and illustrators starting as early as Year 1 where the work of Van Gogh inspires pupils' work on the sea. The computer is used to enhance pupils' art work as, for example, when pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a graphics program to produce work in the styles of Mondrian and Jackson Pollock. Strong links with literacy are promoted when pupils in Years 5 and 6 consider the work of illustrators such as Raymond Briggs and Arthur Rackham and how illustrations can enhance a story.

93. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils in terms of the quality of their work and their behaviour. They use correct terminology, and ensure learning resources are well prepared and ready for use. Lessons have a good, brisk pace and pupils are challenged to develop their skills and to be creative. Pupils with special educational needs really flourish: some pupils with academic difficulties find and develop artistic talent and creativity, and this gives a great boost to their self confidence. Lesson planning reflects progression in learning from one lesson to another and successfully incorporates some consideration of art from other cultures. Good use of resources, such as photographs, pictures and information books, gives pupils examples to emulate. A good result of this is evident in the several 'portraits' of Henry VIII in which pupils identify the various facets of his character and personality they have tried to capture in their pencil drawings. There are examples of ICT being used very effectively to enhance pupils' learning in art, as when pupils in Years 3 and 4 used a graphics program to create pictures in the style of Seurat.
94. The leadership and management of the subject are excellent. The co-ordinator's knowledge and enthusiasm have generated similar enthusiasm in both colleagues and pupils. Assessment procedures are very good and outcomes are well recorded. Good links are made with other subjects including mathematics. Very good work is generated by the extra-curricular art club, for example mod-roc action figures and some wonderful sculpture of exotic plants made from junk material. A local artist has worked in the school and this has helped improve the quality of art produced by both teachers and pupils.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

95. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about pupils' standards at the end of Year 2. There was evidence of pupils' work for only one design and technology project, and that was of the expected standard. Pupils designed vehicles using annotated sketches, and listed the materials they would need to make their products. The products were of a sound quality including appropriate finishes. Pupils then carried out and recorded simple self-evaluations of their work and identified changes they could make.
96. Standards at the end of Year 6 match national expectations. Pupils use various sources of information for their design ideas, including the evaluation of familiar products such as slippers. They also investigate different materials before they produce step-by-step plans. Pupils work from these as they make their products, for example as they made moving fairground rides. Pupils use their initiative and there is a good range of designs for each product. In some cases, pupils make models before the final product, as when pupils in Years 3 and 4 made card models of purses before completing the products in textiles. Pupils work with a variety of materials including wood, card, plastic, food and textiles, and those in Years 5 and 6 worked with a range of tools and some accuracy as they used gear wheels in the mechanisms for their fairground rides. Pupils evaluate their products and the process of designing and making self-critically. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.
97. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All teaching follows a sequence that provides pupils with opportunities to learn specific skills, such as different kinds of stitching to join fabrics, how to evaluate different materials, and how to plan, make and evaluate their products. Whole-class teaching is clear and thorough and prepares pupils well for their practical work although at times this teaching takes too long. Work is well matched to pupils' differing learning needs. In one lesson for example, lower-attaining pupils were supported by a learning support assistant who demonstrated the work at the expected level and the pupils recorded their evaluations on a sheet with a helpful structure. Higher- and average-attaining pupils worked more independently without a pre-determined structure and responded well to the teacher's high expectations. Consequently, all pupils achieved well.
98. There is a sound system for assessing pupils' progress and this is consistently used in all classes. The leadership and management of the subject are of good quality. Resources are well organised and each teacher has a handbook which provides very good advice about planning and

teaching. Most of the targets in the subject's development plan for 2002-3 have been achieved. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and standards to a satisfactory extent from teachers' feedback on their medium-term plans and by evaluating finished products that are displayed in classrooms. Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in this subject because pupils' attainment in designing has risen and teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 have improved.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

99. Attainment is above national expectations at the ends of Years 2 and 6. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. Progress is good during Years 2 and 6 and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. There are no significant differences in the attainment or progress of boys and girls. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge of the local area and appropriate emphasis is placed on mapping skills, particularly during local walks. Pupils have a good understanding of the physical and human features of Haddenham and use their literacy skills to compare and contrast them with the imaginary Scottish Isle of Struay. They make good links with mathematics and ICT, as they record on block graphs and tally charts where pupils go on holiday and which countries are most popular. Their understanding of places beyond their locality develops through the study of weather and the travels of Barnaby Bear. By the end of Year 6, many pupils have a good understanding of the water cycle, rivers, settlements and weather. Their understanding of distant places and other cultures develops through their study of an Indian village and world weather. Their moral development is enhanced as they discuss environmental issues.
100. Teaching and learning are very good. The strengths of teaching are teachers' excellent planning, their very good subject knowledge, the emphasis on geographical enquiry skills, and very good class management. Teachers' expectations are high, teaching methods are very effective and time and resources are used well; as a result, pupils are inspired to apply intellectual and creative effort to their work. Learning support assistants make a significant contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs.
101. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good and the curriculum is enriched by fieldwork, visits and visitors. Leadership and management are good. The new subject leader has a clear vision for the future development of the subject and the priorities for development are appropriate. She monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work. The portfolio of pupils' work to demonstrate the expected National Curriculum standards is not yet complete. Adequate resources support pupils' learning. An area for development is to enhance pupils' learning by visits to a contrasting locality. The school has made good progress with geography since the last inspection.

## **HISTORY**

102. Standards in history are above national expectations by the ends of Years 2 and 6 and pupils are making good progress. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection. The school uses national guidelines for planning the topics in history, which are enhanced through visits (eg to Kentwell Hall as part of the work on the Tudors) and visitors to the school (eg the county's museum service for a Victorian washday). Judgements are based on the pupils' ample amount of previously recorded work and the lessons observed in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a good understanding of 'then' and 'now' through topics such as the 'sea-side in the past' and by making comparison between homes of today and those of the past. Year 2 pupils produce booklets giving a good range of facts about what a Victorian home was like and they use a timeline to show the development of homes.
103. The use of time lines is a strong feature of history teaching throughout the school. By Year 3, pupils understand what historical facts are and they write down facts about ancient Egypt in

answer to their own question "What I should like to know?" Most pupils understand the significance of historical evidence and, by Year 4, some pupils understand the importance of the work of archaeologists such as Howard Carter and how it contributes to our knowledge of the past. Research from books and the Internet is well developed although better use of the library would enhance the capacity for this even further. Pupils are using historical vocabulary well. Historical skills are very well developed by Year 6, for example in a lesson in which pupils compared modern and Victorian schooling. They examined a picture of a Victorian schoolroom and the skills of many pupils were impressive as they used inference to go beyond simple observations, as well as showing good awareness of the limitations of this historical evidence.

104. Teaching and learning are very good, ensuring very good progress and enthusiastic attitudes. The quality of the curriculum and teachers' planning provides pupils with good opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding of significant events and historical characters. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss aspects of the lesson and this helps to develop speaking and listening skills, so lifting the quality of class discussion. Lessons are well concluded with a very effective plenary which reviews learning and informs the good assessment procedures. Marking throughout is of very high quality. The subject is well managed by the subject co-ordinator.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

105. Pupils' standards in Years 2 and 6 match national expectations. Year 2 pupils plan and give instructions to make things happen with a programmable toy. They use a simple database about types of home and their classes to organise and classify information for geography and science. All pupils have been taught to enter, save and retrieve their work. They use a graphics package to draw shells and create symmetrical patterns, and combine simple text and images. In Year 6, most pupils have accurately entered formulae into a spreadsheet and checked a database for the accuracy of its information. About half the pupils have successfully used ICT to control lighting systems in different contexts. In one lesson, nearly all the pupils quickly learnt how to add graphics, sound and background colour from a variety of sources to a Powerpoint presentation, with some awareness of the intended audience. Pupils' achievement in ICT has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers because their learning is effectively supported by teachers and learning support assistants, and the tasks are well matched to the learning needs of these pupils.
106. The quality of teaching and learning is very good, and in consequence pupils' rates of progress are improving. Teachers often make the work fun and provide opportunities for pupils to use their initiative, and this helps pupils to sustain their interest and concentration as they tackle the tasks. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and so give clear demonstrations of ICT skills using the data projector, prepare interesting ICT resources and help pupils overcome their difficulties and extend their learning by asking, for example, "Why don't you try....?" Good links are made with other subjects as, for example, when pupils from Years 3 and 4 used a graphics program to create pictures in the style of Seurat and Aboriginal art. The excellent lesson planning includes plenary sessions that are used to check pupils' progress against the learning objectives for the lesson and to evaluate the quality of what they have achieved. Tasks are often set at different levels to match work to pupils' differing learning needs, as when Year 1 pupils extracted information from a CD ROM dictionary.
107. Teaching is well planned overall although on occasions pupils repeat similar work in different years. The use of ICT to enhance pupils' learning in other subjects has been developed well, and has been effectively monitored by the ICT co-ordinator. ICT is regularly used in English and mathematics lessons, for example, to enable pupils to practise their skills of using speech marks or working with angles. Data handling is used as part of work in geography and science when some data is recorded in spreadsheets. There is a sound system for assessing pupils' progress in ICT and this is consistently used in all classes. The school has made good improvement in ICT since the last inspection. There is now direct, good quality teaching each week for every class in the new ICT suite. Opportunities are now provided for modelling work in Years 3 to 6

through the use of spreadsheets and a package for modelling the design and furnishing of a room. Nearly all of the targets for ICT in the school improvement plan have been successfully achieved, and the co-ordinator has appropriate targets for improvement in 2003-4. The school benefits from technical support that is provided each week by a voluntary helper.



## **MUSIC**

108. Standards of attainment are above national expectations at the end of Year 2, and in line with national expectations at the end of Year 6. Pupils are making good progress throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs make progress at a similar rate to their classmates, and there is no obviously significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys. There has been good improvement in the subject since the previous inspection because the quality and range of resources have improved, the school has given greater emphasis to pupils' cultural development through musical experiences, and the quality of teaching is now good.
109. A good curriculum plan is in place, taught in half-termly units. By the end of Year 2 pupils are developing rhythmic awareness and have a good understanding of pulse. Pupils are starting to use musical terms confidently, for example tempo. Higher-attaining pupils discuss dynamics in relation to compositions. In Years 3 and 4, pupils continue to achieve well through regular opportunities for composing, appraising and performing. For example, they have very well developed skills in analysing the way sounds are used to create different moods. They link art and music very well by choosing percussion instruments sensitively to portray a visual image, such as a beautiful sunset. By the end of Year 6, most pupils talk confidently about the differences between tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Many use musical terms accurately, and know how to create chord sequences on glockenspiels, xylophones and keyboards for different effects in their 'twelve bar blues' compositions.
110. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught by a specialist music teacher who ensures that pupils' skills are developed year on year as they move through the juniors. In an excellent lesson for Years 1 and 2, pupils worked in groups to create interludes for 'The Dark, Dark Wood'. They listened very carefully as the teacher read the short story, and responded to skilful questioning about how they might reflect the mood of the music in composition. They discussed the moods and atmosphere that the story suggested, and used the language of music confidently. There were very high levels of co-operation during group work, and this contributed to the excellent progress pupils made. When the compositions were complete, pupils followed the guidance of a conductor expertly as they took part in a performance. The teacher used this opportunity to lead an excellent evaluation of the composition, where pupils talked about what had worked well, and how they would improve it another time. One pupil said, "I think we could have built up our effect more gradually", and another said, "I think my bit was too loud and too fast". In a good lesson with Year 6 pupils, an opportunity was missed to carry out a full evaluation of the lesson, and consequently this inhibited pupils' knowledge of their own learning.
111. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has checked teachers' planning and given guidance about lessons. A good assessment system monitors pupils' progress at the end of each half term, but it does not guide daily curricular planning. There are good links with other subjects. For example, pupils have listened to Tudor music and learnt Tudor dances, and studied Indian music when investigating the locality of Chembakolli in geography. ICT is used satisfactorily, for example, to record pupils' compositions, but the school does not have any composing software, and this is a gap in the school's musical provision. There is a good range of resources, including instruments that reflect multicultural music. There are opportunities for pupils to learn a brass instrument, or join a school choir, and these enrich their musical experiences. The school is keen to raise pupils' awareness of different kinds of music, and in the last year a steel band has visited. Pupils sing enthusiastically in assembly, joining in with the music as soon as they enter the hall.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

112. Standards of attainment are above national expectations at the end of Year 2, and in line with expectations at the end of Year 6 in striking and fielding activities, which were observed during the

week of inspection. Pupils make good progress throughout the school, and those with

special educational needs make progress at a similar rate to their classmates. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys. There has been good improvement in the subject since the previous inspection because the quality of teaching is now good.

113. The good curriculum plan provides a balanced programme of activities, including athletics, dance, games, gymnastics, swimming and outdoor adventurous activities. By the end of Year 2, pupils' skills are developing in football and hockey. They have very well developed skills with a small bat and ball when they practise basic striking and fielding activities. Swimming is offered to pupils of all ages, with many achieving the recognised National Curriculum standard of 25 metres at an early age. By the end of Year 6, pupils develop skills in traditional and creative dance, and make good progress in striking and fielding activities.
114. The overall quality of teaching is good with some very good lessons. All teachers pay due regard to health and safety aspects, and emphasise the importance of 'warm up' and 'cool down' activities. Pupils understand why they are doing these activities, and talk with increasing understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies. In a very good Year 2 lesson, pupils were working in small groups focusing on the skills of batting. They sensibly organised themselves into groups of three and discussed the roles of 'feeder', 'fielder' and 'batter'. The teacher clarified the expectation for each of these roles, focusing specifically on how to hold the bat correctly, and adopt the correct stance. Pupils worked with a high degree of co-operation, exchanging roles willingly, and they followed the very good guidance of the teacher, and adult helper. Consequently, pupils made very good progress by the end of the lesson and demonstrated that they could hit the ball cleanly in the middle of the bat, and to increasingly greater distances. Those attaining at a higher level began to hit the ball away from the fielder. Pupils were generally less successful in fielding activities.
115. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator scrutinises planning and offers guidance to colleagues appropriately. A good system is in place for recording pupil achievement on a half-termly basis, but it does not guide teachers' daily curricular planning. ICT is used well when pupils record the speeds and distances of various athletic activities on a spreadsheet. The school has good playing fields around the buildings and these are used for sports including orienteering. The school actively seeks to bring in expertise from the outside, such as East Cambridgeshire Sports Development, and a teacher from the neighbouring sports college has provided some tennis coaching. These links enrich curriculum opportunities for pupils, alongside the school's own extra-curricular activities in football and netball.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

116. Attainment is above the expectations of the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was satisfactory. There are no obvious differences in the attainment of boys and girls. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. This shows good improvement since the last inspection when progress was satisfactory. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a developing awareness of the importance of key figures, sacred places and special books in Christianity and Islam. By the end of Year 6, pupils have an understanding of the origin and role of the Christian Church and a developing knowledge of Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism.
117. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is very good, which leads to very good learning for all pupils. The strengths of teaching are teachers' excellent planning, their very good subject knowledge, high expectations and very good management of pupils. Very effective teaching methods engage pupils' interest and concentration. The quality of ongoing assessment is good and most pupils have a good knowledge of their own learning. They are encouraged to

express their own experiences and thoughts, and they show respect for the beliefs and practices of others.

118. The curriculum builds upon pupils' own experiences and cultural identity. Stories from different religions and cultures are read and discussed in literacy. Links are made with mathematics, through patterns and symbols associated with different religions. Information and communication technology is used effectively for research. Pupils' spiritual development is enhanced through visits to local churches and their learning from the different religions that they study. Pupils' moral development is encouraged through stories relating to love, forgiveness and care and respect for all life. The study of major world religions enhances cultural development. Social development takes place through working collaboratively, visits and visitors. There are good procedures for monitoring the subject's performance, assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and using assessment to guide future planning. The subject leader is building up a useful portfolio of pupils' work to show examples of work at the different standards expected by the Agreed Syllabus. Leadership and management are good. The new subject leader has a clear vision for the development of the subject. She has effectively introduced the new Agreed Syllabus and provides valuable guidance for teachers. There is not yet a portfolio of pupils' work to demonstrate the standards that the school expects pupils to achieve.