

INSPECTION REPORT

KINGS HEDGES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cambridge

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110775

Headteacher: Ms J Dixon

Reporting inspector: Mrs R S Rodger
10347

Dates of inspection: 10 – 13 March 2003

Inspection number: 247045

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Northfield Avenue Cambridge
Postcode:	CB4 2LG
Telephone number:	01223 518330
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	John Pope
Date of previous inspection:	December 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10347	Mrs R S Rodger	Registered inspector	English Educational inclusion, including racial equality. English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are the pupils' taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9399	Mr R Watts	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
31376	Mr R Green	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
31790	Mr M Jones	Team inspector	Science Design and technology	
11419	Mrs J Underwood	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Special educational needs Music Religious education	
32596	Mrs G Phillips	Team Inspector	Art and design Geography History	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	16
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	24

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Kings Hedges Primary School is situated on the edge of Cambridge in the outskirts of a socially and economically deprived local authority housing estate. There are 423 pupils on roll: 206 boys and 217 girls including 79 pupils attending the nursery part-time. The school is much larger than other primary schools. Ninety-one per cent of pupils are from white United Kingdom families. Nine per cent of pupils are from other cultural heritages; this is a high proportion. The minority ethnic groups are mostly Asian British; mixed white and black Caribbean; mixed white and black African; and Chinese. Of the 39 pupils with English as an additional language, 14 pupils are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The languages spoken include Arabic, Twi and Cantonese. Twenty-three per cent of pupils are entitled to a free school meal, which is above the national average and slightly higher than at the last inspection. Thirty-one per cent of pupils have special educational needs, including 11 pupils with a statement of special educational need. This is above the national average. A high proportion of the pupils with special educational needs have difficulties with speech and communication and weak literacy skills. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average. The school has been given an achievement award for the last two years in recognition of the very good progress made in national test results. Pupil turnover is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. It is very effective in almost all aspects of its work. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and the higher attaining pupils have their needs met very effectively and achieve very well. The school provides a high level of care for its pupils. The quality of teaching is good overall and is very good or excellent in one in four lessons. Leadership and management are significant strengths. The headteacher leads excellently by example and has raising standards as her key priority. Based on the below average attainment on entry, the very good achievement in Years 1 and 2 and good achievement in Years 3 to 6, the broadly average unit costs and the overall effectiveness, the school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make very good progress and achieve above average standards in English, mathematics, and science.
- Standards are above average in art and design and physical education throughout the school and in design and technology in Years 1 and 2.
- Teaching throughout the school is good; it is very good in one in four lessons.
- The needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and higher attaining pupils are very effectively met.
- A very good range of learning opportunities and out-of-school activities is provided.
- Very good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and moral development.
- Procedures for checking the academic and personal development of the pupils are very good.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and staff are very effective.

What could be improved

- The financial management of the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in December 1997. Standards of attainment have improved throughout the school in all subjects where they were below average at the time of the previous inspection. Standards in music have improved considerably; they were a significant weakness in 1997 and are now average. The progress made in addressing the areas for improvement identified by the previous inspection has been very good. The learning needs of pupils with special educational needs are very effectively met. The quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory to good overall and no teaching is unsatisfactory. Statutory requirements for the information and communication technology curriculum are met.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The figures given in the table above show how well the school achieved compared to all schools and to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds in the 2002 national tests.¹ The very good achievement of pupils by Year 6 has been publicly acknowledged in the past two years by two achievement awards because standards are rising at a higher rate than that nationally. Standards in the current Year 6 are average in English and mathematics and above average in science, art and design and physical education. Standards are average in all of the other subjects. Standards have improved since the previous inspection in English; mathematics; art and design; design and technology; information and communication technology; physical education; and in music. The school's targets for 2003 are challenging; 79 per cent of pupils are predicted to achieve Level 4 in English and 76 per cent in mathematics. There are a large group of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6, which suggest that the 2003 results will not be as good as last year. Current standards in Year 2 are above average in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology and physical education because of very good teaching in Years 1 and 2. Current standards in Year 2 are satisfactory in geography, history, information and communication technology, and music. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve very well in Years 1 and 2 and well in Years 3 to 6. Standards are below average in the Foundation Stage² in aspects of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Standards are average in all other areas of learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to come to school and enjoy learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils move around the school in a very orderly manner. There was one fixed term exclusion last year
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils gain confidence as they go through school. They see the diversity of cultures as a major strength. Pupils understand the impact of their actions on others very well.
Attendance	Attendance last year was slightly below the national average. The school has a high rate of unauthorised absence.

Pupils concentrate well and work hard. They volunteer readily to take on jobs outside the classroom. Pupils move around in an orderly manner and show very good care and consideration for others. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good.

¹ The comparisons are based on schools with similar proportions of pupils eligible for a free school meal.

² This includes children in the nursery and the reception classes.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall and consistently very good in Years 1, 2 and 6. There is excellent teaching in the school. Three teachers have been nominated for the National Teacher Awards. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good overall, as is the teaching in all other subjects with the exception of history in Years 3 to 6, where it is satisfactory, and in design and technology, where no teaching was seen. Pupils learn new skills very well. They work hard with interest and good levels of concentration. As a result of the high emphasis given to target setting and sharing these with pupils, they have a good knowledge of their own learning and how to improve their work. Teachers have very high expectations and use a variety of very effective methods to interest and motivate their pupils. For example, during the three times daily, brisk letter and word recognition lessons pupils make very good progress. Teacher's planning is good and well matched to the range of diverse needs of pupils. Innovative arrangements to group pupils to have their needs met most effectively are working well, especially in Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language are taught very effectively.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils very well. Provision for out- of-school activities is a strength.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The curriculum gives due emphasis to the needs of pupils with special educational needs. They are fully integrated into the work of the school and very well supported.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Needs are well met in lessons and through out-of- school clubs tailored to meet their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Provision for moral and social development is very good and for spiritual and cultural development it is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Procedures to promote good behaviour are very good. Procedures to assess the personal and academic progress of pupils are very good.

The school has good relationships with parents. Few parents help in school, but are very willing to support school trips.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher, with the effective support of the deputy headteacher, has created a strong, hardworking team. She has a very clear vision of how to improve the school and has succeeded in this very well in recent years.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors are very supportive but lack the expertise to deal with financial management.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. A range of effective systems is in place to check how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve further.

The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Funds allocated to the school are spent appropriately to ensure that pupils receive the best possible opportunities to learn. Daily financial administration is unobtrusive and efficient but, longer term, it is less so as the headteacher has not always received adequate information to enable her to determine costs and to budget for priorities. The school satisfactorily applies the principles of best value to purchases but is less well placed to evaluate the cost effectiveness of major initiatives.
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The number and experience of teaching and non-teaching staff are very good. Accommodation is good and efficiently used. The school is well resourced, although it does not have a computer suite and the number of computers in classrooms means there is a need to share with parallel classes.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school, are expected to work hard and make good progress. • The leadership and management of the school. • The support provided to help their children become mature and responsible. • They would be happy to approach the school if they had a problem. • The good teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of out-of-school activities. • The amount of work their children do at home. • The information they receive about how their child is getting on.

The inspection team agrees with the positive points the parents make. The school provides a very good range of activities outside school, including sport, music and art activities. School reports give good information about how well pupils are learning and meet statutory requirements. There are good comments on pupils' personal development and targets are set. Parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress twice a year. The amount of homework given is typical of most schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average overall and for some children attainment is very low in speaking and listening. By the time children are ready to go into the reception class, they have made reasonable progress but standards are remain below average. Standards are still below average in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, notably communication skills and numeracy, by the time they start in Year 1. The children are on course to meet the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development by the time they reach Year 1. The school has introduced a language intervention programme to deal with the low attainment in the nursery.
2. Standards of attainment have improved since the last inspection. In Year 2, current standards are above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology and physical education. The pupils in Year 2 have made very good progress in these subjects, given their low attainment one entry, and almost all of them are on course to catch up with, or exceed, national expectations by the end of Year 2. Standards are satisfactory in information and communication technology, history, geography, music and religious education. In Year 6, current standards are average in English, mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, history geography, music, and religious education. They are above average in science, art and design and physical education. The pupils in Year 6 have achieved well compared to their attainment on entry, having often made quicker than expected progress since they were aged seven.
3. The results of the 2002 national tests in Year 2 were average in reading and writing, and in teacher assessments of science, and were below average in mathematics. An above average proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in reading; an average proportion achieved this higher level in mathematics; and a below average proportion achieved Level 3 in writing. In relation to the results of pupils in similar schools, that is schools with about the same proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal, standards were above average in reading and writing, but still below average in mathematics. Girls outperformed boys in reading, writing, and mathematics.
4. The results of the 2002 national tests in Year 6 were average in English and mathematics and above average in science compared to all schools nationally. The results were above average compared to similar schools in English and mathematics and well above average in science. An above average proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics. In science, a well above average proportion of pupils achieved the higher levels. Girls achieved more than boys in English but boys outperformed girls in science. The overall trend of improvement in attainment in the past five years has been above the national trend in all three subjects.
5. The school has taken action to reduce the gap between boys' and girls' attainment. For example, in English a wider range of teaching methods and materials are used to motivate boys. Standards in the current Year 6 are likely to be affected by the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The 2003 targets are challenging and likely to be met for the proportion of pupils expected to attain Level 5. However, a proportion of pupils are currently working below the expected Level 4 and will need to catch up to achieve the national expectation. Inspection evidence shows that the school works very hard to provide additional support for these pupils through booster classes and daily teaching in small groups based on prior attainment. As a result all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well. There are very good improvements in the attention given to raising literacy and numeracy skills: an area for development identified at the previous inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. Pupils' have very good attitudes towards school. Virtually all parents who responded to the questionnaire believed that their child enjoys school. This is seen in the keenness with which most pupils start in the morning and in their enthusiastic response to the good teaching. In the nursery, children are happy, secure and are gaining confidence. This personal growth continues in the reception classes, where children are eager to learn in the formal as well as informal sessions.
7. In Years 1 to 6, lessons start promptly although there is some minor disruption to the early 'warm up' session when a few pupils arrive late. During lesson introductions, most pupils are attentive and keen to answer questions and are generally very disciplined in this. For example, in a Year 1 class, pupils who were clearly bursting with knowledge waited patiently while the pupil had been asked thought long and hard about his answer. Pupils generally concentrate well and work hard to solve problems. They are proud of the work they do and are keen to show it to others. Occasionally, when introductions go on too long or their work is unclear or not challenging enough, pupils become restless. Pupils are enthusiastic about doing things outside the classroom. They identify tasks that need doing and volunteer. Many take part in at least one of the many out-of-school activities offered.
8. The behaviour of pupils is very good. In lessons, few pupils need reminding to pay attention and if they do, they respond quickly. Most teachers need to spend very little time on discipline and concentrate fully on their teaching; this contributes towards the good rate of learning seen in the majority of lessons. Pupils move around the school in a very orderly way, with consideration and courtesy towards both adults and other pupils. Pupils have the opportunity to set their own class rules within the overall framework of the school's code and hence fully accept their validity. They have a strong sense of what is right and what is wrong, and some of the older pupils are starting to question how such judgements are reached. Pupils are trustworthy, for example, in collecting the money for 'comic relief' day and treat books and other resources with care. One pupil was excluded last year for a specified period. The pupil concerned has now left the school. The governors have appropriate procedures for dealing with such matters.
9. The personal development of pupils is very good. In the Foundation Stage, children are gaining in confidence and maturity so that they each play an increasing role as part of the class. Throughout the school, the good rapport between adults and pupils is very noticeable and pupils respond well to the efforts of staff to build on this. Pupils are confident with their teachers and respond by giving of their best. Pupils recognise that people can come from different cultures and have different religions and are used to discussing these. They accept that all are equal under the skin. Their understanding of the impact of their actions on others is very apparent and is reflected in the way pupils treat each other; their social development is very good.
10. Pupils play well together in the playground and respect the right of all to enjoy their playtime. There is little conflict and pupils of all ages and ethnic groups play well together. Racist incidents are logged according to the procedures in the racial equality policy. There are very few even minor incidents of conflict, either deliberate or accidental. There is little or no bullying and no social exclusion was observed during the inspection. Pupils value the role of the playground 'buddies'; Year 5 pupils are assigned to resolve minor problems and help find friends to play with when lonely pupils visit the 'buddy stop'. This is also an example of one of the many areas where pupils willingly take on responsibilities. In many lessons, pupils take responsibility for their own learning and collaborate well. However in a very few lessons where pupils should have more independence, for example in a Year 4 science lesson, they have insufficient opportunity to show this.
11. Pupils are gaining in maturity and developing good self-esteem, often starting from a low level and coming from difficult backgrounds. This is seen, for example, when pupils in the Year 6 classes entered the spirit of their debate on the subject of curfews for the pupils under-twelve. They had clearly worked hard on their assigned roles in preparing their contributions and were confident in standing up for their opinions. Participation in the wide range of activities also develops their understanding of their own strengths, talents and interests.
12. Overall attendance last year was slightly below the national average for primary schools but unauthorised absence is very high. This high level results from a combination of absence where no reason is given by parents, unacceptable reasons or the school assigning lateness as absence.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school with examples of excellent and very good teaching in the infants and the juniors. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching was very good or better in 24 per cent of lessons, good in 48 per cent, and satisfactory in 27 per cent. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged satisfactory overall but with some unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching has improved in all subjects.
14. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, science, geography, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education throughout the school. It is very good in art and design in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is satisfactory in all other subjects. No teaching of design and technology was observed.
15. Overall, teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Questions are used effectively to encourage children to respond, and adults, particularly in the reception class, use every opportunity to intervene and extend the children's vocabulary. There are some missed opportunities to do this in the nursery. The outdoor environment is used effectively to extend children's learning. The nursery nurses and learning support staff work closely with the teachers and provide very good support. Expectations of the children's behaviour are high and they respond well to these expectations. All adults have very good relationships with the children. Praise and encouragement are effective in motivating the children to achieve and promote positive behaviour.
16. In Years 1 and 2, strengths of the teaching include very good use of information and communication technology to support English and mathematics; very high priority given to teaching basic skills and the application of literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Very good use is made of assessment data to group pupils by prior attainment. Skilful and probing questions challenge pupils. Expectations of what pupils can do are high and as a result of very good instruction, explanation and demonstration pupils understand what they have to do. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, there was excellent involvement of pupils as they read spelt out unknown words phonetically with one amazed pupil demonstrating understanding of the blends by recognising 'er' in the word silver read later. Praise is used very effectively to motivate and give pupils confidence, especially in oral sessions which helps to develop an understanding of the main points in a discussion.
17. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, art and design, information and communication technology, music and physical education. It is satisfactory in all other subjects. Features of the good and better teaching include a brisk pace to lessons, which are purposeful, and the encouragement given to pupils to reflect before answering questions. Lessons are well organised, resources are ready to hand and pupils behave well because they enjoy what they are doing. Relationships are very good. Marking is carried out rigorously; it had been highlighted as an area for improvement following the school's own monitoring and evaluation of pupils' work. Teachers make good use of technical vocabulary in science. At times, there is a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils in science.
18. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have had a good impact on improving the quality of teaching throughout the school. The methods and strategies recommended have been adopted in several subjects, resulting in improvements to the quality of pupils' learning.
19. Planning throughout the school is very good. Lessons are well-structured and pupils behave well because they are interested and keen to learn. As a result of the regular discussions held with teachers every week, older pupils have a good understanding of their targets and how they can improve their work. Pupils work independently, concentrate and remain on task. They are keen to discuss what they have been learning and begin to understand that learning has different components. For example, Year 6 pupils prepared a debate about a curfew, they learned about the facts and their feelings about the decisions.
20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The pupils' individual education plans are well written and provide small achievable targets. The teachers are aware of the pupils' needs, prepare appropriate work carefully matched to their needs, and ensure that the learning support assistants know what the pupils must do. Teachers and learning support assistants liaise daily, discussing tasks and, later, how well the pupils' understood them. There are very good relationships between pupils with special

educational needs and their support staff and this gives them confidence to succeed. During lessons, teachers target pupils with special educational needs so they are given an opportunity to respond to questions. Year 6 pupils, work in small groups completing the same work, but modified to meet their needs, as the average and higher attaining pupils. This very effectively ensures very good inclusion and participation when the pupils come together to review what they have learnt.

21. Bi-lingual pupils are generally very well integrated with their peers and are taught as well as everyone else. In addition, there are times when they work with a support teacher in class. This is very effective for pupils in the early stages of English language acquisition in the nursery and reception classes and for higher attaining pupils who need support with complex ideas, especially in science.

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

22. The curriculum is broad, balanced, and relevant to the ages, needs and interests of the pupils. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and complies with statutory requirements. The national strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy have been very successfully introduced. Additional time for teaching literacy and numeracy is allocated to raise standards, which are below average when children enter the school. The school very successfully enhances pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
23. The previous inspection identified the need to meet statutory requirements in information and communication technology and to improve music. Additionally, extra-curricular activities were unsatisfactory and although the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs was generally well planned in mathematics the work was too hard at times. Statutory requirements in information and communication technology are now being satisfactorily met and musical activities have been developed across the school. The school now offers an impressively wide range of out-of-school activities and this is a considerable strength of the school's current provision. The school has addressed the issue of meeting the needs of all children in mathematics by grouping classes according to ability in Years 1 and 2, and establishing ability groups across the classes in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. This along with very some good teaching and learning has made a significant impact on raising standards for all children including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and the more able children.
24. The school provides very good learning opportunities for its pupils. The quality of the long, medium and short term planning is very good and teachers are supported in their work by good, up-to-date policies and schemes of work which indicate what needs to be taught and when.
25. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. The provision for this is made in the nursery and reception classes. There is a good range of activities to reinforce children's learning and develop their language. Good use is made of the wide range of resources in the outdoor environment to support children's learning.
26. There are good developing links between subjects so that learning in one subject consolidates previous learning in another. Literacy is promoted well across the curriculum and pupils are offered a wide range of opportunities to use their skills in reading and writing. Pupils' mathematical skills are further developed through design and technology, physical education and science, for example, in the use of accurate counting, measuring, tallying and recording. Pupils' information and communication technology skills are evident in some literacy, numeracy and science lessons.
27. The school provides a very good wide range of out-of-school activities. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in sporting, musical, art and drama activities. All pupils, including those with special educational needs are well catered for. The school takes part in competitive sporting fixtures in football, cricket and athletics and has enjoyed a great deal of success, achievement and accolade over the past year. The school provides an early morning breakfast club. A number of initiatives support the small number of Asian families in the area, such as the cross-phase homework club and Asian Women's Group that meets weekly in the Red Hen House. An after-school homework and art club is provided to help integrate pupils from other cultures into the life of the school.
28. The school offers all pupils very good equality of access to the curriculum. The teachers very good planning takes account of the range of ability in their classes to ensure that all pupils have access to the

curriculum according to their needs. The very good use of in-class support is carefully planned across the school to make good use of teaching assistants in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants in order for them to make very good progress with their learning.

29. Pupils with special education needs have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum. They receive very good support appropriate to their identified needs and as a result of this make very good progress with their learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 who are identified as requiring support with their literacy skills, are making very good progress through the effective use of early reading research sessions during short, discrete daily lessons on the timetable. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated and experience equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life. No pupils are disapplied from the National Curriculum or religious education. Pupils with statements have full access to their entitlement and are fully included in lessons.
30. The school has very good links with the community that contributes effectively to pupils' learning. Very good use is made of the locality to extend pupils' experiences and knowledge. For example, pupils' interest in learning is stimulated by a range of visitors to the school such as the local priest, police, fire service, school nurse and sports coaches. Visits to local places of interest and to local schools further stimulate learning for the pupils. Pupils particularly look forward to an annual residential visit to Devon. Home-school links are promoted well through the Red Hen House initiative. The school has developed very good links with partner institutions. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 and in Year 6 visit a local secondary school to make use of the art facilities. Close links benefit the Year 6 pupils through contact with older pupils and helps to ease transfer at the age of eleven. Links with local playgroups are also strong and promote a smooth start to the nursery for four-year-olds.
31. The school's provision for developing pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. A structured programme, provided in discrete lessons, is in place throughout the school. Sex education and drugs education are incorporated into this programme. Citizenship is developing well and the school has a flourishing school council that offers pupils, who are elected on a termly basis, the opportunity to share ideas and contribute to the life and running of the school. School council members meet weekly, are also involved in a buddy scheme and are responsible for the care and tidiness of the cloakrooms. A photograph board in the main entrance identifies school council members and values their contribution to the whole school community.
32. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This is a substantial improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. This very good provision is reflected in every aspect of school life.
33. Spiritual awareness is well developed through religious education lessons, circle time and some acts of collective worship, which often have clear themes. Pupils have regular opportunities to discuss pertinent issues and to reflect on their own or on others' experiences. In a school assembly, for example, pupils were invited to think about a fellow pupil seriously ill in hospital, and empathy was immediately apparent. In another assembly, older pupils performed their own dance routines to the rest of the school, their parents and pupils from a local special school. The music, combined with the highly expressive and controlled movements of the pupils, created a spiritual atmosphere in which the whole audience was completely captivated and enthralled.
34. Provision for the pupils' moral development is very good and is encouraged by helping them to determine what is right and wrong, to understand that there are choices, and to recognise that choices have consequences. High self-esteem is encouraged and promoted, as well as self-respect and discipline. Pupils are given responsibilities, which they gladly accept and older pupils take care of the younger ones. The school's golden rules are displayed around the school and each class has agreed to their own rules, and these are well understood by the pupils. These principles are promoted appropriately and consistently by all school staff, who provide very good role models. Pupils show respect for their teachers, other adults including visitors, and each other.
35. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. They are encouraged to work co-operatively and take responsibility for their work and agreed targets. They raise money for different charitable organisations and are given opportunities to take increasing responsibilities. Their involvement in the school council gives them opportunities to develop self-confidence and initiative, as well as an

understanding of school life. The use of visits, including a residential visit, visitors, inter-school competitions, and a range of extra-curricular activities helps to develop pupils' social skills.

36. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good overall. Pupils are made aware of their own culture through their work in music, history and geography. Experiences of other cultures are given through pupils' work in a range of subjects. In art and design, for example, pupils successfully create various designs, drawings and artefacts from other cultures. Their work in geography, comparing their own life with that in an Indian village, and in science, looking at different diets across the world, gives them an awareness and understanding of other people's traditions and different ways of living. Through their studies of other religions, pupils gain an insight into the major religions of the world.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school is a very caring, harmonious community, which provides a secure environment in which pupils want to learn. Members of staff are trained in first aid and pupils are well looked after if they are ill or have accidents at school. Staff members are sympathetic to pupils' needs, which often require close liaison with parents and carers. They participate regularly in a link committee where the school and welfare agencies can discuss problems and arrange to support both parents and children. Very rigorous health and safety risk assessments and equipment checks are carried out. Where risks are identified, effective action is taken. For example, the school has suspended swimming lessons because it was not satisfied that pupils were safe when travelling to the pool or within the pool building itself. Child protection procedures that meet local guidelines are in place and the designated teacher and all staff have been appropriately trained in their use. The school operates a very thorough system of recording concerns which can be referred to the link committee or, when more urgent, to the police or social services.
38. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are very good. The school has viewed the establishment of good behaviour as essential to promoting good learning. The discipline system, which emphasises praise and reward but also has clear sanctions, is consistently applied so that all pupils understand and respect it. The absence of bullying is a consequence of the school's very good emphasis on a caring environment and encouragement of discussion amongst pupils in personal and social education sessions. A pupil buddy system supports vulnerable pupils at lunchtime and a nurture group takes place at playtimes. The headteacher keeps a log of racist incidents as required by the racial equality policy. The arrangements to care for more vulnerable pupils are very good.
39. Teachers complete registers punctually at the start of each school session but the recording of the reasons for absence, and when absence has not been authorised, is inconsistent. Pupils who are late are recorded as they arrive and many of these count as unauthorised absence, even when they are only a few minutes late. Current monitoring procedures do not give the school sufficient information to tackle the high level of unauthorised absence because it is not clear about the reasons. Accounting for pupils for fire safety is secure but the school has problems in contacting parents about why their child is absent. It therefore does not operate a first day contact system. The education welfare officer works with the parents of those pupils with the worst attendance records.
40. Procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' progress are very good. As soon as children start in the nursery assessment takes place to identify those children requiring additional support. Ongoing assessment is then completed half termly. This provides useful information to show where there are gaps in the children's knowledge. In addition, regular assessment of the development of reading skills and assessment of what the children have learned during adult-targeted activities provides very detailed information to help identify the next steps for the children's learning. For example, observational assessment was carried out as children drew plants. Target setting is well-established throughout the school. The pupils' English and mathematics target books cover all aspects of the programme of study for English and mathematics. Older pupils are effectively encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and set their own targets.
41. The assessment co-ordinator has worked very effectively to put all the current procedures into place, to inform the governing body and to lead training for the staff. She is currently introducing the use of average points scores as a more accurate way of measuring progress. National test results are analysed by gender, special educational needs, English as an additional language and summer birthdays to identify key priorities for the coming year. This information is also used to identify small groups of pupils,

including high attaining groups for additional support. Pupils from minority ethnic cultures have their own social club after school and an art club, which other pupils from Years 4 and 5 attend. Pupils in Year 6 get very valuable support with their studies and personal development through an adult mentoring scheme. Once a week, a member of staff sits down with a group of two or three pupils to discuss their progress during the week and give guidance on any difficulties they might be having. Progress toward their curricular targets is also checked. The breakfast club, attended by 20-30 pupils daily, not only gets those pupils who might not have breakfast at home off to a healthy start, but also improves attendance and lateness.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Parents are very satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. The parents who attended the meeting before the inspection were supportive of the school and had few concerns. They felt that it is a very supportive school which makes learning fun. A few parents thought there should be a wider range of homework but most were satisfied. About one third of the parents returned a questionnaire and the views expressed there were also very positive. Their children like school, which has good teaching, promoting high expectations. There were minor concerns, as is often the case, about the amount of homework and extra-curricular activities. The positive views are confirmed by the inspection and concerns about homework and out-of-school activities are not justified.
43. The school's links with parents are effective and the school has done well to earn the confidence of parents. This confidence has grown over the past few years. The quality of information about the life of the school is generally good, with regular and detailed newsletters. When children start in the nursery and reception classes, parents have the opportunity to see the school, meet staff and learn about how their child will be taught. Booklets also give them advice on how to help at home. In all classes, parents have the opportunity to meet the teacher twice a year to discuss progress. Pupils' annual reports meet statutory requirements and give good information about progress in all the subjects taught. They differentiate well according to the ability of the pupil, targets are set and the pupil has the opportunity to record their own opinion of their progress. The comments on the pupil's overall and personal development are good and reflect the teacher's close knowledge of the class. The school supports the 'Red Hen' project, a charity managed jointly with two other local schools, and the home-school worker gives support and advice to individual parents. The project also manages the breakfast club. Subject to obtaining funding, they hope to expand into helping parents as educators of their own children. A group of parents from minority ethnic cultures meet regularly in the Red Hen house.
44. Parents play a satisfactory role in supporting the school and their children. Most parents hear their child read at home and encourage them to do homework although a significant minority cannot or will not give this help. The school issued a Home-School Agreement but by no means all have been returned and the benefit is uncertain. The school has great difficulty with a minority of parents over such issues as accounting for absence and allowing dogs on the premises. Very few parents help in lessons but they offer to support outside visits. The Parent Staff Association is run by a very small but dedicated group but can call on good support from other parents and pupils when it organises social and fund-raising activities. These are very successful and have raised prodigious amounts recently for outdoor activity equipment.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The leadership of the headteacher is high quality. She gives considerable priority to raising standards. The headteacher does not tolerate anything less than total commitment from herself and staff in her drive for improvement in all aspects of the school's work, especially meeting the needs of the diverse school population and the community. She has a strong personal conviction and passion that pupils should be entitled to achieve as well as they can. The school has received an achievement award for the past two years. This is in recognition of the very good progress made in the school's performance in national tests. The aims of the school have been changed to match the needs of pupils in the school. The headteacher brings a very clear vision of what sort of school this should be. She leads excellently by example, takes responsibility, and has created a very strong senior and middle management team with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. The headteacher is well-supported by her deputy. Kings Hedges primary

school is very effective. The upward trend in the standards achieved by its pupils shows that the school is very successful in fulfilling its aims.

46. The governing body are inexperienced and there are several vacant roles. They are effective in many aspects of their role but their full involvement in financial management requires improvement. The governors are very supportive of the headteacher and the school. The relatively new chair and other governors attend training. The chair meets regularly with the headteacher and this is enabling him to have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The governors lack expertise in relation to financial management. The governing body has had considerable problems in the past year with budgeting and planning strategically for the coming years and this area of its work is unsatisfactory. A combination of mistakes by the authority and independent advisers and lack of financial expertise within the school left it with wildly fluctuating estimates of the extent of the budget surplus or deficit. Problems with the financial management were confirmed by a recent audit report, requested by the school. Financial decisions made under such circumstances cannot be well founded. The school has improved day-to-day financial control and has employed a new adviser in whom they have confidence but the end-of-year balance was still uncertain at the time of the inspection. The school makes satisfactory use of modern technology in the office and is starting to introduce more recent developments into its teaching. The principle of 'best value' is starting to be put into practice but the principles are not well understood by the governors and they are too reliant in this, as in other financial decisions, on the headteacher. School improvement planning is based on a clear vision statement and the priorities identified in the yearly self- evaluation. However, uncertainties about the budget have meant that some actions have had to be carried forward.
47. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and action taken to improve are very good. The senior management team, headteacher, and the deputy headteacher carry out yearly self-evaluation to identify key strengths and areas for improvement. Staff members are provided with feedback reports. The most recent one was completed in November 2002 and identified weaknesses in the use of information and communication technology and the deployment of learning support assistants to name only a few areas. Performance management is the responsibility of the deputy headteacher. The targets set for staff are rigorously checked and contribute to overall school improvement. All staff members with curricular responsibilities have time to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively.
48. The assessment co-ordinator has analysed national test data and taken a major responsibility for the school's target-setting arrangements which are very effective and used consistently throughout the school because time to set and review them with pupils is built into the school timetable. Subject co-ordinators have the opportunity to check the quality of teaching in lessons and they complete thorough checks of work in books. This is achieved because the headteacher and deputy headteacher teach particular subjects throughout the school to enable staff to have time to carry out their roles and responsibilities. Well-targeted agendas for improvement are set because they are based on a very rigorous, well-triangulated analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
49. The special educational needs co-ordinator is very effective in ensuring positive learning experiences of special needs pupils and the smooth day-to-day organisation of support staff. She is able to monitor how well individual education plans are being followed and to provide support for class teachers as they review individual education plans and devise new ones. Time is spent evaluating the effectiveness of the support provided by learning support assistants and carrying out performance management appraisals. Annual reviews are arranged and appropriate outside agencies notified. The resources for pupils with special educational needs are adequate but there is a shortage of suitable computer programs and books for pupils in Years 1 and 2.
50. The number and experience of the staff are very good and meet the demands of the curriculum. Several staff members are relatively new to the school; nevertheless, they make very effective contributions. Retention of younger staff is an ongoing issue for school due to the prohibitive cost of housing in the area. The school is in partnership with a local provider of initial teacher training which they use to recruit high calibre newly qualified teachers as well as being an effective training establishment themselves. The quality, quantity and range of non-teaching staff are very good and are deployed effectively across the school, especially to support pupils with special educational needs.
51. The accommodation is good and efficiently used. The school environment is enhanced by attractive art and design displays. Good use is made of the parallel open plan classrooms to share resources, such as

information and communication technology, when a class is having a lesson elsewhere. The paired open plan classrooms lead to some distraction for pupils when they are working. Resources are generally good.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governing body with the support of the headteacher and staff should:

- Improve the financial management of the school.
(This is discussed in paragraph 46)

There is one minor issue for the governors to consider including in their action plan:

- improve registration procedures (discussed in paragraph 39).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

93

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

34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	19	45	25	0	0	0
Percentage	4	20	48	27	0	0	0

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	39.5	383
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		89

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	28	120

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	39

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.3
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	24	32	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	21	19
	Girls	31	30	28
	Total	50	51	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (96)	91 (100)	84 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	19	22
	Girls	31	31	31
	Total	51	50	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (98)	89 (100)	95 (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	25	19	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	16	22
	Girls	17	17	18
	Total	30	33	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (73)	75 (77)	91 (96)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	18	14
	Girls	14	17	17
	Total	24	35	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (63)	80 (75)	70 (90)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils ³
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	10
Indian	1
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	23
Chinese	2
White	296
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.4
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	21
Total aggregate hours worked per week	379

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	3
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

³ The information on the ethnic background of 32 pupils was not obtained and five parents declined to say what their children's ethnic background was.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2002
Total income	963603
Total expenditure	978718
Expenditure per pupil	2303
Balance brought forward from previous year	18885
Balance carried forward to next year	3770

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	423
Number of questionnaires returned	124

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	23	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	39	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	39	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	46	8	2	10
The teaching is good.	66	32	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	45	7	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	35	2	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	26	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	39	50	6	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	56	39	2	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	40	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	37	9	4	14

Other issues raised by parents

Parents are happy and support the work of the school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

52. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is made in nursery and reception classes. Children are admitted into the nursery in the September of the year in which they have their fourth birthday. There are presently 79 children attending the sessions, all part-time: 46 during the morning sessions and 33 during the afternoon. Nursery nurses and learning support assistants effectively support them while there is a vacancy for a teacher in the nursery class. Children transfer to the reception classes the following September. There are currently 57 children in the two reception classes: 27 in one and 30 in the other. One class has a full time teacher. Two part-time teachers teach the other. Learning support assistants support both classes very well. The majority of children entering the nursery have had some pre-school experience, usually the local playgroup. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage has been maintained since the last inspection.
53. There are well-resourced dedicated nursery and reception areas that provide a bright and welcoming environment. Outdoor facilities consist of two secure areas with an excellent range of equipment. Both are used creatively and effectively to improve children's physical and creative skills. The curriculum is based on the nationally agreed areas of learning and is effective in providing a range of challenging and focused experiences to promote children's learning: particularly in the reception classes.
54. The attainment of children entering the nursery is well below average overall and is very low in speaking and listening for some children. This is very similar to the attainment on entry found in the previous report. However attainment on entry to the reception class rises slightly, but it still remains below average, reflecting the good progress they make, and more children are approaching typical attainment for their age. The school's assessment using a published assessment format supports this judgement. The children make good progress and the majority of pupils are on course to achieve the expected levels in personal, social and emotional development, in physical and creative development and in knowledge and understanding by the time they are ready to start in Year 1. However only half the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in literacy and numeracy and these aspects of learning remain below the expected levels.
55. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall. Most of the adults who work with the children have a good understanding of the early learning goals. Lesson plans and schemes are clear with appropriate learning objectives based on the stepping stones (the levels of attainment leading up to the early learning goals). Day-to-day assessment informs planning so staff can ensure the work matches the needs of all the children. This is an area for further development in the nursery, where assessment of focused tasks is limited. All teachers have good knowledge of the needs of children in the early years and the curriculum to meet those needs. Teachers and nursery nurses plan together and then discuss the plans with the other adults to ensure continuity. Themes are carefully planned and linked, where possible to visits or visitors. For example, an arctic explorer came to talk to the children when they were looking at homes in different climates.
56. There is a good range of activities to reinforce children's learning and develop their language. Questions are used effectively to encourage children to respond, and adults, particularly in the reception, use every opportunity to intervene and extend the children's vocabulary. This is an area that needs further development in the nursery. Opportunities are missed to add to a child's vocabulary or extend their understanding of answering with a simple sentence. The nursery nurses and learning support staff work closely with the teachers and provide very good support. Expectations of the children's behaviour are high and they respond well to these expectations. All adults have very good relationships with the children. Praise and encouragement are effective in motivating the children to achieve and promote positive behaviour.
57. Some attractive displays help to provide a bright and interesting environment in which learning is encouraged. The adults recognise the importance of play and first hand experience and this has a positive effect on the progress of the children towards the early learning goals and provides a firm foundation for entering Year 1. Experiences, particularly in the reception classes, are challenging and concentrate closely on what the children need to learn. Parents are encouraged to spend the first ten

minutes at the beginning of each nursery session sharing books or puzzles with their children. This helps the children to settle more quickly. Those of reception children are encouraged to listen to their children read at home and to fill in their reading record. Staff members provide induction meetings for parents of both nursery and reception children, giving advice on how best they can help their children. Occasionally parents accompany children on visits.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is good and most are on course to achieve the early learning goals. Children enjoy coming to school and have settled well and adjusted to the routines of school life. They are eager to learn new skills and, when activities are stimulating and exciting put effort and concentration into their work. Emphasis is put on helping children understand the consequences of their actions. They are encouraged to take turns and wait patiently to speak in small group discussions. This begins in the nursery where at the start of each session children spend time on the carpet. For example, each child was asked how he or she came to school and with whom. They were not allowed to call out. Children in the reception classes were observed taking turns on the apparatus, when playing outside. They are encouraged to work together and share resources. They found this more difficult in the nursery where they prefer to play alone, even in the role-play area. However the reception-aged children begin to play together and were observed acting out the story of Jack and the Bean Stalk in the "Ogre's castle", helping each other on the computer and completing a jigsaw puzzle. There are planned opportunities for children to develop a sensitivity and awareness of other people and their way of life through religious education and the celebration of the Chinese New Year and Diwali.

Communication, language and literacy

59. Progress in this area of learning is good. About half of the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning. Although this is a below average proportion of children, it nevertheless represents good achievement given the low levels of attainment and well below average language skills on entry. Teaching is good, particularly in the reception class. Children are encouraged to be good listeners, to enjoy stories, songs and rhymes. Activities are planned to encourage children to develop writing skills including letter patterns, copying their name and making books and cards. A few nursery children can write their names and many try to communicate using marks on the paper. Some children are beginning to write legibly and write their name. The higher attaining children can write initial letters for their words in a sentence with the odd word spelt correctly. The lower attainers are still struggling to write recognisable letters.
60. All children enjoy books, handle them with care and turn over the pages correctly. Children in the nursery share books with parents and each other, choosing their favourite stories. They listen carefully when adults read to them and answer questions about the story. Children are given the opportunity to read their names during the introductory session in the nursery: a few are confident when doing this. In the reception class the higher attainers are reading fluently and recognise many words and confidently talk about their books. The lower attainers do not recognise many words but know the letter sounds and can point out letters found in their name. All were confident to recite a nursery rhyme and retell a well-known fairytale. Children are being taught letter sounds and words using an effective scheme; brief sessions are held three times a day.

Mathematical development

61. Teaching in this area of learning is good. Even so, a below average number of children are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the time they start in Year 1, reflecting their low attainment on entry. In the nursery, children are encouraged to count the number of children present and how many are away. The outdoor area is used to develop mathematical understanding in a variety of ways. An activity using a large die and hoops containing the numbers 1 to 6 was observed. Children counted the number of dots shown on the die and found the appropriate hoop; they were successful. Children make patterns using two-dimensional shapes and know the difference between a circle and a square. The higher attainers in the reception are confident with numbers up to 20 and recognise numbers at random. Appropriate vocabulary is taught and most children understand longer, shorter, taller, smaller and use other words to describe size. They are familiar with the names of three-dimensional shapes. Occasionally numbers are written backwards. Number rhymes and action songs are used to help children develop their counting

skills. The children cannot separate groups of numbers in different ways and know that the total is the same, use own methods to solve problems or know the next number in a sequence.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. Teaching in this area of learning is good and most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. They use the school grounds to explore plant life, matching buds to plants. Nursery children were fascinated when the teacher put eggs into an incubator and wanted to know what would happen to them and why they needed water. Children explore both wet and dry sand, noting the different properties and find that only dry sand can be used to make a wheel go round. In both the nursery and reception classes. Children are growing plants and know that they need water and sunlight to survive. A number of visits and visitors provide children with first hand experiences and enhances their learning and curriculum. The reception children have explored the local area and were surprised by the number of shops. As part of a topic about 'Ourselves' children created graphs to record hair or eye colour. Computers are always switched on and in both areas children were observed using them. Nursery children use the computer to draw pictures and those displayed above the computer show how mouse control is developing as the pictures become more recognisable. There is a good range of software to support different areas of learning: used regularly during sessions. A group of higher attainers in the reception class were observed programming a roamer to move around a map drawn on paper. By the end of the session children could program the roamer to complete a journey that involved turning through 90 degrees.

Physical development

63. The teaching in this area of learning is good and the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the time they start in Year 1. Lessons are well planned to build on previous learning. After an initial warm up, where children demonstrate good spatial awareness and body control, they enjoy developing ball skills. During the lesson these skills improve as children move the ball round the hall and roll or kick the ball with greater accuracy to their partners. Both nursery and reception class outdoor areas have a variety of good quality climbing equipment to enhance children's physical development. They climb and swing with confidence. One was observed performing a forward roll over a low beam. Many opportunities are provided to help children develop their manipulative skills through cutting, threading, using small construction kits, and colouring.

Creative development

64. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good and most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. They enjoy a range of experiences in music, art, story and imaginative play generally inside the classroom. The role-play areas in both classrooms often reflect the topics and have been a shoe shop, igloo, greengrocers and are presently the "Ogre's Kitchen". Nursery children experience a variety of activities: mixing paint; marbling; printing with different objects; and using different media. Children made butterflies using tissue paper and finger painting with the aim of helping them to begin to understand symmetrical patterns. Reception aged children have similar experiences but extend them to include observational drawings. For example, a group of children drew plants from observation using oil pastels with care to show the differences. Design and technology is a good feature of the reception children's creative experiences. For example, they designed and coloured shoes; some writing about what was needed to do this. During the inspection, reception children made a model television with a plant inside which was attached to wool which in turn was attached to a spindle. By turning the handle, they could make the plant appear to "grow". All children enjoy music and participate with enthusiasm, although the nursery children are better doing the actions than singing. All the children regularly sing a variety of action songs and rhymes during sessions. However, the specialist music teacher takes music lessons for both groups. The reception children also join Year 1 and 2 pupils for singing with the music teacher and this gives them the opportunity to learn an increasing range of songs.

ENGLISH

65. From Year 2 to Year 5, pupils are split into two 'streamed' classes per year group based on their prior attainment. Year 6 pupils are taught in smaller groups based on their prior attainment in English. There are four groups, each taught by a teacher or a classroom assistant.
66. Standards of attainment by Year 2 are above average in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Based on their well below average attainment on entry to the nursery, achievement of the pupils is very good. This is very good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below average. In the 2002 national tests for seven-year-olds, standards were in line with the national average and above average compared to similar schools. Girls outperformed boys. An above average proportion of pupils attained the higher Level 3 in reading.
67. Standards of attainment by Year 6 are generally average, which is better than the findings of the previous inspection. A high proportion of pupils have special educational needs in Year 6 this is reflected in the overall judgement on standards. As a result of good teaching, pupils achieve well with a significant proportion of pupils working at the higher Level 5. In the 2002 national tests for eleven-year-olds, standards were in line with the national average compared with schools nationally and above average compared to similar schools. Standards have improved consistently over the past five years at a rate above the national trend. The school has set a target of 79 per cent of pupils expected to achieve Level 4 or above in the 2003 national tests which is challenging. The predicted levels for the higher attaining pupils are likely to be achieved. A relatively large number of pupils with special educational needs are currently achieving well below average levels of attainment. However, they are very well supported and the pupils close to achieving Level 4 are provided with additional support.
68. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are fully included in learning and they are making very good progress. Higher attaining pupils make very good progress, as a result of well-targeted support and very thorough monitoring and evaluation of learning through target-setting and mentoring for Year 6 pupils. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and work very hard. Behaviour is always good.
69. Pupils in Year 2 read fluently and with very good expression when reading a passage of dialogue. Unknown words are reread to help to understand their meaning and how to pronounce unknown words. Higher attaining pupils have a very good recall of the plot, characters and conclusion of books previously read. Pupils are confident in using an index and contents pages. They know the purpose of a glossary. A short session held three times a day to teach pupils how to sound out unknown words is proving to be very effective in extending pupils' repertoire of words, especially to support reading and writing across the curriculum. For example, the words 'slope' and 'bricks' taught in an earlier phonic session were used with the connective 'because' to construct one sentence instead of two. So the sentences 'This is a gentle slope' and 'It has two bricks,' became 'This is a gentle slope because it has two bricks'.
70. Pupils are encouraged to share their thoughts orally. They listen well to teachers and good opportunities are provided for them to talk in pairs before giving answers to questions. For example, pupils recalled apposite words to describe well-known objects in Year 1.
71. As a result of very good teaching, pupils in a streamed lower attaining class were learning how to apply their understanding to a practical situation. In their writing, pupils have learned to use imaginative and powerful descriptors to capture a mood. Pupils wrote, 'The wind was gushing and rushing. The wind was zipping and ripping'. Handwriting is a very well formed italicised script. This is consistently applied and successful, even by pupils with special educational needs who make outstanding progress in a Year 2 class and achieve good standards. There are very good examples of writing in other subjects. For example, in history, a similar emphasis on capturing the mood of the period is reflected in pupils' writing about the Fire of London.

'What a terrible time in the flames.
I could smell smoke.
I could see flames.
I was scared.
Everyone was running and shouting'.

72. By Year 6, pupils read independently with good levels of accuracy, fluency and understanding from a range of high quality books. They talk knowledgeably about favourite authors and recollect events and characters from favourite stories. There are frequent opportunities to develop research skills using the Internet, although less so in the library because it is small and not well used. By Year 6, pupils are provided with a good range of writing tasks. Typically, pupils write confidently in a range of genres. A travel brochure designed and compiled by pupils provided the opportunity to write formal and informal letters, public information, journalistic writing, and non-chronological reports. They understand a range of poetic forms appropriately.
73. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. Their individual education plans contain challenging targets, for example, to write a simple story, read and spell regular verbs and write in a cursive hand writing style. As a consequence of the small groups in which they work, their needs are met very well. Writing is plentiful: they know how to make their writing more imaginative by using adjectives; they compose formal invitations; and make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. There are weaknesses in grammar, an understanding of tenses at times and the quality of handwriting.
74. The good teaching and learning and the organisation of the classes contribute significantly to the good progress made throughout the school. Teaching is consistently very good in Years 2 and 6 resulting in very good achievement in those year groups. In Year 2, pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment for all lessons. This is effective for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Work is generally well-matched to pupils' needs and higher attaining pupils are well challenged. Teachers have secure knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy. Planning is very good. Deployment of additional staff is appropriate as they generally support lower attaining pupils. Relationships are very good and praise is used effectively to motivate pupils and to keep them on task. The pace of lessons is brisk and purposeful. The use of information and communication technology in an excellent lesson in Year 1 contributed significantly to the progress made by pupils of average ability as they used the word bank on an interactive whiteboard to make sentences describing objects using key words. A strong feature of the lesson was the inclusion of a pupil with special educational needs working in partnership with a more able pupil. He used the full stop symbol on the interactive whiteboard to end a sentence with accuracy and displayed a good sense of achievement. He was well supported by his partner. Features of the very good teaching included high expectations, building well on previous learning and a very good pace to the lessons, resulting in pupils enjoying what they do. Learning objectives are shared with pupils, class and group targets are displayed and high attaining pupils know what their targets are and use them to check their work. Marking is good and indicates what pupils need to do to improve.
75. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good in more than half of lessons. Pupils learn effectively in most lessons as a result of the encouragement they are given to think about what they have learned before answering questions. For example, as part of a unit of work on recognising how arguments are constructed, pupils, including those with special educational needs, constructed several sentences putting forward their viewpoint on the merits of an 8pm curfew for children under 12 in Kings Hedges. They formed their initial views effectively through debate that promoted speaking and listening skills well. Questions posed by staff were challenging and 'talk partners' were used appropriately to initiate the debate. An effective teaching method is the use of different thinking hats to help pupils focus on the facts and information or their feelings when explaining their opinions. The pace of learning is very brisk and the plenary session is used well to suggest improvements to pupils' grammar and to expand their ideas. Each pupil has a target booklet against which they check their progress weekly with a mentor. Marking makes good reference to progress which helps pupils to know how well they are achieving and what they need to do to improve their work.
76. Pupils are well behaved and contribute very well in lessons. The organisation of pupils into groups based on their prior attainment is very effective, especially in Year 6, where there are four groups of pupils. All the pupils study the same content, including pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. This is very effective because of the small numbers of pupils in each group and the individual attention they receive.
77. Leadership of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator is a relatively inexperienced teacher and has only been in post for a short time. However, she is tackling the main issues to raise standards rigorously, especially the underachievement of boys in writing by varying the stimuli used to encourage higher quality work and to improve motivation. Resources have been reorganised to provide teachers with suitable books

for guided reading. National test results have been analysed thoroughly and the outcomes fed back to the senior management team. Planning is checked regularly and training has taken place to equip her with the necessary skills to monitor teaching and learning in lessons. There are good procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress, although they are less secure for assessing pupils' progress in guided reading. Resources to support teaching and learning are good.

MATHEMATICS

78. Standards are above national expectations for pupils by the end of Year 2 and are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 6. This represents good achievement overall when compared to the well below average standards on entry.
79. Standards have improved since the last inspection when they were in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and well below national expectations at the end of Year 6. The school has done well to improve on previous standards and this is due to the very good teaching and learning, the curriculum offered to all pupils, the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the introduction of ability grouping of children across classes in Years 2 to 6.
80. The results of the 2002 national tests for seven-year-olds indicated that standards were below the national average for all schools and below the average for similar schools. The school's explanation is that last year's cohort contained fewer pupils with high prior attainment and more pupils with special educational needs. The school has addressed the decline in standards and the inspection evidence indicates that the current pupils in Year 1 and 2 are achieving above average standards.
81. The results of the 2002 national tests for eleven-year-olds indicated standards that were in line with national expectations for all schools and above average for similar schools. A quarter of pupils achieved the higher Level 5, which was in line with national expectations. The results for eleven-year-olds show an improving trend over the last three years and inspection evidence indicates that current Year 6 pupils are continuing to achieve broadly in line with national expectations. This shows good progress as the current Year 6 cohort of children achieved well below average standards at the end of Year 2.
82. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a strong influence on standards of work. The benefits of improved mental recall and the systematic development of mathematical knowledge and understanding are evident in pupils' approaches to investigative work. Pupils are much more confident in their approaches to mathematics. Very good teaching throughout Years 1 and 2, and in Year 6, with good teaching throughout Years 3, 4 and 5, along with a high time allocation to the subject have made significant contributions to pupils' learning and raising standards.
83. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make very good progress in their learning. Teachers give strong and well-targeted emphasis to mental calculations. Pupils in Year 1 confidently recall pairs of numbers that total 10. They then seamlessly move on to the main activity of rearranging 3, 4 or 5 coloured squares to create as many patterns as they can, after setting themselves a personal target. Excellent use was made of information and communication technology in both the demonstration and modelling provided by the teacher as well as use of the interactive whiteboard and other programs by two of the pupils. Pupils in Year 2 continue to improve their speed and competency of recall in mental calculations with the use of number cards and quick fire questions by the teacher to enable children to multiply by 2, 5 and 10. A Year 2 class, comprised entirely of lower attaining and pupils with special educational needs made excellent progress with their learning due to the excellent teaching enabling them to achieve standards which are broadly in line with the national average. In Year 2, many of the pupils have good knowledge of place value up to 1000. As pupils' mental skills improve, the teachers increase the challenge and pupils accurately add pairs of two digit numbers. They make very good progress adding, subtracting and multiplying in order to make a sequence. More able pupils in the other Year 2 class are making very good progress and respond well to open- ended questions and demonstrate initiative in formulating their solutions to mathematical problems. Teachers make good use of praise and humour to promote positive classroom relationships and this has a strong impact on learning.
84. Good progress is maintained in Years 3 to 6. Pupils develop good knowledge of the number system and improve their skills of computation. In Year 3, pupils count forwards and backwards in 5s, 10s and 100s with increasing speed as their confidence and understanding grow. They can identify and classify two-

dimensional shapes using appropriate vocabulary and use measures to find right angles in the classroom. They sort a variety of two-dimensional shapes into those with or without right angles. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress with their learning in appropriate ability groups from Year 3 onwards. The challenge and pace of lessons maintains pupils' interest and develops their motivation to learn. For example, in Year 4 pupils responded enthusiastically to the teacher's challenge to count on and back from minus 5 using a counting stick and to finding numbers which are multiples of 3. Pupils in Year 5 name, estimate, measure and calculate acute and obtuse angles. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of large numbers and use mathematical vocabulary well. They are able to convert fractions to decimals and have a good understanding of percentages. They understand negative numbers and inverse operations. Pupils' knowledge of the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes is good. Data handling is developing well and teachers and pupils are making very good use of information and communication technology.

85. Pupils' attitudes are very good; they enjoy lessons and sustain concentration well. Very good behaviour is maintained throughout lessons as teachers know their pupils well and make considerable efforts in their teaching to ensure everyone is kept interested in all parts of the lesson. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported in their work by both teachers and teaching assistants. More able pupils are well catered for by being given well-planned and appropriate opportunities to extend their learning.
86. The quality of teaching is very good in Years 1 and 2; good in Years 3, 4 and 5; and very good in Year 6. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching was described as satisfactory throughout the school. Lessons are well structured, have clear learning objectives for the mental and oral part of the lesson and for the main activity which are always well communicated to the pupils. Pupils are managed very well. Basic skills are taught thoroughly and the pace of much of the work is good. For example, in a Year 2 lower ability class the teacher's quick fire questioning using flash cards assisted all pupils to make very good progress with their learning. Teachers have high expectations and the work is well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils with special educational needs, with English as an additional language, and those who are more able all make good progress. In a very good lesson in Year 6, the teacher's review of previous learning, using a computer and projector to demonstrate how to use a protractor to measure acute and obtuse angles enabled all pupils to understand and make progress with their learning. Pupils' work is marked regularly, consistently and gives useful comments regarding how well the child has achieved and what they need to do to improve further.
87. The subject has an enthusiastic, effective co-ordinator who has only been in post for a short time. He is receiving appropriate training to undertake the role. All teachers in the school have received training on the delivery of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teaching and pupils' work have been monitored and checked by the co-ordinator with very useful oral and written feedback provided on the findings and what to do to improve further. The co-ordinator has audited the range of resources available throughout the school for mathematics and ensured these are sufficient for the needs of all classes. There is an annual budget for the development of the subject linked to an effective action plan. Resources for teaching mathematics are good, and include projectors and appropriate software to utilise and make effective links with information and communication technology.

SCIENCE

88. Standards of attainment are above average by Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve well. This is a good improvement on the 2002 national test results when standards were above average by Year 6, but average by Year 2 in the teacher assessments. A below average proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in the same tests. The results of the 2002 national tests for eleven-year-olds showed that attainment was well above average when compared to similar schools. The results over the last five years were consistently good and above the national trend. Pupils' progress, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is good overall.
89. By Year 2, pupils sort a range of objects into man-made and natural materials, developing good observational skills. They describe their properties and why they are used for specific purposes, such as in house building. Pupils use their senses appropriately in a study of light and sound sources and are well aware of the world around them. Their understanding of electricity is developing well through creating simple circuits and they showed an awareness of simple forces when describing pushing and pulling. In

their investigation on how different objects move, pupils showed a good understanding of a fair test. They have a good understanding of the function of different parts of the human body and are beginning to appreciate the value of healthy eating and exercise. Pupils have a good knowledge of plants and understand the functions of roots, leaves and flowers. They know the conditions needed for healthy growth.

90. By Year 6, pupils further develop a firm understanding of fair testing through regular investigative work and they appreciate its importance in evaluating the evidence gained. They make reasoned predictions, observe carefully, record neatly and accurately and discuss their conclusions using appropriate scientific vocabulary. Good examples of pupils following this process were seen in their investigations. By Year 6, pupils recognise the difference between solids, liquids and gases according to their properties and understand that some processes of change can be reversed whilst others are irreversible. Pupils apply this knowledge to successfully separate solids and liquids. They understand and explain clearly how and why condensation and evaporation occur, and their links to the water cycle. They understand the need for a varied and healthy diet and can sort items of food into groups of fats and sugar, vitamins and minerals, proteins and carbohydrates. They also appreciate the benefits of regular exercise and its effect on their bodies.
91. Pupils' progress is good across the school. They acquire scientific knowledge about a wide range of topics, which are re-visited at a higher level as they get older. Pupils have a good grasp of scientific vocabulary, and their literacy and numeracy skills are used well to discuss, record and measure scientific findings. They collaborate extremely well in small groups, discussing predictions and outcomes sensibly. They remain on task showing interest, enjoyment and very good attitudes towards the subject.
92. The quality of teaching is mainly good. Members of staff have a secure and confident level of subject knowledge that extends pupils' thinking well. There is a good focus on developing key vocabulary and clear scientific language. Planning is detailed and is developed in clear steps. The teachers' question and answer sessions are particularly good and this consolidates learning at the start of the lesson and indicates at the end just what pupils have learned. Teachers often link the work to examples from everyday life and this makes pupils realise the relevance to their own lives. Work is regularly marked with good developmental points.
93. There is sometimes a lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils. Some of the investigations are too teacher-led and lessons are overlong. Opportunities for the older and higher attaining pupils to design their own investigations and recordings are often missed.
94. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work but has only been the co-ordinator for a short period and, as such, has not yet made an impact on the development of the subject. Resources for the subject are generally good and easily accessible.

ART AND DESIGN

95. The standards are good and above national expectations throughout the school. Around the school, pupils' carefully mounted and displayed work shows a good range of two and three-dimensional work. All teachers take great care to create a bright and attractive environment in which all pupils' work is celebrated. In Year 6, pupils are familiar with a wide range of materials, tools and techniques used in art, craft and design. Teachers and support staff give pupils with special educational needs good support within lessons. Since the previous inspection there have been good improvements in standards throughout the school. All pupils have made good progress in judging what is good about their own work and other pupils' work and can explain how the work can be improved. Pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 have made good progress in learning about and appreciating the work of other artists.
96. Teachers plan lessons so that the pupils experience a wide range of activities that develop their skills and techniques as they move through the school. For example, Year 1 pupils mix paints for portraits including 'self portraits with a hat'. Year 4 pupils paint pictures of landscapes showing a background, middle ground and foreground and Year 6 pupils paint portraits based on the work of the Pre-Raphaelites showing tone and different facial expressions. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to plan their work, practise skills and say what they like about their work and what they would change. For example, the

pupils in Year 2 practise drawing people before making three-dimensional models of the characters from the story of Katie Morag. Pupils in Year 5 study the 'Field for the British Isles' by sculptor Anthony Gormley. They describe effectively the sculpture, draw repeating patterns, make a model from plastic cotton reels based on the sculpture and then make a model in clay. Year 4 pupils design a chair for Harry Potter and write what they could do to improve their design. 'I think we can improve our chair by adding a bag full of spells on the side.' Although teachers collect examples of pupils' work in sketchbooks they do not all use them to assess the progress pupils are making.

97. There are good links with other subjects. For example, Year 4 pupils paint portraits of Henry VIII and his wives and Year 6 pupils paint portraits after studying the work of the Pre-Raphaelite painters linked to their work about the Victorians. In work linked to geography Year 2 pupils make three-dimensional models of the characters in the stories about Katie Morag. Pupils in Year 4 use their information and communication skills effectively by using the computer to write a story with images. Pupils learn about the work of artists and make their own pictures based on the artist's work. For example, pupils in Year 2 make their own high quality prints after looking at the work of Andy Warhol. Pupils learn about other cultures. For example, they make Rangoli patterns and draw pictures of a mosque. Teachers raise pupils' awareness and enthusiasm for art by organising projects such as the annual art exhibition and the Big Arts Week.
98. Teaching is very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers are hardworking and enthusiastic and know what they have to teach which enables them to explain the work in a lively and interesting way. They plan work that is just at the right level for the pupils but challenging enough to make sure pupils learn and make good progress. They place the right emphasis on the teaching of investigative, designing, making and evaluative skills and give pupils time to develop these skills over several lessons. For example, Year 2 pupils have five lessons to develop their prints based on the work of Andy Warhol. Teachers and support assistants use questions to find out what pupils know and to make pupils think more about their work. For example, at the beginning of a Year 4 lesson the teacher asked questions to check pupils' understanding of previous work on imaginary landscapes and in a Year 2 lesson a learning support assistant asked pupils which part of the work they found the hardest.
99. The coordinator provides very good leadership and supports colleagues well. She has had regular opportunities to work alongside colleagues. This has allowed her to use her considerable personal knowledge and skill very effectively to support and encourage colleagues. She has started to develop good links with other schools so that pupils can work with art specialists. For example, pupils in Year 1 visited a local secondary school and were taught how to make clay pots by a potter. She knows the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. She has plans to improve resources, use information and communication technology more effectively, and develop links with a regional college.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. No lessons were observed during the inspection. However, from a scrutiny of teachers' planning, previous work and discussions with teachers and pupils, it is possible to say that standards are good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' progress in designing and making skills is good across the school and their evaluating skills are developing well. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
101. By Year 2, pupils make a range of constructions. For example, the younger pupils looked at a variety of materials before setting up their own looms and creating individual weaving. They showed good motor skills in altering, folding, cutting and joining in their three-dimensional work of paper sculptures and coil pots. The pots were beautifully and individually decorated showing care and imagination. Pupils in Year 1 designed their own fabric pattern for 'Joseph's coat of many colours' and used a variety of making skills to produce a finished article of which they are proud. They listed the resources needed, chose their own colours and materials for the design, wrote clear instructions with labelled drawings and evaluated the finished item. They have planned, made and evaluated fruit kebabs and fruit salads, and are aware of the need for care when cutting, and hygiene when handling, food.
102. By Year 6, pupils continue to design, make and evaluate items, often linked to a topic. Good use has been made of electrical and pneumatic forces to create movement in wheeled buggies and in 'Mummy Cases'. The wheeled buggies, made by Year 6 pupils as bases for carnival floats, show good skills in cutting, joining and strengthening following the same design. They also use rods, pulleys and drive belts

appropriately. A variety of puppets have been produced using bright and colourful materials and papier mache. They were well tested and evaluated during performances for younger pupils. In food technology, Year 5 pupils have designed and created different kinds of bread, which were evaluated by tasting.

103. The recently appointed co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is beginning to make an impact on the subject by monitoring and evaluating the pupils' work. Resources are good and plentiful.

GEOGRAPHY

104. Standards meet national expectations by Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress and pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress. Since the last inspection, there have been several improvements. Teaching is now consistently good and teachers plan work that builds well on what pupils have learnt before. The work is carefully matched to pupils' different abilities and is interesting so they work hard and behave very well. Teachers make sure that pupils learn about different areas in Britain and about other countries. The use of information and communication technology is limited.
105. Pupils learn about their own community as well as other places and gradually learn geographical vocabulary. In Year 1, pupils know about the traffic around the school by comparing the number of vehicles on 'quiet' and 'busy' roads. Pupils in Year 2 compare how land and buildings are used on the imaginary Isle of Struay and in Cambridge and say where they would prefer to live. For example, a Year 2 pupil wrote, 'I would prefer to live in Cambridge because there are football pitches. There are cars and they are useful'. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of geographical vocabulary and correctly label cliffs, mountains, bays, rivers and valleys on a map of Struay. In Year 4, pupils have a good understanding of the different ways land is used in an Indian village and Cambridge. They can explain why some jobs are the same in both places and some are different. In Year 5, pupils complete some good work on how the local area would be affected by a new local development and find out what other people think by asking questions such as 'Should people build over Roman remains and the Iron Age Fort at Arbury camp'.
106. Pupils develop their mapping skills and some of the skills of geographical enquiry that help them find out more information. Pupils in Year 1 completed a 'picture map' of their journey from the school to the park and correctly labelled buildings they see such as the post office and car park. In Year 4, pupils find India on a world map and on a large-scale map find out the crops that grow in Chembakolli. In Year 6, pupils found rivers in atlases and on maps. Some good links are made with other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 1 use the skills they have learnt in mathematics to complete a tally chart of the traffic they see and pupils in Year 4 use a computer program to find out more about life in Chembakolli.
107. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Teachers use questions very well to check what pupils know and to make them think more about their work. Teachers plan work that is just at the right level for the pupils so they make good progress. Teachers know what the pupils with special educational needs find difficult and set them tasks that they can do. Teachers give pupils interesting activities so they work hard and are very enthusiastic. For example, pupils in Year 1 are very excited and concentrate well when they complete a traffic survey by counting the vehicles on a 'quiet' road and a 'busy' road. Because of these good features pupils are keen to learn and behave very well. Pupils share well and help one another when they work in pairs or groups. For example, the pupils in Year 4 work well in pairs. They talk about the photographs they are given of Chembakolli and help one another to answer questions. The units of work are not always studied in sufficient depth and only one unit is studied in Year 6 because the school gives teaching the core subjects a high priority.
108. The enthusiastic coordinator is committed to developing teachers' subject knowledge and to raising standards in geography. She finds out about new developments in the subject by attending the meetings that are provided by local education authority advisers. Though she has looked at pupils' work to find out what they have learnt she has not yet observed any teaching of geography. She has clear plans for the further development of the subject throughout the school. These include purchasing more resources linked to the work studied, extending the use of information and communication technology and finding different ways to teach geography through, for example, drama and art and design.

HISTORY

109. By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils achieve the standards nationally. Throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory progress in what they know and understand about events, people, and changes in the past and develop satisfactory enquiry skills. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress. There have been satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. Pupils use information and communication technology to research historical events. Teachers give pupils more interesting work so pupils behave well and work hard.
110. By Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of people and events from the past. They compare people's lives in the past with their experience of the present day and can say what is different and what is the same. Pupils know about the life and work of Florence Nightingale and know that hospitals during the Crimea War were different from hospitals in Cambridge today. For example, a pupil wrote, 'Most people got poorly with no heating and rats and mice on the floor.' Year 2 pupils know where and why the Fire of London began, why it spread so quickly and how long it lasted. They are beginning to understand that there can be different points of view about historical events. Some pupils think the Fire of London 'was bad because houses burnt down and people died' and some think it was 'good because the old houses burnt down and could be built again.' In Year 3 they know that the Celts lived in houses of wood and straw and the Romans lived in stone houses.
111. By Year 2, pupils know about Victorian schools and make comparisons with their own school. In Year 6, pupils' work in history supports their reading and writing. For example, pupils put themselves in the place of Florence Nightingale and write part of her diary. There are a few examples of pupils using their literacy skills in Year 3 to 6 such as the Year 3 pupils writing a letter from a member of the Iceni tribe to his parents but these opportunities need to be extended. In Year 4, pupils make satisfactory use of the internet to find out about life in Ancient Greece. Links are made to art and design. For example, Year 2 pupils drew pictures of the Fire of London and made models of houses in London before the Fire of London. In a special Tudor Day the Year 4 pupils found out more about life in the time of the Tudors and tried different activities such as candle making.
112. It is not possible to make a judgement about the teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 as history was not taught in these year groups during the inspection. Teaching is satisfactory in Year 3 and Year 5. There are some good features in the lessons. Teachers give clear explanations so pupils learn new things and know what they have to do. Teachers expect good standards of behaviour and give praise to encourage pupils. Teachers use resources well. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils watched a video about life in schools in Ancient Greece and used the Internet to find further information about Ancient Greece. Teachers make history interesting. For example, in a Year 3 lesson about the Roman invasion, teachers take on the roles of different characters to help pupils understand that events can be seen from different points of view.
113. Teachers do not always give work that is at the right level for pupils and it often relies too much on their reading and writing skills so they cannot finish the work in the time they are given. Teachers do not spend enough time teaching pupils the dates and order of historical events so pupils do not have a clear understanding of the passage of time. For example, although the pupils in Year 5 know that the people in Ancient Greece lived before the Tudors but they do not know when they lived or many years before the Tudors. Although the work is planned following national guidance the topics are not always taught in sufficient detail in Years 3 to 6. Teachers do not always have sufficient resources for the units of work.
114. The newly appointed coordinator works hard and is very committed. She has made a list of resources that teachers can use for each area of study and has bought some additional resources. She has looked at the work in pupils' books so she knows what pupils have been taught but has not been able to monitor the teaching and learning in the classroom. She has an understanding of the strengths and areas for development. She has clear plans of what she needs to do to improve the teaching and learning of history and to raise standards and is in a good position to implement them.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

115. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations at ages seven and eleven. This demonstrates a good improvement since the last inspection when standards were described as unsatisfactory. The

quality of learning is good overall throughout the school. In Year 1 and Year 6 it is very good. Pupils in Year 1 use information and communication technology to assemble text and symbols to help them communicate ideas. In a literacy lesson, pupils used an interactive whiteboard and word bank to make a sentence describing objects using key words and in a numeracy lesson made different patterns using three, four or five coloured squares. However, access to only two computers in the classroom inhibits further learning in terms of all pupils being able immediately to practise and develop this skill. In Year 2, pupils undertake a search using an index in order to locate specific information. Again, the learning is inhibited by only having access to two computers in the classroom. Work on display and discussion with pupils, shows that they can save and retrieve information, alter the font, size and colour to print out their names. They can write and correct short passages using a word-processor and use a computer to create pictures.

116. By the end of Year 4 pupils manipulate text well. They confidently change the size and type of font, cut, move and copy text and can use a spell check. Pupils in a Year 6 lesson keenly demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding in reference to the internet and e-mail. They demonstrate an avid and enthusiastic response to the subject and are keen to practise what they know and have learnt when they respond to receiving an e-mail before constructing and sending a reply. They are able to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of sending a letter and e-mail. Their word-processing skills are satisfactory.
117. Not all pupils have sufficient time using computers to develop their skills effectively, although the improvement in the number of computers available recently has provided more opportunities for access, which has had a good impact on learning. Year 1 and 2 pupils have access to two computers in their classrooms and Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 have access to four computers in their classrooms. The school has no computer suite and so teachers demonstrate and model skills on the computers in their classrooms and let the pupils practise at other times.
118. Pupils have no anxieties about using technology. In Year 1 children are confidently using computers, a laptop and interactive whiteboard. Year 3 pupils are saving and printing their work. Year 6 pupils are confidently receiving, saving, deleting, and sending e-mails. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language learn at the same rate as other pupils.
119. Pupils' attitudes to the use of computers and technology are good across the school. Their behaviour is very good and they treat the equipment with appropriate respect. They sustain concentration, listen to their teachers and enjoy the opportunities they are given to use technology.
120. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. This is a significant change since the last inspection when there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement. In Year 1 the teaching is excellent and in Year 6 it is very good. Effective routines are established and pupils given opportunities to develop the key skills they need in order to make good progress. Learning can be inhibited by the provision of two or four computers in classrooms but teachers make the best use of the provision available. In the best lessons, computer skills are taught thoroughly with good support from teaching assistants, high quality teacher subject knowledge and pupils being well managed and given opportunities to explain and evaluate their learning. Clear learning objectives are fully explained to pupils at the beginning of the lesson and the learning is evaluated at the end of the lesson.
121. The subject is well led and managed by the enthusiastic and experienced co-ordinator who has contributed significantly to the improvements made since the last inspection. The deputy headteacher provides very good support. A good policy is in place along with an action plan which is designed to improve the long term provision in the school, improve the quality of teaching further, and continue to raise standards. The quality of teaching has been monitored, pupils' work checked and effective assessment systems introduced to track and record individual progress. The co-ordinator has made a significant contribution to ensure that statutory requirements are now met.

MUSIC

122. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are average. There have been very good improvements since the last inspection when a number of areas were judged to be poor. Standards in music were unsatisfactory and are now average. The quality of teaching has also improved as no unsatisfactory teaching was observed.

Progress is satisfactory as the pupils develop the appropriate skills and an appreciation and understanding of music. All pupils enjoy music and respond positively whereas, in the previous inspection, attitudes towards learning were unsatisfactory in over a third of lessons.

123. By age seven, pupils know what pitch is; they recognise high and low pitched notes on the chime bars. They “compose” a simple piece of music based on two pitched notes and record their composition on a two-line staff to show the order in which the notes should be played. Pupils sing with enthusiasm and interest, enjoying a number of action songs especially when untuned percussion is added as an accompaniment. They sing from memory, making a pleasant sound and adding some dynamics: loud and soft. By the age of eleven pupils are developing an understanding of notation, scales and appropriate musical vocabulary. During a lesson, pupils experimented with simple tunes and listened to them played in a minor key instead of the well-known major key. The oldest pupils also enjoy singing and participate with enthusiasm. They sing in tune and with clear words and sustained long notes. The choice of songs appeals to them and they give of their best. The music teacher links a new song to a previous music lesson when the differences between the sound of music played in a major or minor key were explored. Pupils successfully sustain this song as a two part round.
124. All pupils have a very positive attitude towards music and because the teacher is so enthusiastic and knowledgeable they are motivated to achieve well. They remain well focused on the tasks, collaborating and sharing ideas, even when the task is challenging. They listen carefully and are keen to respond to questions. Because of good relationships they are confident to perform for their peers. However, limited opportunity is provided for pupils to appraise these performances, an area for further development.
125. The use of a specialist music teacher, appointed since the last inspection has had a very positive effect on the teaching of music across the school and the standards achieved. She is responsible for all music taught, except Year 2: the knowledgeable and competent class teacher takes both Year 2 classes. Teaching is good with some excellent teaching. The music teacher is very knowledgeable, being particularly skilled in developing singing. This was observed during singing when techniques were shown and a sense of humour and vitality permeated the session, motivating the pupils to sing with enthusiasm. Questioning is used effectively to extend or reinforce pupils’ knowledge. There is good liaison between the two teachers to ensure relevant skills are developed in Year 2.
126. The music teacher has developed a scheme of work based on the nationally recommended scheme with the addition of her own practical examples and activities. Pupils have the opportunity to join the choir, play the recorder, keyboards, chimes, and to belong to a bands, including a salsa band. The choir regularly sings within the community and is going to perform in the Guildhall. Pupils take part in school productions at Christmas and Easter and Year 6 pupils at the end of the summer term. Occasionally, musicians visit the school and provide workshops, for example the drummer from a well-known pop group. All these opportunities enhance the music curriculum and help to develop pupils’ understanding and appreciation of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. Standards are above average at the age of seven and eleven and have improved since the last inspection when they were described as average. The quality of learning is good or better in most lessons. In Year 2 and Year 6 it is very good. Pupils in Year 1 show good control of their bodies when making a range of different shapes on the floor and when jumping. They are able to move over, under and through large apparatus, taking turns when working in pairs. They make good progress with their learning because of the good teacher intervention and good coaching for improvement. Year 2 pupils demonstrate very good control of their bodies when working on the apparatus, are beginning to evaluate their own and other pupils’ performances and are aware that the heart beats faster after physical exercise. Good progress is sustained throughout the Key Stage. Year 3 pupils compose and control their movements very well by varying their shape and direction linked to work on clocks and the sound of a metronome in a dance lesson. Year 6 pupils demonstrate very good control and skills when sending and receiving a ball using a tennis racquet, improving their forehand and backhand volleys.
128. Pupils throughout the school have very good attitudes to physical education and they behave very well in lessons. They work safely, alone, in pairs or groups. They often make judgements about their own and others’ performance and use this evaluation to improve the accuracy and quality of their movements. They

keenly and enthusiastically exert energy over the course of a lesson and demonstrate a thorough knowledge and understanding of what is happening to their bodies during rigorous exercise.

129. The lessons observed were in gymnastics, dance and games. Teachers' planning indicates that athletics, adventurous outdoor activities and swimming also form part of the physical education curriculum. Although swimming lessons were not observed during the inspection, records of achievement and discussion with the subject co-ordinator and Year 6 pupils indicate that all pupils receive the opportunity to undertake swimming lessons during Key Stage 2 and that most children can swim the 25 metres expected nationally by the time they leave the school.
130. The quality of teaching is good or better throughout the school. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching was described as satisfactory throughout the school. In Year 2 and Year 6 the quality of teaching is very good. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of physical education and lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives that are communicated to the pupils at the beginning of all lessons. Pupils are very well managed. Effective and varied teaching strategies are used to maximise the potential for learning. Lessons have good pace, rigor and challenge pupils of all abilities. Plenary sessions with appropriate feedback are especially good features of the best lessons and enable pupils to evaluate their performance and articulate how it can be improved.
131. Pupils maintain their high level contributions and success at local and regional levels in a range of activities including football, cricket and athletics. Achievements are enhanced by the very good range and high quality provision of extra-curricular sporting activities in which all pupils, including those with special educational needs are catered for. Competitive football matches against other schools, for boys, and girls, were both observed during the inspection. Competitive cricket and athletics fixtures take place in the summer term. Levels of participation in extra-curricular sporting activities enjoyed by boys and girls are high. The very good work of the subject co-ordinator and teaching staff is complemented by external coaches who visit the school in order to enhance the provision, quality of teaching and standards of achievement.
132. The subject is well led and managed by the enthusiastic co-ordinator and this contributes significantly to the impressive provision and standards achieved. A good policy is in place with resources to ensure coverage of all aspects of physical education. There is an annual budget for the development of the subject linked to an appropriate action plan. Good plans are in place to monitor the quality of teaching, check pupils' work and further develop the subject throughout the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

133. Standards are in line with expectations by the age of eleven and have been maintained since the last inspection. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one lesson in Years 1 and 2 and two lessons in Years 3 to 6, so additional evidence was obtained from work scrutiny, planning, interviewing Year 2 pupils and the subject co-ordinator. Year 2 pupils are very knowledgeable about Christianity recalling many facts about the Christmas story and Jesus' birth. They know the wisemen had presented the baby Jesus with frankincense, gold, and myrrh and that Mary and Joseph had to flee to Egypt. They remembered that Jesus told stories called parables and performed miracles. However, they could not recall any information about other faiths. In Year 1, pupils know that the Bible is a special book for Christians and contains messages about "being good and kind". Attainment by the age of seven is barely in line with expectations because although pupils are very knowledgeable about Christianity they have little knowledge or understanding of other faiths. Despite lack of written evidence from Year 6 pupils, it was clear from the lesson observed that they know a range of facts about Judaism. They talked about the Torah and its importance to Jews, knowing it is never completely unrolled or touched by hand but read using a "shad" and that it is written in Hebrew. They are also aware of other faiths such as Buddhism and Islam. They respond positively to questions in assembly about Jesus and his miracles.
134. The quality of learning is satisfactory across the school. Much lesson time is spent in discussing relevant themes and often pupils do not record the outcome so there is insufficient written work produced to support and consolidate the oral work done in lessons, an area for further development. Pupils enjoy the subject and like sharing the information they have found, for example information about Jewish artefacts found on the Internet. The youngest pupils are very interested in the Bible and the different versions of the

story of Jonah. The Jewish artefacts they discover on the Internet fascinate the oldest pupils. They are well focused on the tasks set and respond positively to teachers' questions.

135. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages, an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory. The teachers' knowledge is good and questioning is used effectively to reinforce or extend pupils' knowledge. A range of teaching styles is used as pupils discuss or act out themes. This helps to focus pupils' attention on the topic. Where necessary teachers are aware of the sensitive nature of the topic they are discussing and how it might affect the pupils. The good relationships between teachers and pupils give them confidence to talk about their faiths or what they have found from their research. Teachers use the final group session well, to draw together pupils' thoughts, valuing their comments.
136. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and interested but, as the subject has not been a priority, has had little time to develop the role. The present scheme is based on the locally agreed syllabus but recently this has been updated. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to review the existing planning and to ensure the new syllabus is implemented. Resources have been audited and new artefacts for each religion studied are available. The local vicar is a regular visitor to the school, often leading assembly. The school is also well supported by the local Islamic community. All pupils visit the church to help them understand Christian worship and, when relevant, some visit a mosque. Pupils are encouraged to share their faiths and festival celebrations such as Diwali and Eid, with their peers. All these enhance pupils' understanding of other faiths and their importance to those who follow them.