

INSPECTION REPORT

ELY ST. MARY'S C OF E JUNIOR SCHOOL

Ely

LEA area: Cambridgeshire County Council

Unique reference number: 110842

Headteacher: Chris Munt

Reporting inspector: Brian Aldridge
17454

Dates of inspection: 23rd to 26th September 2002

Inspection number: 247062

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior School
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	7-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Barns Ely Cambridgeshire
Postcode:	CB7 4RB
Telephone number:	01353 662163
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Canon Fred Kilner
Date of previous inspection:	17/11/1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17454	Brian Aldridge	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT) Music	What should the school do to improve further The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents
17857	David Walters	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Geography Physical education	
22671	David White	Team inspector	Educational inclusion Mathematics History Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
23453	Carole Cressey	Team inspector	English as an additional language English Art and design Design and technology	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's CE Junior School is situated in the north of the City of Ely. With 350 pupils (187 boys and 163 girls), it is larger than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. There are five pupils of minority ethnic heritage, three of whom speak English as their second language and receive support. There is one child from a Traveller background. Of the 69 pupils with special educational needs, eight have a statement. The first of these proportions is above average and the second slightly above average. The needs of individual pupils include moderate learning, emotional, behavioural, social, physical and specific learning difficulties. Two teachers started teaching in the school two weeks before the inspection. Pupils enter the school with broadly average levels of attainment although this differs from year to year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school which is well run by the headteacher and governors. Standards are above average because teaching is good and the school's curriculum is interesting. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- The school is well led.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- All pupils are well cared for and enjoy equal opportunities.

What could be improved

- Some aspects of information and communication technology (ICT).
- Some aspects of assessment.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Almost all aspects of the school's work have improved since the last inspection in November 1997 and the school is well placed to make further improvements. Following the last inspection standards dropped for a time but they are now above those found in 1997. The issues identified for the school to address have been tackled well. Standards in ICT and design and technology have improved. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when almost one-fifth of the lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. No observations of unsatisfactory teaching were made in this inspection and the proportion of very good and excellent teaching has risen from one-tenth to over one-third. The headteacher and teachers make a good job of checking on the quality of teaching and governors meet the requirements for health and safety legislation.

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
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	C	C	D
Mathematics	B	D	E	E
Science	B	C	C	C

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

The results in 2000 and 2001 dipped below the school's usual trend largely because there was a higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs in these year groups. The results for 2002 have improved and are likely to be above average in English and average in mathematics and science. Better teaching and learning opportunities have also led to improved standards. The school is setting itself demanding targets for all year groups and has exceeded them. The difference in performance between boys and girls is narrowing from what was a significant gap.

Inspectors found that in English, mathematics, science, art and design, music and history standards are above the expected levels for Year 6 pupils. As pupils enter the school attaining average levels, they achieve well and make good progress in these areas of learning. In all other subjects standards are at the expected levels. Pupils with special educational needs, those who are learning English as an additional language, pupils from minority ethnic families, including those from Traveller backgrounds, learn well. The school plans work that challenges and supports all groups of pupils including those who learn faster than most other pupils. The progress of pupils who have a musical talent is particularly good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good across the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Generally good but a small group of pupils in each class do not react well to their teacher's instructions.
Personal development and relationships	Good; the school's residential activities and welfare arrangements help pupils to become mature and responsible.
Attendance	Good; pupils like coming to school.

Younger pupils find it difficult to settle to practical work and some older pupils do not get on well together. The school has taken good steps to improve this aspect of the school's provision.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and consequent learning opportunities are very good and at times excellent in Year 5. In Years 3, 4 and 6 teaching is consistently good. The basic skills of reading, writing and number are taught well. Good, and at times very good, subject knowledge ensures teachers plan interesting and challenging lessons for all groups of pupils, whatever their ability or background. Pupils with special educational needs learn very well because of the support they receive. All pupils are included in all class activities. During lessons pupils' progress is assessed well although there are differences in the quality of marking and few meaningful targets are set. Management of behaviour is generally good and homework is well balanced and useful. Learning is particularly good in the classes and subjects taught by specialist teachers. ICT is taught well in the computer suite but is not practised enough in classrooms.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good; the school has planned an interesting curriculum full of practical work.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; early identification and action ensures pupils' needs are effectively met.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good; pupils learn English quickly and they perform well in National Curriculum tests.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall; the provision for spiritual development is satisfactory and some opportunities are missed in lessons and assemblies. Other aspects have good provision and this helps pupils develop well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good; the school takes its responsibilities very seriously.

The school works well with parents and tries hard to keep them well informed. The regular questionnaires help the school determine how to meet parents' requests. Of particular note within the curriculum is the programme of musical activities and residential visits. The school collects lots of relevant assessment information but does not use the information well enough to measure pupils' progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a good leader and manager and is ably supported by the assistant headteacher and coordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors know the school well; they review pupils' work regularly and have developed useful links with coordinators and year groups.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has very good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses and has used this information to form good plans for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Very good; the headteacher and governors are highly skilled financial managers.

The school is well staffed and accommodation is good. Resources are building well from a low base; the headteacher, governors and subject leaders have exercised great restraint over the past few years when finances were low. School management of meals and grounds maintenance has released more funds to upgrade resources. The principles of best value are applied very well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like coming to school and their behaviour is good. • Children receive the right amount of work, are expected to work hard and are helped to become mature. • Teaching is good and children make good progress. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The homework routines of the school • The quality of reports and number of parents' meetings.

Parents are positive about the work of the school and inspectors agree with these views. Inspectors judge that homework is set and used well to support class-based learning. The school is aware of concerns about a third parents' evening and the quality of reports and has arrangements in hand to meet parents' needs.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. At the last inspection standards were judged to be above average in English and average in mathematics and science. Attainment in music and history was above the expected levels and in art and geography it was average. Progress in these subjects was at least satisfactory. Attainment in gymnastics, design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT) was below the expected levels and progress was judged to be unsatisfactory. In general boys' attainment was said to be lower than girls. Inspectors concluded that this lack of progress was due to a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, which had not been checked regularly, and unsatisfactory learning opportunities in some subjects.
2. For the two years, 2000 and 2001, the school's results in national tests dropped from above average in 1999, to average in English and science and below and well below average in mathematics. The fall in standards was largely the result of higher than average proportions of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 in those two years and also because of the continuing impact of unsatisfactory teaching and learning opportunities. The relatively high proportion of pupils who change school each year complicates further the promotion of pupils' achievements. Pupils enter the school with broadly average levels of attainment although this differs from year to year. In the present Year 6 the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is about average.
3. The results of the 2002 national tests show a marked increase in the number of pupils achieving the expected levels although there are no national figures to act as comparators. However, in comparison to the 2001 national figures, all subjects show an improvement and, in particular, mathematics scores have risen well. The scores over the past few years have shown that girls out-perform boys. However, recent results show this gap to be closing.
4. Inspectors carried out an analysis of the rates of achievement of Year 6 pupils for the four-year period from September 1999 to July 2002. When the proportions are adjusted to take account of those pupils who move schools the assessments show that in English and mathematics about 70 per cent of all the pupils made better than expected progress and boys made more rapid progress than girls over the same period. Almost 90 per cent of the pupils made at least satisfactory progress. Some pupils with special educational needs made the best progress, entering the school as seven-year-olds with below average results and leaving with results above the average expected of eleven-year-olds.
5. Inspectors find that pupils in Year 6 are now achieving above average standards in English, mathematics and science. In the five years since the last inspection the school has made improvements in the quality of teaching. Learning opportunities and assessment arrangements have been improved and as a result the rate of pupils' achievement has increased. Standards in ICT are now at the expected levels in some strands but remain weak in others because teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in classroom lessons; however, standards show a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Standards in design and technology and gymnastics are average and have shown a good rate of improvement. Standards remain at the expected levels in geography. In history, music and art and

design standards are above average, maintaining the standards seen at the last inspection. The rate of boys' achievement is improving because teachers now concentrate on providing practical activities in which boys do well. Overall, achievement rates have improved since the last inspection and are now good; however, there remains room for improvement and a sharper focus on measuring pupils' progress and setting individual targets will help raise the stakes for each pupil and the school.

6. The quality of learning and the rate of achievement across the school as a whole is good overall but variations between the four year groups largely reflect differences in the quality of teaching. The rate of achievement ranges from satisfactory to good in Years 3, 4 and 5 although even within these year groups some classes show better rates of achievement than others. In Year 5 most of the teaching is at least very good and an analysis of pupils' books show that the rate of achievement is rapid.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The generous staffing level means that these pupils are given a great deal of assistance in most lessons and this enhances their understanding of tasks, their concentration and their progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Many pupils arrive at the school without clear identification of their learning difficulties. Early and accurate identification combined with very effective small group support has a positive impact on pupils, enabling them to participate fully in class activities. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs are provided with the support that has been deemed necessary. They also make good progress.
8. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language, pupils from minority ethnic families, including those from Traveller backgrounds, achieve well. This is due to the school working hard to make newcomers feel welcome and, for those pupils who are new to English or learning, setting up relevant programmes of work to ensure they learn the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Pupils who show talents in music, for example, are served well. There is a wide range of music tuition and no pupil, whatever their background, is excluded from taking up a musical instrument.
9. The school has experienced a degree of fluctuation in performance since the past inspection. Following improvements to teaching and learning opportunities and a clear focus on using assessment results to set targets for each pupil, rates of achievement are improving and hence standards are rising.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' good attitudes to school, good behaviour and levels of attendance have a positive impact on their personal development and academic achievements. Standards are similar to and, in the case of attendance, higher than those reported at the previous inspection.
11. Pupils like coming to school and are keen to take part in activities. Parents are very positive in stating how much their children love coming to school. The level of interest in extra-curricular activities is high. For example, a large number of pupils eagerly participate in netball and others strive hard to improve their music skills in the orchestra.
12. Overall pupils show good attitudes to learning in lessons. In Year 3 and occasionally in Year 4 pupils have not established good work habits and teachers have to work hard to keep their attention and interest. This was seen in a Year 3 English lesson where an

otherwise stimulating question and answer session about settings for a story was spoilt by pupils shouting out and the teacher constantly having to stop them and ask them to raise their hand before speaking. This contrasts with the good learning that resulted from the very positive attitudes shown by pupils in a Year 6 English lesson where pupils' fruitful interactions resulted in a stimulating discussion about Romeo and Juliet. In the majority of lessons observed pupils showed a high level of interest in their work and most tried hard to learn. In Year 3 many pupils find concentration for longer periods of time difficult to sustain especially in practical tasks.

13. Behaviour is generally good. There has been one temporary and no permanent exclusions over the last year, a figure well below the national average. Most pupils are developing a good sense of fairness and awareness of the impact of their actions on others. There is a small but significant number of pupils, mostly boys and the majority in Year 6, who show a lack of respect for their teachers and concern for fellow pupils and behave in an immature manner; for example, moving a chair in front of a pupil in the dining room. Some inappropriate language and rough behaviour was seen at playtimes and pupils report that many more bumps and scrapes occur when play is restricted to the hard areas as opposed to the field. No direct bullying was observed during the inspection and pupils and parents have few worries about oppressive, racist or sexist attitudes and behaviour.
14. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils undertake a good range of duties and responsibilities. For example, house captains and monitors undertake their duties eagerly; they willingly give up their lunchtime to help with collating newsletters for parents in the office. Pupils' independence and self-confidence is developed well through the provision of residential visits in Years 4, 5, and 6. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their experiences on these visits. Pupils show pride in their achievements, especially when nominated by their peers as "star of the week".
15. In lessons most pupils with special educational needs behave well and are fully integrated into the lesson. They co-operate effectively with their fellow pupils in groups in lessons such as science and physical education. With the help of learning support staff, their self-confidence and ability to work on their own develops very well where it is part of the planned lesson objective. A Year 5 group showed this clearly when left to choose their own words. Their responses indicated they had a secure understanding of the science material they were using. In small groups, pupils cooperate happily and share enthusiastically the success of others. The transfer of skills, confidence and knowledge from small groups to the main classroom is very good. Some pupils have targets to improve their behaviour towards other pupils and are making satisfactory progress, acquiring a sense of appropriate behaviour in different circumstances.
16. Most pupils show an aspiration to learn and develop expressive and creative skills in accordance with their positive approach to school. For instance, in a Year 5 art and design lesson there was a buzz of excitement as groups explored a display of plates, fruits and jugs set up to help them develop techniques in still life drawing. Their appreciation of the excitement of learning is limited by opportunities to reflect in lessons. They examine issues about moral values, such as peer pressure, and various religions well through assemblies and personal and social education lessons. Their appreciation of art, music and literature including aspects of non-European cultures is developing well with good stimulation from the school. Response to health education issues is good.
17. Relationships are good throughout the school. Most pupils are polite, friendly and helpful to others. Pupils respond well to developing their relationships through

residential visits and performances. Most are appreciative of the efforts of others, as in a Year 5 physical education lesson when there was a spontaneous burst of applause for a good demonstration of a sequence of movements. On a few occasions a small number showed by their unkind laughter, a lack of concern and respect for the efforts of others.

18. Overall attendance levels are good and have improved in the last year to be above the national average. Few pupils are late, allowing lessons to start promptly. The level of unauthorised absences is low. The level of attendance further demonstrates the pupil's keenness for school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT

19. The quality of teaching is now good and there has been a significant improvement since the last inspection. Of the lessons observed by inspectors, just over a third were at least very good (one in five of those was excellent), just under a half were good and a fifth were satisfactory. There were no instances of unsatisfactory teaching. During the last inspection most teaching was judged to be satisfactory. It was good in over a third and very good or excellent in a tenth of lessons. Just under a fifth of lessons were unsatisfactory. The improvement in the quality of teaching is good and is due, in particular, to two factors:
 - The quality of teaching is now monitored well and teachers receive regular and good quality advice about how to improve their skills. These systems were not in operation when the school was last inspected. A significant improvement has been made in this respect.
 - As a result of the last inspection the headteacher and governors adopted a determined policy to improve the quality of teaching. New teachers improved and broadened the range of teaching skills available. The headteacher and governors are careful to ensure that the skills of all prospective teachers are checked by colleagues before appointment.
20. At the time of the last inspection the consistency of teaching varied considerably. The quality of teaching has improved, the consistency is generally better too and there are many positive features of teaching that are found in all classes. However, there are still differences between the year groups and between teachers within year groups. For example, by far the most consistently high quality teaching was found in Year 5. In almost 70 per cent of the lessons observed in this year group, the quality of teaching was either very good or excellent. Inspectors were impressed by the way teachers took every opportunity to teach a new fact, skill or idea or reinforce previous learning. In the other three year groups there was no excellent teaching and very good teaching accounted for between a fifth (in Years 3 and 4) and a third (in Year 6) of the lessons seen. In the satisfactory lessons the pace was not as brisk as it could have been and lesson organisation was not sharp. This resulted in satisfactory learning, short of the good rates of learning in those classes where teachers encouraged pupils to work at a fast rate and produce more work of better quality.
21. Planning is usually very good. Teachers make good use of pupils' previous work and assessments to form the basis of plans for the next session. However, marking in books is not always as good as the oral evaluation of pupils' progress. This results in pupils not understanding what to do beyond the scope of the current lesson. Some teachers in Year 5 are at the early stages of setting targets for pupils but this is not widespread and where it is happening it is not linked to a progressively more difficult curriculum. Teachers plan well for the abilities of pupils in their classes. Brighter pupils are challenged and work is set on an individual basis for pupils with special

educational needs. There is always plenty of work and the resources that teachers produce are well matched to what pupils should learn next. Teachers do have good knowledge about pupils' backgrounds and this ensures that effective homework is set.

22. The management of pupils is good. Teachers are unfailingly polite and firm about how pupils should behave. Classroom rules are devised by pupils and are generally applied consistently. However, in the few instances in which misbehaviour does occur, teachers rarely take the necessary steps that are set out in the school's behaviour policy. In those lessons that are conducted at a business-like pace, misbehaviour rarely occurs and relationships are generally very good. Overall, the pace of lessons is good and at times can be blistering. In general, lessons are brisk and bright with tasks well thought out with brief pauses so that teachers can remind pupils about what they are meant to achieve.
23. The level and quality of questioning is good and teases out pupils' understanding about the objective of the lesson. Pupils' answers and explanations allow the teacher to plan the next move for teaching. This high quality questioning is based on the good and at times very good levels of subject knowledge. This was evident in a range of subjects and not least those that were taught by teachers with specialist knowledge; music and ICT, for example. However, very good subject knowledge was also observed in art and design, design and technology, personal and social education, English, mathematics and science. Whatever the subject, teachers' good levels of subject knowledge helped pupils see the links between their learning and this deepened their understanding.
24. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Pupils are encouraged to see that the skills of reading, writing and number have interesting uses beyond simple school exercises. However, teachers do not encourage pupils to make enough use of computers in their classrooms. As a consequence, for example, pupils do not develop keyboard skills and when they use computers in the suite, their work is hampered by laborious one-finger methods of entering data.
25. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers know pupils' targets and set work that helps them to achieve their goal. Teaching has a very good impact on the progress of pupils because they are kept busy in a purposeful and relevant way. This is also the case with those pupils who are learning English as an additional language, pupils who are new to the school from other countries and those pupils from Traveller backgrounds.
26. Pupils with individual needs have their work based on secure identification that leads to an appropriate programme of study. There are very good relationships in the withdrawal groups, where pupils share enthusiastically in the success of others. Pupils are fully integrated and work alongside other pupils confidently, often without continuous support. The teaching and support staff of the school fully accepts its responsibility towards pupils with individual needs. This is a major factor in the good progress made by the pupils.

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

27. The school has made good improvements to the curriculum since the last inspection. It gives its pupils a broadly based and well-balanced set of learning opportunities that meets their needs and interests effectively. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and complies with statutory requirements in all subjects. At the last inspection the quality of the curriculum was thought to be unsatisfactory and it is now good.
28. The school has effective policies for all subjects and uses nationally and locally recommended schemes of work to plan lessons. Planning is good. The teachers plan in their year group teams. Teachers accurately identify the knowledge and skills to be taught and this secures continuous and progressive learning for their pupils. Tasks are generally well matched to pupils' stages of learning; this is achieved by the teachers' assessment of their pupils' attainment during lessons enabling tasks for the next lesson to be clearly identified. The curriculum and its planning are being carefully monitored and evaluated by the subject managers to ensure that they meet the needs of the pupils. Additionally, the subject managers have time away from their full-time teaching commitments to develop, support and monitor their allocated subjects. This is making a significant contribution to the raising of standards.
29. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are now being fully and successfully implemented. All classes are regularly taught ICT in a recently developed computer suite.
30. The school makes good provision for the pupils' physical and personal development. There is a suitable health education programme and the school has provided an opportunity for parents to be made aware of the dangers of the misuse of drugs, complementing the programme provided for the pupils. The governors have decided that the school will provide a sex education programme. Both programmes form part of the health education programme in science. These strengthen the school's provision for preparing pupils for adult life. The school has developed links within the community that support pupils' learning, providing joint activities with local secondary schools to promote the recording of investigations in science and to provide summer clubs and activities. The local library, in collaboration with the school, provides extra research facilities for pupils in Year 6 by making suitable books and the Internet available. The choir has taken part in concerts at Christmastime for the elderly in hospital and in the market square.
31. The school continues to provide a good, wide range of extra-curricular activities that is particularly strong in musical and sports activities, as well as a French language club and a homework club at lunchtimes. The pupils are provided with opportunities to visit places of interest and museums and places of worship that enhance their curriculum experiences. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have the opportunity to attend extended residential visits in York, the Isle of Wight and France respectively.
32. The school's very good provision for pupils with special educational needs is an improvement since the previous inspection. This is an inclusive school and provision fully meets the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. The high quality work of support assistants has a significant impact on pupils' good progress. Individual education programmes, including those for pupils with emotional or behavioural needs, have clear targets for pupils to reach, against which their progress is reviewed regularly. Pupils with special educational needs are respected and valued

members of the school. The provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language is good. They are taught to speak, read and write English effectively and use their new language skills to good effect. The provision is such that pupils who have English as a second language often achieve standards above the expected levels.

33. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the previous inspection and is now good overall. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory and provides planned opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their learning, with teachers asking them to relate to a wider frame of reference by asking 'why', 'how' and 'where' during the lesson. During lessons pupils are given the opportunity to explore and understand their feelings and emotions and how they influence people. In the majority of lessons, pupils and teachers show a respect and value for each other's contributions to lessons and the school provides a climate of mutual respect and harmony where all views and opinions are well regarded. The school places a high priority on the religious diversity within the wider community, providing opportunities for pupils to study the beliefs of the major world religions and this is a significant feature of the good provision for spiritual development within the school. The school encourages the pupils to develop their creativity especially in literature, music and art and the wonder of their environment in science.
34. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. The clear and consistent approach to promoting the principles of right and wrong provides the pupils with a strong framework within which they can make their own decisions. The school has revised its provision for personal, social and health education, and during circle time and assemblies pupils discuss and explore their responsibilities. Golden rules, the school's codes of behaviour, are displayed prominently around the school and each class has agreed its own code of behaviour.
35. The school has revised its provision for the pupils' social development. Adults in the school provide a very good role model for the pupils in their respect for others, and the majority of pupils learn to relate to others positively. All pupils are included in lessons and other activities and all are fully involved in the school community. The pupils are regularly encouraged to discuss their work and collaborate with one another during lessons, learning to co-operate and support one another. In a range of lessons pupils are encouraged to share ideas in small groups. They gain an awareness of the difficulties facing children in other countries through their e-mail link with a school in Uganda and its twinning with a school in The Gambia as well as raising funds for a wide range of charities. Older pupils are being encouraged to help younger pupils at lunchtimes and by being a school monitor. The regrouping of the school council is planned for later in the term.
36. The way in which pupils are encouraged to appreciate a range of different cultural traditions has improved since the last inspection and the provision is now good. Cultural diversity is celebrated, festivals and special occasions are recognised and the pupils' investigations are well displayed to celebrate the different cultures within the wider community. In addition, visits to different places of worship for Buddhists, Christians and Sikhs are organised to assist the pupils' understanding of different customs. All pupils take a pride in their local community through their studies in history and geography and they are very aware of the effect humans have on the locality. Their understanding is enhanced by the visits they make to places of interest in the neighbouring locality. The school promotes creativity and the performing arts very well. Visiting groups perform dramatic, musical and artistic events in the school with the

pupils. They, in turn, take great pride and enjoyment in their musical and dramatic performances in the school and city.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS

37. The school provides very good care for its pupils and has improved on the standards outlined in the previous report. The standard of care and social inclusion contributes very well towards pupils' positive attitude to school.
38. Health and safety procedures and monitoring are very good and potential risks are identified well. All issues raised in the previous report were dealt with promptly and effectively. Child protection procedures and awareness are excellent. The headteacher handles issues and potential issues with a most thorough, professional and sensitive approach. First aid arrangements are good with adequate numbers of staff receiving training. Pupils' personal development is monitored well and staff members provide good personal support enabling most pupils to develop confidence and self-esteem. Pupils are seen and treated as important by all staff. The high quality of the school lunches is testament to how the school strives to care for all the personal needs and welfare of its pupils, staff and visitors.
39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are generally effective. The behaviour policy, with an emphasis on the use of rewards and praise, has a positive impact on most pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Pupils see the house point system as very fair and effective. The policy is sometimes not applied with sufficient rigour in lessons to ensure that all pupils behave well.
40. Procedures to discourage and deal with bullying, racist or sexist behaviour are good and any potential incidents are monitored and recorded rigorously. The school makes very good efforts to include all pupils, including those with behaviour difficulties, which results in the very low level of exclusions. Supervision at lunchtimes is good with a wide range of activities when weather permits the use of the field. Staff are well aware of the problems caused by the limited space available when only the hard play area can be used.
41. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. Registers are well maintained and the close and prompt following up of absences has led to an increase in overall levels in the last year.
42. There are very good systems for assessing pupils' special educational needs and monitoring their progress. As soon as problems are identified an individual programme is written and progress towards the targets is assessed. New targets are set as a result of the reviews. The provisions specified in statements of special educational needs are met in full. Links with agencies, such as social services and the school psychological service, are very good and their expertise is valued.
43. The school is aware that it needs to develop and refine its assessment procedures further. Some aspects of assessment have improved since the last inspection and are satisfactory overall but there remain some areas to be developed in order to help raise standards further. Staff are collecting a substantial amount of data on attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Statutory and non-statutory tests provide a wealth of information about pupils' attainment and progress in these subjects. Test results have been analysed to identify where the school needs to improve the curriculum to further raise standards. For example, the attainment of boys in writing and mathematics has been highlighted as an area of concern and subsequent action

has been taken with significant success. Test results are used well to identify which pupils need additional support and those who need to be included in booster classes and the additional literacy strategy. Teachers know their pupils well and assess them formally and informally during lessons. For example, teachers frequently use the final session of a lesson to discuss pupils' work and through skilled questioning, determine pupils' level of understanding.

44. The school records the Year 6 National Curriculum test results to show the progress of pupils from their entry into school to when they leave. However, it does not analyse and use the range of assessment information available to measure pupils' progress over the school year and across the school. As a result the school cannot always identify with sufficient rigour where pupils have made gains in their knowledge and understanding and where there are significant gaps. Individual targets are set in English and mathematics in some classes but these are inconsistent across the year groups and are not sufficiently related to the curriculum. Pupils and parents are usually unaware of the curriculum level they are currently working at and what precisely they need to do to move onto the next levels and achieve higher standards.
45. Assessment systems in other subjects are in the early stages of development and there is as yet no consistently used whole school system to record pupils' progress in subjects such as art and design, ICT, design and technology, history or geography.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

46. Parents are positive in their views of the school. In the pre-inspection meeting, parental questionnaires and in discussions during the inspection they were full of praise for the school and had only a few areas of concern. In particular, they say their children like school, make good progress and behave well and that teaching is good. The school expects the pupils to work hard and helps them to become mature and responsible, and it is well led and managed. Inspectors feel these views reflect the strengths of the school. A minority of parents have some concerns over the information they receive about progress, the range of activities provided outside lessons and how closely the school works with parents. Inspectors feel that information on progress is satisfactory, although it could be improved, that the range of extra-curricular activities is good and that the school works closely with parents. Teachers are conscientious when setting homework and inspectors judge that the amount is correct for pupils in all four year groups.
47. Parents are involved well in the work of the school by helping in classes and on visits, especially residential trips, and providing good support through the parent teacher association. The school is making good efforts to involve parents further in the school and their children's education. An open and sharing environment has been created. Parents are consulted regularly on their views and results are used well; for example to improve the homework policy and give parents more information on how to help with homework. In Year 6 parents are encouraged to take their children to the local library to improve their research skills.
48. Parents are involved at all stages of the special educational needs process and reviews. In conjunction with the class teacher they are equally active in helping their children with work at home. This has a good impact on pupils' self-esteem and progress.
49. Annual reports give satisfactory details of pupils' achievements but no consistent or specific information in relation to areas for improvement and development. Parents feel

that consultation evenings are informative and they are very well attended but they feel an extra meeting is required to discuss reports. The school is aware of this and is seeking to meet parents' needs. Newsletters are informative, especially the inclusion of information about topics and work to be done at the start of each term. The annual prospectus and governors' report are readable and informative documents. The school has an 'open door' policy for parents. The good accessibility of staff contributes well to the strong partnership. Parents' contribution to encouraging their children's learning is good. They ensure their prompt and regular attendance, and support homework well, especially reading.

50. A good partnership has been established with parents that has a positive impact on pupils' achievements and attitudes to school. This is an improvement on standards described in the previous report.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED

51. The leadership and management of the headteacher, key members of staff and governors were judged to be satisfactory during the last inspection. Since that time the senior management team has had time to operate effectively, subject leaders and managers have developed new responsibilities and methods of working and the governors have become more fully involved in the work of the school. The governing body has also taken effective action to ensure that it completes all of its legal duties. The quality of the school's leadership and management has improved considerably since the last inspection. Standards are now rising, the curriculum has improved, the quality of teaching is better than at the last inspection and the issues identified at that time have been effectively and efficiently addressed.
52. The leadership of the headteacher is good. He has guided the work of staff members and governors to look carefully at the areas for improvement and has planned effective measures to meet the school's needs. He has a firm grasp of the strengths and areas for development in the quality of teaching and checks regularly on how well teachers are functioning. He offers advice and maintains open and constructive relationships. This means that the teachers and support staff are committed to improving the provision within the school and work hard to achieve better results. There is a determined air about the school and parents and governors talk of the good learning atmosphere that the headteacher and staff maintain. Inspectors agree with this observation and the school is well placed to make further improvements. In part this is due to the serious manner in which subject leaders view their work. They are expected to make valuable contributions to the processes of school improvement and they all work hard to achieve the aims of their subject plans.
53. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very good leadership. There is close liaison with other staff to ensure the best possible provision for all pupils who have educational and other needs. The school has a very strong commitment to the inclusion of all pupils and spends its money efficiently and effectively in fulfilling that commitment. Consequently, pupils needing support make good progress in schoolwork. The school benefits from a supportive governor, who takes responsibility for oversight of special educational needs matters seriously. High quality support staff members are deployed to good effect and receive training in the particular needs of the pupils they work alongside.
54. The headteacher is a good manager. With the assistant headteacher he has constructed a calendar of activities, which ensures that all the school's policies and practices are supervised effectively. Subject leaders diligently check on pupils' work in

the regular reviews and pass on information to the governing body about how well the school is doing. The headteacher provides very good quality information to governors and ensures that they are aware of their responsibilities as well as providing the systems which will meet these duties. More could be done to ensure the targets in the much improved school improvement plan are specific and set out clearly how success should be measured. In the present plan the targets are a little woolly and difficult to use to indicate that improvements have been achieved.

55. Financial planning and management is of a very high quality. The headteacher and governors have a very clear grasp of finances and funding issues. School-based management and administrative systems are very good, enabling the school to plan and monitor its finances very effectively. The principles of best value are understood and applied very effectively, providing cost-effective services that maximise the funds available to be spent for the direct benefit of pupils. This is seen in the very good quality meals provided by the school and the control of ground maintenance contracts.
56. The school's accommodation is good. There are plenty of rooms for small group work, music tuition and resource storage. The school is set in pleasant grounds although the hard play areas are small when the field is out of action. Resources are generally appropriate; the new ICT suite is a good addition to the school's resources although material for geography could be improved and there are too few non-fiction books in the library.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

57. In order to raise standards and the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) *Improve standards in some aspects of ICT by:
 - continuing to implement the school's plan for the subject;
 - ensuring teachers plan learning opportunities for pupils to use ICT within classrooms and in the curriculum, and
 - instituting records and assessment procedures.*(Paragraphs 5, 24, 76, 79, 87, 98, 103, 105-108, 110)*

- (2) *Improve assessment arrangements by:
 - measuring regularly and frequently the progress and attainment of individual pupils;
 - setting targets in each class based on this analysis, and
 - providing high quality information on pupils' progress and areas for improvement to parents in the annual reports.*(Paragraphs 5, 21, 43-45, 49, 54, 69, 77, 99)*

Minor issues which the governors may wish to include in their action plan:

- *Continue to:
- work with parents to support those pupils whose behaviour does not match the school's usual standards; *(Paragraphs 12-13, 15, 22, 39, 67, 111, 115).*
 - improve the quantity of non-fiction books available to pupils; *(56, 64)*
 - refine the targets within the school improvement plan based on improving standards; *(54)*
 - match the learning opportunities in geography to those in history. *(96-99)*

* Indicates issues already identified by governors and staff and in the process of development.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	16	28	11	0	0	0
Percentage	7	27	47	19	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		350
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		45

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		69

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	48	39	87

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	26	38
	Girls	34	26	36
	Total	62	52	75
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (78)	59 (73)	85 (89)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	28	39
	Girls	32	27	36
	Total	58	55	75
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (77)	63 (75)	85 (88)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	345	1	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background			
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British - Indian	2		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese	2		
Any other ethnic group	1		
No ethnic group recorded			

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3-Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	29

Education support staff: Y3-Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	173

FTE means full time equivalent

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	670,976
Total expenditure	668,894
Expenditure per pupil	1,922
Balance brought forward from previous year	-3,781
Balance carried forward to next year	-1,699

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	350
Number of questionnaires returned	83

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	37	0	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	52	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	16	71	10	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	39	29	7	4
The teaching is good.	43	53	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	43	23	7	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	42	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	47	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	25	49	22	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	39	51	7	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	53	1	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	48	16	5	6

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

ENGLISH

58. After recent fluctuations in national test results, standards are now similar to those reported at the last inspection and the upward trend looks set to continue. The results of the 2002 national tests show a marked increase in the number of pupils achieving the expected levels. As a result of improved teaching, more effective assessment, the support of a skilled co-ordinator and a richer curriculum pupils are now achieving above average standards.
59. Pupils of all attainment levels make good progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to their peers and most achieve the expected standard and often exceed it. The pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and as a result achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. The previous inspection and attainment levels over the past few years have shown that girls out-perform boys. However, recent results show this gap to be closing.
60. The school implements the National Literacy Strategy well and this has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Considerable focus is given to ensuring pupils use the skills they are taught in other subjects. For example, when recording science experiments pupils use a range of appropriate technical vocabulary and record their observations using lists, tables and diagrams or in their geography work use the conventions of letter writing. This approach is particularly effective in raising standards of writing across the school. Additional booster classes provide extra support for those pupils needing help to reach the expected standard.
61. Pupils make good progress in their speaking and listening skills and, by the age of eleven, standards are good. In lessons pupils have good opportunities to express their ideas and opinions. Although a significant number of pupils are reticent in engaging in question and answer sessions in lessons, once prompted and encouraged by their teachers they are confident speakers who express ideas clearly using interesting and grammatically accurate language. Imaginative teaching provide pupils with stimulating opportunities to develop skills in speaking and listening as shown by the 'hot seating' in Year 6. Staff and pupils took on the role of characters from Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet'. A red rose, scabbard and regal cloaks helped pupils immerse themselves in the various roles. Pupils confidently asked probing questions of the characters and listened with interest to the thoughtful well-expressed answers.
62. Pupils make good progress in their reading skills and by the age of eleven standards are good. Pupils are encouraged to read for a wide variety of purposes including information and pleasure. This was reflected well in discussions with pupils who demonstrated considerable knowledge about poetry, plays, novels, encyclopaedias and information books. In classrooms books are well displayed to support topic work and in the library the 'author of the month' encourages pupils to develop an appreciation of different styles and genres. Books are well matched to pupils' attainment and interest levels and pupils are very enthusiastic readers of a wide range of texts. Many pupils are members of the local library and have a wide range of books at home. They take books home regularly and family members are encouraged to share in their children's reading in order to improve further their progress.

63. Higher attaining pupils across the school express a preference for particular authors such as Roald Dahl, Paul Jennings and Nick Arnold and choose books because of a special interest, such as adventure or sport. They show a mature understanding of different writers' styles and accounts and are able to deduce meaning from the texts and suggest what the writer's intentions were from their reading. Classics such as 'Black Beauty' are well known and more mature readers are eager readers of Charles Dickens. Although higher attaining pupils are confident, fluent readers they are sometimes unsure of new vocabulary and need support to enable them to discover new meanings.
64. Pupils develop independent research skills as they use dictionaries, thesaurus, encyclopaedias and CD-ROMS. The library is well organised and fiction books are of a good quality and attractively arranged to extend pupils' love of books. The school is aware that there is a limited range of non-fiction books and that this restricts pupils' opportunities to extend their research skills although pupils do make good use of ICT for their research exercises.
65. Pupils make very good progress in writing and by the age of eleven, standards are good. By Year 5 and 6 handwriting is clear and well formed and pupils' work reflects a pride and enjoyment in what they do. Higher attaining pupils in Year 5 and 6 become accurate spellers of complex words. However, too many pupils are still spelling common words carelessly and do not use spelling rules and dictionaries sufficiently to improve the quality of their work. Pupils progressively develop their ability to write for different purposes using a wide range of styles. Work is well planned and shows an awareness of the need for different presentation skills, vocabulary and style. Higher attaining pupils show a good use of well-chosen vocabulary to capture the imagination of the reader. Pupils produce diagrams, charts and posters to support their work in other subjects. They write poems, prayers, letters, scientific, geographical and historical accounts. Writing is well organised. Higher attaining pupils use paragraphs, correct punctuation, complex grammatical structures and rich appropriate vocabulary to enliven their writing. In Year 3 pupils learn about setting and how to use speech marks and adjectives to add interest to their work. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of poetry and can discuss the characteristics of limericks, sonnets and haiku.
66. Teaching is good overall and in just over half the lessons seen it was very good. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and very good teaching was seen in each year group. This has a very positive effect on the standards pupils are now achieving. All teachers are confidently implementing the Literacy Hour. Guided reading groups have been taken out of the main lesson and are effective in focussing on pupils' needs.
67. Teaching is well structured to meet the needs of pupils of all attainment levels. Opportunities for extended writing are made within the curriculum to ensure that progress in this aspect of English is maintained. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are given a high priority and pupils' are encouraged to use their knowledge and understanding of basic skills in their extended writing and when writing in other subjects. For example, in Year 5 pupils understanding of note taking and instructional writing was deepened through links with a design and technology lesson. Pupils applied their newly learned skill well as they wrote detailed instructions on how to make a pizza. Teachers are very aware of the need to engage the interest of both boys and girls to ensure they reach the standards they are capable of. Books and topics for writing are carefully planned to capture the imagination of both sexes. Teachers use praise, comments and questions very effectively to check understanding and extend thinking. Expectations are high and the teachers' enthusiasm, clear explanations and secure

knowledge have a very positive effect on attainment and progress. Interesting displays in classrooms remind pupils of the strategies they need to improve their work, such as good handwriting, correct spelling and punctuation. Plenary sessions check that pupils have understood the lesson and also extend their thinking, pushing them just that bit further. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss their work and to explain what they have learned during lessons. A shortage of big books sometimes limits pupils' learning; they have difficulty seeing poorly copied extracts from books and become inattentive and distracted. Relationships are usually good and teachers have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour and attainment resulting in good discipline and standards. In some lessons teachers' strategies to ensure positive behaviour are not sufficiently successful and pupils do not respond to the structures and sanctions.

68. Tasks are particularly well matched to meet the needs of different attainment levels. Pupils with special educational, those from Traveller backgrounds and those learning English as an additional language receive additional support from a teacher or teaching assistant based on specific learning programmes or individual education plans. This support greatly enhances the learning opportunities for pupils and enables them to achieve well and access the full range of learning experiences. The school offers good support for pupils who are high attainers or who are gifted and talented. Teachers are very careful to provide extension work for these pupils to enable them to achieve their full potential.
69. Assessment and record keeping are satisfactory. Although some classes have targets they are not consistently applied and pupils are rarely reminded of them in lessons. Teachers mark work on a regular basis but comments do not always provide pupils with helpful suggestions on how they can improve their work. In some classes reading records are not always kept as rigorously as they should be. As a result there are missed opportunities to identify strengths and weaknesses in order to help pupils improve further. Homework is used well to extend work done in lessons and to check that pupils have fully understood new learning.
70. The co-ordinator is a good leader and manager. The thorough system of monitoring and supporting colleagues helps them to improve the quality of the teaching and learning. The plans to develop the subject are well focussed on raising standards.

MATHEMATICS

71. Pupils in Year 6 are attaining standards that are above those expected for their age in numeracy in all areas of mathematics (number, algebra, space, shape and measures, and data handling). This is an improvement on the standards evident at the time of the previous inspection. The national test results for 2002 show a significant improvement over the previous years and are expected to compare favourably with national and similar schools attainment. Improvements in the quality of teaching and a detailed analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision for the subject have brought about these improvements.
72. There has been a significant difference in the performance of girls and boys. In recent time this gap has closed and boys are now performing at levels close to those achieved by the girls. Pupils with SEN and those who are learning English as an additional language are supported very well and make good progress.
73. By the age of eleven, pupils identify and use the appropriate operations to solve word problems, have a quick recall of number facts, understand fractions, name and measure angles accurately, use and interpret first quadrant co-ordinates and find the

perimeter and area of simple shapes by using the appropriate formulae. Analysis of pupils' work indicates that the pupils are less secure in the interpretation of data in mathematics and this is a priority in the subject action plan.

74. The rate of achievement across the school is good but there are distinct differences between classes and year groups. Learning in lessons and achievement reflects the quality of teaching. The rate of progress is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4, although within these year groups, some classes show better rates of progress than others. This is achieved by lessons having a brisk pace and precise lesson organisation. The good progress achieved in Years 5 and 6 is due to the pace, challenge and high expectations teachers display in their teaching.
75. The quality of teaching in mathematics has improved since the previous inspection and is now good overall with examples of excellence in Year 5. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. The teachers are confident and familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy that they apply very effectively. The three-part lesson structure is now firmly established and planning is very good. Lessons begin with teachers sharing with the pupils what they are to learn and continue with a rigorous and enthusiastic exchange of quick fire questions. The teachers use a good range of mathematical vocabulary and this results in pupils being able to explain their work using the correct terminology. The main teaching activities involve pupils practising their skills and in this part of the lesson teachers support and manage their pupils very effectively. A particular strength is the differentiated work they provide for the different abilities within their classes and the support the pupils receive from their teachers and the class learning support assistant. These strategies ensure that all pupils make good progress.
76. The use of ICT to develop the pupils' mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding is underdeveloped because opportunities are not being provided in lessons. The school has recognised this deficiency, which is being address in the subject action plan. Pupils use mathematics to help their learning in other subjects. For example, pupils are involved in mathematical work in drawing graphs to illustrate methods of transport used on holiday for geography, the use of Roman numerals in documentary sources in history and in accurate measuring in design and technology
77. Assessment is used well in lessons by teachers to gauge pupils' understanding. Analysis of data and information from tests is used well to identify year group strengths and weaknesses. The school does not, however, use this information to measure individual pupils progress from year to year or to set challenging targets for the pupils.
78. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The mathematical curriculum has been reviewed and teaching has improved. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of the future needs of the subject to ensure that this progress and the improving standards are maintained.

SCIENCE

79. Standards are better than reported at the previous inspection. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is above the national average. The number of pupils who achieve the higher level has increased significantly over four years. Pupils therefore achieve very well during their time in school because only one fifth of the year group arrived at the school with the higher level. Changes in the subject leadership, combined with improvements in the effectiveness of teaching are the important factors in the good improvement. Teachers analyse national test scores carefully and use the results to show which areas of learning need improvement. There is a greater focus on

investigative activities, resulting in better attitudes to work and science activities generally. Pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English are making good progress. In its subject development plan, the school correctly identifies the need to use ICT extensively as an area for improvement.

80. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of what a food chain is and appreciate the feeding relationships between plants and animals in a habitat. The school makes very good use of the school ground for observing seasonal changes in living things and pond life. Pupils have a secure understanding of the relationships between good health and eating a balanced diet. Good links are made with physical education when measuring pulse rates at rest and after activity. Higher attaining pupils understand the relationship between recovery rate and fitness. Pupils have the expected knowledge and understanding of solids, liquids and gases, and of the reversible and irreversible changes in materials. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have a secure understanding of the principles behind a fair test and show understanding of the terms 'constant' and 'variable'.
81. Since the previous inspection, greater emphasis on investigative activities is enabling pupils to have more experience with equipment such as stopwatches. Teachers now have higher expectations of pupils to be more independent. Pupils are taught how to devise their own investigations, which is one of the requirements for pupils to achieve the higher level. Good knowledge of the curriculum and challenging tasks has led teachers to show pupils how to select their own methods and equipment. Pupils record their findings in a variety of ways, including line graphs, charts and tables. There is insufficient use of computer graphics to present work and data.
82. Lesson planning is very good. Teachers plan together as year groups and provide work for all levels of ability. Their plans include support staff who work with pupils with special educational needs. The result is well-managed lessons in which pupils make good progress. The overall quality of teaching is good with some very good and excellent teaching. No unsatisfactory teaching has been seen, which is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Two lessons did not succeed as well as intended because a minority of pupils did not cope well with the independence they were given. Years 3 and 4 teaching is effective at improving pupils' vocabulary and factual knowledge. In Years 5 and 6 pupils' confidence and independence in their ability to succeed improves significantly. Teachers have high expectations. In Years 5 and 6 pupils produce good labelled drawings and diagrams and are in the early stages of raising their own scientific questions. The way in which pupils' work is marked is an area that could be improved to give them a better idea of what they have to do to improve their standards.
83. Data from assessments of pupils' work has influenced changes in the curriculum. Currently, it is not yet used to set targets for pupils as it is in some classes in mathematics and English. The quality of leadership is very good. The subject leader has a clear view of what needs to be done to improve the schools' provision. Some initiatives are already succeeding. For example, the consistent use of specific scientific vocabulary is evident in every science lesson. Pupils' work is regularly monitored and the senior management is successfully monitoring teaching.

ART AND DESIGN

84. Standards have improved since the last inspection and by Year 6 are above those expected for their age. All aspects of the subject are now given good coverage and across the school standards of work are consistently of a good quality. This is the

result of good teaching, a varied and interesting programme of art and design activities that supports the development of skills and techniques successfully and the effective role of the co-ordinator. Although art and design work is often related to other subjects the skills and techniques of making art remain a clear focus of pupils learning.

85. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy art and design and produce work of a quality comparable to that of their peers. Pupils with English as an additional language and those from Traveller families make the same progress as their peers. Boys and girls achieve equally well although some boys show a lack of confidence and need considerable additional support and encouragement to make progress.
86. A scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that the school provides pupils with a wide range of experiences to develop their skills, techniques and knowledge and understanding of art and design. Visits, artefacts, nature and literature are used well to stimulate pupils' interest and to provide a focus for their work. Links with other subjects help pupils understand art in the context of an historical period, a geographical location or a deeper understanding of characters. For example, Year 6 pupils designed and made their masks as part of their history project on Theatre in Ancient Greece. Pupils use their artistic skills well to add interest and quality to illustrate their work in other subjects such as religious education and English
87. Pupils become very skilled in using line, form, colours, shade, texture and a variety of materials and tools effectively to produce images and pictures. The importance of observational skills is central to pupils' success in producing detailed quality work. Younger pupils create portraits of each other, paying attention to particular features and attributes to add interest to their work. Year 4 pupils experiment with a variety of mediums and techniques to create camouflage pictures of animals which show a good use of colour and a very good eye for creating mood and movement. In Year 6 pupils refine these skills as they create sketches showing detailed body parts to reflect movement.
88. Throughout the school pupils study a wide range of different artists such as Monet, Picasso and Turner as well as Old Masters from Tudor and Stuart times. Pupils in Year 6 use the designs and style of favourite artist to design shoes. Using a whole range of skills, techniques, stimuli and their own special imagination Year 6 pupils created three-dimensional shoes, which were so attractive that an admirer could be tempted to try them on only to realise they were made from modelling material! A range of two and three-dimensional work shows that pupils are developing very good skills in art and design. Weaving, tiling and tapestry cause pupils to use a range of textiles, textures and colour to produce interesting designs. A millennium tapestry proudly displayed in the school hall represents the many artistic skills pupils acquire as they move through the school. Similarly the tiled cross displayed at the school entrance reflects the wide range of skills and materials pupils deploy. An awareness of art in different cultures is developed well. Pupils explore the intricate patterns of Hindu art, deepening their understanding and respect for its influence on the world. Some illustrations are completed using computers and graphic software.
89. The quality of teaching is consistently good. Staff provide very clear and precise explanations and demonstrations to enable all pupils to build well on what they already know and can do. Sketchbooks are used effectively to develop pupils' skills and encourage confidence in building up a bank of ideas and designs to help pupils produce quality work. Pupils are provided with well-planned opportunities to work co-operatively, share ideas and appreciate the work of others. Teachers provide a wide

range of opportunities, resources and a variety of exciting stimuli to catch pupils' imagination and interest. They work keenly and their enthusiasm is well targeted at creating effective work that also enhances the general environment of the school as demonstrated by the 'totem pole' adding interest to the school playing field.

90. The role of the curriculum co-ordinator has improved since the last inspection. She is very experienced, skilled and enthusiastic and works closely with staff to raise their confidence in the teaching of art and design. This has a positive effect on the standards and progress pupils make.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. Standards have improved since the last inspection. By Year 6 pupils are reaching the expected standards. This is an improvement on the unsatisfactory standards seen before. The improvement has been achieved by the adoption of the locally produced schemes of work that address the requirements of the National Curriculum, a higher quality of teaching and a resulting greater teacher confidence in delivering the subject.
92. Evaluating products plays an important part of the pupils' study of pizza making in Year 5 where very good teaching enabled the pupils to set their own criteria for evaluating their pizzas. In Year 6 pupils are given the opportunity to bring their art and design skills into the subject. This was achieved by a visit to the Northampton Shoe Museum following which, the pupils designed shoes that would reflect the style of a famous artist. In this way the most original shoes in the style of, for example, Macke and Picasso were displayed.
93. Pupils use a wide range of materials and components, linking design and technology with other subjects. From science, an electrical circuit was used to illuminate eyes in the masks made by pupils in Year 3 and levers to animate an Easter card in Year 4. Spreadsheets were devised in Year 5 to determine the costing for their pizzas. Textile design and insulating materials were studied in Year 5 in order to create an efficient and aesthetically pleasing oven glove.
94. The good teaching observed was reflected in the enjoyment the pupils show for the subject, the sensible manner in which they approach their tasks and the positive collaboration that takes place to achieve the finished article. Teachers are skilful in questioning their pupils' design ideas. In the very good lesson observed the organisation of the classroom, equipment and materials was of a very high order. An analysis of teachers' planning shows that lessons have clear learning objectives and that the pupils' tasks are carefully differentiated to meet their needs. All pupils make good progress.
95. The enthusiasm of the new co-ordinator together with an appropriate action plan and enthusiastic colleagues point to the continued raising of standards in design and technology.

GEOGRAPHY

96. By the end of Year 6 most pupils are achieving standards that are broadly in line with the expectations for their age. All pupils make satisfactory progress developing their geographical knowledge and many gain practical experience of field observations from the various visits out of school. Pupils are less secure when they have to make comparisons between regions or study activities, such as farming or industry at home or abroad. Very little development of the subject has taken place since the previous inspection.
97. Geography is taught in blocks of time separated at times by more than a term. This hampers pupils' progress, as there are long gaps between topics. Pupils lose contact with what they have learned because they do not have regular opportunities to practise their skills. The pace and quality of their progress often depends on how well the pupils are motivated to do research or follow an interest, which in turn is dependent upon the individual teacher's level of enthusiasm for the subject. This results in significant variation in the depth of study and detail. By looking at pupils' previous work, it is clear that work is set which is not based on what pupils know already.
98. In the one lesson seen, Year 3 pupils understand and use a map key correctly and have begun to make a simple definition of 'locality'. Through good questioning by the teacher, pupils agree that Ely is part of their 'locality', but Cambridge and London are not. When shown pictures of mountains they know it is not near Ely 'because we don't have mountains around here'. This simple reasoning is not built upon later in the school. Written answers are brief and factual and pupils are rarely expected to describe or explain what they have learnt in any detail. Pupils have few opportunities to study current events like the social and economic consequences of natural disasters such as floods. Additionally there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use computers in geography.
99. Areas for improvement have been identified in the school development plan, including the need for a system of assessment of pupils' work. The long-term absence of the subject coordinator has prevented plans becoming action. The newly appointed coordinator is aware of the shortcomings and plans to work with colleagues to implement the school's intentions. Resources remain an issue, as reported at the previous inspection. The good quality globes, atlases and aerial photographs have a good impact on raising pupils' interest. The visits out of school are well received by pupils.

HISTORY

100. Standards in history that are above the expected levels have been maintained since the last inspection. This has been achieved by the knowledge and understanding, enthusiasm and personal interest of the teachers. This school-wide interest in history accounts for the differences between the standards in geography and history which are organised in a similar manner.
101. By the age of eleven, pupils have a good understanding of periods and events in their history. They use this understanding well when, for example, they were given the opportunity to experience what it was like to be an evacuee at the beginning of the Second World War on an educational visit. Their writings indicate their understanding of the emotional difficulties those children encountered.
102. The pupils' experience of interpreting a variety of sources is well developed. An example was a lesson in Year 5 where the teacher provided the pupils with well-chosen contemporary commentaries that enabled them to determine how Henry VIII spent his money. Showing a very good command of the subject the teacher was able, through questioning, prompting and explaining, to ensure the pupils extracted the relevant information from the text and draw up an accurate analysis.
103. Teaching is effective throughout the school. The teaching motivates the pupils to show interest and apply themselves enthusiastically to their studies. This was well demonstrated in a lesson in Year 3 when the teacher described the life of people in Ely 1000 years ago. The pupils were given the opportunity to examine plants that still grow in the area today and to share their observations of the city's buildings. The many practical activities and visits teachers plan have a positive impact on standards. Computers are used to access the Internet and CD-ROMs for research purposes but more use could be made of computers in history lessons.
104. The newly appointed co-ordinator has an action plan for the future direction of the subject and a planned programme of monitoring and evaluation will ensure that the schools maintains the standards it has achieved.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

105. At the last inspection standards were judged to be below the expected levels. The quality of the school's equipment has improved and teachers have been trained to use the computer suite effectively. Inspectors now judge standards to be average and the school has good quality plans to increase the range and quality of programs. Classes are taught in the suite for one hour each week and the school has taken advice and has constructed a good quality provision. The whole curriculum is now offered and progress over the recent past has been rapid.
106. In most of the lessons seen pupils learned at good rates. During discussions pupils in Year 3 demonstrated a fairly low starting point. As a consequence keyboard skills are low and it takes all pupils a long time to enter data. Pupils in Year 3 know how to make changes to a piece of writing. They replace words and change the appearance of fonts. These youngest pupils in the school know how to open files, retrieve their work and save it when they have finished. Their work in planning a greetings card was of average quality. In Year 4 pupils use illustration programs to draw and paint on screen. They understand how to reposition an illustration and use the tools of the program to produce well-drawn illustration of the solar system. Year 5 pupils used a spreadsheet to calculate the costs of the pizzas they are making in design and technology. Pupils

labelled cells, entered their data and used the spreadsheet to calculate totals. Pupils in Year 6 used a spreadsheet to record the results of their science investigation into pulse rates. Once they had entered their information they constructed a continuous data graph with the correct labels. Pupils use search engines on the Internet to find information. They understand how to use the address bar and how to narrow the search with specific commands.

107. Teaching in most lessons is good. During the inspection the computers available to pupils in classrooms were not used to any great extent. This means that skills learned in the computer suite cannot be practiced. It also means that pupils do not benefit from using computers in the other subjects of the curriculum. However, in the computer suite teachers work hard to teach pupils new skills and their management of behaviour is good. Pupils are given lots of opportunities to work in pairs and this helps them to develop good social and work skills.
108. The coordinator is a knowledgeable and experienced manager. The school has a good understanding of the areas for development in ICT and the subject leader has prepared a good quality development plan which outlines the steps to be taken. Work is continuing to develop records and learning opportunities that will challenge brighter pupils but there is some way to go before these elements are established. Governors are committed to improving the provision in ICT and have set aside funds to develop further the range of programs available. The school's priorities are appropriate and the headteacher and coordinator have ensured that the school is well placed to improve on the present position.

MUSIC

109. Pupils in Year 6 achieve standards above the expected levels. Pupils like working in music and many volunteer for extra tuition in small groups and as individuals. The school has a strong tradition of music making and the tuition provided by visiting specialists and the strength in depth of the teachers' subject knowledge ensures that pupils learn well in lessons and achieve well. Pupils who have lessons from visiting teachers do particularly well. The school has done well to maintain the provision seen at the last inspection. As teachers with music backgrounds leave the school, the headteacher and governors have made skilful choices and newcomers have increased the school's capabilities.
110. The quality of singing in the school is variable. In lessons, pupils in Year 6 sing rounds well. They try hard to make sure their voices blend well together. In larger groups such as assemblies, singing is lack-lustre. However, in singing practices pupils are taught to control their voices, improve their breath control and sit properly singing is at least of average standards. In a very good session in Years 3 and 4 learning was rapid and pupils learned two difficult melodies well. Lessons are well balanced between listening to their own music, that of composers and from other cultures and composing and performing. Pupils read notation well; they practise their skills in each lesson by following their teachers' models and then recording and reading rhythms from the board. This knowledge stands pupils in good stead when they come to compose patterns to accompany rounds. In Year 6 pupils use tuned percussion to perform accompaniments to their rounds in three parts. Some work has taken place using computers to compose simple tunes; however, this is in the process of development as new programs are introduced.
111. The quality of teaching is good and where classes are taught by teachers with specialist knowledge, teaching is very good. The curriculum is planned to present

pupils with challenging learning experiences, including those who have a talent playing stringed, woodwind or percussion instruments. Each year group has carefully chosen activities and, because of the high quality of specialist teaching, each group of pupils whatever their ability is given challenging work. In the best lessons, lessons are a very good balance of speed, time for reflection and opportunities to work within a group as well as individually. In all of the lessons there was lots of variety in the tasks and pupils learned well because they were interested in what they were doing. Occasionally, older pupils' behaviour falls short of their teachers' expectations.

112. Music lessons contribute well to pupils' cultural development. The subject is led very well by a newly appointed co-ordinator. The school has good quality plans for the future of music in the school; to continue the school's traditions of performance and develop more plans to extend music provision.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

113. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve satisfactory standards in all aspects of physical education. In the previous inspection performance in gymnastics was judged to be unsatisfactory. Since then the programme has widened and standards have improved. Discussions with pupils show that sporting activities are popular. Pupils with special educational needs are given the help they need to achieve as well as other pupils in their class. The school has improved its standards and provision. It is well placed to improve standards.
114. Teaching is good overall, with some excellent teaching on occasions. Teachers have a firm knowledge of how to teach gymnastics and games. They make good use of a programme of work to ensure that the skills they teach get progressively harder from one year to the next. Lessons are well organised and there are plans to improve the teaching of dance. Swimming records show that most pupils are achieving the 25 metres expected by the end of Year 6. These developments represent a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
115. Teachers give clear instructions and consistent commands. They observe pupils' performance closely, asking good performers to demonstrate for the class. Good coaching points are made at this stage of lessons and pupils make good progress in controlling and holding movements and passing a ball with their hands. A good example occurred in Year 3 when they knew the points to look for in a good netball pass. In all classes pupils are well motivated by their activities and share amicably in the success of other pupils. Year 6 pupils make good progress judging their performance and knowing what to look for in the performance of their partner. However, each year group has a small group of boys who show off and distract teachers from their main task. No consistent strategies exist to deal with disruption of this nature. One lesson effectively contained such behaviour by regular reminders of the point of the lesson.
116. Pupils know why they have a warm-up and cool-down session in lessons. They understand the links with their science work on muscle groups and pulse rates and enjoy the sporting activities that are a prominent part of the school's extra-curricular provision. Consequently, the subject is making a significant impact on the social and cultural development of many pupils. Parents make an effective contribution to their children's learning by providing a high standard of kit for lessons and helping to organise the games activities with other schools.

117. The subject is led and managed well. The coordinator has a good vision of where the subject should go and has the capability to make things happen. Resources are good quality and quantity, which has a good impact on pupils' learning. Pupils each have a ball or hockey stick so they have maximum opportunities to practise their skills and keep busy during lessons. The school recognises that an area for development is the formalisation of assessment.