

INSPECTION REPORT

KENTISBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kentisbury, Barnstaple

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113157

Headteacher: Adrian White

Reporting inspector: Peter Kerr

23583

Dates of inspection: 10th – 12th February 2003

Inspection number: 247315

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Kentisbury Ford Barnstaple Devon
Postcode:	EX31 4NG
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ian Fleming
Date of previous inspection:	3 rd November 2003

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23583	P. Kerr	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Music Physical education Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Educational inclusion	Information about the school The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well the school is led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9769	M. Morrissey	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22831	C. Lewis	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Geography History Religious education Provision for pupils with special educational needs Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is very small compared to other primary schools, with 32 pupils currently on roll aged four to 11, including four children of reception age. All the pupils are of white British ethnic origin. They are organised into two classes, with an extra group formed for the teaching of English and mathematics on four mornings each week. Pupils come from a wide catchment area and variety of backgrounds, with fewer children from farming families than at the last inspection. Children's attainment on entry to reception is broadly average. Five pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is an average proportion of the school. Three pupils are identified as having special educational needs. One of these has a statement, which attracts funding for support from the local education authority. This is a greater proportion of special educational needs than at the time of the last inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is a happy learning community. The headteacher is very successful in providing a wide range of interesting experiences to enrich the pupils' education. Pupils reach standards in line with those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They excel in art and design. Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 enables the pupils to make good progress and achieve well during the infant years. Parents make a good contribution to the life of the school and pupils are well prepared for the next phase of their education. Taking into account the high costs of educating children in such a small school, the efficiency with which the head and governors use the funds available to them and the educational and personal progress of the pupils, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in art and design are above average.
- Teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 is consistently good.
- The school uses its resources well to provide a very good range of experiences to enrich the pupils' learning.
- Very good provision for pupils' personal development strongly reflects the school's aims and values.
- Parents make a good contribution to the life of the school.

What could be improved

- Provision for pupils in different year groups in the junior class to make optimum progress in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- The development of pupils' writing skills in subjects other than English.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Satisfactory improvements have been made since the school was last inspected in November 1997. The headteacher has continued to improve the range and quality of learning experiences available to the pupils. Teaching has improved considerably for reception children and pupils in Years 1 and 2. Satisfactory improvements have been made in the key issues identified at the last inspection. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and writing now meet national expectations. Assessment data is now used effectively to improve planning in English and mathematics so that lessons meet the needs of pupils in each year-group in Years 3 to 6 more closely.

STANDARDS

The school's results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics, are not published because fewer than ten pupils take the tests, making any statistical comparisons unreliable. The school sets and meets statutory targets for pupils in these tests, however. The data it gathers shows that all pupils make at least the expected gains between the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. Some pupils make more than expected gains. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils make satisfactory progress over their time at the school in English and mathematics to reach average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. It also confirms the school's own view that standards in writing are not as high as they could be. Standards are also average in science, but are stronger in knowledge than in experimental skills. Standards in all other subjects are at expected levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, with the exception of art and design and recorder playing, where standards are above average throughout the school.

Children have average attainment overall on entry to reception but with a wide spread, considering the small numbers of children involved. They make sound progress and most achieve expected standards for children of this age before the end of reception. Pupils achieve very well in Year 1 and Year 2. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve well in some areas, but overall, they make satisfactory progress in the development of skills in each year group. Pupils who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their individual learning targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to learn. They take a lively interest in the various educational opportunities provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils generally behave well. They accept and abide by the school's rules.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Older pupils take good care of younger ones and accept responsibilities willingly.
Attendance	Well above average. Pupils like coming to school. Punctuality is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In Years 1 and 2, lessons in all subjects cater for the full age and ability range and proceed at a brisk pace, with plenty of interesting and challenging activities. The few children of reception age in the infant class are well provided for. The staff have a good understanding of the importance of providing opportunities for children to explore and make choices for this age-group. They are limited to the extent to which they can cater for this, however, especially outdoors until the outdoor learning area is completed. In Years 3 to 6, introductions to lessons, which are often interesting, cater for all ages and abilities, but the planned activities are often too similar in content to challenge all

pupils of all ages and abilities. The junior class is split into ability groups for English and mathematics, enabling lessons to meet the needs of the pupils more successfully, including those with special educational needs. However, expectations for the quantity and quality of writing do not increase enough as pupils get older. Overall, pupils learn at a faster rate in Years 1 and 2 than in the rest of the school because of the enthusiastic and well-targeted teaching. Pupils take an active and fruitful part in the introductions to lessons in Year 3 to Year 6, but their learning slows when they work independently because deadlines are not set. Teachers give appropriate support to pupils with special educational needs so that they make the same progress as other pupils relative to their prior attainment. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good throughout the school, enabling plenty of relaxed and confident informal interactions that promote valuable learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Lessons are supplemented with a very good range of activities to interest pupils and widen their horizons and a very good programme of personal, health and social education, including sex education and drugs awareness is provided.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The few pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated and are provided with relevant individual educational plans where necessary. Appropriate support is provided for pupils with a statement of need.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school teaches right from wrong, encourages respect for self and others, promotes very good relationships and a sense of social responsibility and gives the pupils a good insight into a range of different cultures and beliefs.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures for child-protection and health and safety are in place. All staff know the pupils very well and take good care of them.
How well does the school work in partnership with parents	Good. The school provides good quality information to parents about its work and their children's progress and a number of parents offer good practical support, including running after-school clubs.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides a good lead in striving to ensure that the pupils experience a wide range of interesting learning opportunities despite the school's size. All the staff fully support the head in this aim. The school is well staffed and provides adequate resources to teach all subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their duties well and give good support to the school. They have a sound understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and a willingness to learn more.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Good improvements have been made in how the school uses test and other information to track and support pupils' progress in English and mathematics. The evaluation of teaching in some subjects has not yet been effective in ensuring challenge for the full range and ability of pupils in the juniors.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses the funds available to it well to try and provide the widest possible range of learning opportunities for the pupils, applying sound principles of best value to spending decisions. The school building and site is big enough to accommodate all the pupils, though teachers have to teach physical education in the village hall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The family atmosphere in the school • Teachers expect the pupils to work hard • The range of activities provided • The amount of homework given • How well they are kept informed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements for the storage of packed lunches.

The inspection confirms the parents' positive views of the school. The team agrees that arrangements for the storage of packed lunches are unsatisfactory, but the school has plans in hand to improve these.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Because fewer than ten pupils take the national tests in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and 6 each year, the results do not provide a reliable basis for statistical comparisons with other schools. The outcomes vary markedly from year to year because of the effect of the performance of just one or two pupils on the overall results. Taking this into account, and looking at the trend over a number of years, the school performs as well as the average primary school nationally. Similar judgements apply to the school-based assessments undertaken in science. The school's data shows that pupils make at least the expected levels of progress between the tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There is no evidence of any differences in achievement between girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and make satisfactory progress along with their peers. Overall, the pupils' levels of achievement are good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory overall. Children in reception make good progress and are likely to reach the expected standards for children of this age in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year.

2. Within the subjects, there are variations in the pupils' results and achievements. In English, the pupils do better at reading, speaking and listening than at writing by the end of Year 6. Standards are broadly average in all three aspects at the end of Year 2. Pupils read an increasing range of fiction and non-fiction as they progress through the school and have appropriate research skills by the end of Year 6, which they use well when required to do so. Their good speaking and listening skills enable them to engage in fruitful discussions and debate in lessons; this helps them to clarify ideas and further their understanding. The school has taken steps to improve standards in writing, and these have met with some success. Pupils now achieve standards of spelling, grammar and handwriting that are in line with expectations for their age by the end of Year 6. However, they do not produce these standards consistently enough in their writing in different subjects. This limits the extent to which they improve their writing skills and use writing to communicate their thoughts and ideas clearly.

3. In mathematics, pupils reach expected standards overall by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Through its analysis of test results, the school identified weaknesses in the pupils' use of mental calculations to solve problems. Although improvements have been made, this is still an area for development. During the inspection, pupils were observed using their fingers to help them calculate the difference between two numbers when they could have used quick mental strategies to get the answer. They respond positively when challenged to work things out mentally, but have not established this as the natural course to take. The pupils' have a good knowledge and understanding of shapes for their age throughout the school, especially in Years 1 and 2. They have expected skills in adding, subtracting, dividing and multiplying numbers and in using the metric system of weights and measures. They use a range of graphs and charts in their work in different subjects to show data and have a reasonable understanding of how to interpret these.

4. Pupils have an expected level of knowledge and understanding in all aspects of science at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Their experimental skills are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2, but are below average at the end of Year 6, despite the school's recent emphasis on this aspect of their learning. Older and more able pupils are not yet being challenged to investigate their own ideas in ways of their own choosing and evaluating their results. Standards in ICT are also in line with expectations throughout the school, following recent improvements in provision. The pupils use these skills satisfactorily

as a tool for learning in other subjects. Standards in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical are in line with National Curriculum expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in art and design and in recorder-playing exceed these expectations. Pupils' knowledge and understanding meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. However, in all these subjects, pupils do not make optimum progress in the development of skills within the juniors because the tasks pupils of different ages are given are too similar.

5. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Those with individual learning targets receive appropriate support towards meeting them. Pupils with above average levels of knowledge, understanding and skills make good progress and achieve well in Year 1 and Year 2 because lessons and activities cater for their needs. They make satisfactory progress overall in Years 3 to 6.

6. Pupils of reception age achieve well because they learn through purposeful play for a lot of the time, but also have opportunities to join older pupils for some activities and lessons as soon as they are ready. Their lack of regular access to an outside learning environment does not significantly impede their progress in physical development.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are positive and keen to fulfil their role in the school community. From reception onwards they are confident to express opinions and work hard to follow instructions in a positive and sensible manner. They are polite and articulate to visitors in school and during the inspection were keen to help whenever possible.

8. Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is good. This enables lessons to be taught in an industrious and positive atmosphere. The different age groups in each class work well together, older pupils are good role models for younger children and provide positive examples of good behaviour. When teachers use the school's rewards and sanctions system consistently, pupils respond well with good behaviour and much effort. There have been no exclusions in the last year.

9. Relationships across the school are very good; pupils have confidence in their teachers and are secure in the knowledge their needs will be met with kindness, care and understanding by all the school staff. Relationships between pupils are also very good: there is a discernible atmosphere of friendship and care both in lessons and during school breaks.

10. Attendance is well above the national average. Pupils arrive punctually to school; this allows the school day to begin on time in a calm atmosphere that prepares pupils well for the day ahead.

11. Pupils willingly take advantage of the good opportunities they have to develop personal skills through their life in the school. In the junior class, pupils have sophisticated responsibilities, such as answering the telephone if no adult is available. They also respond well to the responsibility they are given for the younger children. Good provision is made to ensure pupils have every opportunity to develop independent learning skills. They have access to the Internet for research work and all make good use of the library. The pupils take good advantage of the wide range of activities involving outside agencies and organisations for the development of their personal skills. A good example of this is the work with the National Trust's guardianship scheme to produce garden information boards for the local National Trust house.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory overall, with many strengths. Teaching is consistently good in the infant class, including for the children of reception age. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. The needs of pupils in the different year groups within Key Stage 2 have been met through the formation of an extra class for English and mathematics, but teaching in other subjects does not always cater properly for the full age and ability range.

13. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils throughout the school. The relaxed and confident interactions that these relationships engender lead to valuable learning on many occasions. For example, in a mathematics lesson for the older pupils, the teacher encouraged the pupils to explain their thinking and to comment on each other's ideas. This kept them all alert and helped them to clear up some misunderstandings about fractions. Introductions to lessons are often lively and informative. For example, in a good lesson in art and design, the teacher kept the pupils' interest in paintings by famous artists by showing them good quality prints and providing a very well-informed commentary.

14. In the infants, the momentum established in the introductions is carried forward into group activities, which are planned to meet the needs of the different age and ability groups in the class. This is less successfully managed in the junior class, where all the pupils often begin with the same or very similar tasks, and are given varying degrees of support to finish them. The pace of lessons is also quicker in the infant class, with an expectation that pupils will finish their tasks as quickly as they can. In some lessons in the juniors, the pupils are given too much time to complete their work; as a result their pace of working slows and their concentration lapses. Teachers use a variety of resources well to support most lessons. They make good links between the different subjects so that pupils develop a wide view of learning. They plan a particularly good range of enrichment activities in art and design, including direct input from visiting artists, and these are closely linked to the local environment.

15. The lessons taught by the specialist teachers in science and music are satisfactory overall. They bring subject expertise and a change of approach, which add interest to lessons, but the pupils do not always respond positively, leading to some time being lost in managing their behaviour. The activities in these lessons are interesting and practical, but do not build consistently on pupils' skills in each age and ability group.

16. Teaching in English is very good in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory in years 3 to 6. In the infant class, lively teaching engenders enthusiasm from the pupils, leading to sustained effort and very good learning. Teachers provide lots of good quality opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their speaking, listening and reading skills, but expectations for the amount and quality writing are not consistent. In mathematics, teaching is good overall and very good in the infants. Lessons build systematically on existing knowledge and skills throughout the school, except that older pupils are not sufficiently challenged and supported to make full use of the mental strategies available to them when solving practical problems.

17. Pupils with special educational needs have their requirements assessed fully and individual educational plans provided if necessary. Teachers and classroom assistants give them good support in the classroom so that they make the same rate of progress as their peers, relative to their prior attainment. Lessons provide equally well for boys and girls. The staff promote a family atmosphere in the school that fosters a positive attitude to learning and encourages older pupils to develop a sense of responsibility for younger ones. The teaching for children in the reception class is good. It provides them with a wide range of good opportunities to learn through constructive play and dialogue with other children and with adults.

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

18. The school provides a good range of worthwhile learning opportunities, which successfully meet the interests, aptitudes and special needs of all its pupils. The curriculum meets statutory requirements to teach all subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education. There are appropriate guidelines in place to support teachers in the planning of lessons. The school ensures complete coverage of each subject for each year-group, avoiding repetitions, through two-year and four-year “rolling programmes” in the infants and juniors respectively.

19. Appropriate provision is made for the small number of reception pupils to learn through practical activities, with a good element of choice in accordance with government guidelines for the teaching of this age-group. The children have access to an outdoor learning environment, but not yet to regular free access to a wide range of free-choice outdoor activities.

20. Arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. The special educational needs co-ordinator keeps appropriate records of these pupils and their individual educational plans. The provision of additional support for pupils with statements of educational need is of satisfactory quality. The positive family atmosphere of the school and the very good relationships throughout promote the effective inclusion of pupils with special educational needs into every aspect of the school's life. The curriculum provides good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to learn and make progress.

21. The school makes good provision for the teaching of numeracy and satisfactory provision for literacy. The setting up of an extra teaching group in the juniors has helped the school to adapt the government's recommended National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies more effectively to meet the needs of all its pupils in English and mathematics in this age range. Areas remain for further improvement however, notably in the encouragement for pupils to use writing as a means of communication and the use of mental strategies to solve practical mathematics problems.

22. A good range of activities is provided after school during the year for such a small school. At the time of inspection, this included clubs for textiles, ICT and football. Some of these have only recently started and rely on voluntary help, mostly from parents. A very good programme of additional educational visits adds significantly to the pupils' educational experience. These include: trips to the theatre for a “Shakespeare For Kids” workshop; a “Victorian Tea Party” at Arlington Hall; a beach study in Lynmouth and a Creative Arts residential week at Beaford centre. Annual residential camps are provided for the older pupils to further enhance learning and personal and social skills.

23. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development overall. It makes very good provision for their moral, social and cultural development and good provision for their spiritual development. Whole school assemblies encourage a feeling of belonging to a community; this is further developed through the personal, social and health education and “Citizenship” curriculum. Science and religious education lessons also contribute to health education and sex education and drugs awareness for older pupils, in the context of good personal relationships. The programme of visits and visitors makes a very good contribution to pupils' understanding of the responsibilities of being a member of the community – the local MEP has visited the school, for example. This provision contributes well to the pupils moral as well as social development through engendering a sense of responsibility towards others. The school has good links with the local community and a very good range of visitors - musicians, dancers, naturalists, puppeteers among them-

share their expertise with the pupils. These experiences contribute greatly to broadening the pupils' cultural experiences. The school included visitors from a range of cultural backgrounds, for example an Indian drummer, to help prepare the pupils for life in a multicultural society. The school has good relationships with local schools through the local Academic Council and is a member of the small schools group within the council. These links help the school to widen and extend the pupils' learning opportunities beyond what would otherwise be possible to provide through the experience and expertise of the small staff. The staff know the pupils well and value them all equally. This engenders a sense of self-worth and awareness that every individual is special, giving the pupils an insight into spiritual values. Religious education lessons ensure that pupils are aware of the wide range of ways in which such values are expressed by different groups of people.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

24. The school makes good provision for the health, safety, and personal welfare of all pupils. The staff ensure that the school is a healthy and safe environment, with appropriate emphasis on pupils' personal development. They know the pupils well as individuals, and provide good support and guidance for them from being introduced into the reception class to preparing them for the next stage of their education, including moves into different schools during the juniors.

25. Child protection procedures are good and all staff are familiar with the school's agreed policy. The designated child protection officer uses good working relationships with all relevant agencies to bolster the support and protection offered by the school. Health and safety provision is also good. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy that fully meets statutory requirements and the school's procedures are checked regularly by the governors and headteacher. Risk assessment is up to date, including procedures for screening pupils' access to the Internet, and all equipment is well maintained with regular, recorded checks. The school recognises that the current arrangement for the storage of pupils' packed lunches is inadequate. Plans are now in place to improve matters. There are clear notices outlining fire evacuation procedures and fire drills are taken regularly and logged. First aid provision is good; training is up to date and the designated officer and some other staff hold relevant first-aid certificates. Pupils understand who will help them and how this will happen. All serious accidents and head injuries are recorded and reported to parents.

26. The school is successful in promoting good behaviour. Teachers use the code of behaviour consistently so that pupils understand what is expected. This helps to create an environment in which lessons can progress with minimum interruption. Occasionally, visiting teachers do not apply the same principles, leading to less favourable behaviour and less efficient use of lesson time.

27. The school has very good procedures in place to eliminate bullying and other forms of oppressive behaviour; these are used well in personal social and health education lessons and across the curriculum to make all the pupils aware that such behaviour is unacceptable.

28. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good. Registers are correctly and systematically marked and monitored for absence and punctuality. This has helped to improve overall attendance to well above average and eliminate unauthorised absences.

29. Arrangements for tracking and supporting the pupils' educational development are satisfactory overall. The school has made good improvements to its procedures for tracking and supporting the pupils' progress in English and mathematics. The data gathered and analysed includes the pupils' results in national tests and samples of their work through the year. This enables the school to identify where pupils achieve well and where most effort

needs to be put in. The tracking of children's progress in reception is very good, providing a clear record of the children's achievements in each area of learning from their entry to reception, including comments by parents. This enables the teacher to plan activities that are well suited to their emerging needs. Pupils in the juniors are allocated to one of two classes in English and mathematics on the basis of their performance in tests and results of other in-school analysis. This enables teachers to meet their needs more closely than when they are all taught together. The system has been expanded to include tracking of the pupils' attainment in other subjects, but this has not yet been established long enough to judge its impact. The staff all know the pupils very well. This informal knowledge helps them to cater for individual pupils' needs in many ways throughout the school day.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

30. The majority of parents have a good opinion of the school. Most are pleased with the teaching overall and especially the teachers' expectations of their children, but a minority of parents express reservations about the quality of teaching. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting felt there have been many improvements to the school over recent years. This is supported by the response to the school's survey of parents' views and the inspection findings. One parent summed up feelings well, saying: "School is part of home and home is part of the school."

31. The school provides plenty of good quality information for parents. A range of means, including the school prospectus, school policies, parents' evenings, newsletters and full end-of-year reports, is employed to provide clear communication between home and school. All prospective parents receive good information prior to their children starting at the school; this helps the children settle quickly into the school community. Parents returning the questionnaire felt they were very well informed of pupils' work and progress.

32. The school has good links with parents that enrich the pupils' education and support their progress. Parents give home support by listening to their children read and overseeing homework and parental help enables after school clubs for ICT, football and textiles to take place. Attendance at parents' meetings and school events is good; the staff appreciate this. A small number of parents feel they are not really encouraged to help in the classroom. However, others feel that if they wish to come in to help they are welcome to do so.

33. The Parent Teacher and Friends Association is an active and very hard working body: it organises a wide range of fundraising and social events to involve both parents and pupils. At present they are raising funds to improve provision for outdoor activities in reception.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

34. The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school and manages it well. Together with the staff and governors, he continues to expand and enrich the pupils' learning experiences. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the way it evaluates its performance improvements and has introduced a clearer focus on raising standards into the school development plan. It successfully meets its aims to provide a stimulating curriculum within a family atmosphere. Parents are very appreciative of this.

35. The school has a clear commitment to equality of opportunity, which it makes strenuous efforts to meet. The main risk of inequality in this school is in opportunities for pupils of different ages and abilities to make good progress in the juniors because of the wide age spread in the one class. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has taken steps to remedy the weaknesses identified in this area through the formation of an extra teaching group for English and mathematics on four mornings per week. This has resulted in pupils of

different ages and abilities making more even progress in these subjects, which is much appreciated by parents.

36. The very small teaching staff work well together to maintain and develop the school's provision for the pupils' personal and educational development. Discussions between them are relaxed and inclusive. The headteacher gives a good lead in keeping up to date with developments in the running of small schools, and ensures that all the staff benefit from this. The school acknowledges that difficulties remain in providing optimum opportunities for pupils in each year group to build systematically on skills in each subject, but are determined to continue working towards this goal. They have a good capacity to succeed in this venture.

37. The governing body fulfils its duties well and offers good support to the school. Many of the governors are new to their roles, but are already beginning to gain a good insight into the working of the school and have a willingness to help shape its future. They have a sound understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and a good capacity to help it improve. They meet regularly and have a committee structure that enables them to discuss and decide on the full range of issues that concern them. They have improved their risk assessment and health and safety procedures, contributing to the good standard of care that the school offers. The chair of governors works very closely with the head and is often in school. This enables him, together with staff and parent representatives, to provide the governing body with a clear picture of the work of the school.

38. The school's self-evaluation procedures have been strengthened and are now good. However, the high teaching demands placed on the headteacher and the very small size of the staff limits the extent to which teaching and learning can be improved through spreading good practice. The school recognises this difficulty and is continually searching for ways of gaining outside perspectives to help it improve. All the staff are fully committed to improving their performance.

39. The head and governors manage the school's finances well, with very good support from the very efficient school administrator. The headteacher is particularly successful in finding out about and obtaining any funds that are available to improve the school's environment and extend the learning opportunities for the pupils. The lovely avenue of fruit trees that line the path into the school result from one such initiative. The costs of each pupils' education in such a small school is inevitably much higher than in most schools, but the income is spent wisely. The governors apply good principles of best value to their spending, consulting pupils, staff and parents on their views for improvements and look for the most cost-effective ways of doing things. Their spending is guided by the school improvement plan and is therefore geared towards raising standards. Examples of recent fruitful spending include the provision of the computer suite and plans to provide an outdoor learning environment for children in reception.

40. The school's accommodation is adequate overall, and is much enhanced by the above improvements. Pupils have to use the village hall for physical education and store the gymnastics equipment in a separate shed. The school manages this limitation in a positive spirit so that pupils get the most out of what is available. Pupils' also currently store their packed lunches in an outside shed. This arrangement is acknowledged to be unsatisfactory and is to be changed. The head and staff make good use of the school grounds, for example by providing garden plots and climbing equipment for the pupils. Staffing levels are high, but appointments are aimed at improving standards and do not threaten the budget balance. Resources are adequate to teach all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

41. In order to continue improving the equality of opportunity throughout the school and raising standards even further, the headteacher and governors should:

- (1) enable pupils in each year to build systematically on their skills in subjects other than English and mathematics by ensuring that lesson plans include activities that meet the needs of the different age and ability groups.
(Paragraphs: 4, 12, 14, 15, 60, 70, 74, 81)
- (2) improve pupils' writing across the curriculum by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write for specific purposes and at suitable length in each subject;
 - raising expectations for the quality and quantity of writing produced;
 - making more use of displays and other means of celebrating the pupils' writing to inspire them to greater efforts and higher standards.(Paragraphs: 2, 16, 21, 52, 53, 61, 70, 74, 89)

In addition to these key issues, the governors should also consider the following areas for inclusion in their action plan:

- further improve provision for pupils to learn and use mental strategies for solving practical mathematical problems.
(Paragraphs: 3, 16, 21, 56)
- ensure that lessons build systematically on the pupils' skills of scientific enquiry in Years 3 to 6.
(Paragraphs: 4, 59)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	8	9	0	0	0
Percentage	0	15	40	45	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	32
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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	32	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	12.8
Average class size	

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	37.5

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	114 098
Total expenditure	108 691
Expenditure per pupil	3 882
Balance brought forward from previous year	2 946

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.06
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.48
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.06
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.42
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	28
Number of questionnaires returned	20

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	25	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	25	65	5	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	55	10	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	15	80	0	0	5
The teaching is good.	45	35	15	0	15
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	45	0	0	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	40	45	5	0	10
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	40	5	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	45	10	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	50	25	10	0	15
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	30	20	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	55	0	0	5

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents expressed concern about the children having to store their school-bags in a shed in the playground.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

42. At the time of the inspection, there were four children of reception age in the school. These pupils are well provided for to ensure that they receive their entitlement to the reception class curriculum. They make good progress in all the areas of learning and are on course to achieve the expected standards for children of this age before the end of reception. They are included in the infant classroom for registration and other general administrative and pastoral requirements and for some whole-class activities. The teacher and teaching assistant work closely together to plan opportunities for these children to learn through constructive play. They encourage the children to choose from a range of pre-prepared activities and interact with them in such a way as to stimulate their interest and develop their skills in each area of learning. The staff allow the children to opt into activities and lessons provided for the older pupils when they feel confident enough and express a desire to do so. This enables those who learn quickly to make good progress. The records that the teacher keeps provide a very good and useful record of the children's achievements and progress. The photographs that are included serve to enliven and clarify the record, especially for parents. The partnership between school and parents is very strong and contributes enormously to the quality of the school's provision. The teacher includes parents' and carers' comments about the child's capabilities alongside the school's assessments, and gives them due weight. This helps to ensure that the school's provision meets each individual child's needs as fully as possible in all the areas of learning. The teacher and teaching assistant both make great efforts to keep abreast of the latest developments in thinking about provision for the reception class and show a very good insight into how children of this age learn best.

Personal, social and emotional development

43. Provision for this aspect of the children's development is very good. There is a wide range of attainment among this small group, from absorption in the child's own activities at one end of the spectrum to a gregarious and confident co-operation and collaboration with friends at the other. For example, when given the opportunity to build models with large wooden blocks, one child was completely absorbed in his own construction of an airport. Meanwhile, two other children built their own castles then acted out the dramatic rescue of the princess by the knight on horseback, using the blocks as characters as well as buildings. By and large, the children develop good social skills and good levels of independence in response to the staff's high expectations, within a very supportive atmosphere that enables the children to develop at their own rate.

Communication, language and literacy

44. The children achieve well in this area of learning because of the high level of individual attention they receive. They all have very good opportunities to say what they want to say to their friend and to adults in an environment that both challenges and fully supports them. They are given plenty of opportunities and encouragement to explore books, reading alongside each other and the adults in the classroom. Listening to stories alongside the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils enriches this aspect of their learning. The staff encourage them to identify the initial sounds of words, which most of them do correctly. They make a good start in writing through the many opportunities they have to include 'writing' activities into their role-play. The adults encourage and support them to form letters correctly once they are ready for this step, initially guided by their teacher's handwriting and gradually beginning to make their own independent efforts.

Mathematical development

45. Progress is good in this area and the children achieve well. During the inspection, they demonstrated a good understanding of symmetry. One child explained, for example, why the shed door was not symmetrical because there were hinges on one side and not on the other. Higher attaining children built houses and castles with wooden blocks that showed very consistent symmetry in their design. The children have a good awareness of mathematical words such as 'more', 'bigger', 'longer' and smaller, and use numbers in a wide range of practical contexts. They count a set of objects reliably, and use the correct number symbols. They know the names of simple two and three-dimensional shapes, and some of their properties, such as whether or not they will roll. During the inspection, for example, they counted the number of circles they had drawn on a tractor or car. Teaching is effective because the teachers encourage the children to use mathematical words and ideas as they work and play, supporting them to learn the basic skills as and when they are ready.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

46. This aspect of the children's development is well catered for. They make good progress and achieve well. The 'family atmosphere' of the classroom means that they are involved in lots of conversations and activities that stimulate their interest, with good models provided by the older pupils. The staff are very aware of the need to allow them to learn largely through activities they have chosen for themselves, but also give them opportunities to join in more challenging activities and discussions with older pupils if they want to. They therefore learn as quickly as they are able to. They have a good awareness of the natural world through all the activities the school provides to explore the rich environment of the school. They learn about technology through a good range of construction and computer activities and take part in very simple 'scientific' investigations, for example to explore their senses. They develop a good idea of the passage of time through discussions about their families and get to know how their school fits in to the local geography. The staff show skill and insight in the way they encourage the children to express themselves and then extend their understanding of the world through conversations while they work and play.

Physical development

47. Progress in this area is satisfactory overall. The children develop a range of physical skills within the classroom through using different tools and equipment such as scissors and other tools. They enjoy joining in physical education lessons, showing good awareness of their bodies as they take part in role-play, for example acting out what happens at the end of the school day. The children benefit from the school's safe location and environment by being able to run around a lot in the fresh air. The climbing and other play equipment provided in the main playground also helps them to develop confidence and skills. They do not yet have regular convenient access to outdoor activities throughout the day. The school has recognised this need and has begun the development of an outdoor learning area with the help of funds donated by parents and friends of the school. The staff do what they can to compensate for this by arranging supervised outdoor activities as often as possible.

Creative development

48. The children achieve well in this area because they are given plenty of opportunities to explore and experiment in art and design, music and role-play activities. They draw, paint and make models regularly, choosing their own ideas or responding to suggestions by the staff. They choose and mix colours, saying which ones they like. They join in class songs and rhymes, developing a good sense of rhythm and enjoyment in the exploration of sounds. In their play they are beginning to share ideas and develop their imaginations.

ENGLISH

49. Attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is average, representing satisfactory levels of achievement overall. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when attainment at the end of Year 6 was judged to be below average and pupils' achievements therefore unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

50. Throughout the school, pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. In Year 2, the majority of pupils can recall and describe in detail their experiences and explain what they are doing, and most understand the importance of taking turns to make spoken contributions. In Year 6, pupils use a wide vocabulary to express themselves and generally do so with confidence, especially in class discussions with the teachers. The ability most pupils have to listen well to their teachers and peers has a positive effect on their progress, particularly in Years 1 and 2.

51. As they move through the school, pupils read a variety of texts appropriate for their age and ability and show a developing enthusiasm for books. The weekly "Reading Together" lesson, where junior pupils read with infant pupils, makes a very good contribution to this aspect of their development. As they progress through the school, the majority of pupils acquire a range of strategies and skills to enable them to tackle new words and read and understand unfamiliar texts. Pupils have average reading skills overall by the end of Year 2, with some pupils reading at levels above those expected for their age and some below. Pupils develop a good knowledge of letter sounds systematically through regular short lessons. In one such lesson in Year 1, pupils learning the sound made by "ai" understood the term "phoneme" to describe the letter blend; using letter cards, they successfully spelled out words such as "plain" and "maid". By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of the layout of books. For example, they recognise the "author" and name other books by the same author. They know what a "fiction" book is and how to identify the "publisher". Pupils enjoy reading poetry aloud and appreciate the impact it can have. For example, when suggesting possible missing rhymes in a "Rock Pool Rap", they showed awareness of rhythm and rhyme and sound patterns. They read with appropriate expression, taking account of punctuation such as exclamation marks. By the end of Year 6, overall attainment in reading is average, with a spread from below to above average. The best readers are beginning to read accurately, with expression, talk about the characters in the stories they have read, predict outcomes and discuss their favourite stories and authors.

52. By the end of Year 2, standards in writing are broadly average overall. Pupils' writing demonstrates a developing understanding of sentence structure, the use of an appropriate range of vocabulary and the ability to spell simple words correctly. Standards are also broadly average by the end of Year 6. Some long pieces of writing by pupils in Year 6 are of a good standard, with examples of different styles of writing. For example, they have written their own versions of fables using structures and themes from their reading of different versions of familiar folk tales such as "Little Red Riding Hood". They identify similarities and differences, recognising how stories can change over time and how differences of culture and place are expressed. However, the pupils' do not use and develop their writing skills sufficiently in other subjects, such as religious education, geography, history and science. Standards of handwriting are satisfactory overall. Pupils throughout the school regularly practise forming their letters and pupils' presentation of their "best" work is generally equivalent to that expected for pupils of a similar age. Most pupils are able to form their letters correctly; the majority of pupils have begun to develop a neat, cursive style of writing by the end of Year 6, and some are beginning to develop a personal style. However, standards of presentation of writing throughout the school do not consistently reflect the pupil's best efforts. Standards of spelling vary considerably between pieces of work but are satisfactory overall. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 spell frequently used words reasonably accurately. Pupils in Year 6 follow most of the general rules, are aware of important

exceptions, and make a good attempt at unfamiliar words, reflecting satisfactory progress and achievement.

53. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It ranges from very good to satisfactory and, is very good in the infant class. Where teaching was judged to be very good this was because the teacher had a very good rapport with the pupils, used questioning very skilfully to guide and assess pupils' learning, moved the lesson along at a very good pace and supported pupils very well during the tasks. Pupils are enthusiastic and eager to learn in these lessons; they work well at their allotted tasks without the need for constant reminders from the teacher. Teachers provide good opportunities for speaking and listening by encouraging pupils to talk and put forward their ideas during lessons. In the junior classes, teachers take some account of pupils' varying age and ability in the two separate groups, but this is not always enough to ensure good progress by all pupils. Introductions to the lessons are successful. They are often lively, and teachers direct questions at pupils in such a way as to involve all ages and abilities. The pupils respond enthusiastically and contribute constructively to this part of the lesson and learn well. However, teachers do not usually give deadlines for the pupils to complete their written work. This leads to a lack of urgency and slow pace of working and learning during this part of the lesson. Marking is up to date and, in the best instances, offers pupils positive encouragement to improve their work.

54. Teachers plan and organise lessons according to the National Literacy Strategy, with resources readily available for pupils to use, and make satisfactory use of good assessment information to group pupils according to prior attainment. This is an improvement since the last inspection and addresses one of the key issues. Although the small library is satisfactorily stocked, it is not readily accessible for older pupils as it is situated at the end of the infant classroom. This reduces to some extent the ease with which they can refer to books to support their studies in different subjects. "Big Books" and "group readers" used for shared and class reading in literacy lessons include a good range of poetry and fiction, with traditional stories from a range of cultures, and factual books. The main contribution of ICT in English lessons is the use of word processing. This helps to add interest to the process of communicating through writing.

MATHEMATICS

55. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils make good progress overall and very good progress in Year 1 and Year 2, which is a good improvement since the last inspection.

56. The pupils' number work in Year 2 is of an expected standard. They understand and use the number system to write, add and subtract tens and units, using this knowledge to solve simple practical problems. They do sums in their heads confidently and accurately, for example finding the double of 14. Higher attaining pupils achieve well, using large numbers with confidence. They show a good understanding of simple fractions and use the idea of a half and a quarter to help them solve simple problems. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of shape is above average in Year 1 and Year 2. Most pupils name and describe a range of flat and solid shapes, recognising the connections between them. For example, they see that a cylinder can be made by curling a rectangle and that a cuboid has six rectangular faces. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good range of knowledge and skills. They use decimals confidently, understanding quick ways of multiplying and dividing by 10, 100 and 1000, and the connections between fractions, decimals and percentages. They lack confidence in using their understanding of the structure of the number system to solve problems in a practical situation. For example, some pupils will count back using their fingers to subtract 9 from a number rather than subtracting ten and adding one mentally. This is an area the school is working on, following an analysis of the pupils' test results.

Their knowledge of shapes and the metric system of weights and measures is good, but they do not have a good grasp of imperial equivalents, for example the connection between miles and kilometres. Their understanding of co-ordinates is good. For example, they draw shapes in any of the four sections of a grid, using positive and negative numbers as co-ordinates for the corners. Pupils have expected skills in interpreting graphs and charts by the end of Year 6, and use computers competently to present data in different ways.

57. The quality of teaching is good overall. The teaching seen in the infant class is of a high standard. The teacher uses practical resources very effectively to focus the pupils' attention on mental questions. She asks pupils of different ages and attainment levels questions of varying difficulty in the 'mental warm up', catering fully for all the pupils in the class. Because they each had to show which their answer by using 'digit fans' in the lesson seen, all had to do the mental work, and the teacher was able to tell which pupils were struggling and which were secure in their knowledge. For the main lesson, the pupils were given packets of different shapes so that they could take them apart to see which flat shapes were used in the initial packaging design. As well as giving the pupils a very good insight into the connections between two and three-dimensional shapes, this activity linked their work in mathematics with basic design and technology skills. They could see how to design and make packaging of different shapes. The pupils respond very well to these opportunities and challenges. They show very high levels of enthusiasm and interest, work hard and develop great confidence in trying difficult problems and putting forward their ideas. The quality of teaching seen in Years 3 to 6 during the inspection was satisfactory. However, evidence from the pupils' books shows that over time, teaching is good because pupils make good progress in each year-group. In a lesson with older pupils, lively discussion between the pupils during the introduction helped them to clarify ideas about fractions. The teacher handled this well, giving the pupils plenty of opportunities to comment on each other's contributions. However, in a lesson involving younger junior pupils, the pace of the lesson was slowed by pupils' continuous interjections that were not so skilfully handled. In both lessons, similar tasks were set for all the pupils, and the support that was given was too general. This meant that too few of them were suitably challenged by the activity, which reduced their level of involvement and rate of learning. Teachers review the success of their lessons, tailoring future lessons to the needs that they see emerging. For example, following some confused responses in a lesson on fractions, the teacher decided to revise what the pupils had already learned about fractions in more detail in the next lesson. Resources were not used as effectively in the junior classes as in the infants to bring lessons to life and help teachers to judge individual pupils' understanding.

58. Improvements since the last inspection include better tracking of pupils' progress and the use of this information to group the pupils according to their prior attainment, both within lessons and to allocate to one of the two teaching groups in the junior class. This helps the teachers to plan work that is more closely matched to the pupils' needs.

SCIENCE

59. Standards in science are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils have a better understanding of fair tests as a means of finding things out, but they still do not build on their investigative skills in a clear and systematic way in Years 3 to 6.

60. Pupils in Year 2 have expected levels of knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and forces for their age. They group plants and animals together according to observable similarities, such as the number of legs or colour of flowers, and know that they need different things such as water and light to keep them alive and that they reproduce. They distinguish between push and pull forces and describe some properties of the materials they handle, using words such as 'flexible', 'smooth', 'shiny' and 'hard'. Higher

attaining pupils say why certain materials are good for specific purposes, such as glass for windows because you can see through it. They record their practical work using labelled diagrams. In Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of many aspects of the natural world and man-made environment. They describe the life-cycles of animals and plants and the purpose of various organs such as the stamen of a flower and the human heart. The work in their books shows a good understanding of the forces acting on an object like an aeroplane in flight. In discussion, they explain correctly why an aeroplane flies, using technical terms such as 'thrust', 'uplift' and 'drag'. However, they show a less thorough knowledge and understanding of some of the forces more closely affecting their everyday lives. For example, they found it difficult to explain why a force was needed to overcome friction in order to push an object along a surface. They understand some physical processes such as evaporation and condensation and, with help, can explain that some changes like these are reversible, whereas others, such as burning, are not. They have a better understanding of experimental procedures than at the last inspection, but lack confidence in explaining how they would test their own ideas and how to explain clearly the results of experiments they have carried out.

61. The quality of teaching and learning in science is satisfactory. The only teaching that was seen was in the junior class, where a specialist teacher takes weekly lessons. The teaching ensures that the pupils undertake practical experiments in order to improve their understanding of the world. In the lesson seen, they tested the insulation qualities of different materials by measuring the temperature of a fixed quantity of water as it was allowed to cool in similar containers that were wrapped in samples of the various materials, such as paper and hay. The pupils understood the method and took reasonably accurate readings using a thermometer. The main weakness in this approach is that all the pupils carry out the same task, with the only difference being in the way they are supported to do so. The similarity of the recorded work in the pupils' books across the age range confirms that they usually work in this way. This ensures that all the pupils cover the required aspects of knowledge and understanding for the National Curriculum, but does not secure the systematic development of skills. It does not challenge the older pupils to think of their own ways to make and test their own predictions, explain their methods and possibly repeat experiments and measurements to confirm their results. It also means that pupils in younger age-groups may miss out on some developmental steps in learning the skills of scientific enquiry. Explanations provided by the teacher are clear, but are sometimes aimed at too high a level for the younger pupils. Expectations for the quality of presentation of pupils' work are not high enough. This results in untidy pieces of work and limits the usefulness of pupils' books as a demonstration of what has been learned and as a focus for discussion of what the next step might be. It also means that many opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to explain themselves fully in writing.

ART AND DESIGN

62. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is above expectations for their age and they make good progress in a good range of work in a wide variety of media as they move through the school.

63. The paintings and computer designs in the style of Jackson Pollock, Christmas banners and self-portraits produced by pupils in Year 2 during this year are of above average quality. Pupils are equally competent using pencil, oil-pastels and watercolours. The standard of their observational drawings of buildings is good, and they mix and test colours before applying them. In Year 6, pupils observe the work of artists such as L. S. Lowry carefully and make astute observations such as: "All the skies are similar, all a sort of dirty grey". They then produce good quality work of their own based on the artists' techniques and ideas. For example, they painted "Skyline" pictures of a good standard in a similar style to Paul Klee, having explored his work, making use of a variety of sources, including the

Internet. Their observational drawings of dandelion seeds and paint and chalk pictures of "Winter Trees" are also of a good standard.

64. The quality of learning in art and design lessons is good overall, reflecting the overall quality of teaching, which was good in both lessons observed. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, use a wide variety of resources to motivate pupils well and, through good support, encourage them to evaluate, improve and take pride in their work. Pupils' responses in the lessons observed ranged from satisfactory to very good and were good overall. In the best cases, pupils greatly enjoy their art and design activities, responding very well to challenges to express themselves creatively.

65. Resources for art and design are of good quality, readily accessible and well-utilised. The school gives high priority to art and design and links the pupils work very effectively to the local environment. The playground mural illustrated this very well. The school provides a very good range of visitors who work with the pupils on such projects as the, the cushion project and the "Arts in Education" week, and arranged stimulating visits, such as that to the local pottery. All this extra provision serves to interest and motivate the pupils and adds a new dimension to their personal development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

66. No lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements are based on the limited work on display, photographs of previous work and the school's scheme of work.

67. Standards were in line with expectations for pupils' ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 as at the last inspection. Indications are that these standards have been maintained. In Year 2, pupils have worked with a range of materials that they have cut and joined in various ways to make models. They have discussed their likes and dislikes and made drawings to show how their designs progressed. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed a range of skills in the use of tools to make products from a variety of materials including wood. Photographs show that they have included moving parts in their designs of model toys, but there was insufficient pupils' work available to make a secure judgement on the level of design and making skills that went into this and other projects.

68. The guidelines available to support teachers in their planning of lessons are good. They outline the skills that need to be taught in each year group and suggest activities through which this may be achieved. Photographs provide evidence that the work has been done, but no examples of pupils' designs and evaluations are available to provide an overview of standards and to help teachers pitch future lessons at the right level.

GEOGRAPHY

69. No geography lessons were observed during the inspection, so no secure judgements on teaching, learning can be made. However, photographic and other evidence provided by the school and discussions with pupils indicate that pupils' attainment is broadly average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and that pupils make broadly satisfactory progress in geography as they move through the school.

70. During the current school year, Year 1 and 2 pupils have looked at "Journeys" around the World and at different climates and the type of clothing appropriate for each climate. In the juniors, pupils have undertaken map studies, using Ordnance Survey symbols, plans and keys and scale in their map work. They have looked at weather patterns around the world and at desert and tropical climates – the monsoon season in India and Bangladesh, for example. The level of thought they have put into comparing these environments and the factors contributing to them is about what is expected for their age. The quality and quantity

of written work does not reflect good use of the subject to improve this aspect of the pupils' literacy skills.

71. The school has adopted the government-recommended scheme of work for geography, with some amendments to suit the school. This ensures appropriate coverage of all areas of study but is less successful in ensuring clear progress in the skills and knowledge of the subject as pupils move from year to year in the same class. The school makes good use of its local environment to enliven learning in the subject, for example through the playground wall mural depicting local features of landscape, wild-life and farming.

HISTORY

72. One history lesson was observed during the inspection, in the infant class. Additional evidence was provided by a scrutiny of samples of pupils' work, photographs and discussions with pupils. This demonstrates that, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly appropriate for their age and that they make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Pupils develop their sense of chronology and learn about key events in selected periods of history; they study local history and learn about the past from a very good range of information resources.

73. In the one lesson seen, pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 found answers to questions about past and present homes through simple observations. Through their comments, they demonstrated an increasing sense of chronology by using terms pertaining to the passage of time when sequencing events and objects. Examples of comments include: "In olden days you had to go to the river to find water"; "They didn't have toilets in those days" and "That saw (a photograph) was maybe built 2000 years ago". Their knowledge of the history of transport is also good. In Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of Ancient Greece, including Greek gods, Greek classical architecture - Ionic and Corinthian columns for example - and Greek food. They also have a sound knowledge of some other periods of history, such as the Tudors in England, and an expected level of awareness of how these different periods relate to one another in time.

74. The teaching observed was very good. The teacher motivated the pupils very well with stories of her own grandmother and, through skilled questioning, ensured all pupils were challenged and included in the lesson. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes, as well as learning in this lesson were very good. They remained attentive and very responsive throughout, due to the very good relationships engendered by the teacher. The work in the pupils' books and on display does not reflect good use of the subject to promote writing skills, especially for older pupils.

75. The school has adopted the government-recommended scheme of work for the subject with some amendments to suit the school. To ensure full coverage of all areas of study the school has successfully adopted a system of "rolling programmes" of two and four years, but has been less successful in ensuring that pupils build systematically on their skills as they move from year to year. This is particularly so in the junior class. The school makes very good use of its local environment to enrich learning in the subject. The school motivates the pupils and extends their learning opportunities very successfully through a very good range of visits, and also visitors who talk about life in the past or undertake "role play" activities.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

76. One complete lesson was observed during the inspection, together with a number of small group activities in the newly-installed “computer suite”. These observations, together with evidence of work undertaken previously and discussions with pupils, indicate that standards are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils’ make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Provision for ICT was a key issue at the last inspection. Since then, significant improvements have been made to the level of resources, training for teachers, the coverage of the subject and the use of ICT in other subjects.

77. Standards are average in Year 2. Pupils are familiar with a range of basic on-screen editing techniques. They type their names on the keyboard, using the “caps lock” key to change case, and select the font size and colour of the text independently. They use a simulation package to orientate an image on the screen, showing good skills with the “mouse”. Pupils continue to build on these skills and reach standards expected for their age in Year 6. They create and test instructions, including the use of repeats and brackets, to make an on-screen robot draw lines. They combine text and images to produce complete stories or rhymes, for example “Jack and Jill” and download information from the Internet to support their work in other subjects. They have a good knowledge of web-sites and search engines and compare their usefulness as sources of information

78. Insufficient evidence was gathered to support an overall judgement on teaching and learning in ICT. Pupils are keen to work with computers; they work together appropriately, taking turns and working independently where required. Pupils’ attitudes and behaviour during small group activities are good. The quality of teaching and learning in the lesson observed was good and the learning support assistants gave good support in the group activities.

79. Equipment and resources for the subject are now good for the number of pupils in the school. Teachers have undergone appropriate in-service training and the school has introduced a whole-school scheme of work based on government-guidelines. These factors are enhancing the quality of teaching and learning that the school provides and enabling the pupils to use ICT as a tool for learning in an increasing range of situations.

MUSIC

80. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make a sound judgement about the pupils’ overall attainment in music at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. One full lesson was observed in the juniors and one part lesson in the infants. Recorder lessons were also observed throughout the school. All the pupils participate in these lessons, and reach above average standards.

81. Year 2 pupils perform simple repeated rhythm patterns, keeping to a steady pulse and use their voices expressively when singing simple songs. They play simple tunes on a recorder, reading musical notation accompanied by the letter names of the notes. Standards in recorder-playing and reading musical scores are higher in Year 6 than would be expected because all the pupils have regular lessons. They read standard musical notation to play tunes in an ensemble. They have listened to a wide variety of music, which has given them a healthy, open-minded approach to any new music that they hear. Their skills at composing and performing music were below average in the lesson seen in the juniors. They needed a lot of support and guidance to work in small groups to produce a simple short composition. There was little difference between the skills shown by the younger and older pupils in this lesson, with the overall standard of performance being more in line with expectations for Year 4 or 5 than Year 6. The standard of singing observed in this lesson was also below expectations, with many of the pupils failing to achieve the correct note when singing a

response to a sung question from the teacher. However, they did not have the support of an instrument of any kind to guide the pitch of their voice, so an overall judgement on their singing ability could not be made on the basis of this evidence.

82. A specialist teacher provides all the music teaching on one afternoon per week. It was noticeable that the pupils react differently to the visiting teacher than to their class teacher in both classes. They are more difficult to manage, and therefore do not learn as well as they do in their regular lessons. This was particularly apparent in the infants. The lesson plans are detailed, and provide for the active involvement of the pupils, for example in using instruments to compose pieces of music. They are successful in ensuring that all the pupils gain experience in this important area, but do not cater fully for the different levels of prior attainment in each class. This results in some of the older, higher-attaining pupils not making enough progress.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

83. Lessons were seen in dance in the infants and games in the juniors. These are therefore the only aspects of the subject in which firm judgements about standards can be made.

84. Pupils in Year 2 show a good awareness of their bodies and the space around them when they work. In the lesson seen, they mimed actions associated with going home at the end of a school day with concentration and invention. They kept very still when required, to show that a sequence of movements was about to begin, and moved with control and enthusiasm as they developed their ideas. Pupils in Year 6 were observed learning and practising football skills under the direction of a volunteer coach. They showed expected levels of skill in controlling a ball, being aware of the space around them, passing the ball to a target player and shooting at goal. Some of the younger pupils in Years 4 and 5 showed above average skills in these areas. Girls and boys demonstrated equal levels of skill.

85. The quality of teaching seen was good. The teaching of dance in the infants was lively and enthusiastic. The pupils responded with great enthusiasm and effort. The teacher helps pupils to evaluate each other's performances, encouraging positive comments. The pupils are good at this. They are very thoughtful in their comments, looking for the most positive aspects of what they see. This lesson proceeded at a brisk pace, making most of the limited time available and demonstrating the good progress these pupils are making. The teaching seen in the juniors was also good. The volunteer coach managed the pupils very well, providing a very good range of activities clearly designed to develop the pupils' skills. The pupils responded very positively with effort and enthusiasm, visibly improving their performance as the lesson progressed and taking great pleasure in their achievements. This extra provision is clearly making a good contribution to the pupils' progress in games.

86. The school provides swimming lessons for all the pupils, enabling most of them to fulfil the minimum expected requirements of swimming 25 metres and knowing the basics of water-safety by the end of Year 6. Considering its small size and the absence of a purpose built hall, the school does remarkably well in providing for the full National Curriculum programmes of study in physical education. The good range of climbing equipment in the playground, arrangements for residential trips that include adventure activities and competitive sports and games fixtures further enrich and enhance the pupils' learning experiences.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

87. One lesson was observed during the inspection, in the junior class, and samples of work in books and on display around the school were scrutinised. This provided sufficient evidence to show that pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject as they move through the school to meet the expectations of the locally-agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

88. Pupils in Year 2 consider simple environmental issues affecting “Our Beautiful World”. They know about different “creation” stories and appreciate the importance of homes and families. In the lesson observed, older pupils showed an awareness of the idea of life as a journey as portrayed in ‘Pilgrim’s Progress’ and ‘The Canterbury Tales’. They have an adequate knowledge of the ceremonies and beliefs of Hinduism for example, the main gods, the stories of Rama and Sita, the Divali celebration and the “Four Rules” of Hindu life.

89. The quality of teaching and learning in the one lesson seen was satisfactory overall. The teacher demonstrated a good rapport with the pupils and managed a lively discussion at the start of the lesson. Following this, the pace of learning slowed because no deadline was given for the pupils to complete their work. The work in their books shows that over time, the subject is not used well to encourage the pupils to express themselves well in writing.

90. The school follows the locally-agreed syllabus for religious education planned over “rolling programmes” of topics. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and these are augmented well by visitors to the school - to talk about Judaism, for example. Through focusing pupils' attention on general values that religions share, common moral codes and sense of wonder at creation, the subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual and moral development. It also helps to prepare them for life in a diverse society.