

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BRAMPFORD SPEKE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Brampford Speke, Exeter

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113347

Headteacher: Stephen Powley

Reporting inspector: Peter Kerr

23583

Dates of inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> September 2002

Inspection number: 247352

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brampford Speke Exeter Devon
Postcode:	EX5 5HE
Telephone number:	01392 841414
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C. Francis
Date of previous inspection:	6 <sup>th</sup> October 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23583	P Kerr	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Music Physical education Provision for pupils with special educational needs 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?
19335	S Dixon	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?
8845	H Sumner	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage English Art and design Geography History Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is a smaller than average Church of England voluntary controlled primary school catering for children from four to eleven years old. The number of pupils on roll is currently 60 and will rise to 66 by the summer of 2003. All the pupils are of white British ethnic origin. They come from a range of backgrounds, but only 5 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals and attainment on entry is above average overall. The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is below average. Most of these pupils have needs relating to learning. None of the pupils has a statement of special educational needs. During the two years preceding this inspection, the school experienced a complete change of teaching staff, including headteacher, and a third class was established to cater for a rising roll.

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

The school provides a good standard of education overall. Pupils achieve well in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2. Achievement is satisfactory and improving in Years 3 to 6. Pupils due to leave the school in 2003 are on course to achieve above average standards. The school is well led and managed. There is a strong team spirit and shared commitment to raising standards. The budget is efficiently managed and the school gives sound value for money.

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

- The headteacher provides good leadership and management and shares with the staff and governors a clear commitment to raising standards.
- Pupils achieve well in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
- Provision for children in the Reception class is very good.
- The pupils behave well, have good attitudes and enjoy good relationships.
- The school provides well for the pupils' spiritual and moral development.

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

- The levels of achievement of the older and more able pupils.
- The balance in the curriculum between and within subjects.
- Provision for pupils to appreciate the cultural diversity of the wider society.

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

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

Good improvements have been made since the school was last inspected in October 1997 in the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum and leadership and management. The key issues that were raised have all been addressed, including putting in place: a good school improvement plan; schemes of work for each subject; a system to support pupils with special educational needs; monitoring of teaching and learning; tracking of pupils' achievements. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents fully comply with statutory requirements and good plans are in hand to provide the school with the means to cover the full ICT curriculum in the very near future.

## 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	A	N/A	D	E
mathematics	B	N/A	C	D
science	B	N/A	D	E

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

The table has to be treated with great caution because of the small numbers of pupils from the school taking the tests each year. The results of one or two pupils can change the comparison grades considerably. In 2000, fewer than 10 pupils took the tests, so the results are not published.

The table suggests that the school has not performed as well as similar schools in 2001. However, when compared to other schools that obtained similar results at the end of Year 2 in 1997, pupils at the school made at least similar progress during Years 3 to 6. The school has set a realistic target for 2003 for all pupils in Year 6 to achieve the expected Level 4 in English, mathematics and science (the 'core subjects'). This would lead to above average comparison grades and bring the school's rate of improvement in standards to at least in line with national trends.

The inspection findings are that:

- Pupils in Year 6 are on course to achieve at least average standards by the end of the year in the core subjects. However, some of the older and more able pupils are capable of higher standards than they are currently achieving and there are general weaknesses in library and investigative skills.
- Pupils make good progress overall (including those with special educational needs)
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils achieve well at this stage.
- Standards are above average and achievement is good in the Reception class.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are improving, but are still below expectations because the pupils do not yet use a wide enough range of ICT skills to aid learning in different subjects. The school has good plans in hand to address this issue rapidly once new computers are installed in the near future. Boys do not achieve as well as girls in reading, so the school is providing more books of interest to boys.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils' enthusiasm contributes' to a good working atmosphere.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils get on well together and there is no evidence of bullying or intimidating behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good relationships. Satisfactory personal development. Improving as opportunities for accepting responsibility increase.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance rates are well above the national average.

## 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.*

Teaching is good overall, meeting the needs of the vast majority of pupils. In Reception and in Years 1, 2 and 3, good use of a variety of teaching methods and resources keeps the children and pupils purposefully occupied in enjoyable learning for much of the time. The range of methods used in Years 4 to 6 is not always as well suited to the needs of the wide age and ability range of the pupils. This leads to some lack of interest and enthusiasm, usually among the older and more able pupils. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall. English is taught well throughout the school, but not enough use is made of other subjects to teach and apply literacy skills. The teaching of mathematics is good in Years 1 to 3, with good application of numeracy skills to solve practical problems, and satisfactory in Years 4 to 6. Teaching of ICT is good, but its effect limited as of yet due to the shortage of up-to date equipment. Teaching is at least satisfactory in all other subjects, except that in geography, insufficient ground is covered. Pupils apply themselves well to activities, working hard mentally and physically as required. Their knowledge of their own learning is satisfactory, but is an area that could be improved to raise levels of interest and involvement.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Meets statutory requirements, with a good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The pupils receive good quality support in lessons, but their targets are not always clear enough to guide day to day learning and track progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision overall. Strengths in spiritual and moral guidance. Areas for development in opportunities for pupils to show initiative and accept responsibility and to fully appreciate the wide range of cultures represented in society at large.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good provision for children's welfare and promoting good behaviour. Good tracking of pupils' progress in English and mathematics with plans to extend it to other subjects.
How well does the school work in partnership with parents	Relations between the school and parents are good, although some parents have been apprehensive about recent changes. The school is keen to involve parents, many of whom want to contribute.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides good leadership and management. All the staff give good support, work very well as a team and discharge their evolving management responsibilities effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors have a very good appreciation of their role, take an active and supportive interest in the school and hold it to account. Their working relationship with the school is excellent.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Recent improvements to the tracking of pupils' performance have greatly enhanced this aspect of management.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses its money wisely to achieve the best value for the pupils, guided by a very good school improvement plan. The accommodation and resources available for teaching and learning are satisfactory. Staffing levels are good, with a very good complement of effective teaching assistants.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The children like school</li><li>• The headteacher and staff are very approachable</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The balance between English and mathematics and other subjects</li><li>• The range of activities in lessons</li><li>• Opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and exercise responsibility</li></ul>

The inspection team agrees that the school is a very open and friendly place. There was an imbalance in the curriculum during the past year which continues to some degree. The team agrees that pupils could be encouraged more to use their initiative and exercise responsibility, and that a wider range of activities could be introduced to help the older and more able pupils learn more effectively.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Numbers of pupils taking the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are small and the composition of year groups varies considerably from year to year in terms of family backgrounds and levels of attainment. Judgements about standards and achievements and discussion of the school's test results take this into account. The attainment of children on entry to the Reception class is above average this year in English and mathematics, and was also above average the previous year. This gives the school a benchmark against which to measure the progress of this group of pupils through the school. The school has no similar data on the attainment on entry of previous year groups.

2. Currently, children make good progress in the Reception class and achieve well in all the areas of learning for this age group. They are on course to achieve all the expected standards in each of the six areas of learning for children in this stage before they leave the Reception class and so begin the National Curriculum in Year 1 with above average attainment.

3. The results that are published in this report are from the 2001 tests because national data from the 2002 tests is not yet available for comparisons with other schools to be made. Only the end of Year 6 results are published because there were fewer than ten pupils taking the tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001. In 2002, fewer than ten pupils took the end of Year 6 tests. This group contained more lower-attaining pupils than the 2001 group, so the test results are correspondingly lower. The school's targets for English and mathematics in 2003, and also for science, are much higher. The inspection confirms that this target reflects the potential achievement of this group, which is above average. Taking all these considerations into account, the trend in the school's results is one of improvement over time at a rate comparable to the national picture.

4. The inspection found that pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are on course to reach average standards in English and mathematics by the end of the year. Year 2 pupils achieve well in both of these subjects because of good teaching that offers opportunities for pupils of all abilities to make appropriate progress. Year 1 pupils also make good progress and achieve well. The achievement of pupils in Year 6 is satisfactory in both subjects. They are not achieving as well as Year 2 pupils partly because of the disruption to their education caused by the turnover of staff during the past two years. Another contributory factor, however, is the fact that currently, they spend insufficient time learning at their own pace in lessons. The progress of pupils in Year 5 has also been affected by the same factors, so their achievement in English and mathematics is also satisfactory rather than good. Pupils in Year 3 make good progress because lessons include sufficient challenge for them, while pupils in Year 4 make satisfactory progress.

5. Within English, speaking, listening and skills are good throughout the school, and there are weaknesses in writing, particularly spelling, that the school has plans to address, and in library skills. In mathematics, pupils make good progress overall in learning basic number skills. The main area for improvement is in their ability to select and use the mathematics they need to solve a range of problems, particularly in Years 4 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs relating to English and mathematics make satisfactory progress. They are supported well in lessons, but the literacy and numeracy targets in their individual educational plans are not always specific and short-term enough.

6. Standards in science are in line with expectations overall at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils have an expected level of knowledge in the subjects throughout the school, but in Year 6, pupils do not have the breadth of experience in experimenting and investigating that is expected by this age. In ICT, pupils are making rapid progress from a low base in the areas of the subject that have been covered in recent lessons, but standards are still below expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because of previous shortcomings.

7. In all other subjects except geography, standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Because of insufficient time spent on geography and lack of focus on key skills such as mapping, pupils do not achieve as well as they should by the end of Year 6. Standards in gymnastics are held back by the lack of a hall that could accommodate equipment older pupils need to develop their skills. In art and design and music, pupils reach a satisfactory standard overall, with weaknesses in the creative aspects of the subjects, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

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

8. Pupils have good attitudes to their work. They arrive at school eager to learn and they approach their lessons and activities with great enthusiasm. This has a positive effect upon their learning and creates a happy and generally purposeful atmosphere. For the most part, pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to each other and respond well to questions. In a small number of lessons some pupils chatter, call out or fail to listen respectfully to others. This occurs mostly when teachers do not set clear enough ground-rules or pupils' work lacks sufficient challenge. Pupils work well in groups and pairs and they enjoy discussing their work and sharing ideas, as seen when older pupils worked together to compose different stories to follow on from a common beginning.

9. Whilst pupils from the Reception year onwards are encouraged to be independent and confident there are too few opportunities in the school as a whole for pupils to take part in investigative work and creativity. This was a strength identified by the previous inspection that has not been maintained. Pupils are proud of their work, but their awareness of their own learning is limited.

10. The behaviour of all pupils is good in lessons, assemblies and at lunchtimes. Pupils understand the school rules and abide by them willingly on the whole. There is no evidence of conflict or bullying and pupils work and play in harmony. There was one temporary exclusion during the previous year in response to unacceptable behaviour towards pupils and staff.

11. The relationships amongst all members of the school community are good. Pupils work and play well together and are generally friendly and helpful. Pupils show genuine concern for each other and take care that their fellows are fully included in both work and play. Lunchtimes are sociable and pleasant and outdoor play is happy and orderly with older pupils adopting a responsible and caring approach to younger ones.

12. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils respond well to the opportunities that they have to take responsibility, for example by tidying away, taking messages and caring for others at playtimes. They have expressed excitement at the introduction of a school council and are enjoying taking their part in the development of the school grounds. The school has good plans to develop aspects of citizenship and recognises that pupils need a greater awareness of the traditions and lifestyles of the different ethnic groups represented in society at large.

13. Attendance rates are very high in comparison to the national average. Pupils arrive on time eager to start the day. Registration is efficient and brief leading promptly into the first

lesson. Parents keep the school well informed about absences that are largely due to childhood illnesses and a small amount of holiday taking in term time.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

14. The quality of teaching is good overall. The teaching seen during the inspection was consistently good in Reception. In Years 1 to 3, teaching was good in ten of the 13 lessons seen and very good or better in four of these. Two lessons were excellent, including one taken by the music specialist. In Years 3 to 6, teaching was good in half of the eight lessons seen and satisfactory in the rest.

15. The main features of teaching in the Reception class that contribute to constantly good learning are:

- Good planning and organisation of a wide range of interesting activities based on a clear understanding of how young children learn.
- The careful tracking of each child's progress, especially in personal development, literacy and mathematical understanding, including individualised targets.
- Excellent relationships between staff and children with a very significant contribution made by the teaching assistant to the children's progress.

In this stimulating and challenging environment, the children rapidly develop self-confidence and independence in their learning and make good progress. The Reception children benefit greatly from the teachers' astute classroom management that enables them to learn through play as they need to, but also to be incorporated into more demanding activities with the Year 1 pupils as they become ready for it. This class also provides a good quality learning environment for Year 1 pupils, who make rapid progress, especially in English, mathematics and science – and increasingly in ICT. They show high levels of interest, work hard, sustain concentration and produce a good output.

16. The Year 2 and Year 3 class successfully builds on good progress made by the Year 1 pupils in the first class. A similar quality of classroom organisation and teamwork coupled with activities that demand more from the more able pupils secures good quality learning for Year 2 pupils. The Year 3 pupils in this class also learn well, although at times they are not challenged as much as they could be. The teacher targets more difficult questions at them in whole class lessons, but they do not always benefit from probing questions as they work at individual and group activities. This limits their progress in some key areas such as investigative mathematics.

17. The teachers and classroom assistant in the Year 4, 5 and 6 class are making great efforts to meet the diverse needs of the wide ability and age range in this class. Lessons have a clear structure, and a range of activities is planned, usually including more difficult tasks for the more able and simplified tasks for younger and lower attaining pupils. When the pupils work at these activities, they learn at a good rate. They show interest and enthusiasm, and concentrate well on the task in hand, working productively with others as and when necessary. During these parts of the lessons, the teachers and teaching assistant are most effective at supporting the pupils and helping them to improve. However, on many occasions, too much time is spent on the whole-class part of the lessons, in which a significant minority of pupils lose interest. Getting the balance right between teacher input and pupils' active learning is a key area for improvement in the quality of teaching and learning across the wide age and ability range in this class.

18. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class. Teachers and classroom assistants are aware of the contents of the pupils' individual educational plans, and look for opportunities to help them achieve their targets. In the cases where the targets are specific and attainable in the short term, the pupils make good progress. This is not often enough the case, however. Many of the targets in the individual educational plans are in fact overall aims, such as improving spelling, rather than specific targets such as learning to spell a certain number of words or a particular spelling rule.

19. Pupils' learning is good overall, particularly their application to tasks, perseverance and ability to co-operate with others on projects. They want to learn more, and enjoy being presented with problems that are not easily solved. Pupils' opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning are limited. Although pupils show an interest in using books to find answers to questions, they do not learn how to use them effectively enough because of the lack of space to provide an easily accessible indexed display of reference books. Currently, pupils do not make effective enough use of ICT to aid their learning in different subjects, but are set to do so in the near future with the arrival of new laptop computers. They have a general picture of how they are progressing, but are not as involved in their own learning as they could be, for example, in asking their own questions to explore and setting new targets for themselves.

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

20. The quality and range of the curriculum is good in the Reception class, satisfactory for Years 1 to 6 and fulfils statutory requirements. Good improvements have been made, however, since the last inspection, particularly to the planning of all subjects, which is now systematic. Information and communication technology, a weakness at the time of the last inspection, is poised for significant development, both as a subject and as an aid to learning in other subjects. A comprehensive curriculum for ICT is in place and the school awaits the imminent delivery of lap-top computers to implement it fully.

21. However, the curriculum currently lacks balance. The school has responded to the national drive to raise standards in English and mathematics by allocating significant additional teaching time to these subjects. Inevitably, this has decreased the time devoted to most other subjects in the curriculum. The main result has been a reduced emphasis on the creative and cultural subjects of art and design and music, history and geography. While curriculum enrichment, such as educational visits and support from expert visitors have been arranged with a view to ameliorating the situation, the school is aware that more fundamental change is needed to the routine timetable.

22. Planning for the development of literacy skills is sound overall, but there are significant areas for improvement. As a natural priority, it has been allocated a third of available time, with the standard literacy hour supplemented on most days by other periods of time spent on formal elements of literacy such as spelling, basic reading skills and extended writing. Some parents feel that this has diminished the pupils' pleasure in learning. The school had not fully appreciated how effectively aspects of English can be developed within other subjects and how the application of language can improve progress across the curriculum. There is now a commitment to the development of this cross-curricular aspect of curriculum planning for both literacy and numeracy. Strategies for teaching numeracy are currently satisfactory.

23. The difficult task of planning for mixed age classes has been carried out effectively, so that pupils in adjacent year groups do not repeat topics previously encountered. However, within this coverage of topics, insufficient attention is paid to planning for the systematic development of key skills in each subject. Examples of this include investigative

mathematics, experimental skills in science, the interpretation of evidence in history and mapping skills in geography. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored, but the evaluation of the effectiveness of lessons is not made sufficient use of as a basis for the on-going refinement of the curriculum.

24. The school provides satisfactory learning opportunities for pupils with special requirements. Those with special educational needs benefit from individual education plans, which is a good improvement since the last inspection. The school recognises the need to make these individual educational plans more effective by honing the targets into short-term achievable tasks to enable the pupils to build success on success. Extra support is provided for pupils who are on the borderline of achieving appropriate standards in English during Year 2 and 'booster' classes support Year 6 pupils as they prepare for national tests in English and mathematics. Following their relatively low performance in reading in national tests, more suitable reading materials have been provided for boys to enhance their achievement. Different levels of challenge are planned in most lessons, so that the progress of pupils of differing abilities is supported. Despite this, the older and more able pupils in Years 3 to 6 are still not stretched enough. The school has not yet introduced a policy for identifying and providing for gifted and talented pupils.

25. Pupils' learning is supported by good curriculum enrichment opportunities. For instance, a Book Week, during which pupils dressed as their favourite characters, helped to foster their interest in reading. Visitors, such as university music and drama students, enhance the pupils' enjoyment of learning, as do visits to such places as The Woodland Education Centre, a theatre and a zoo. Musical tuition is due to start later in the current term. Whole school productions and involvement in local sports competitions also enhance the pupils' educational experiences. In spite of its small size, the school provides a good range of extra-curricular experiences such as an art club

26. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Personal and social education opportunities are provided weekly for each class. In one good quality lesson, for instance, younger pupils responded well to the challenge of how to make the school more welcoming for those who do not speak English. Incidental class discussions stimulated by episodes of unacceptable behaviour are also used well to re-enforce positive messages. Health education is provided within the context of science and sound policies on sex education policy and drugs avoidance are in place. The school is intending to introduce education for citizenship and has made a good start by setting up a school council enabling pupils to express their views formally.

27. The school has very good links with educational partner institutions. Links with the local secondary school are particularly strong and helpful as are those with the independent pre-school group situated on the school site. The school's membership of the local Academic Council promotes productive relationships with other primary schools and feeder secondary school and a useful link with the local college of teacher education has just been established. The school's relationships with the local community are also good, strengthened by its active involvement in the 'Church in the Community' project. Visits from local agencies such as the Fire Service and a local train operator and use of local amenities also make a positive contribution to the pupils' education.

28. Provision for the pupils' personal development was a strength of the school at the time of the last inspection. It remains good overall, though the four areas are not equally well developed as the raising of academic standards has become the major imperative of the moment.



29. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. It is enriched through the Christian beliefs which under-pin all aspects of the school's work. These are strongly reinforced through reflection and prayer in daily acts of worship and clarified in the context of religious education lessons. In a lesson in Year 2, for instance, the Old Testament story of Ruth and Naomi was used to show pupils the deep, often difficult to express, ties experienced by human beings. This was graphically illustrated by the criss-crossing of a woollen thread between pupils and led to reflection on the even more profound connection between man and God. A class act of worship followed and a spiritually charged atmosphere developed, assisted by the playing of a record of sublime music by Bach. The development of knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs effectively alerts pupils to the spiritual aspects of life in other religious communities. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate that there is more to human life than the every day world. Discussions with older pupils confirm that there is a need for the school's contribution to this aspect of personal development. For example, one pupil described his 'journey through life' in terms of the acquisition of ever more technically advanced leisure items. There are good examples of the use of incidental or planned opportunities within day to day lessons to emphasise spiritual values. In an excellent music lesson, for instance, the school's youngest children were amazed and enchanted by the skilled presentation of the first few bars of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Other such opportunities to aid spiritual development, for example pausing for reflection on the wonders of science or the mysteries of mathematics, are not always taken advantage of.

30. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. It is closely linked to provision for spiritual development through the successful encouragement of pupils to appreciate the uniqueness of each individual and to show consideration for others. The effectiveness of the school's strong moral code is reflected in the generally good behaviour evident throughout the school. Most pupils show kindness, as when a Year 1 pupil immediately moved to be with an isolated child, putting his arm around his shoulders as the class formed into groups. Acts of worship, religious education lessons and the inclusion of personal and social education on the weekly timetable all provide good opportunities for the reinforcement of suitable moral values and their realisation in every day life. Staff provide excellent examples of how people should treat each other. This message is reinforced with explicit teaching of right and wrong through Bible and other stories, together with a new behaviour policy. Older pupils are generally very willing to express views on moral issues and to think through the consequences of their actions.

31. The school is strongly committed to the social development of its pupils and is in process of taking steps to enhance the current satisfactory provision. It has recently introduced a school council, a move which has pleased the pupils though it has not yet become fully established. This is designed to increase the currently limited opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility and initiative. There is already a strong and successful stress on pupils' responsibilities with regard to the environment. Pupils regularly report their concerns about the local area. They also exercise playground monitoring responsibilities effectively. Younger pupils learn social responsibility through contributing to the running of their own classrooms. A residential opportunity to increase the independence of older pupils is in the early stages of planning. The possibility of introducing an educational business link which would provide opportunities for pupil initiatives is also being considered. Mixed gender grouping and paired working in class provide good opportunities for the day to day development of personal interaction skills. Shared experiences through educational visits, involvement in church festivals and whole school events effectively support the development of a sense of local community. There is some extension of this through support of charities, for example the British Legion's Poppy Day initiative.

32. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. A key weakness is the paucity of provision for their multicultural education as members of an ethnically mixed

society. A sound basis for appreciation of other faiths is provided in the context of religious education and some reading books draw on stories reflecting characters and events in different cultures. However, the variety of cultural influences represented in the wider society finds little expression in most other areas of the curriculum at present. Additionally, the recent curtailment of “cultural” subjects such as history and geography, music and art and design has further limits the pupils' opportunities in this area of their personal development.

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

33. The school has maintained the good quality of care it offers to its pupils since the last inspection, with improvements in the tracking of pupils' progress. Good arrangements are in place for the care and protection of its pupils. In this small school all pupils are well known by staff, equally valued and well supported by the good relationships that exist. Health and safety procedures are good as are those for child protection. Daily practice reflects appropriate, clear policies. Pupils are very well supervised at all times and staff are alert to the needs of each individual.

34. The procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic progress are satisfactory overall. The measures that have been recently introduced to track the performance of pupils in English and mathematics are good. The school uses this data well to identify individuals and groups of pupils that are under-attaining. For example, tests of reading ages revealed that boys were not reading as competently as girls, so the school took measures to encourage boys to read more, including the purchase of books of particular interest to boys. Although the pupils' performance in other subjects is not monitored at present, the school improvement plan contains a sensible programme to introduce assessment procedures in each subject in a measured and manageable way over the medium term. An area for further development is in the use of performance data to identify and support those pupils who may be attaining at least the expected level for their age but could be achieving more.

35. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory as is the educational guidance offered to pupils. Whilst the school has no formal procedures for monitoring and recording pupils' personal progress it does have various informal systems. Their effectiveness is reflected in the quality of the comments made about pupils' progress in the annual written reports for parents. These show a thorough knowledge of each pupil and targets for the future are clearly given. At present pupils are not involved as much as they could be in evaluating their own progress or setting their own targets for improvement.

36. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. There is an effective system of rewards and sanctions and clear rules that are well understood by all. In many lessons the use of praise is effective in promoting good behaviour and motivating pupils. In a small number of lessons rewards and sanctions are not made best use of to provide pupils with clear messages about listening to others. There are also good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. There is no evidence of conflict or bullying.

37. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The school meets with statutory requirements and the administrative arrangements are efficient. Attendance is closely monitored and the taking of holidays in term time is suitably discouraged. Parents are provided with clear messages about the adverse effect such absences have on the pupils' progress.

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

38. The parents' questionnaire was sent out towards the end of the previous year, which was the first year of the present headteacher's tenure. The views expressed therefore reflect what had been happening during that transitional year rather than current provision. This has to be taken into account when considering parents' reservations about some aspect of the school's work compared with their very favourable responses at the time of the last inspection.

39. Parents feel that the school is very approachable and that pupils' behaviour is good. They appreciate the improvements that been made to the management of the school, though some have reservations about the direction in which they perceive it is being led. Some parents are unhappy with the progress that their children make, with the amount of homework provided and with some aspects of the communication with parents. A significant number of parents are not happy with the range of activities offered both within and outside lessons. The inspection findings support the parents' positive views. They partially support some of the reservations. For example: there is evidence that the progress of some pupils, especially those currently in Years 5 and 6, was hampered during the recent transitional period. The balance of activities within the timetable and within lessons is also an area identified for improvement. Some pupils feel that homework often lacks challenge. Generally, however, the school has good plans in hand to address most of the concerns that have been raised. The information provided for parents is good and the school is keen to build upon this. The provision for activities outside lessons is good, adding richness and experience to pupils' lives. For such a small school pupils are now offered a good variety of extra curricular clubs.

40. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good, with staff available for informal contacts on a daily basis. The school has good arrangements for taking parents views into account through questionnaires and with discussion evenings. Parents can gain some insight into their children's' learning through open evenings and exhibitions, with performances and special events. The school wishes to continue strengthening the partnership with parents and their involvement in the school.

41. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory. Parents have indicated a desire to help more in school and with extra curricular clubs but at present await the completion of the necessary formal procedures surrounding this. There is a strong and enthusiastic Friends Association that raises considerable funds for the school. These are used to support identified school needs. For example, at present the Friends Association, along with many other parents and the pupils, are involved in a project to improve and develop the school's outdoor environment.

42. The school brochure, governor's report and newsletters are well written and keep parents well informed about the life of the school. Parents are provided with good information about the curriculum and the work that will be done in the coming term. The requirements of homework are also clearly explained. Information about pupil's work and progress is conveyed through consultations and written reports. There is some variation in the quality of the written progress reports but all are satisfactory. In key stage two they are particularly useful giving detailed information about the work that pupils have done and their achievements. Areas of difficulty are clearly explained and guidance for improvement given.

43. The contribution that parents make to their children's learning at home and at school is good. Homework is well supported throughout the school and this has a beneficial effect upon pupils' learning. Parents meet requests for items of interest to support the curriculum well. The high levels of attendance at this school reflects the parents' commitment to supporting their children's education and their school.

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

44. Leadership and management are good. The main task facing the school on the recent appointment of a new headteacher was to establish a clearer structure for the evaluation of the school's performance and the planning of future improvements. These were key issues at the time of the last inspection. This has been achieved in a remarkably short period of time, given the headteacher's high level of teaching commitment. The significant improvements that have been made to the management of the school have enabled the governors and the staff to see more clearly how their roles fit into the broader picture of the school's endeavours. This has strengthened further the good team spirit that existed previously. It is clear from the cohesion that evidently exists among the newly established teaching staff, that a clear sense of educational direction has been established and that all are committed to improving the school's performance. Recently and newly qualified teachers have come together to form, along with the teaching assistants, a very cohesive team. Although inexperienced in management, they are beginning to fulfil their roles of co-ordinating the different subjects well. In particular, all members of this team are keen to learn, both from each other and from any available sources of guidance and advice.

45. The governors have benefited greatly from the clarity that has been brought to school improvement planning. The structure of the school improvement plan, with spending implications of each item included, has given a renewed sense of purpose to their long-standing commitment to the school. Relationships between the governors and the school are excellent. Governors have very clear ideas on how they want to see the school move forward and are fully supportive of the headteacher. They scrutinise the work of the school very effectively via a committee structure and fully hold it to account. The good quality information they now have about standards enables them to compare the school's performance with other schools and challenge themselves and the school to improve. They manage the budget well, keeping enough funds in reserve to meet foreseeable contingencies and spending the rest on the clearly established educational priorities. The current surplus in the budget results from the need to cater for whatever salary implications arose from new teaching appointments and to service the new computer facility when it arrived. Plans are in hand to ensure that the annual carry forward is kept at a reasonable level.

46. Financial control and administration are good. The budget and most routine procedures are computerised, enabling the secretary to furnish staff and governors with any required information on pupils, staff and finances.

47. The accommodation the school offers is satisfactory. The site and grounds are attractive and offer good opportunities for play and for studies in both the man-made and natural environment. The play environment has been enhanced, with further significant improvements in the pipeline. Increasing use is being made of opportunities for pupils to learn actively from their surroundings. This is not currently a strong feature of provision. The lack of space to display reference books inhibits the development of pupils' library skills despite the provision of a good range of books for each classroom. The school also lacks a hall. Good arrangements are made to circumvent the difficulties this causes. Dinners are taken in classrooms, assemblies held in a local church and physical education lessons undertaken in the village hall. However, the lack of good quality space and equipment for gymnastics inevitably hampers the development of the pupils' skills in this area. Staffing levels are good,

with a very good complement of effective teaching assistants, although pupils still have to be taught in mixed age groups. Resources are satisfactory overall, and will be greatly enhanced by the imminent arrival of new computers.

48. Inevitably, policy has lagged behind practice in some areas of the school's work during the recent period of rapid change. The headteacher and governors are very aware of this and are updating policies as time allows. There is no urgency in some areas in which the school has a very clear idea of where it is going. In other areas of the school's work, for example cultural development and gifted and talented pupils, the lack of a policy is leading to aspects of provision not receiving the attention they merit. The school has not yet adopted a written policy on race equality, which is now a statutory requirement, but is taking steps to do so in the immediate future.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. In order to continue raising standards and broadening the educational opportunities on offer to the pupils the headteacher and governors should:

- (1) Raise the achievement levels of older and more able pupils by:
  - using assessment procedures more effectively to identify those pupils who could be achieving more and providing them with the support to do so
  - extending the involvement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, in assessing their own progress and setting their own agenda for learning
  - extending the variety of teaching methods used so that pupils have more opportunities include to develop library skills and engage in independent learning(Paragraphs: 4-9, 16-19, 24, 35, 58-61, 63, 65, 66, 68, 86)
  
- (2) Bring a greater balance to the curriculum by:
  - reviewing the timetable so that pupils spend less time on formal lessons in literacy and more time developing and applying literacy skills in other subjects
  - ensuring that lessons systematically develop study skills in all subjects, including geography and history
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to engage in creative activities
  - using the evaluation of the effectiveness of lessons to guide ongoing refinements of the curriculum(Paragraphs: 7, 21-23, 58, 60, 63, 65, 69, 73, 74, 78, 80, 81, 83, 85, 91)
  
- (3) Improve provision for pupils' cultural development by:
  - giving teachers guidance on how to provide opportunities for broad cultural enrichment in lessons in all subjects, including literature, music, art and design, mathematics and science
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to appreciate and celebrate the cultural diversity of life in the wider society.(Paragraphs: 12, 32, 54, 61, 88, 91)

In addition to these key issues, the governors should:

- ensure that the school complies with current legislation in respect of its policy on Race Equality as soon as possible  
(Paragraph: 48)
- consider adopting policies that would help to give greater focus to the school's work in areas such as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and provision for gifted and talented pupils  
(Paragraphs: 24, 32, 48)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	2	13	7	0	0	0
Percentage	8	8	54	29	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 four 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)	60
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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

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	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.3

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

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 1 (Year 2)

These results are not published as fewer than ten pupils took the tests

### 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	6	6	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	10	9	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (N/A)	75 (N/A)	100 (N/A)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	10	10	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (N/A)	83 (N/A)	100 (N/A)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Where the number of boys or girls in the year group are ten or fewer the individual results are not reported

**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	57	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	3	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	1	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)	3.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.6
Average class size	20

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	48

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	184 133
Total expenditure	170 590
Expenditure per pupil	2 546
Balance brought forward from previous year	14 106

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	67
Number of questionnaires returned	21

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	38	48	14	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	24	43	10	14	10
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	57	0	0	19
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	38	24	5	10
The teaching is good.	14	43	0	0	43
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	24	14	10	14
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	38	0	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	29	38	5	0	29
The school works closely with parents.	33	29	19	10	10
The school is well led and managed.	19	52	5	0	24
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	14	43	10	5	29
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	15	48	24	5

### Other issues raised by parents

A number of parents at the meeting and in writing expressed concern about a perceived narrowing of the curriculum over the past year resulting in diminished interest and enthusiasm among the pupils. They also thought that the pupils used to have more opportunities to accept responsibilities and show initiative around the school than they have now. These issues are addressed in the report.

## **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**

50. Children transfer from the independent pre-school into Reception termly as they approach five years of age. Initially, they attend on a part-time basis. This results in some children having only one term in the Reception class. However, Reception children are taught alongside those in Year 1 which allows the teacher to adjust learning opportunities to meet the needs of children at different stages of development, whatever their ages. This is done particularly effectively enabling the children to develop at their own pace. A two-year rolling programme of topics ensures that children do not repeat learning experiences as they move into Year 1. The school emphasises the importance of co-operation with parents. It provides useful guidance on ways in which they can prepare their children for the Reception year. There are also formal and informal opportunities to discuss their child's progress with the teacher. Because the numbers of children entering the school in any one year are small, the attainment of each year group of children is likely to vary. Initial tests and lesson observations indicate that those entering the school recently are at least average in their overall development. The children make good progress and are on course to maintain above average standards by reaching and in some cases exceeding the expected standards in each area of learning before they leave Reception.

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

51. Most children start their Reception year with good levels of confidence. They have a positive attitude towards their new learning experiences and are happy to share them with others. For example, they engage in role playing the running of a shop and contributing to a group painting. They relish challenges such as using lap top computers for the first time. They soon adapt to the class routines and learn to share equipment and ideas. Most pay attention and are able to sustain concentration in whole class lessons, and they soon learn to co-operate when working in pairs or small groups. The children respond well to coaxing or authoritative guidance from the teacher or experienced teaching assistant, both of whom show a sensitive understanding of children's emotional needs. On the playground, they play well together, the older children co-operating agreeably whilst playing football, for instance. Almost all children are well set to achieve the expected standards for this area of development by the time they move into Year 1.

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

52. Preliminary testing indicates that most children enter the school with average or above average speaking and listening skills. They converse with one another as they share their learning activities and also talk freely to adults. For example, some children willingly discussed what they had enjoyed about a dance lesson, even describing their feelings. The children are very attentive in shared reading sessions, offering comments on the story as it unfolds. The teacher employs an informal, conversational style which puts the children at their ease, enabling them to offer comments. Some even offered the teacher guidance when she was demonstrating the use of the computer for art-work. Their vocabulary develops well, for example as they acquire new descriptive words for how different materials feel. "Look and say" opportunities enable them to acquire the skills of speaking to a group as they present the items they have brought into school. Reading skills are also good. The most advanced children read fluently from their introductory books. Individual reading records show that they read several books during the course of a week. They are establishing a good range of sight words and are beginning to use letter sounds, even at the start of their time in the Reception class. At this stage, other children tackle simpler reading challenges well,

gradually building up their banks of recognised words, using picture clues and attempting to put letter sounds together to help them to read words. Their sensitivity to sounds in words benefits from the teacher's imaginative use of a glove puppet which keeps on making mistakes in its pronunciation. Some children are becoming aware of rhyming words in nursery rhymes and that stories have structure. All are making good progress. Most receive good support from their parents and clearly enjoy their reading opportunities. Children are at the earliest stages of writing as they attempt captions under their drawings. A few recognisable letters are apparent at an early stage in the year. A range of strategies is used effectively to support the children's progress, depending on their stage of development. All available evidence indicates that expected standards will be achieved and in some cases exceeded by the end of the children's time in the Reception class.

### **Mathematical development**

53. Entry tests show that children are generally above average in their awareness of the use of mathematical calculations in everyday life. A few are well above. However their actual knowledge and use of numbers is generally average for their age. Most have a good, elementary understanding of space, shapes and measures of quantity. At the start of their Reception year, some children are recognising and using number names to 5 in their learning activities. A few showed developing understanding of numbers to 10 as they watched young Year 1 pupils using the computer for simple addition sums. Their recognition of low denomination coins is effectively secured by number games such as playing shop and cafes. In one such activity they made references to size and shape as well as value, counting on in their first approaches to addition. Knowledge of shapes and understanding of numbers is effectively built up through activities such as making a large night sky mural with stars and rockets to count, sizes to compare and two and three-dimensional shapes to name. Teaching is good. Stimulating, interactive displays around the classroom reinforce learning of number symbols and sequences. Board games and a good range of small mathematical equipment are available to reinforce ideas and vocabulary. The indications are that these learning experiences will extend children's already good progress in mathematical understanding, enabling them to achieve the expected standards by the end of the Reception class. Some children are likely to exceed them as they benefit from the short sessions with Year 1 pupils at the beginning of each numeracy lesson.

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

54. Most children show an above average knowledge of the world around them when they enter the Reception class. Their pre-school experiences combine with those at home to provide a good basis for further development during their time in Reception. A stimulating range of learning experiences is provided and the children make good progress. When exploring the sense of touch, for instance, they readily learned to distinguish between and describe different textures. As they used touch to identify objects hidden in 'feely bags' they began to recognise the importance of touch to living creatures as they move about in the world. Children's earlier experiences of high-tech toys contribute to their confident approach to the computer, which they are beginning to use effectively to support their learning, for example in mathematical understanding and art and design. A history lesson, supported by an excellent display of Victorian toys and experience of playing the game of "Shove Ha'Penny", enhanced their understanding of past and present times. Asked whether they would like to live in the past, present or future, most opted for now because of the play amenities available to them. However, some chose the future, envisaging amazingly complicated toys and incidentally indicating that they are beginning to be aware both of chronology and the influence of technological development on the way we live our daily lives. Walks in the locality and various visits, such as that to the local Woodland Education Centre, broaden their knowledge and understanding of the environment. Religious education is

included in their curriculum, as required by law. Children experience a range of religious celebrations such as harvest festival and Christmas but no evidence of awareness of non-Christian religious festivals was seen during the inspection. The children achieve well in response to these various experiences. They are on course to achieve the expected standards and are well -prepared for the subject-based work they will meet later on.

### **Physical development**

55. The children generally show good physical development on entry to Reception. Observation of them at play shows that their body control is good. A few children show above average skills of balance and control as they play with footballs and skipping ropes. They are aware of the implications of their movements for the space required by other children. Their responses in a dance lesson demonstrated their agility and sensitivity to musical stimuli. The children generally have good control when manipulating small equipment, providing useful support for their writing, model building and art and design work. Their responses to the computer are careful, with well controlled use of the mouse and keyboard. These skills develop well, enabling the children to achieve all the expected standards in this area and providing a good foundation for future learning.

### **Creative development**

56. Most children are likely to achieve the expected standards for creative development by the end of their time in Reception. Progress in this area of learning is being fostered through imaginative activities such as role play, music and art and design. A variety of construction materials is available and making activities are planned. Two-dimensional work so far has included the painting of self-portraits of a satisfactory standard for the children's age. These involved colour mixing skills, which they further developed as a group as they made multi-shaded hand prints to produce an attractive, autumn tree. Children have also produced well observed and confident paintings of fruit and vegetables to celebrate harvest. They have used the computer most effectively to produce colourful pictures of children's playground areas. This very successful challenge was supported by a visiting expert. A follow-up lesson, led by the teacher, resulted in the making of tree images, which they will duplicate and arrange on the screen to produce repeating patterns. The children's creative strengths so far, however, lie in the areas of music and dance. They showed immense sensitivity to short excerpts of classical music and, in an outstanding lesson, moved from listening to playing together using a wide range of percussion instruments, even following a simple graphic score to guide their contributions. When dancing, they moved imaginatively to music, marching as soldiers, swaying with out-stretched arms as they simulated aeroplanes and twirling like ballerinas. After the lesson some children described their emotional responses to the music - sometimes they felt brave while at others they felt sad.

57. The Reception curriculum is firmly based on the national expectations. Lessons are motivating and very well planned to ensure that children make the best possible progress. Teaching is consistently good and the teaching assistant makes a very significant contribution to the progress of Reception children. The interesting and appropriate learning activities are based on a clear understanding of how young children learn. Individualised targets are set for each child on entry and the progress of the children is carefully monitored, especially in aspects of personal development, literacy and mathematical understanding. Indoor and outdoor facilities are satisfactory and the classroom environment is stimulating. Relationships between staff and children are excellent. This very good provision is an improvement since the previous inspection and is one of the school's key strengths.

## **ENGLISH**

58. Overall attainment in English matches national expectations for pupils at the end of both Key Stages, but this generalisation obscures differences in pupils' achievements in the various aspects of the subject and the changing picture in pupils' performance as the school has introduced initiatives to raise standards of attainment. Teaching is good overall, and especially good in Years 1 and 2, where pupils currently make the best progress. The progress of Years 3 to 6 pupils is satisfactory. It is held back, in writing especially, because of the difficulties of catering for three age groups and a wide range of prior achievement. So far, the school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has not been flexible enough to meet the needs of all the pupils in each age group.

59. Test and other assessment data provide an overall picture of improving achievement by the pupils over time, although areas for further development remain. In particular, the school recognises the need to raise the achievement of those pupils capable of reaching higher standards and to improve the achievement of boys in reading, writing and spelling.

60. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are generally average, though a significant minority of pupils achieve above the expected level for their age. For example, in a Year 1 "look and say" session, several pupils spoke fluently as they presented interesting items to the class. One pupil showed clear awareness of audience as he said, "You're going to like this!" Most pupils listened with interest and some asked questions. By Year 2, pupils are participating in class discussions, listening intently and providing thoughtful responses, as when they considered the truths underlying the Old Testament story of Ruth's loyalty to Naomi. The confidence of these younger pupils as they practise their skills is strongly supported by teachers' employment of a conversational approach. This puts the pupils at their ease and encourages their involvement. They soon learn how to contribute to group discussions, judging when to speak and when to wait. In Years 3 to 6, pupils show developing skills, for example by giving increasingly lengthy answers to questions in formal situations and discussing their work with each other. However, they do not develop a wide enough range of speaking styles. The school has plans to address this by extending the range of speaking and listening opportunities across the curriculum, including drama and debates.

61. Pupils achieve well in reading in Years 1 and 2. A minority of pupils are very competent for their age, reading accurately and with levels of expression that indicate very good levels of understanding. Pupils soon build up a good range of words which they read on sight. The time given to the direct teaching of how to build up words from units of letter sounds is also contributing significantly to pupils' good progress. A majority of pupils have their own book collections at home and all are benefiting from the support of parents. Shared reading in lessons and guided reading in groups increases their working vocabulary and reading skills. It also contributes to their writing skills, especially in the case of stories. By the end of Year 6, pupils are reading with ease and are achieving in line with expectations for their age. Inspection revealed some weaknesses, however. Competent readers are not being challenged enough, for example to discern underlying meanings. Older pupils generally showed little knowledge of the classics of English literature, limiting their cultural development. While classrooms hold well organised stocks of reading books, pupils do not have ready access to books of reference. The school has no space for a proper library, and pupils' lack of convenient access to reference books inhibits the development of their library skills. Though older pupils make ready use of contents lists and indexes, none knew about glossaries or how to track down relevant reference books.



62. Pupils' writing skills are generally sound. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily during Years 3 to 6. Most pupils have made good progress in story writing skills by the end of Year 2. They understand how a well described setting can set the mood for a story. They are aware that stories need to be carefully sequenced and that the reader should be able to recognise the personality characters of the people involved. As their vocabulary develops the quality of their writing improves and more able pupils begin to achieve above average standards in a variety of writing tasks – letters, short poems, factual accounts - as they reach the end of Year 2. Teaching throughout these years is usually good. It is well informed, with interesting approaches used to motivate the pupils

63. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' writing is less well developed than their skills in other areas of English. Teaching is well informed, imaginative learning experiences are provided and pupils work hard, especially in group situations. Despite this, older and more able pupils are held back somewhat as teachers attempt to satisfy the needs of the wide range of age, maturity and ability in the class. Regular supplementary lessons on extended writing are provided, but teachers recognises that further initiatives are required if all pupils are to fulfil their potential. They are aware that opportunities to develop writing skills in other subjects are not fully utilised and are poised to adopt a more cross-curricular approach to the situation.

64. Overall management of the subject is very good. A good improvement plan establishes writing as a priority. Increased use of assessment for curriculum improvement is to complement its effective use for tracking the progress of individual pupils. The monitoring of teaching and learning is to be further developed and booster classes for Year 6 pupils confirmed. Enhanced facilities for ICT are expected soon and will be used across the school to further improve standards in literacy. The school also organises a number of activities that enrich the provision for English. They include a Poetry week, theatre visits and school drama performances.

## **MATHEMATICS**

65. Pupils are on course to reach average standards overall at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Their knowledge and understanding are as expected for their age in each area of mathematics. Progress is good in Years 1 and 2 and pupils achieve well relative to their prior attainment because the teaching is lively and challenging, and includes opportunities for the pupils to apply newly acquired skills in a variety of ways. Their work from the previous year reflects a good spread of knowledge in number, shape, measure and handling data. The only area for improvement indicated in the samples of work and in the lesson observed is in the levels of achievement of the most able pupils. There are some examples of them tackling problems that they find difficult, but this is not a strong feature of their work. Levels of achievement are satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, but the older and more able pupils are not currently achieving the standards they are capable of. Their work from last year shows that they covered the expected ground, but did not use their skills in a wide enough range of practical applications. Another feature of their work, both past and present, that could be improved is their explanations of what they have done using precise mathematical language. This limits the use they can make of it to consolidate their understanding and ask further questions. For example, work on display shows how Year 6 pupils have made new shapes using parallelograms, but nothing is said about why the parallelograms fitted together or the properties of the new shapes, such as similarities with the original shape or whether or not they also fit together. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 show that they have a sound knowledge of the number system, including fractions, decimals and percentages. However, they lack confidence in using this knowledge to solve new problems, for example by changing percentages into fractions or decimals and vice-versa. They have positive attitudes, however, showing enthusiasm to learn new methods and tackle more difficult problems.

66. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In Years 1 to 3, teachers make full use of the lesson time by giving brief but clear demonstrations and preparing interesting activities that enable the pupils to progress at their own rate. The teaching assistants are well briefed and work very effectively with the teachers to keep all the pupils working throughout the lessons. A good balance is achieved between whole-class teaching and individual and group activities. When teaching the whole class together, the teachers ask questions to engage the interest of pupils of all ages and abilities, using praise and encouragement well and making good use of pupils' errors as teaching points. As a consequence, pupils are not afraid to think problems through for themselves and suggest answers, even though they may be incorrect. This helps them to learn from their own mistakes. Information and communication technology is planned into lessons wherever possible. For example, pupils used the programming of a remote-controlled robot to re-enforce the idea of addition and subtraction as the robot moved backwards and forwards along a row of numbered squares. The more able older pupils in the Year 2 and Year 3 class are the only ones not to be fully challenged. At times, lessons lack opportunities for them to extend their knowledge and skills. For example, in a lesson in which they were making up subtraction sums to give a pre-determined answer, they were not led towards using the patterns in their answers to enable them to make up sums involving much larger numbers. In Years 4 to 6, pupils learn at a satisfactory rate overall. Learning is good when the pupils are engaged in individual and group activities with support from the teacher and teaching assistant. This is when their positive attitudes to learning are of most benefit to them. They concentrate well on their work and do their best to succeed. In whole class lessons, some of the older and more able pupils do not give the teacher their full attention, reflecting the lack of challenge for them.

67. A scrutiny of the pupils' books suggests that the good quality of teaching observed in lessons during the inspection in Years 1, 2 and 3 was in place during the previous year. The marking is consistent and encouraging and the pupils make clear progress throughout the year. The work of pupils from Years 5 and 6 is less consistent in quality, reflecting the disruption to teaching suffered by this class. Overall, the standards and quality of teaching reported at the last inspection have been maintained. Curriculum planning for the subject has been substantially improved and the school now has data on each pupil's progress so that future lessons can be more closely tailored to meet emerging needs.

## **SCIENCE**

68. Standards in science are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils have expected levels of knowledge for their age and understand that science is about learning through experimentation. By the end of Year 2, pupils know that plants and animals need certain conditions in which to survive and thrive, and understand that it is important for humans to have a healthy diet. They know that materials have different properties and that forces can be either a push or a pull. They have carried out a good range of experiments and research. The effectiveness of their research is sometimes limited because the books they use to find information are not always matched to their reading abilities. By the end of Year 6, a scrutiny of the pupils' books shows that they have covered all the expected areas of knowledge. The pupils currently in Year 5 and Year 6 have significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding, however, because of insufficient investigative and research experience. For example, Year 6 pupils could not make any suggestions as to how they would set about comparing the friction exerted by different surfaces. The pupils' inexperience in research was demonstrated by the difficulties they had in focusing on and comparing key observable features of different leaves and fruits that they had collected from the playground during a lesson.

69. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The best teaching was seen in Year 1 in a lesson in which the teacher fully engaged the pupils' attention with imaginative

activities aimed at developing their awareness of the importance of the sense of touch. Very good subject knowledge underpinned effective planning of the lesson, preparation of resources and the teacher's ability to be flexible and amend the lesson in the light of the pupils' responses. As a result, pupils of all abilities made good progress. The pupils were led to an understanding that they could tell a lot about an object or substance without necessarily seeing it. Skilled questioning and guidance from the teacher greatly enhanced the pupils' awareness of the importance of correct vocabulary in describing how things feel, contributing to development of the pupils' literacy skills. The key area for improvement in the satisfactory lessons in Years 3 to 6 is in the balance between instruction from the teacher and learning through activity. Too long was spent in both of the lessons seen on preliminary discussions led by the teacher and insufficient time helping pupils to learn through research and investigation. The older and more able pupils do not have enough opportunities to put forward their own ideas, devise their own ways of testing them and explain their findings using increasingly sophisticated scientific vocabulary.

70. The newly appointed co-ordinator has a good plan of action to address the key issue of developing experimental skills, including updating and expanding resources. Her subject knowledge is good, and the headteacher is enabling her to move forward as quickly as possible.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

71. Pupils achieve broadly satisfactory standards in art and design by the end of each key stage. Though the school has had a good reputation for work in this area and has used visiting artists to enhance pupils' progress, standards of provision have lapsed recently due to the emphasis on improving pupils' performances in literacy and numeracy. This situation is about to be remedied as the school sets about restoring the overall balance of the curriculum.

72. Only one art and design lesson was observed during the inspection, but a survey of pupils' past work and displays around the school provided sufficient evidence for overall standards to be assessed and for the inference that teaching is generally satisfactory, with examples of good and very good lessons. For instance, pupils in Year 1 benefited greatly from a well-informed, well organised lesson on computer art. The challenge was to create an on-screen image and to create a repeating pattern by replicating it. This was only the second time pupils had had access to the laptop computers, but they achieved well. Though they did not manage to complete the assignment in the one lesson, they showed very good attitudes towards learning and made great creative efforts. By the time they are seven, pupils have learned to mix colours and have used a variety of pencils for drawing, achieving three-dimensional effects through shading. They extend their observational skills by using pastels for still life drawings such as a very life-like, prickly pineapple in the case of one higher achieving pupil. They show progress in capturing line and texture as well as growing skills in the use of colour.

73. Older pupils make satisfactory progress in most areas. For example, they achieve movement in their pastel drawings and have made striking and effective posters to influence peoples' attitude towards the environment. Though experienced in the past, pupils have had no recent opportunities for widening the range of materials used in art and design, to include textiles, for example, and to undertake three-dimensional work using clay and other materials. Their progress is also hindered by the limited use made of the work of famous painters to raise their expectations of themselves. They also have too few opportunities to develop a good vocabulary to help them evaluate and improve their own work. Discussion with older pupils indicated that art and design is a favourite subject. The few pupils who attend the

school's art club generally achieve at an above average level, in part because they do not miss out on this key aspect of artistic education.

74. The school is aware of these various weaknesses in the curriculum and is about to enhance its planning for the subject. It also intends to set up a simple, but effective assessment system so that pupils' progress can be charted and the effectiveness of provision for art and design evaluated.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

75. Standards are broadly in line with expectations overall, with strengths in Years 1 and 2 and some weaknesses in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Year 6 are on course to achieve average standards in the designing aspects of the subject by the end of the year. They were observed making observational drawings of musical instruments as a preliminary step to designing and making their own. They showed a sound understanding of the processes of examining existing products and modifying the design to make improvements, taking the consumer's or user's requirements into account. There is no evidence on which to judge their making skills. However, lessons planned for this year cover sufficient ground to bring standards up to expectations in this area provided they are properly resourced.

76. Pupils achieve well in both the designing and making aspects of the subjects in Years 1 and 2, and are on course to reach at least average standards by the end of Year 2. The quality of the work seen during the inspection was above average in terms of the pupils' ability to use and improve their own ideas during the process of designing and making a product. They responded extremely positively in the one lesson seen to the challenge of making working models of playground equipment, showing initiative and flair in devising means for roundabouts to turn and swings to swing. They also demonstrated good awareness of health and safety aspects of designs, for example the need to add a level piece at the bottom of a slide to slow down the speed of descent. Samples of work from previous terms show that the pupils have designed and made a range of products, including food products such as sandwiches, to an expected standard. They make good use of numeracy skills in their work. For example, they used graphs to present the results of research into consumer preferences for different types of sandwich fillings. Literacy skills are also developed and used effectively at this stage, for example by writing an instruction booklet on how to make a sandwich. Their work shows good progression in the use of an increasing variety of ways of joining and fastening materials and the use of a good range of tools and equipment. Pupils are also confident in examining commercial products, for example sandwich packaging, to give them ideas on how to improve their own designs.

77. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed in Years 1 and 2 was excellent. The teacher and teaching assistant collaborated very effectively to prepare sample models and provide well-organised resources for the pupils to make their own. The pupils responded very enthusiastically to the excellent opportunities they were given to improve on the designs that had been demonstrated. The rate of learning was excellent because those pupils who needed it had been given ideas for designs that they could modify slightly, while those with the creative flair were enabled to follow their own ideas through. Another very good feature of the lesson was the way the adults encouraged the pupils to go beyond the materials provided to realise their designs. The variety in the prototype models that resulted from the lesson testifies to the great success of the teaching strategies used. The range of methods used in the lesson observed in Years 3 to 6 successfully met the needs of most of the pupils, but did not challenge the most able pupils to the same extent. The school recognises the need to enable the older and more able pupils to work in more flexible ways so as to catch up on ground that has been lost over the past year or so.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

78. Pupils fail to reach the nationally required standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 respectively. No lessons were observed during the inspection. Scrutiny of displays around the school and of pupils' previous work indicates that geography has had very low priority in the school in the recent past, though at the time of the last inspection it was satisfactory. Teaching time for geography has been significantly reduced to accommodate the more pressing priorities of literacy and numeracy in the school's improvement plan. The school is now moving towards correcting this imbalance.

79. The pupils' previous work reflects useful, though isolated knowledge elements related to National Curriculum requirements, but little evidence of the continuity in learning which supports skills and understanding. One strength is the learning experiences being provided for the youngest pupils who have opportunities to explore the local environment and to learn about the wider world by following the travels of Barnaby Bear, a much loved puppet who sends postcards from the places he visits. Another strength is the school's commitment to care of the environment. Pupils show a real interest in this and it is well used in the context of geography. For instance, Year 2 pupils undertook a traffic survey on how children travel to school, linking their work to numeracy through the making of a bar chart. The older pupils used a valuable, role-play approach in a debate about the positive and negative features of a housing development which enhanced their literacy skills as well as their understanding of human geography.

80. A very clear weakness is the lack of pupils' progress in mapping skills and other fundamental aspects of the subject. There are some examples of maps being used effectively, for example by Year 2 pupils, who have interpreted symbols on weather maps of the UK, but generally, maps are under-used. Planning has recently been improved to follow national guidelines for coverage of the subject, though it has yet to be implemented. As yet, there is no planning for progression in vocabulary, variety in secondary sources of information, continuity in the learning of mapping skills, range in fieldwork experiences and the development of research and recording skills generally. Insufficient enquiry work has been undertaken to allow pupils to compare and contrast the natural features of a range of environments and to learn how their inhabitants relate to them. Additionally, there is no manageable strategy in place to allow for the assessment of pupils' progress or the evaluation of learning experiences. The school is aware of these shortcomings and is committed to improvement.

## **HISTORY**

81. Pupils' attainment in history is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Only one lesson was available for observation during the inspection but a survey of pupils' past work showed that the coverage of topics in the shortened teaching time available to the subject in the school has allowed for satisfactory achievement in knowledge. There are examples of good progress, as when Year 2 pupils undertook a comprehensive and wide-ranging study of the Victorian period. Historical research skills are insufficiently developed, however, as is the understanding that comes from opportunities to link various elements of knowledge together so that explanations of causes and changes can be attempted. The overall picture that emerges from the inspection is of satisfactory teaching leading to satisfactory progress and achievement.

82. The one lesson observed showed good teaching of Year 1 pupils who achieved well. It focussed on the development of pupils' sense of chronology. Photographs of children at the turn of the last century were scrutinised, finally leading to discussion of how they spent their leisure time. The lesson was supported by an attractive display of Victorian toys and the

pupils were invited to play Shove Ha'Penny. By the end of the lesson, pupils could use the terms past, present and future with ease. When asked which of these times was preferable, most said the present, but a few suggested the future when the technology of toys would be even further developed, so showing an elementary insight into the importance of technological change for altering ways of life over time. Scrutiny of Year 2 pupils' past work showed extensive study of Ancient Egyptian and Roman times. Older pupils used secondary sources, plus a classroom display of models, to build up a detailed picture of daily life in Tudor times.

83. Overall, the learning experiences, including occasional museum visits, are providing a stimulating basis for pupils' progress. However, there is insufficient use of such sources of evidence as artefacts, documents, oral evidence and old maps for pupils to assemble their own evidence in answer to historical questions and, as young historians, to attempt to interpret it. The school is beginning to use national guidance on topics relevant to the National Curriculum which include motivating learning activities. However, it has not yet given sufficient consideration on how to sequence these so that pupils make good progress in the key elements of historical enquiry. Neither has it established a manageable way of estimating pupils' progress or of evaluating the effectiveness of the modules and strategies which the school is using as a basis for lessons. Currently, there is also insufficient use of literacy development opportunities in history lessons.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

84. Provision for ICT improved somewhat following the previous inspection, when it was judged inadequate. However, the rapid pace of change in technology in the outside world rapidly overtook whatever the school had put in place. As a consequence, pupils currently have not had the experience they need with up-to-date computers and software to reach expected standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are therefore below average and achievement levels unsatisfactory. However, over the past year, specialist teaching has been made available through the feeder secondary school. In addition, the staff that have been appointed have been recently trained and therefore have a good level of expertise. Teaching and learning are therefore of a good quality. This was evident in the lessons seen, in which teachers gave very clear demonstrations and helpful guidance to pupils as they worked. As a result, pupils are now making good progress overall in lessons. In the one lesson that was observed in Years 1 and 2, pupils made very good progress in creating pictures and moving them around on screen. Despite this good progress, however, pupils do not have the expected skills to enable them to use computers to full effect in their learning in different subjects in each age group. New laptop computers are due to arrive shortly, however, and the co-ordinator has prepared a good quality plan of action to ensure that the pupils develop and use appropriate skills with these as rapidly as possible.

## **MUSIC**

85. Standards in singing are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of the pupils' singing in assemblies is good. They sing with enthusiasm and a good sense of rhythm and mood. There was insufficient evidence during the inspection to judge standards in other aspects of music at the end of either Year 2 or Year 6. Pupils in Year 1, however, showed above average attainment in recognising different elements in pieces of classical music and playing their own short pieces on percussion instruments. This was in response to a highly stimulating lesson taken by the music specialist teacher. Pupils in Year 6 recognise and describe the characteristics of pieces of music, such as speed and pitch that contribute to the effect the piece has. Their ability to compose music and evaluate and refine their compositions are not well developed, however, due to a lack of time spent in these elements over recent terms.

86. The quality of teaching observed ranged from excellent to satisfactory. In an inspirational lesson with Reception and Year 1 pupils, the specialist teacher introduced short motifs from well known classical pieces that held the pupils spellbound. The excellent variety of the extremely well organised activities ensured full and eager participation throughout the lessons, rapid learning and excellent progress. By the end of the lesson, even the youngest pupils in the class confidently played short pieces they had composed, following made-up symbols to represent the sounds they made. Very good use of the available musical instruments also contributed to the success of this lesson. The lesson observed in Years 3 to 6 was much more pedestrian. Too much time was spent explaining things to the pupils for them to gain optimum benefit from composing and performing their own pieces. This is an area for improvement in order to enable pupils in this class to learn at a rate compatible with their age and ability in this very mixed class. The school has recently adopted a new scheme of work and has yet to implement it successfully throughout the school. Opportunities exist for pupils to learn woodwind instruments, but overall, the provision for music is not as good as it was at the time of the previous inspection. The specialist teacher is very effective in lessons and assemblies, but is part-time. Music from a range of cultures is played in lessons and assemblies but is not used as effectively as it could be to promote an understanding and appreciation of the richness of the various musical traditions represented in the multicultural society to which the pupils belong.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

87. The only aspect of physical education seen was dance, in which pupils are on course to achieve standards that are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Year 2 pupils performed a sequence of movements to represent a machine, collaborating effectively with a partner. They showed a good awareness of the available space around them and refined their movements to obtain the desired effect. They observed each other at work and made sensible comments on what they liked about the movements. Year 6 pupils devised and performed a sequence of dance movements to a piece of music, using different levels. Pupils have very positive attitudes to dance, and both boys and girls work hard during lessons. Standards in gymnastics are held back by the lack of a school hall and modern equipment, especially in Years 3 to 6. No judgements can be made about standards in games. Most pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres before leaving the school and know the required aspects of water-safety.

88. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was good in Years 3 and 4 and satisfactory in Years 4 to 6. The planning of lessons is thorough throughout the school, and teachers make good use of the available accommodation and resources. The time was used to better effect in the Years 1 and 2 lessons seen, as the pupils worked practically for more of the time and had opportunities to evaluate their work. The teachers offer good support and encouragement and use music well to stimulate the pupils' imagination. Some examples of the distinctive dance traditions of ethnic minority communities are included, but are not fully exploited as a means of giving the pupils a greater understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. Opportunities are available for those pupils with the interest and talent to compete against other local schools in various sports.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

89. The standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 match the expectations of the new, locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. They make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and develop a satisfactory appreciation of other world religions, especially Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. Pupils benefit from the commitment of the school to the importance of religious beliefs and values, including their significance for peoples' conduct in every day life. The subject is incidentally

supported by Bible stories, discussions in acts of worship and whole school Christmas productions.

90. Due to timetabling, only one religious education lesson was observed during the course of the inspection, making it impossible to reach an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. Very good teaching in the Year 2 lesson seen led to very good learning by the pupils whose overall attainment on this occasion was above that normally expected for the age group. Learning about the Bible as a library, the initial challenge to recall Bible stories and to say they were from the Old or New Testaments stimulated a very enthusiastic response. Indeed, so many stories were recalled, demonstrating pupils' good knowledge of the Bible, that the teacher had to call a halt. Pupils soon slipped into reflective mode and showed good insight into why people should want to read a sacred text like The Bible. They benefited significantly from the teacher's own knowledge and commitment as well as the informal atmosphere created. Other evidence showed that pupils are familiar with religious festivals such as the meanings of Christian baptism and the Jewish festival of Hanukkah. They learn from thinking about their own special places to understand the significance of churches, synagogues and temples to adherents of the different faiths.

91. Older pupils have visited places of worship to explore the symbolism, which they display. Younger pupils begin to understand the place of worship and prayer as key elements in religions and reflect on the significance of religious belief for everyday living through such assignments as writing about "My Journey through Life". Teachers' marking of such work is sensitive, encouraging and supportive of progress. However, the school has yet to set up a manageable system to evaluate the effectiveness of the learning activities provided. Provision for religious education contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual and cultural education, giving some support also, to their otherwise limited multicultural education.