

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOHN'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tiverton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113496

Headteacher: Mrs D Carr

Reporting inspector: Mrs H Bonser
22870

Dates of inspection: May 6th – 9th 2003

Inspection number: 247384

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 Aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Melbourne Street Tiverton Devon
Postcode:	EX16 5LA
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Coombs
Date of previous inspection:	October 20 th –23 rd 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2287o	Hilary Bonser	Registered inspector	English; geography.	The school's results and achievements; Teaching and learning; Leadership and management.
11575	Catherine Fish	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development; Care and welfare of pupils; Partnership with parents.
21904	Diane Gale	Team inspector	Science; design and technology; history; physical education; Foundation Stage	Personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
22102	Roger Gilbert	Team inspector	Mathematics; information and communication technology; art and design; music; special educational needs; educational inclusion.	Learning opportunities.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St John's Roman Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided school that draws its pupils from Tiverton and its surrounding area, including Cullompton. The school is average in size, with 208 boys and girls from 4 to 11 years of age. The number of pupils has increased from 174 at the last inspection. At that time, pupils' attainment on entry to the school was above average. This has changed now to broadly average, although it varies a little from year to year. Twelve per cent of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs, mainly as a result of learning difficulties, although a few have physical or emotional and behavioural difficulties. This is below the national average. However, four per cent of pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which is well above average. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds, but this is not reflected in the proportion of those known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below average. Currently, no pupils speak English as their second language and very few come from ethnic minorities.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St John's Primary School is a good school with many strong features. Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology at the end of Year 6 have risen rapidly in the last three years because the quality of teaching is good. This means that pupils achieve well overall by the time they leave the school. Pupils behave well and are very keen to learn. The headteacher, governors and staff work together very well as a team to improve standards for all pupils and are fully committed to continuing this. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- At the end of Year 6, standards are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and information and communication technology; pupils do well because the quality of teaching is good overall and often very good for older pupils.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership, working very closely and very effectively with all staff and governors to overcome weaknesses and to bring about improvements in all aspects of the school's work.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good and often very good progress, because the school makes very good provision for them, successfully helping them to take part in all aspects of school life.
- The school cares well for its pupils, providing very good support and guidance for them; together with the very good relationships between all members of the school community, this makes a strong contribution to pupils' very positive attitudes towards school.
- The school promotes pupils' personal development very effectively, successfully encouraging them to behave well, to get on well together and to work hard.
- The school enriches the curriculum with good relevant, additional learning opportunities that help to interest pupils and motivate them very well to learn.

What could be improved

- Standards in science, which are below average at the end of Year 2 and not as high as in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2, which are below average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1997 and since then there has been good improvement. The school has addressed the weaknesses identified in the last report well, especially in relation to the provision for children in the reception class. Initially standards fell back after the last inspection, but the impact of effective action taken by the school is now seen in the improvements in standards and pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 over the last three years. This has been recognised by a School Achievement Award this year. Standards and achievement in information and communication technology have also improved significantly. A well-focused programme of staff training to help raise the quality of teaching and learning and the well-planned use of national and other innovative initiatives to support pupils' learning have contributed to this success. There is a strong, shared commitment in the school to continue to raise standards and the quality of teaching and learning and, as a result, the school is well placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The particular characteristics of the school, with relatively small year groups and a high proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need means that comparisons with similar schools should be interpreted with care. In 2002, for example, Year 6 pupils did very well compared to their prior attainment at the end of Year 2. Since the last inspection, results overall have kept pace with national trends. This is because, although they fell back at first, they have improved rapidly since 2000, especially in English. Results at the end of Year 2 in 2002 were above average in writing, but fell back to below average in reading and mathematics, because fewer pupils reached the higher levels. Results were average in teachers' assessments in science.

Standards on entry to the school are broadly average. Lesson observations and pupils' work show that boys and girls achieve well by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. They achieve satisfactorily overall by the end of Year 2, but make more rapid progress as they move through the school and especially in Years 5 and 6. By the end of their reception year, the majority of children reach the expected standards in all areas of their learning, achieving satisfactorily. At the end of Year 2, standards are average in English, with improvements in reading since last year. Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology and art and design, reaching above average standards. However, in mathematics and science, standards are below average. This is because average and higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they should, as they are not challenged sufficiently in these subjects. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs do well because of the good support they receive.

Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average overall. Differences from last year's test results reflect a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this particular year group. Pupils of all levels of attainment are achieving well in relation to their previous attainment at the end of Year 2. Standards are highest in English, mathematics, information and communication technology, art and design and physical education in Year 6. Standards in science are average. They are not yet as high as

in English and mathematics because the subject has not yet been a main focus for development. The school is likely to meet the realistically challenging targets set this year for English and mathematics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils enjoy coming to school, they are enthusiastic, very eager to learn and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good both in lessons and at play. There has been one exclusion during the past two years.
Personal development and relationships	Very good personal development; relationships are very good between pupils of all ages and with all of the adults in the school.
Attendance	Good; above the national average.

Boys and girls alike co-operate together very well, concentrate and take a real interest in their work. They show thoughtfulness, care and respect towards the feelings and ideas of others, including those with particular difficulties, and most act very responsibly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good and has improved further since the last inspection. As a result, pupils learn well in most lessons. In Years 5 and 6, pupils learn very well, as a result of a high proportion of very good teaching. This has contributed very well to the improvements in standards and in pupils' achievements. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught well overall. Teaching is good throughout the school in English and in information and communication technology and in Years 3 to 6 in mathematics and science. Teaching was satisfactory in these two subjects in the lessons seen in Years 1 and 2, although a scrutiny of pupils' work showed that teachers do not always match tasks well enough to their differing needs. This is why some pupils do not achieve as well as they should in mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. Although pupils in Years 1 and 2 and in the reception class are taught well in the majority of lessons, they are achieving satisfactorily overall, rather than well, because several changes of teachers over the last year have led to some inconsistencies in the expectations of what pupils can do.

In general, however, the school meets the needs of most girls and boys well. One reason for this is the very effective support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Another is the good use teachers make of initiatives to help pupils develop their thinking and learning skills in a well-structured way. In the many well-taught lessons across the school, teachers manage pupils very well, using a good variety of methods and resources to provide challenging and interesting activities. As a result, pupils work hard, with a good sense of purpose and make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall; enriched well by visits and visitors and a good range of extra- curricular activities. Very good provision for the reception class.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; pupils have clear achievable targets and are supported very well by teachers and skilled learning support assistants. They are included very well in all activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall; good for their spiritual development; very good for moral development; excellent for social development and satisfactory for cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Well; a strong emphasis on promoting self-esteem contributes very well to their personal development.

The school has a very good partnership with parents and this makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers and teaching assistants use their very good knowledge of pupils to provide very good educational and personal guidance to pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall; very good leadership by the headteacher, well supported by the senior management team and by very good teamwork between all staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well; they take an increasingly active and effective part in the management of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; good use is made of test results to analyse strengths and weaknesses and to take effective action.
The strategic use of resources	Good; available funds are used well to support the school's priorities.

The headteacher provides a very clear sense of direction and has shared this effectively with the whole school community. It is focused on improving standards, the quality of teaching and learning and ensuring that all pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life. The school works well to apply the principles of best value when making decisions. Staffing levels are good overall. Very well-trained teaching assistants contribute very effectively to pupils' learning. The school uses the satisfactory accommodation and a generally satisfactory level of resources well to promote pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children enjoy coming to school.• Their children are well taught and they make good progress.• The school is approachable and responsive to their views and concerns.• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The information about how their children are doing.• The range of activities outside the classroom.• The behaviour in school.• The amount of homework given.

Inspectors fully endorse the positive comments made by the parents. With regard to their concerns, the quality of information received is judged to be very good, especially with the frequent opportunities for parents to talk to teachers. There is a good range of activities. The behaviour of most pupils is good all of the time. There are a few pupils who have not developed the self-discipline to behave well when not being directly supervised. A few pupils who have specific behaviour difficulties are managed very well by staff. The amount and use of homework is found to be satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 were above average in writing, which had been a focus for development throughout the school. They fell to below average in reading and mathematics compared to all schools nationally. This was because, although a high proportion of pupils reached Level 2, showing how well lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs were doing, fewer pupils reached the higher Level 2b and above. Teachers' assessments in science indicated that standards were broadly average but showed a similar pattern. At the end of Year 6, results were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science in comparison to all schools. These showed a very good improvement over the last three years, which has recently been recognised with a national School Achievement Award. They reflect the increasing impact, now evident, especially in Years 3 to 6, of the effective action that the school has taken to raise standards. While results over the last five years have broadly kept pace with the national trend, they fell back initially after the last inspection, but have improved much more rapidly since 2000. They now show good improvement from those at the time of the last inspection.
2. Compared to similar schools, the 2002 results at the end of Year 2 were average in writing and well below average in reading and mathematics. At the end of Year 6, they were well above average in English but average in mathematics and science. However, comparisons with similar schools, which are based on the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, should be interpreted with care. This is because the relatively small sizes of the year groups, combined with a well above average proportion of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, can lead to fluctuations in results in some years and give a misleading indication of pupils' standards and achievements overall. For example, the 2002 results showed that pupils in Year 6 achieved very well in relation to their test results at the end of Year 2. Differences in the performance of boys and girls over the last three years are similar to the national picture. The school monitors any year-to-year variations carefully and takes effective action to redress these.
3. Children's attainments on entry to the school, from observations and from analyses of the baseline assessments, are average overall. Children are achieving satisfactorily overall in the reception class. This is because, since January, they have been taught for most of the time by a temporary teacher. While the quality of teaching and learning has been satisfactory, children have not sustained the more rapid progress that is evident in lessons taught by their regular teacher. By the time they leave the reception class, the majority of children are likely to meet the early learning goals in all areas of their learning.
4. Recent work and lesson observations show that the improvements in standards and pupils' achievement at the end of Year 6 are being sustained, even though there is a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 group. Standards are well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science. Slight variations from last year reflect differences in the particular groups of pupils. Standards in science are not yet as high as in mathematics and English, as the subject has not yet been a priority for development. Pupils of all levels of attainment achieve well overall in relation to their prior attainment and some achieve very well. Standards at the end of Year 2 are now average overall in English and pupils achieve satisfactorily, showing some improvement in reading since last year. This is being brought about by the recent implementation of a good, revised policy, designed to address the identified weaknesses in this area. However, it has not been in place long enough for its full impact to be seen. In mathematics and science, where there is little evidence of above average attainment, standards are below average. While lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are doing well, some average and higher attaining pupils are not achieving as well as they should.

5. A number of factors have contributed to the good improvements in standards and achievement at the end of Year 6. There have been further improvements in the good quality of teaching and learning. The high proportion of very good and, at times, excellent teaching of older pupils has a considerable impact on their rate of progress and their keenness to learn and they respond very well to the high expectations of them. The effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has had an increasing impact on standards at the end of Year 6. The good use the school makes of initiatives such as the early and additional literacy strategies for pupils in need of additional support and the very good provision for pupils with special educational needs is reflected in a good increase in the numbers of pupils reaching the expected standards. The school is also making effective use of innovative strategies, such as 'Mind Kind' (a structured approach for promoting pupils' thinking and learning skills). This has already had a considerable impact on improving the quality of pupils' writing throughout the school. The number of changes in the teaching staff of younger pupils over the last two years means that school action has been less effective in raising standards by the end of Year 2, as teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have not been as consistently high.
6. In English, standards are average at the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve satisfactorily in all aspects of the subject. They have a good variety of opportunities to develop their speaking skills, but a significant minority of younger pupils find difficulty in listening attentively to their teacher or to each other. They enjoy reading, but although phonics are taught in a structured way, many pupils do not apply their knowledge effectively to tackle unfamiliar words or to help with their spelling. Standards are well above average at the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve very well. By the time they leave the school, pupils listen attentively to their teacher and build on each other's responses, making thoughtful contributions to sustained discussions. This makes a good contribution to their learning in all subjects. Pupils are enthusiastic readers, and show a good understanding of what they read. They use strategies they have learnt very effectively to select relevant information from a variety of sources. A particular strength in the subject is the way that teachers make successful links with pupils' learning in other subjects, such as history and geography, to provide meaningful contexts both to reinforce and to extend pupils' reading and writing skills. They make increasingly good use of information and communication technology to promote pupils' language skills.
7. Standards in mathematics are below average in all aspects of the subject by the end of Year 2. Some average and higher attaining pupils do not make the expected progress because they are not given challenging enough work. Standards are above average at the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. The way that teachers use their subject expertise in questioning pupils to extend their thinking and to help them develop their own strategies for solving problems contributes well to this.
8. Standards in science are below average by the end of Year 2. While lower attaining pupils achieve well because they are supported well, the work planned is not well matched to the needs of higher attaining pupils, in particular, and assessment procedures are not rigorous enough to help teachers in this. As a result, many of these pupils do not achieve as well as they should. By the end of Year 6, standards are average this year, as slightly fewer pupils are likely to reach the expected Level 4. However, appropriately challenging work and high expectations, evident, for example, in the good quality of recorded work, means that pupils of all levels of attainment achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
9. Standards in information and communication technology are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well. This is partly because teachers use the computer suite well to help pupils develop their skills and partly because they provide pupils with increasing opportunities to apply their skills in relevant and interesting work across the curriculum. Teachers also model the effective use of information and communication technology well, for example, in their choice of resources for lessons.
10. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in art and design and physical education and pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching throughout the school, guided by the considerable expertise of the co-ordinators for these subjects. Standards are average in history and geography

and pupils achieve satisfactorily. There was not enough evidence in design and technology and in music to make an overall judgement on standards or achievement.

11. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good gains in their learning relative to their prior attainment. Some achieve very well. They make good progress towards their individual targets because of well-matched work and the very good support given, both by teachers and by the teaching assistants in withdrawal groups and in class. For example, pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are gradually helped to increase their attention span and participate effectively in class lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good overall. The school has built well on the positive picture at the time of the last inspection. It works hard in creating a positive ethos in which the pupils are able to work and play successfully. The pupils' attitudes to learning and levels of maturity develop very well as they move through the school, reflecting the very good provision made for their spiritual, moral and social development.
13. The pupils are very enthusiastic about school. Parents feel their children are happy and enjoy coming. All the pupils spoken to during the inspection said how much they enjoy being with their friends, they like the teachers and what they are learning is interesting. The youngest pupils settle quickly to the daily routine. Older pupils are proud of the roles and responsibilities they have within school. They undertake them willingly and perform them well, reflecting their very good personal development. Very good examples were seen of Year 6 pupils not only looking after younger pupils in the playground, but also intervening very appropriately and maturely to resolve minor disputes. This showed their excellent social development. Representatives on the school council, drawn from all years, carry out their duties very well, ensuring that pupils' views are taken into account. Members recently reviewed the rules for the playground; they reflect the needs of the pupils and school environment well.
14. The pupils' attitudes to their lessons are very good overall; they are best in Years 3 to 6, where they were very good or better in nearly a half of the lessons seen. In Years 5 and 6, they are almost always very good or better. These very positive attitudes are characterised by high levels of concentration, motivation and attention. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson the pupils worked with interest on the test set by the teacher. They concentrated very well and really enjoyed the challenge of the harder questions. Attitudes are good in the rest of the school. This was shown well in a Year 2 history lesson. The pupils were totally absorbed in what they learned from the video about Florence Nightingale, showing great interest and curiosity about the past. However, particularly in Year 1, some pupils find it hard to sustain concentration, which sometimes slows the pace of learning for other pupils.
15. Although some parents expressed concern about the behaviour in school, it was found to be good overall. Most pupils behave very well nearly all the time, although there are a few pupils who have not developed the self-discipline to behave well when not being directly supervised. There are also a few pupils in school who experience considerable difficulties with their behaviour. They respond very well to the strategies agreed and used with them and are improving their levels of self-control. A very positive aspect of the school is the very good support provided for these pupils by their peers; everyone is really pleased when they succeed. This contributes very well to the very positive attitudes to school that pupils with special educational needs have, because they feel included and valued. No bullying or any other form of harassment was seen during the inspection; pupils feel that if they report any to the staff it is handled quickly and effectively. One pupil was excluded for one day last year. The correct procedures were followed and the pupil has returned to school.
16. Pupils' personal development is very good. The very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has a particularly positive effect in this aspect. One striking example showed the ability of older pupils to understand and explain the essence of something spiritual. In an assembly for pupils in Years 3 to 6, a discussion took place between the teacher

and the pupils on 'energy' as seen in the Holy Spirit. After a very interesting debate, a Year 6 girl wisely said that you cannot see energy, you show it, just as the Holy Spirit is not seen, but felt.

17. Relationships across the whole school are very good. Older pupils happily help with younger ones. Boys and girls of different ages play well together and they respect each other's feelings. In lessons, they work very well together and gain from sharing ideas and observations. This was well illustrated in a Year 3 physical education lesson, where the pupils worked together very well in groups, talking about their efforts and evaluating each other's work.
18. Attendance at school is good; it is better than the national average. Most pupils arrive on time so the school day can start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The school has further improved the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. It is now good overall, with a higher proportion of good and very good teaching and none seen that was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching was good or better in over two-thirds of the lessons seen. It was very good, and at times excellent, in a fifth of them. Much of this very good teaching was in Years 5 and 6. A key factor in this improvement has been the impact of a very well focused, ongoing programme of staff training, together with evident close teamwork between teachers and with teaching assistants in implementing it. There is also an enthusiasm and willingness among teachers to establish and evaluate new approaches to enhancing pupils' learning, for example in adapting the National Literacy Strategy to embrace a more cross-curricular approach to learning and in using strategies such as 'MindKind' to promote pupils' thinking and independent learning skills. These factors have made a significant contribution to the improvements in standards and pupils' achievements at the end of Year 6 over the last three years and continue to do so. They have had less impact on pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2, where there have been several changes of teachers recently. Good improvements have been made in the expertise of permanent teachers in the reception class and in the effectiveness and consistency with which teachers manage pupils with behavioural difficulties. These were particular areas for improvement in the last report.
20. The quality of teaching is good overall in the reception class throughout the school. Although teaching is good overall in English, mathematics and science, there is a higher proportion of good, very good and excellent teaching in these subjects in Years 3 to 6. This results in pupils learning well, and often very well, in lessons and increases their rate of progress as they get older. This is a key reason for the rapid rise in standards at the end of Year 6, especially in English, where the quality of teaching and learning is very good. While the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good overall, it was only satisfactory in the lessons seen in mathematics and science. In addition, past work shows that in these two subjects, although lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs often do well because of the good support they receive, average and higher attaining pupils are not always challenged fully. This means they do not achieve as well as they should in these areas. In the lessons seen, teaching was good across the school in information and communication technology, art and design, history and physical education and satisfactory in geography. No teaching was seen in design and technology and not enough in music to make an overall judgement.
21. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught well overall. This helps pupils to achieve well by the time they leave the school and older pupils, in particular, to make good and often very good progress. One reason for this is that teachers and co-ordinators have worked hard to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively, making good use of staff training. This means, for example, that they use their good subject knowledge well in questioning and intervention to improve pupils' skills and understanding. In a well-taught introduction to a mathematics lesson for Year 6 pupils, the teacher questioned pupils skilfully, encouraging them to explore and explain different ways of reaching their answers, and so helping them to improve their skills of mental calculation. A particular strength is the very effective use teachers make of other subjects, such as history and geography, to teach and extend pupils' literacy skills, especially in Years 3 to 6, where the approach is more embedded. Teachers make satisfactory use of opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to practise their numeracy skills. Teachers make increasing use of information

and communication technology to extend pupils' learning in subjects such as geography and art and to encourage their research skills, as well as opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their word processing and presentational skills.

22. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Class teachers know their particular needs very well and take good account of these in their planning, so that pupils are challenged appropriately and included fully in lessons, often through skilful questioning. Teaching assistants work well with class teachers to provide very good support for these pupils. In the classroom, they prepare well for lessons by discussing the planning with the teacher and how they can modify the activities so that their pupils can learn as much as possible. When working with them individually or in small groups, teaching assistants provide good teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. While the work is challenging, they create a pleasant atmosphere so that pupils enjoy working with them. Their lessons are well planned so that new learning is combined with much consolidation of what has been done in previous sessions. They use stimulating resources very effectively to build up pupils' knowledge of letter sounds and commonly used words and to develop their skills in understanding text. They have good questioning skills that encourage pupils to think for themselves. They give good feedback to teachers, which helps teachers to decide what pupils should learn next. All of these factors combine to help these pupils to achieve well and often very well.
23. In many lessons, there are strong features that contribute to the very good attitudes pupils have towards their learning. There are very good relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school. Teachers manage their pupils in a very consistent and positive way. This is based on the very good relationships clearly evident between all staff and pupils throughout the school. This helps to motivate pupils well. Teachers and teaching assistants apply agreed strategies very consistently and effectively to support pupils with behavioural difficulties. Teachers and their assistants have a very good knowledge of individual pupils and they use this sensitively to support their learning and to promote their self-esteem and personal development. They work hard and successfully, to ensure that every pupil, irrespective of their culture, social background or level of attainment is included in all activities and feels fully part of the class. This contributes very well to the respect that pupils show for each other and reflects the aims of the school well. Teachers listen to and value pupils' ideas, helping them to develop their confidence in expressing them. Many very good examples of this were seen in lessons across the school. It means that pupils are keen to share their ideas and to learn readily from their mistakes.
24. Teachers deploy their teaching assistants well, so that their skilled support has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. They make good use of additional help from several parents. Many examples were seen of teachers using good questioning skills in whole-class sessions to involve pupils of all levels of attainment and to ensure, for example, that boys and girls were equally involved. Teachers are careful to choose resources and interesting activities that are relevant to pupils and arouse their interest. In many lessons, teachers use a good range of teaching and learning strategies to keep up a brisk pace and inject a sense of urgency, for example, by using time targets effectively. As a result, in the majority of lessons, and especially by the time they reach Years 5 and 6, pupils listen well, work hard and are keen to learn, showing how very well they can concentrate and co-operate together. This has a very positive impact on their learning.
25. Teachers make effective use of a number of strategies that have been introduced over the last 18 months, specifically to help pupils to develop their thinking and learning skills in a structured way. Good examples were seen across the curriculum of how the use of opportunities for pupils to exchange thoughts quickly with a partner enabled them to order and extend their ideas and articulate them confidently. It means, too, that all pupils were more confident in contributing their ideas and so more fully involved in class discussions. This aided their concentration as well as contributing well to the development of their speaking and listening skills. Teachers used a variety of planning models well to successfully stimulate pupils' ideas for writing and to help them to organise them. This, for example, in a Year 2 history lesson, deepened pupils' understanding of the context of Florence Nightingale's work in the Crimea.

26. The impact of such features on the rate of pupils' learning was illustrated in an excellent lesson for Year 5 pupils. The very clear objectives for both the literacy and geographical learning meant that pupils knew exactly what they were expected to be able to do by the end of the lesson. The teacher referred to the objectives frequently during the lesson to keep pupils tightly focused on what they should be learning and to help them to assess how well they had done at the end of the lesson. She used a structured approach with which pupils were familiar to help them quickly and efficiently make brief notes for a four-paragraph report on features of mountain environments. This showed how very well pupils of all levels of attainment were developing skimming and scanning skills to select key information. As pupils worked, she questioned pupils skilfully, both supporting lower attaining pupils and challenging and extending higher attainers. She used a number of good strategies for ensuring that all pupils participated actively in the lesson, such as paired discussions. By the end of the lesson, pupils' detailed recall of pertinent geographical facts, learnt through their own reading, and the high quality of the introductory paragraphs that they had either written or presented orally, directly from their notes, showed how much they had learnt.
27. In some lessons seen, learning was satisfactory, rather than good or very good. This was sometimes because teachers spent too long on initial explanations so that the pace and sense of purpose dropped, resulting in some pupils losing concentration. In some lessons, the match of work was not sharply focused enough on the differing needs of average and higher attaining pupils. In others, not enough time was left to use the plenary session effectively to review or extend pupils' learning. In Year 1, however, several of the pupils find difficulty in listening attentively, concentrating and settling to work quickly as a result of inconsistent expectations of their response arising from the changes of teachers they have had this year. This has slowed their pace of learning. There is some variation in the usefulness of the marking of pupils' work in helping them to know how to improve it. Most teachers, but not all, use individual and class curricular targets effectively in English and mathematics lessons to help pupils focus on particular areas for improvement and to move their learning on. In general, homework is set in line with the school policy and satisfactory use is made of it to support pupils' learning in class.

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

28. The curriculum provision is good and overall has improved since the last inspection. It is broad, well-balanced and fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum well. Its quality and range caters well for boys and girls, contributing well to their good achievement.
29. Areas for improvement, noted in the last inspection report, have been addressed effectively. The curriculum for the children in the reception class is now very good. It is based on principles that take full account of the particular needs of young children as well as the early learning goals in all areas of their learning. Physical education now includes a unit of work on outdoor and adventurous activities and pupils are given opportunities to evaluate and develop their skills in the majority of lessons. Design aspects in design and technology have also improved. This has had a positive impact on learning in these subjects.
30. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been effectively implemented overall and have contributed well to the rise in standards at the end of Year 6. This is particularly so in English, as result of the carefully planned adaptation of the literacy strategy to enable pupils to develop their literacy skills in more meaningful contexts, closely linked with their learning in other subjects. The use of innovative strategies, such as 'Mind Kind' has also had a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The school plans to meet the needs of the range of pupils through the provision of appropriately matched work. It is not totally successful in this, however, as in Years 1 and 2, average and higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently in mathematics and science. Here, the impact of the numeracy strategy is consequently limited. However, the school works hard and successfully to ensure that lower attaining pupils across the school and all pupils in Years 3 to 6 do well. Pupils who are felt to need extra support receive well-focused small group support from teaching assistants, through the good use of, for example, the early and additional literacy strategies.

31. A significant strength of the school is its very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The result is that these pupils make good and often very good progress in relation to their individual targets. The requirements in Statements of Special Educational Needs and those of Code of Practice are met. Pupils, including those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs are taught the same range of subjects as the rest of their class and are fully included in all aspects of school life. Some spend some time each day working in a group with a skilled teaching assistant on literacy and numeracy. This arrangement works well and results in pupils achieving well in these areas. Other pupils receive individual support from a teaching assistant in order to help with the development of speech, language and communication. The school is very successful in meeting the needs of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Teachers and teaching assistants provide very good support and apply carefully thought out management strategies consistently, helping pupils to make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Consequently, pupils are able to participate effectively in lessons and the school is successfully meeting its aim of including all pupils fully in school life.
32. The provision for personal, social and health education is very good. In all classes, time is allocated for pupils to discuss personal and social issues. Pupils find these opportunities very helpful and a wide range of issues concerning life in school, relationships and growing up are discussed. Pupils feel free to discuss personal issues with their teachers, who handle these matters sympathetically and effectively. The school council meets regularly and discusses matters relating to school life. It provides pupils with a good introduction to citizenship and awareness of their responsibilities as members of a community. A well-structured health programme is linked very well to the physical education curriculum and this includes good attention to sex education and drugs awareness.
33. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Year 2 pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder and older pupils have the opportunity to have instrumental tuition, although there is a charge for these lessons. Other activities that take place during the dinner break and after school include those for sport, art, information and communication technology, French and cycling proficiency. Members of the art club have successfully exhibited work at the South-West Academy of Fine Art. Pupils in all classes go out on a good range of visits to places of educational and cultural interest. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have the opportunity to take part in extended residential visits and this provides them with good range of different challenges and experiences, contributing well to their personal development.
34. Very good links have been established with the community. The school has strong links with the parish. Members of the congregation visit regularly and pupils participate regularly in parish services and events. There are also close links with other local churches and clergy from different denominations regularly take part in assemblies. Parents provide voluntary help in school with lessons and some have given talks to pupils about their work and professions. A parent who is a qualified instructor helps with swimming lessons. Other visitors to include a 'Roman' soldier, theatre groups and artists in residence. These links help to make learning more relevant and interesting for pupils and contribute to their very good attitudes to school.
35. The links with the pre-school playgroup on the school site and other pre-school providers are good. There are also good links with local secondary schools. As a consequence, transfer from one phase of education to another runs smoothly and this ensures that there is continuity in pupils' learning. Good links also ensure that pupils with special educational needs are known to staff before they transfer from one school to another and that appropriate arrangements are made for them.
36. The school's provision for pupils' personal development is very good. The school gives high priority to this area and staff lead by example and through making sure that the school is a caring community, where pupils can grow in self-esteem, develop a sense of responsibility and gain insight into the lives and beliefs of others. Pupils' progress in their personal development is central to the vision of the school. This vision is based on the Christian ethos and values which encompasses equal opportunities alongside social responsibilities and informed choices. These concepts are affirmed in assemblies, through lessons and the day-to-day life of the school. Care for others is effectively seen to be an essential part of on-going development

37. Provision for pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was judged to be good at the time of the previous inspection, but is now judged to be very good. A key issue from the previous inspection was the weakness in the school's provision for pupils' cultural development. The school has addressed this issue by incorporating themes within the curriculum and assemblies, and through displays linked with current topics and special occasions. This therefore shows satisfactory improvement. The headteacher has initiated strategies to make the awareness of diverse cultures as real as possible to the pupils, so that they can begin to understand what they learn rather than just gain factual knowledge. Many of the elements of cultural awareness are specifically planned. For example, such events as an Islamic week and a Hindu week, help pupils to appreciate different cultures. From the time they enter the reception classes pupils learn about the different lives of others. Teachers use opportunities to enhance understanding by using their expertise and experiences, as was evident from a useful display on the Ukraine. The result of these initiatives is now satisfactory provision for the development of pupils' awareness of the many elements of cultural diversity. Although discussions with pupils in Year 6 show that they are very aware that their own community is different from many others in the country, there are still gaps in pupils' understanding. Pupils' knowledge of their own culture and western culture is carefully developed. It is well developed in literacy, history and geography, and in art and music they begin to appreciate the work of great artists and composers. They consider dance from other cultures, for example, looking at Indian dance. Pupils benefit from a good range of visits, which helps them to appreciate and understand their own heritage.
38. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. It is inherent in lessons and in daily life and routines. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on what they learn, to empathise and consider their own feelings and the feelings of others. From the headteacher and through various lessons pupils learn about the importance of tolerance, working together and making the right choice. This provides pupils with a strong base for making their judgements. The benefits of this good provision were clearly illustrated when pupils in Year 6 affirmed how important it is to know about other beliefs and cultures, and how this can lead to mutual respect and tolerance. It is frequently obvious in lessons as pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on their own work and the effects of their actions on others. Assemblies are a special time and provide opportunities for pupils to consider their feelings and respond to questions on beliefs and values. Requirements for a daily collective act of worship are met. Although there are many displays through the school to reaffirm the well-established good values, some opportunities are missed in classrooms to use displays which would contribute to pupils' awareness of spirituality in many aspects of the world around them.
39. There are good links between pupils' spiritual awareness and their moral development, which is very good. The school's strong moral code helps pupils to grow in self-confidence, and moral and behavioural expectations are consistently and unobtrusively reinforced. This again is underpinned by the school's ethos and teaching. Moral issues are carefully promoted through personal and social education, specific lessons, religious education and assemblies. All staff consistently provide good role models in promoting harmonious relationships and a caring atmosphere. Pupils are carefully challenged to consider the effect of their action on others. They learn to distinguish between right and wrong, not only primarily for the sake of keeping rules, but also from a developing respect for others' needs, feelings and beliefs. Classes agree on their own rules, and teachers quietly remind them of these should the need arise. They are encouraged to understand that they are responsible for their own actions, but that teachers take responsibility for dealing with the consequences of pupils' actions. The use of a 'problem box' and a 'worry bag' helps pupils to quietly confide their concerns.
40. Provision for pupils' social development is excellent and has strong links to their spiritual and moral development. Teachers have high expectations and try to ensure that pupils understand the value of sharing and working and playing together co-operatively. Lessons provide very good opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and groups and there are very good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. They are encouraged to consider and support each other when applying themselves to their tasks in the classroom and this frequently leads to spontaneous compliments from others. This aspect is particularly strong in Years 4, 5 and 6. From an early age pupils are helped to develop their sense of responsibility and initiative. In this, they are encouraged by the ideals and development of the effective school council, where even the younger members of

the school display their decided views on improvement in the school. Older pupils become aware of responsibilities by undertaking helpful jobs around the school and helping with the younger pupils. The system of family grouping also fosters pupils' social development. The school is very aware of the need to promote the self-esteem of pupils. The establishment of nurture groups to help pupils who have difficulty with relationships is a carefully considered and effective part of social provision. Pupils are made aware of wider social and moral issues through their very good support of a range of local and world-wide charities and in some cases they have initiated and organised fund-raising events themselves. Teachers make good use of opportunities in subjects such as geography to promote pupils' sense of citizenship. A wide range of visits, including residential visits for older pupils, and involvement in local events consistently provide another very good element to pupils' social development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school works hard to create a caring and welcoming atmosphere in which the pupils can work and play. The pupils feel valued and well supported by the staff. They are comfortable to approach them with any concerns; the school provides good and effective ways for the pupils to bring a concern to the notice of a member of staff so that it can be discussed and resolved. The pupils feel safe and secure and so they are able to get on with their learning.
42. The school has a good range of policies and procedures to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its pupils. All relevant risk assessment is undertaken on the building, on lessons and for trips. Appropriate safety checks are made on equipment, apparatus and appliances. The school has good child protection procedures in place. The head teacher, who is the named child protection officer, has recently attended a training course to update her knowledge; she has identified ways in which the school can further improve in this aspect. Very good arrangements are in place and used well to ensure that pupils looked after in the community are well supported. The pupils are well supervised at playtime and the site is safe and well maintained.
43. The staff recently reviewed the school policy on behaviour, including any forms of harassment, and how it should be managed. Good procedures are in place. The generally consistent approach to implementing these across the school has led to a decrease in the number of pupils who are sent to the headteacher for misbehaving, as pupils have become better at self-discipline. There are good and supportive strategies in place to help those pupils who experience specific difficulties and these are effective. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection. The support from their peers for the pupils involved is particularly helpful. The policy encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour and the involvement of the school council means that they have ownership of the policy. The council recently reviewed the rules for the playground with the midday staff and teachers.
44. The staff know the pupils very well and so the monitoring of personal development is very good. The comments made in the annual report to parents show a very clear understanding of the pupils. Parents particularly commented on how well their children are known by all staff. The pupils' personal development is successfully fostered through the school's strong and positive ethos that successfully promotes a family atmosphere and very good relationships. The school's personal, social and health education programme also supports personal development very well. Aspects of personal development are discussed in religious education and assemblies. Good provision is made through the nurture groups for pupils who benefit from a more structured approach.
45. There are good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. Attendance registers are completed accurately so the school is aware of who is on site. Reasons for any absence are clearly identified. Parents are good about informing the school of any absence and so there are only a very few occasions for which the reason is not known.
46. There are very good procedures for the tracking of attainment and progress of pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans contain targets that are clear and appropriate. They are produced by class teachers and provide clear guidance on what pupils need to do next in order to make progress. Reviews of pupils' progress towards their targets are carried out regularly and

pupils and their parents are appropriately involved in this process. The individual education plans for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties have proved to be very effective in helping pupils settle into the life of the school and to benefit from the learning opportunities provided for them.

47. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. There are satisfactory procedures overall for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Satisfactory improvement has been made in this area since the last inspection. There are good procedures in for children in the reception class, closely linked to their progress in relation to the early learning goals for their learning, which are used well to appropriate activities for individuals and groups of children. In Years 1 to 6, assessment procedures are sound in mathematics and good in English, where they have been further strengthened by additional assessments in reading, for example, to underpin the new policy. Good procedures are also being established for information and communication technology and design and technology. Procedures for science are unsatisfactory as they do not enable teachers to track pupils' progress or provide enough information for them to use in planning work for pupils of differing levels of attainment. Procedures are generally satisfactory in other subjects.
48. Teachers make generally good use of analyses of national tests to find gaps in pupils' learning and to set curricular targets for each year group to address these. In English, they have been used well to revise reading and writing policies. Teachers also make appropriate use of termly assessments of pupils' work in their Record of Achievement to set individual targets for improvement. The process involves pupils in evaluating their performance and discussing their next targets with the class teacher. This practice has proved successful in improving attainment and achievement in writing but it is less well developed for other subjects. There is also some variation in the effectiveness with which teachers focus pupils' attention on their targets in their work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The school has very good relationships with nearly all of its parents and enjoys their confidence. The views expressed at the meeting prior to the inspection were generally positive. Nearly a half of the questionnaires were returned, and these again were generally positive. Parents show particular confidence in the school's approachability, the fact that their children enjoy attending and the progress the school helps their children to make both in the classroom, because of the good teaching, and in their personal development as they get older. Inspection findings fully endorse the positive comments made by parents. However, a number of parents have concerns about some aspects. These include the information they receive, particularly about how their children are getting on, the behaviour of the pupils, the range of activities outside the classroom and the amount of homework set. These aspects were looked at during the inspection and no evidence was found to support these concerns. (Details can be found here or elsewhere in the report.)
50. The information that parents receive is very good overall. Weekly newsletters keep parents very well informed about what is going on in school and with forthcoming events. The inclusion of drawings and work done by the pupils makes them more interesting and relevant. Newsletters are always displayed in the entrance hall and are available on the web site. Each term the school provides good quality information about what the pupils in each year will be learning. The annual written report to parents was revised after consultation with parents. It now gives details of what pupils have covered, and what they have experienced. At the request of parents the individual comments relate mainly to personal development; these are of very good quality. The report is very well supplemented by the pupils' Record of Achievement files being sent home each term. These contain selected pieces of work, which are marked and given a National Curriculum level by the teacher. Targets are set from these pieces of work. Through seeing these, parents can see the progress being made by their children in their work over time. The school is regarded as very approachable by nearly all parents and this ensures that any further information can be obtained and discussions can be held when needed. Meetings with teachers are held for parents; these are well attended
51. Very good contact is made with parents informally at the start and especially at the end of the day. Further very good opportunities arise through the Parents' Forum. This meets regularly to discuss

issues or general matters as they arise. Everyone is invited and the details of what is to be discussed are published before hand. Where it is needed, a home/school contact book is used to ensure good communication between home and school. The school takes parents views into account, as shown by the amendments to the annual reports. A recent concern about how much reading is heard in school led to the introduction of a record card showing in what ways pupils have been reading each week.

52. The school also works hard to establish good partnerships with the parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs. As soon as pupils are identified as having a need, their parents are immediately informed and fully involved as support is planned and progress reviewed. Parents receive very good information about their children's progress because they have the opportunity to discuss it with everyone involved, including the special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers, teaching assistants and the educational psychologist.
53. Social and fund-raising events, organised by the Parents, Friends and Teachers Association, also help to promote a very good partnership between school and home. The funds raised are used to further the work of the school and pupils' learning and to enhance the environment, for example with play equipment and the planned covered areas. There are a few parents who are able to come in to school on a regular basis to help, for example, with reading. Others who cannot commit themselves as much are supportive on an occasional basis, such as helping to clear the brambles from the wooded area. All parents sign the home/school contract. As required in this, parents are generally supportive of the school over homework, such as hearing their children read.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The overall leadership and management of the school are good and have improved since the last inspection. There has been a good overall response to the key issues identified in the previous report. There is now a very good curriculum in place for the Foundation Stage, which takes very good account of the needs of the youngest children. In addition, a new classroom has been built to provide a more suitable environment for their learning than at the time of the last inspection. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress have been improved with the exception of those in science, which remain unsatisfactory. There are appropriate planned opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths and cultures. Financial planning is now good, helping to make the school more cost-effective. A number of other good improvements have also been brought about, especially, for example, in the quality of teaching and learning. A key factor in this is a well-focused, ongoing programme of staff training. This contributes well to the general consistency of approach in many aspects of teaching and learning, even though at present, several teachers have temporary posts. This consistency helps pupils to build on previous learning as they move through the school. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented effectively. The literacy strategy, in particular, together with other initiatives, is used creatively and to good effect to enhance pupils' learning and raise standards. There has been a good improvement in the school's provision and teaching of information and communication technology so that pupils now achieve well in this area. The increasing impact of all of these improvements is seen in the significant rise in standards and pupils' achievement at the end of Year 6. They have had less impact on standards at the end of Year 2, largely because of a greater turnover of teachers in Years 1 and 2.
55. The headteacher provides very good leadership. Her role in creating and maintaining a very effective, positive climate for change, in motivating and enabling the staff team, gaining the confidence and support of governors and almost all parents and securing a firm commitment to school improvement has been a critical factor in the successful improvements made. The response of the staff to this, through high-quality teamwork, mutual support, hard work and the dedication of all to improving the quality of teaching and learning for pupils, is very good.
56. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school, rooted in Christian beliefs, which she has shared effectively with the school community. This had led to a strong sense of direction and purpose, which is encapsulated in the school aims. It is focused on raising standards and pupils' achievements, irrespective of ability, gender, background or culture, supporting all aspects of their personal development and ensuring that all pupils, whatever the nature of any difficulties they may

have, are helped to participate in all aspects of school life. The very good relationships, teachers' very good knowledge of individual pupils, the way they promote self-esteem and recognise the achievements of each pupil and the very good inclusion of all pupils, are some of the many examples of how the school's aims and values are seen in practice daily. Another is the commitment to training to ensure effective implementation of the school's policy for promoting racial equality. All of this makes a strong contribution to the very positive attitudes and good behaviour of the pupils and consequently to their good achievements.

57. The senior management team is fully involved in all decision-making and contributes effectively to the leadership and management of the school. All subject co-ordinators are given time each year to monitor aspects of their subject, such as planning and pupils' work, although this has not yet included direct observations of teaching and learning, which limits their effectiveness. Their evaluations form the basis for their annual action plan, which in turn contribute to the school development plan. The expertise of the literacy and information and communication technology co-ordinators, in particular, has been instrumental in bringing about the rapid improvements in standards and achievements in these subjects. The impact of co-ordinators on standards is less evident in subjects, such as science, that have not yet been a priority for development.
58. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides effective leadership. She has led the implementation of the new Code of Practice and managed the introduction of new procedures for drawing up individual education plans well. As a result, there is consistency across the school in the way that individual education plans are written and used, ensuring that work meets the needs of pupils precisely and helps them to make good progress.
59. The partnership that the co-ordinator has developed with teaching assistants contributes significantly to the success of their work. Through good initial and continuing training, she ensures that they have the skills and knowledge required to carry out their work effectively with their pupils. The special educational needs teaching assistant shares the management of this area of the school's work with the co-ordinator. This works well and enhances the quality of the provision. The new governor designated for special educational needs has developed a good relationship with the co-ordinator and teaching assistants. She visits the school regularly in order to discuss this area of the school's work and reports back appropriately to the whole governing body to inform their overview.
60. The determination and capacity of the school to raise standards further, by improving the quality of teaching and learning, is seen in the focused use of the performance management process. This has been developed as a very positive tool to support the key priorities on the school improvement plan and is carefully linked to very well-planned training in which all members of staff are encouraged to take part. The school also makes very good use of other initiatives, such as the early and additional literacy strategies, as well as schemes, such as Investors in People and innovative strategies such as 'Mind Kind' to provide further support for pupils' learning and school improvement. The headteacher manages the additional bureaucratic demands arising from implementation of national initiatives effectively. She does this, for example, through the good use of information and communication technology to reduce paper-work and by delegating well, to ensure that the demands do not detract from the benefit to pupils.
61. There are good overall procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. The headteacher has increasingly involved all staff and governors in these since the last inspection in order to identify strengths to build on and key priorities for improvement. These form the basis for the school development plan, which reflects the shared sense of purpose well and focuses whole-school development on a manageable number of priorities, although some of the success criteria for these could be more precise. Detailed analyses of the Year 2 and Year 6 national tests are used well to identify areas of specific weakness and to determine effective remedial action. A good example of this is the introduction of a well-thought out reading policy, which teachers have worked on together, led ably by the literacy co-ordinator. It is focused on raising standards, especially by the end of Year 2, and providing continuity into the rest of the school. This is already beginning to have an impact on pupils' progress in the short amount of time it has been in place. Analyses of the previous year's national tests also form the basis of curricular targets that are set for each year

group. Termly analyses of pupils' work are used to set individual targets for improvement, which most teachers use well for this purpose. This year, the school has put in place a useful new information system to track pupils' progress more effectively in the core subjects as they move through the school and to identify individuals or groups of pupils in need of additional challenge or support more quickly. Although the procedures in place for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning have been effective in improving its quality, these now need to be reviewed and more opportunities for focused lesson observations included in order to promote continuing improvements.

62. Governors are very committed and supportive of the school and carry out their statutory duties well. Although several are recently appointed, they take an active and effective part in the leadership and management of the school. The partnership and teamwork between staff and governors are clearly evident and contribute very well to the common sense of purpose. Governors are linked to key areas of the curriculum and several work regularly in school. All of this, together with the role of their curriculum committee in reviewing school performance and detailed information from the headteacher, has helped to inform their clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and of what is needed to continue to take it forward.
63. The quality of financial planning and management is good and the efficient finance officer makes a very good contribution to this. The funds received by the school are used effectively to support the school priorities. Good use is also made of specific grants for example, to increase the number of teaching assistants and so extend the effective support for pupils. The effectiveness of such spending decisions is carefully evaluated in relation to pupils' progress. Principles of best value are applied well and contribute to the improved cost-effectiveness of the school. For example, the school ensured through careful research and discussion that it obtained best value for money when equipping the computer suite. Parents are consulted regularly, both informally and through questionnaires, while pupils are consulted through the school council. Office staff, teaching and support staff make increasingly good and confident use of new technology, both to increase the efficiency of their work, for example, in curriculum planning and as a resource to enhance pupils' learning.
64. The overall match and number of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum is good. Over half of the class teachers this year are temporary appointments of varying duration to cover leave of absence or non-class-based work of permanent staff. While their deployment has not detracted from pupils' standards and achievements in Years 3 to 6, it has slowed the progress of younger pupils, especially in Year 1, where there have been several changes of teachers this year and in the reception class. The teaching assistants, several of whom already have, or are working towards, national qualifications, provide skilled and very effective support especially for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, contributing well to their good achievement. Administrative staff provide efficient and helpful support. Lunchtime supervisors support the school well, especially in the consistency of behaviour management.
65. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and staff make good use of the facilities available. The caretaker and cleaning staff maintain the building well and ensure that it is clean and welcoming. The provision of a well-equipped and well-used computer suite has contributed to the very good rise in standards in the subject. The extensive, attractive grounds provide good facilities for physical education and are being developed to support pupils' learning in a number of other areas. Resources are generally satisfactory and teachers make good use of them to support pupils' learning. Resources are good in information and communication technology, history and physical education, contributing to pupils' good progress in lessons. They are unsatisfactory in science and consequently provide little support for pupils' learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. In the context of the school's many strengths, the governors, headteacher and staff should address the following matters in their action plan in order to raise standards and the quality of education further:

a) Raise standards in science, which are below average in at the end of Year 2 and not as high as in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 by:-

- establishing more rigorous assessment procedures that help teachers to track pupils' progress and to decide their next steps in learning;
- ensuring that teachers plan work for pupils of all levels of attainment and especially for higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2;
- increasing the amount of written recording in Years 1 and 2;
- improving the quality and range of resources to provide better support for pupils' learning across the school.

(see paragraphs 4,8,27,47,101-103,105,107)

b) Raise standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2, which are below average by*:-

- ensuring that teachers match tasks effectively to the needs of higher and average attaining pupils to challenge and extend them;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to apply what they know in problem solving and investigative activities;
- making better use of more precise target setting to help pupils improve their work.

(see paragraphs 4,7,20,94,95, 98,100)

**The school has already identified these areas for development.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	7	23	13	0	0	0
Percentage	4	16	51	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 two 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)	208
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	6
Special educational needs	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	25
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	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	17	11	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	15	14
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	27	26	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (87)	93 (87)	89 (90)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	15	16
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	27	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (90)	89 (90)	96 (90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	13	12	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	9	12
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	24	21	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	96 (72)	84 (80)	96 (88)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	11	12
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	20	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (72)	92 (80)	96 (76)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	208	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	254

Financial year	2202/03
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	£
Total income	484071
Total expenditure	489958
Expenditure per pupil	-5887
Balance brought forward from previous year	8193

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	208
Number of questionnaires returned	91

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	49	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	36	52	8	3	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	52	13	9	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	51	18	3	1
The teaching is good.	43	47	2	0	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	34	29	10	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	37	5	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	43	43	11	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	24	53	15	4	4
The school is well led and managed.	35	45	11	5	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	53	1	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	43	21	2	7

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

67. There are currently 25 children in the reception class, most of whom have had pre-school experience and many have attended the play group situated in the school grounds. Standards on entry to the school were judged to be above average at the time of the previous inspection. They are variable from year to year but the attainment of the children on entry is now judged to be average. Induction procedures are good and ensure that children are familiar with their surroundings before they enter the school.
68. By the time they reach Year 1, the majority of children are likely to reach the expected standards in all of the six areas of learning. Their achievements are satisfactory overall but in some lessons where teaching is very good, they make very good progress. Children with special educational needs receive good support to enable them to achieve well in relation to their difficulties with learning, or with their personal and emotional difficulties.
69. A key issue from the previous inspection was the quality of the curriculum for the reception children. This issue has been comprehensively addressed so that is now very good. The school has undertaken much research before constructing a new curriculum and in this it has been successful. While embracing the Reggio Emilia philosophy, the curriculum is carefully and firmly linked to the early learning goals for children in their Foundation Stage. The good procedures for assessment link well with the curriculum and give a clear picture of the children's development.
70. The teaching in the reception class is good overall. Since Christmas, a temporary class teacher has taught the class for much of the time and teaching is satisfactory. This teaching provides adequate learning opportunities for children but with insufficient challenge or expectation from the teacher to extend children's learning further, particularly for the higher attaining children. This is why children's learning and achievement this year are satisfactory, in spite of the good overall teaching seen during the inspection. In lessons taught by the regular class teacher, teaching was consistently good and frequently very good. She has a very good understanding of the needs of the children and work was carefully matched to their abilities, making good use of assessment. The teacher made sure that her time was adequately distributed among the children so that she could direct questions, discussions and tasks to the different groups in the class. The teaching assistant is used effectively to support children in their work.
71. The accommodation has improved since the previous inspection, and is adequate for the number of children in the class. The outdoor area is well used for a range of learning activities, but a weakness in provision is the lack of large riding toys or equipment where children can further develop their physical skills.

Personal, social and emotional development

72. By the time children transfer to Year 1, the majority are likely to achieve the expected standards in terms of their personal, social and emotional development. The teaching is effective in ensuring that children make satisfactory progress in this aspect of their learning. Children are confident in their approach to many aspects of their work and establish positive relationships with one another, class teachers and the teaching assistant. Those who are hesitant are carefully encouraged to participate and to contribute to activities. Children behave well and are considerate of others when moving around the classroom or playing with resources and equipment. They work well together when part of a group, persevere with their tasks and many show good concentration. They share equipment well and there is very little dissension between them. They enjoy opportunities for individual responsibilities, and many of them show good personal independence in their ability to find and use equipment. On the whole, children are polite and know that they need to wait patiently if the teacher is working with other children, but some take the opportunity to interrupt and deviate from their tasks in these circumstances. Occasionally opportunities are missed to develop children's learning

in this area further, as it is not consistently intrinsic and built clearly into the daily routines of the class. When getting ready for physical activities, the children change relatively quickly, although some need the assistance of an adult. Although some teaching was characterised by the over-use of praise, on the whole praise and encouragement are used effectively, helping to promote confidence and self-esteem.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

73. By the time the children enter Year 1, the majority are in line to meet the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and their achievements are satisfactory. The majority of reception children are articulate and use an appropriate range of vocabulary to talk about what they are doing. When engaged in their activities they use their speaking skills well to talk and plan together. The quality of their responses in class discussion time varies with the quality of teaching. Where good questioning is used then children show that many of them are competent in expressing their thoughts and ideas. If not challenged, they tend to use one-word answers. Their listening skills are satisfactory overall. While many show a good ability to listen and concentrate well, there are some whose attention quietly wanders, and this is usually when they have lost interest, when teaching fails to stimulate them. On the whole they listen to and follow instructions carefully, and enjoy listening to stories and rhymes.
74. The children approach reading with eagerness. They know how to handle books, and the higher attaining children demonstrate their skills by co-operating with the teacher and reading sentences from familiar stories during shared class reading times. In discussions with the teacher about books, some are able to express their ideas about what they have heard and they handle books appropriately. However, only a minority demonstrate sound reading skills. They understand the importance of linking letters with sounds, but are not always competent in applying this to their reading. The lower attaining children and the younger children are keen to use the pictures in their books to tell the story and show an interested curiosity. Very good teaching helps children to formally develop their reading skills in a relaxed but structured manner, where they are encouraged to appreciate the magic of books and the written word.
75. The majority of the children are beginning to try to write for themselves and the higher attaining children are beginning to write sentences, knowing that capital letters and full stops are needed. In this they also make use of the word banks that teachers provide. Use is made of classroom based computers to support children's early reading and writing skills, such as in the recognition of letters and their corresponding sounds. A weakness in provision for the development of children's skills in this area of their learning is the lack of opportunities for role play to develop their use of language, and planned opportunities for children to 'pretend' write in imaginative play situations. However, stimulating activities such as restocking the school garden makes a positive contribution to pupils' speech and communication development.

Mathematical development

76. Most children reach the expected standards in mathematics by the time they leave the reception class. Their achievements over time in the early understanding of number, shape and measure are satisfactory overall, but with some good progress seen within lessons where teaching was very good. In these lessons the teacher used a range of strategies to reinforce what children were learning. The efficient organisation and well-chosen activities to support learning ensured that all children were involved and stimulated by their tasks. Some of the children with higher ability are beginning to do simple calculations with numbers to five and some to ten. They recognise, for example, that the answer to 2 plus 3 must be the same as 3 plus 2. Some can count on and back within ten and are able to write recognisable numbers and place them in the correct order. They recognise the terms 'one more' or 'before and after'. Some are able to go further, recognising the necessary digits for example for writing numbers above ten. The lower attaining children, however, are not always confident in writing and recognising numbers below ten and need help in sequencing numbers. These children are helped to develop their understanding by the use of appropriate games and activities such as throwing beanbags in a hoop. This type of activity provoked a delighted response from the children who found mathematical learning fun. Many children are beginning to

recognise patterns in number and recognise two-dimensional shapes. Through activities such as using the water tray and sand tray they begin to develop their concepts of capacity and three-dimensional shapes. In these activities, they are carefully guided by the teaching assistant.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

77. Most children enter the school with a sound knowledge of the world in which they live. They make satisfactory progress so that by the time they enter Year 1 they reach the expected standard. The topics the children learn about are based on their own interest and choice. As a result of discussions at the end of the previous term, children chose to learn about mini-beasts, which provides a stimulus for other areas of learning. The school environment is carefully used to foster and develop the children's knowledge, but the degree of success depends on effective teaching. For example when children were taken to hunt for mini-beasts within the school grounds, inadequate preparation meant that the children were not sufficiently focused on what and where they should be seeking. Conversely, when good teaching made sure they were well prepared before exploring a gardening task, the children acquired useful new knowledge and understanding about how to help plants to grow and they understand that plants have different uses. They named the herbs they had planted and knew that they are used in cookery. The teaching assistant worked well with them in such activities and the garden provided much for the children to talk about. Children are encouraged to develop their understanding of the world by close observation. For example, the observational drawings of flowers and of snails drew many fascinated comments. The children are learning control of a computer mouse, with some developing the skill of clicking and dragging, but few opportunities were seen for children to use technological equipment such as wind-up toys or tape players. The children become aware of other cultures through activities such as looking at food from around the world.

Physical development

78. The children develop sound skills and meet the expected levels of attainment in their physical development by the time they leave the reception class. Within the classroom, children manipulate and handle small tools well. Their more precise skills, when using pencils, glue or scissors are good. They use pencils correctly and their paintings, drawings and collage reflect their good control when using paint or other materials. Developing physical control was also demonstrated when children were engaged in throwing beanbags into hoops during a mathematics lesson. They handle and build models with bricks with dexterity. In physical education, they understand the need for to warm up before a lesson and are beginning to develop an awareness of space. Many show a sound ability to stretch, skip and jump and how to move in different ways. Their ability to evaluate what they and others are doing them helps them to improve their skills. The lack of appropriate equipment for the outside area detracts from further progress in the children's physical development. Good teaching ensures that there are appropriate activities and guidance for children's physical development in the classroom and good subject expertise enables them to move with control and co-ordination in their physical education lessons.

Creative development

79. By the time the children enter Year 1 they meet the expected standards in their creative development. Achievement overall is satisfactory over the range of experiences provided, although it is unsatisfactory in the area of role play. Teaching in this aspect of children's development is satisfactory overall. Some teaching showed that many of the activities to promote creative development were over-prescriptive and resources were pre-prepared, providing too few opportunities for children to create and develop their own ideas over a range of materials. However, in well-taught lessons, the children were able to explore colour and shape, for example after examining the work of Matisse. Their paintings of butterflies showed bold confidence and colourful use of paint. The opportunities for observational drawing enabled the children to examine the natural world in greater detail, as they endeavoured to capture the colours they observed. Small groups of children demonstrated a good degree of imagination in building a home with construction bricks, although they were limited in their ability to describe and explain what they had built. A weakness in the children's creative development is the lack of opportunity to participate in exciting opportunities for

role-play. This is not a stimulating area and does not complement other areas of learning, for example, by promoting speaking and listening skills, writing or mathematical skills or by contributing to the children's personal, social and emotional development. This was a weakness in the previous inspection, which has not yet been fully addressed. During the inspection, it was not possible to see any musical activities, but good teaching enabled the children to understand how a range of unusual musical instruments can be used to capture the images of the mini-beasts they were discussing in a class story.

ENGLISH

80. When children start school their language skills are broadly average. Inspection evidence shows that standards are average by the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. This shows some improvement from the below average performance in reading in the national tests last year. Standards in writing are average this year compared to above average last year when more pupils reached the higher Level 3. By the end of Year 6 standards are well above average, continuing the significant improvement in standards over the last three years and from the time of the last inspection. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, boys and girls achieve very well in relation to their previous attainment in Year 2.
81. A number of factors have contributed to the very good improvements in standards at the end of Year 6 over the last three years. There has been a good improvement in the quality of teaching, especially in Years 3 to 6, where it is very good overall and, at times, excellent in Years 5 and 6. This helps pupils to make rapid progress in their learning. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and consistently and has been adapted very effectively, especially for the older pupils, by linking it closely with pupils' learning in other subjects such as history and geography. This promotes the focused development of both their literacy skills and those in the linked subjects. This is because of the clear objectives that teachers have for both areas and because the context provided for pupils' learning in this way makes it more relevant and interesting for them. Teachers have also begun to make very effective use of 'Mind Kind' strategies, to help pupils organise and structure their ideas for writing. This is contributing significantly to the rise in standards of both reading and writing, especially in Years 3 to 6. The very good leadership of the co-ordinator has also contributed considerably to the improvements through staff training and support and the detailed analysis of national tests. For example, in response to a fall in performance in the Year 2 national tests in reading, she has worked closely this year with staff to revise the reading policy in the light of the identified weaknesses. She has provided clear, useful guidance for its implementation, supported well by focused assessment and target-setting procedures. However, these have not been in place long enough for the full effect on standards this year in Year 2 to be seen.
82. Class teachers and teaching assistants work very closely together to help pupils with special educational needs to do well, through very effective, well-planned sensitive support in class and, where appropriate, through individual and small group teaching. As a result, lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school. In Years 3 to 6 some achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. Assessment information is used well to identify those in need of additional support. Initiatives such as the early and additional literacy strategies and focused support from skilled teaching assistants are then used very effectively to help them make more rapid progress. This is reflected in the proportion of these pupils who reach the expected standards in English by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
83. Standards in speaking and listening are average by the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. They are above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well. Throughout the school, teachers provide varied opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking skills, through, for example, assemblies, presentations of work and school productions. The opportunity for pupils to take part in activities such as the school council and circle times enhance these. Good examples were seen in all classes of teachers questioning pupils skilfully to help them extend their initial responses. Older pupils, in particular, are encouraged in lessons across the curriculum to articulate their ideas through frequent opportunities for paired and small group discussions, which increases their confidence and clarity when subsequently expressing their thoughts to the class. As a result, many older pupils speak confidently and audibly in front of groups of different sizes. This was

illustrated very well in a Year 5 literacy lesson, when several pupils spoke fluently to the class about mountain environments, using only brief notes.

84. In Years 1 and 2, the majority of pupils listen attentively to their teacher and to each other. However a significant minority of pupils, especially in Year 1, find difficulty in maintaining concentration for more than short periods when listening to their teacher. While they are keen and confident about sharing their ideas, they remain focused on what they want to say. Consequently, they tend to call out and do not listen well to each other. This is partly a result of several changes of teachers this year, which have led to inconsistent expectations over the way that they listen and respond. However, in Years 3 to 6, consistently high expectations of pupils' concentration and very well-paced, focused teaching means that, by the time pupils reach Years 5 and 6, they listen intently to their teacher. Irrespective of their level of attainment, pupils make thoughtful contributions to discussions and begin to build well on each other's views.
85. Standards in reading are average at the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Phonics and key words are taught in a structured way and teachers monitor and support the progress of individual pupils carefully. The introduction of the new reading policy now ensures a careful balance between individual, paired and guided reading. The early literacy strategy is used effectively to support lower attaining pupils. However, although pupils of all levels of attainment clearly understand what they are reading, most do not use what they have learnt about sounds to help them tackle unfamiliar words. Some higher and average attaining pupils have a good sight vocabulary but need prompting to discuss their books in any detail. All, including lower attaining pupils are well-motivated and proud of their skills.
86. By the end of Year 6, reading standards are well above average and pupils, including those with special educational needs, and especially in Years 5 and 6 achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. Boys and girls enjoy reading an appropriate range of books and also show a good understanding of what they read. Higher attaining pupils can compare different authors they have read, giving good reasons for their preferences. Examples include comments such as, 'She introduces you to a world of real life problems' or, 'She writes in the first person and involves you at once; it is easy to get into the book because there are not too many characters'. Several factors have contributed to this. Teachers make very good use of individual and guided reading sessions as well as opportunities across the curriculum to help pupils to develop and apply their reading skills successfully. Teachers use very effective strategies, including those based on 'Mind Kind', to teach pupils to retrieve and collate information efficiently from a variety of sources, including the Internet. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils of all levels of attainment showed good skills in locating key words and using them to make brief, appropriate notes.
87. Standards in writing are average by the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils write in a good variety of forms, including poems, letters and stories, although teachers do not make enough use of opportunities for written recording in other subjects to extend their writing skills. Pupils begin to include relevant details and to use capital letters and full stops correctly. A few higher attaining pupils begin to use interesting vocabulary and more complex sentences, as in, 'The flint she was holding flew straight out of her hand and on to an arrow'. However, in their first draft work, spelling is not sufficiently accurate because pupils do not apply their knowledge of sounds to spell words well enough. Their handwriting is generally well formed, although cursive writing is not taught systematically.
88. By the end of Year 6, standards in writing are well above average and pupils achieve very well. They write in a good variety of forms and extend their ideas by adding description or explanation. Average attaining pupils use more complex sentences confidently, while higher attaining pupils make secure use of paragraphs and use a variety of strategies to successfully sustain their reader's interest. Pupils often make very good progress in literacy lessons in learning a good range of techniques for improving their writing. Teachers make very effective use of 'Mind Kind' strategies, which help pupils to extend and organise their ideas when planning their writing in a way that has a considerable impact on its quality. For example, using these strategies, an average attaining began an account of the Tay Bridge disaster with, 'Yesterday, Christmas hearts were destroyed by rain gushing down ----'. Higher attaining pupils use very well-chosen vocabulary and adapt their style competently to

suit the purpose and audience of their writing. An example of this was the use of idiom where appropriate, as in, 'I had a close call yesterday ----', when writing a letter home in role as a fighter pilot in the Second World War.

89. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In Years 3 to 6 it is very good overall with some that is excellent and this means that pupils of all levels of attainment make rapid progress in their learning. In Years 1 and 2, it was good overall in the lessons seen, although scrutiny of work shows that expectations of the amount and quality of pupils' work are not as high as for older pupils. In Year 1, where there have been several changes of teachers this year, there is less evidence of teachers using individual targets to help pupils improve their work, which they generally do well in other year groups.
90. In many lessons, teachers used probing and challenging questioning, which was made particularly effective by the good knowledge they had of each pupil's learning, as a result of the good range of ongoing, termly and annual assessments they now make. They used this knowledge to pitch questions at just the right level for pupils of differing levels of attainment, skilfully enabling all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to participate fully in the lesson.
91. In an excellent literacy lesson for Year 6, that was closely linked to their work in history, the teacher used well-chosen extracts from pupils' work from the previous lesson to both reinforce and extend their learning on writing a historical information text. Highly focused, challenging questions that showed her considerable expertise and very high expectations of pupils included all boys and girls and totally engaged their attention. Not a moment was wasted, as the teacher then moved them on to read and discuss some diary extracts, prior to writing their own, in role as Anglo-Saxons journeying to England. She used pupils' suggestions very well to exemplify features of this style of writing and techniques to raise the quality of their work, such as enabling the reader to recognise the emotions felt by characters through description, rather than simple statements. One pupil suggested, for example, writing about 'the pallor of their faces' and 'clutching their stomachs', to imply fear. Pupils of all levels of attainment were motivated very well by the discussion. This was seen in the way that they settled very quickly to their work, successfully applying many of the teaching points that the teacher had made and thus producing a good amount of high quality writing, within the short amount of time allowed for it.
92. Teachers make good use of opportunities for pupils to use their word-processing skills for redrafting and presenting their work. They are also beginning to make good use of information and communication technology to promote pupils' reading skills through, for example, the use of animated books, which motivate younger pupils very well.
93. Teachers make good use of other opportunities to enrich the curriculum and to stimulate and interest pupils, such as Book Days and visits from theatre groups, and weekly paired reading between younger and older pupils. Teachers often encourage pupils to reflect upon their experiences and those of others prior to discussion or written work and teach pupils strategies to help them work independently. Such activities make a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

MATHEMATICS

94. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average and boys and girls of all levels of attainment achieve well in comparison to their prior attainment. Standards in Year 6 have improved since the last inspection and especially over the last three years. Standards at the end of Year 2 are below average. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory here because higher and average attaining pupils are not given work that challenges them sufficiently and too few pupils are reaching above 2b of the National Curriculum levels. Although standards at the end of Year 2 improved after the last inspection, they fell back last year.
95. In Year 2, the majority of pupils, including higher attaining pupils, understand the importance of place value and identify the value of digits in two-digit numbers correctly. They solve simple problems involving addition and subtraction. Their calculations are generally accurate because they

have satisfactory recall of number facts involving addition and subtraction. They estimate the length of objects and check their findings using centimetre measures. Pupils classify two-dimensional shapes correctly by the number of edges and corners and know their mathematical names. When collecting information such as the favourite activities for wet playtimes, they record their findings appropriately. However, in both Years 1 and 2, pupils who are confident and accurate in their work are not usually given more demanding tasks. Much of their work concentrates on number and pupils have less opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of shape and space, measures and data handling or to apply what they know in investigations and problem solving. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress in lessons because they are supported effectively by teaching assistants and the work that teachers set them is appropriately challenging. As a consequence their achievement in number work in particular is good.

96. In Year 6, average and higher attaining pupils have good understanding of place value, fractions, percentages and decimals and the relationship between them. They have good recall of number facts involving the four rules of number and see patterns and relationships quickly and easily. They use their number knowledge well to select appropriate strategies in order to solve problems. They enjoy wrestling with algebraic problems such as finding the value of D in $D \times D \times D = 8$. Through their work on temperature, they have good understanding of negative numbers. Pupils handle data well and use information and communication technology effectively to present their findings in a variety of charts and graphs. Pupils' understanding of shape and space is also good. They calculate the area and perimeter of regular and irregular shapes and draw nets of regular three-dimensional shapes accurately by using protractors and rulers. Pupils have good understanding of geometry and are able to calculate the angles of shapes from the information that they are given. Lower attaining pupils have satisfactory understanding of the four rules of number. They accurately calculate the area and perimeter of regular two-dimensional shapes. They estimate the length and weight of objects with reasonable accuracy before measuring and record their readings using decimal notation.
97. In Years 3 to 6, pupils with special educational needs continue to do well because teachers and teaching assistants work well together to plan appropriate work for them. The achievement of pupils with behavioural difficulties who find it hard to concentrate is often very good. This is due to the very effective support they receive from the teaching assistants, who make the work interesting and accessible for them, and the consistent approach of teachers and teaching assistants in helping the pupils to learn to manage their difficulties.
98. The quality of teaching is good overall. In the lessons seen in Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. Teachers provided a clear structure to lessons and an appropriate variety of activities to maintain pupils' interest. Occasionally, their introductions were too long and as a consequence some pupils found difficulty in concentrating. Teachers used questioning well to extend pupils' thinking and understanding. For instance, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher asked pupils how many ways they could find of making 45 pence using silver coins. This activity prompted a lively discussion. However, teachers did not target higher attaining pupils in their questioning and the learning activities provided for them did not challenge them sufficiently. Although the teaching during the inspection was satisfactory, the scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that the work set for many average and higher attaining pupils is undemanding and teachers' expectations of what they can do are not high enough. The same task is often given to all pupils. While teachers' assessments identify, for instance, whether a pupil is working at level 2a, 2b or 2c, the targets that they set are not so precise. As a result, activities are not appropriately matched to pupils' next steps in learning.
99. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. In well-taught lessons, teachers consistently provide activities that are matched appropriately to pupils' next steps in learning. This stimulates pupils so that they are eager to answer questions and explain their work. They participate enthusiastically in the mental and oral work at the start of lessons. A brisk pace is kept up and this helps pupils to work well, maintain good levels of concentration and generally to complete the task that they have been set. Teachers encourage pupils to select for themselves the strategies they use to solve problems and also to consider alternative methods that might be more appropriate. They expect pupils to explain their thinking using appropriate mathematical terms. As a consequence, pupils

tackle new work enthusiastically and confidently. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils were encouraged to select their own strategies for multiplying different pairs of numbers. This resulted in them comparing and considering several strategies and realising that there no one method was best. In the same lesson, a team game designed to improve number knowledge and recall prompted a discussion about the quickest way to check the answers of the winners and also how to make the game fairer, promoting good learning in a context that pupils were thoroughly enjoying. Teachers are careful to use opportunities to extend pupils' learning. For example, after pupils had calculated the area of a rectangle, the Year 6 teacher challenged them to find the area of a triangle. Through skilful questioning, she helped pupils to see the relationship between rectangles and triangles and discover the formula for calculating the area of a triangle.

100. The curriculum concentrates on the development of numeracy skills and understanding. In Years 1 and 2, insufficient emphasis is placed on other areas of mathematics and on using and applying knowledge and skills through investigations and problem solving. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 do not yet have enough opportunities to carry out extended investigations or to plan and undertake their own investigations. Teachers make satisfactory use of information and communication technology to improve pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge through the use of spreadsheets to record and present data. Programs are also used that enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of number and shape and space. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to extend their understanding and use of mathematics in other areas of the curriculum, particularly in the use of data handling in geography and history. The school is aware of the shortcomings in the subject, especially in Years 1 and 2 and has already identified it as a priority for action over the next year in the school development plan.

SCIENCE

101. Standards at the end of Year 2 are below average. This reflects a decline in standards since the previous inspection. Work seen during the inspection from pupils currently in Year 2 indicates that there is a low percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3, which reflects the results of teacher assessments in 2002. Standards at the end of Year 6 are average, as they were at the time of the previous inspection but have fluctuated since then, with a rise over the last two years. An analysis of the previous national test results for Year 6 highlighted strengths and weaknesses in learning and this information has been well used to adjust the focus of lessons in Year 6 to address the weaknesses. However, there is no clear view of attainment throughout the school, as the assessment procedures are not rigorous enough to enable teachers to track pupils' progress from their start in Year 1. The lack of good informative assessment procedures, which are built into each topic, means that teachers have no clear idea of what pupils know and understand. The strategies used to assess knowledge and understanding at the beginning and end of topics do not give a precise picture of where pupils are in relation to the National Curriculum levels. The results of assessment are not sufficiently used to plan for pupils' differing needs or to inform the planning of the curriculum. A proposed tracking system has not yet been fully implemented. This hinders further improvements in standards and insufficient use is made of target setting in the subject.

102. The achievements of most pupils by the end of Year 2 are unsatisfactory. There is a lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils and because assessment is not well established, tasks are not consistently well matched to pupils' level of attainment. The achievements of pupils in Years 3 to 6 are good. This is particularly so in the older age groups where teachers' expectations are high. The achievements of pupils with special educational needs vary with the quality of teaching. They are fully included in all lessons, but do not always receive the different tasks matched to their needs. Where there is clear support from the teacher, they make good progress and make a positive contribution to the lessons.

103. In discussions with pupils in Year 2, they show that they have a solid base of factual knowledge, for example, of the conditions needed for growth. They have undertaken investigations, and carefully explain what they discovered, such as the different ways they used to prevent an ice cube from melting. Many pupils showed sound observational skills and identified the properties of objects in a lesson on materials. For example, they recognised whether objects would bend, twist, stretch or squash. However, in the same lesson, the lower attaining pupils found this difficult as they did not

fully understand the differences between pushing and pulling. The standard of pupils' recorded work is unsatisfactory, as it does not show clearly how well pupils are challenged to achieve. There is insufficient balance between active learning and recording and pupils are not challenged sufficiently to reflect on their findings. Similarly in Year 1, pupils demonstrated the knowledge they had gained from work on using their senses, but the worksheet used to record their understanding had too many difficult words for some pupils, and was not challenging enough for others.

104. There is a good blend of practical activities and factual knowledge that enables pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in many lessons, so that by the time they reach Year 6, pupils show a comprehensive base of knowledge and understanding. Achievement is better in Years 4, 5 and 6 because the quality of teaching is better with high expectations for all groups of pupils. Pupils develop their skills of scientific enquiry systematically and extend their knowledge and understanding through first-hand experiences. Pupils understand the need to control an investigation and the elements required to make it fair and justified. They consider and reflect on what they discover and make reasoned conclusions based on this. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5 lesson where pupils carefully considered the elements of germination and decided on their own investigation, setting up the necessary variables with thought and precision. Very good links are made between science and health education, with pupils in Year 6 understanding fully the need for a healthy lifestyle and the effect of this on the human body. Pupils present their evidence in a variety of ways, including tables, diagrams and charts.
105. The judgements on teaching match the judgements of the previous inspection. It was satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 in the lessons observed, although the standard and sparseness of pupils' work over time suggest elements of unsatisfactory teaching. In Years 3 to 6, it is consistently good with two very good lessons seen. Teaching overall is therefore judged to be good. In Years 1 and 2, teachers introduced lessons well, and used lively strategies to interest and motivate the pupils with new learning. Their subject knowledge was at least satisfactory. However, the same activities are planned for all pupils, with little difference to match the levels of attainment in a class. Consequently, there are some missed opportunities for the higher attaining pupils especially to extend their learning, and this means that some pupils become restless and lose the focus on their tasks. In the very good lessons of Years 5 and 6, the learning intentions were clear and teachers gave very good explanations to ensure that pupils understood new concepts. They had very good subject knowledge, which enabled them to use questioning well to check on pupils' understanding, to challenge their thinking, and to provide accurate answers to pupils' questions. Teachers encourage pupils to use precise scientific language to explain their observations and describe what is happening. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to work in groups. This encourages their skills of co-operation and team work. They are encouraged to reflect on what they learn. The result of these good strategies is interested and motivated pupils who apply themselves eagerly to their tasks, and the teaching in the subject for older pupils makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.
106. In Years 3 to 6, literacy skills are encouraged through good opportunities for pupils to write up experiments and explain their findings, and there is some good quality work. The use of information and communication technology varies, but overall is satisfactory. Numeracy is used satisfactorily, with a good example of its use in Year 4, where pupils calculated the differences in temperature when conducting an investigation into insulators.
107. The curriculum for science provides a good balance across the National Curriculum areas of study for science, with a good whole-school emphasis on ensuring that there is planned development in the investigative side of science each term. The co-ordinator has not yet worked with teachers sufficiently to develop skills of assessment and to evaluate the effectiveness with which plans are implemented in each year group, although he has developed useful portfolios of work to act as a benchmark for assessment. He has developed many well-considered and potentially useful plans for the improvement of the school grounds to benefit learning in science, but the action plan for the subject is not sufficiently directed towards raising standards in the school. Resources are unsatisfactory and need renewing and extending to provide better support for pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN

108. Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. This has been sustained since the previous inspection, despite the increased demands of other subjects for teaching time and the subject now being taught by class teachers rather than a specialist teacher.
109. Pupils in Year 1 develop good observational skills through the good opportunities provided for this and improve their awareness of line and shape, for example, when drawing their friends and themselves. They use a computer program imaginatively to draw pictures and patterns that show good understanding of colour and composition. In Year 2, pupils continue to develop good drawing skills and use pencil effectively to add shape and form to their pictures. Pupils also develop good understanding and appreciation of art from different times and cultures. For instance, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils were fascinated by the way the sculptor, Andy Goldsworthy, uses materials from nature such as plants and sticks and stones. They enthusiastically produced their own sculptures for their class art gallery and then viewed and discussed the work of their classmates in order to discover how they might improve their own compositions.
110. In Year 3, pupils make good progress in their understanding of shape and pattern through their drawings of plants and leaves from plants they collected in the school grounds. They made imaginative use of these drawings then in the planning of leaf sculptures. Year 4 pupils make very good progress in the use of colour and line, when producing large-scale paintings on fabric. They make good progress in learning how to develop a project by first making observational drawings of plants and insects and then building on these to create oil pastel drawings in the Surrealist style of Max Ernst. In Year 5, pupils continue to develop a good understanding and appreciation of the use of patterns, shade, line and tone by painting portraits in the style of artists from the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. Year 6 pupils make effective use of a variety of media that include print making, pencil drawing and watercolours. Their figure drawing shows good awareness of proportion and they use light and shade to good effect in showing the folds in clothing. Throughout the school, pupils use sketchbooks effectively to collect ideas for future use and to practise and experiment with different techniques and media.
111. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge that enables them to draw from a wide variety of art and artists in order to demonstrate techniques and styles. Their interest in the subject is infectious and consequently pupils respond enthusiastically, enjoy lessons and have very positive attitudes to the subject. They listen attentively and concentrate on tasks showing care and attention to detail. This is also helped by the way that teachers provide interesting starting points for new topics. For instance, in order to make the drawing of self-portraits more interesting, the teacher in Year 1 provided shiny spoons for pupils to use to view themselves. They were fascinated by the way the spoon distorted their appearance and the resulting pencil drawings captured the images well and showed good attention to detail. Teachers demonstrate techniques clearly. In a lesson in Year 4 the teacher used examples from her own art portfolio in order to show pupils how to fill their paper with their drawing and improve it through the use of pattern. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to experiment with new techniques and media. They encourage pupils to plan their work and discuss how they can improve it, so that, from an early age, pupils show confidence in evaluating each other's work. Teachers also encourage the use of appropriate vocabulary that enables pupils to understand and appreciate their own work and the work of a variety of artists. Pupils with special educational needs who find difficulty in concentrating are ably supported by teachers and teaching assistants and as a consequence concentrate well and pay attention to the fine detail of observational drawing.
112. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to work in a variety of media that includes drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, batik, and three-dimensional work such as clay and modelling from card, wood and papier-mache. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to illustrate artists' work and exemplify styles and techniques. Pupils also make good use of information and communication technology to search the Internet for information about artists and their work and pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a drawing program effectively to enhance their understanding and use of colour.

113. The co-ordinator has a very high level of expertise and provides good leadership in the subject. She has developed a broad and balanced curriculum that covers all aspects of the National Curriculum for art. She has provided useful training for staff and regularly provides support and advice on the teaching of the subject. She also runs an art club for pupils that enables her to develop their talents to a very high standard. The paintings and three-dimensional work produced by members of the art club is regularly exhibited and has won a number of awards.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

114. Due to the school's organisation of the curriculum timetable, it was not possible to see any lessons during the inspection. There was very limited evidence of pupils' previous work so that it is not possible to make a judgement on standards or pupils' achievement at the end of Years 2 and Years 6. Subject planning and discussions with the co-ordinator show that pupils follow a balanced programme of work.

115. Pupils begin to appreciate the elements of design and technology in Year 1 where they use levers and sliders to make moving pictures based on nursery rhymes. They successfully use this to make effective and lively pictures. Completed work in Year 2 on making a coat for "Gregory Bear" shows that pupils have appropriate expertise for combining and joining materials, and are able to make attractive choices to decorate their completed products. Work from pupils in Year 4 show that they understand the process of designing and evaluating what they have made, and the display of this work shows that they have enjoyed worthwhile experiences with some good quality products. There is appropriate challenge for Year 6, as they use bulbs and motors to make their fairground models. Although the finished product was not available to see, some pupils had used information and communication technology to record their experiences. Overall, the evidence of pupils being given the opportunity to carefully plan and evaluate what they do is very limited. There are no specific books where this is recorded so that pupils can see for themselves a progression in what they are learning.

116. It is not possible to make a judgement on teaching as no lessons were observed, and the limited range of pupils' work does not provide sufficient evidence. Also, there was no evidence of work by pupils with special educational needs for a judgement on their achievements. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 indicate an enjoyment of the subject and sound recall of previous projects.

117. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and has used her release time to develop good systems of assessment in the subject. The subject is taught in blocked time in order to provide continuity in the design process and to make the work more manageable, but the co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to evaluate the subject in terms of monitoring planning and teaching.

GEOGRAPHY

118. No lessons were taught in Year 2 during the inspection and consequently judgements for this group of pupils are based on a scrutiny of work and teachers' planning. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. In the last inspection report, standards were described as good at the end of Year 6. However, with the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, not as much time has been devoted to geography and the way in which the geography curriculum is arranged does not help pupils to build on previous learning. Consequently standards are not quite as high.

119. Year 1 pupils begin to develop mapping skills appropriately by drawing picture maps of an imaginary island and the street where they live. They compare features of the road outside the school with one in Exeter to see which is the busiest. In a lesson introducing this study to pupils, the teacher made good use of information and communication technology to enable pupils to observe a busy city road through webcam images, so that they could make comparisons more easily with the amount of traffic on the school road. Year 2 pupils develop a sound understanding of different localities by helping Humphrey the Bear in his travels to Africa. For example, they investigated methods of transport he could use, identified places of interest he could visit and decided upon appropriate clothing for him to take. Teachers also used this theme well to help pupils to develop their literacy

skills, for example, by writing postcards to and from Humphrey in different locations. However, the small amount of recorded work from the remainder of this year indicates that such opportunities are not always used. There was little evidence of pupils building on their mapping skills from Year 1 so far this year.

120. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge of the features of their own locality. First-hand enquiries carried out by pupils into the problems facing their local environment support this well. The annual residential visits for pupils in Year 5 and 6 are also used well to broaden pupils' geographical experience. Most pupils develop their mapping skills satisfactorily, although there is no systematic approach in planning across the school to clarify what should be taught in each year group to ensure this. In a well-taught Year 3 lesson, pupils were identifying the location of photographs of well-known features of Tiverton on maps of the area. The teacher also made good use of information and communication technology in this lesson by using mapping sites on the Internet to demonstrate to pupils the effect of changing scales. This clearly helped to develop their understanding of the need to match scale to the purpose of a map. The very close links made between the teaching of literacy and geography, which are very effective, especially in Years 5 and 6, promote pupils' learning in both subjects very well. For example, in Year 5, pupils were acquiring a good knowledge and understanding of mountain environments as a result of highly focused teaching of note-taking skills set in this context.
121. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen was good overall. In a well-taught lesson in Year 6, for example, as part of their work on improving the environment, pupils were preparing a questionnaire for use with members of the public the following week about traffic danger spots in Tiverton. The teacher used very skilful questioning to help pupils to improve the quality of their questionnaires by applying, for example, what they had learnt from surveys already carried out on their parents about the need for closed questions in order to produce useful statistics. All pupils worked with a very good sense of purpose because of the relevance of the project to themselves as pedestrians and cyclists. They also clearly felt that this was a way they could make a difference to their local community, by being well prepared to persuade a subsequent visitor from the planning department of the need for action. The cohesive way in which the teacher had planned this work not only improved pupils' skills of geographical enquiry and supported their learning in mathematics and literacy, but also contributed very well to their understanding of citizenship and their very positive attitudes to learning. In this way, and through the study of other localities, the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. In several lessons seen, where teaching assistants were working with pupils with special educational needs, their very effective support, together with that of the class teacher, enabled the pupils to participate fully in the lesson.
122. The main reason that pupils only achieve satisfactorily as they move through the school, in spite of good learning in many lessons, is the way that the curriculum is arranged. Although all the required elements are covered, there are often long gaps of up to two terms between topics within a year group, when no geography is taught. This makes it difficult for pupils to build effectively on previous learning or to develop their geographical skills systematically. A temporary co-ordinator is in place during the leave of the post holder and is aware of this shortcoming. She has also identified other appropriate priorities to raise standards and achievement further, through for example, monitoring of teaching and learning, extending the purposeful use of cross-curricular links across the school and following through planned development of the extensive school grounds for orienteering and other field work.

HISTORY

123. The previous report indicated that pupils' attainment was average at the end of Year 2, but above average by the end of Year 6. The attainment of pupils is now judged to be average in both Year 2 and Year 6. The achievements of pupils are satisfactory. Those with special educational needs achieve appropriately and received particularly good support in the lessons observed in Years 4 and 6, where they participated confidently in activities to develop sound historical skills. The change in standards is largely due to less curriculum time being spent on the subject since the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Although they are well taught, this means that pupils have less time to extend their skills and understanding.
124. Only one lesson was seen in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection, so judgements are also based on talking with pupils and teachers and a scrutiny of their work. Pupils have sound and at times good recall of their history topics and many are confident and articulate in talking about them. Pupils are currently examining the lives of famous people. They know that Florence Nightingale had difficulties in overcoming prejudices and show a good understanding of the story. For example, on watching a video of her life, they not only recounted the factual knowledge of what they had learned, but began to give opinions and reasons for what they had seen. When asked to prepare a set of questions to help them find out more about their topic, the result was relevant and succinct enquiry. Pupils are encouraged to consider and extend what they learn through interesting strategies, which has obvious benefits for the development of historical skills, but the opportunities for pupils to record their work in a structured and challenging manner are unsatisfactory.
125. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 study a range of historical topics so that their historical knowledge and understanding is satisfactory, with most pupils able to link different periods of history. Pupils in Year 6 know the main features of the eras they have studied, giving good reasons why they found some people of the past more interesting than others. Discussions showed that they have acquired a sound knowledge and through their topics they have developed some of the key skills for understanding how events and people can make great changes. For example, they understand the influence of such diverse people as Henry VII and Hitler. They empathise with people and situations, such as the Holocaust and Anne Frank and the plight of evacuees during the Second World War. Past work shows that literacy is consistently and effectively used to promote their historical skills. In Year 6, literacy is carefully interwoven with history with a beneficial impact on pupils' literacy skills. Consequently, their skills for research and enquiry, for example, are well developed. This was evident in a Year 4 lesson where pupils examined Greek artefacts to encourage them to ask and answer questions. The use of information and communication technology to support research is good.
126. The teaching of history is good overall. At the time of the previous inspection it was judged to be satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is lively and stimulating for younger pupils and good use is made of resources to help pupils' understanding. Teaching shows that its impact on pupils is successful in motivating their interest so that good learning can take place, but teachers have lower expectations for pupils when recording their work. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' previous good learning is reflected in the quality and standards in their books. This shows the pupils' good understanding and ability to use historical skills. Teachers use effective strategies to encourage pupils' learning. The establishment of a 'Roman Museum,' by pupils in Year 5, complete with life-like models and detailed information, reflects these strategies and high expectations from the teacher. Similarly in Year 6, challenging questions help pupils to gain an understanding of the differences between facts and opinion. Because of the many varied strategies used, pupils are interested, enjoy a challenge and persevere with their tasks. They work well in groups and in pairs, supporting each other when necessary. As a result, the subject's contribution to pupils' personal development is very good.
127. The co-ordinator is new to the post and is enthusiastically committed to the subject's future development. She has introduced a new policy for the subject and looked at teachers' planning. Procedures for assessment and a portfolio of work are currently being developed. She is aware of the need to continue to raise multi-cultural awareness in the school and has plans to integrate new

aspects into the history curriculum. The subject is well supported by many visits to places of historical interest and by visitors to the school. Resources are good and used well to support pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

128. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are above average and boys and girls, including those with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have risen for a number of reasons. The co-ordinator has been able to concentrate fully on the task of improving all aspects of the subjects as he has been released from class responsibility for the last two years. He planned a comprehensive programme of work that meets all requirements of the National Curriculum and ensured that there were sufficient good resources to equip the computer suite to implement the schemes of work effectively. At the same time he worked with teachers and teaching assistants, providing training and working alongside them, in order to develop their skills and knowledge in information and communication technology. The consistency in the teaching of the subject and the good standards that are reached throughout the school indicate that this strategy has been effective. The next development is to improve further the use of information and communication technology in supporting pupils' learning in other subjects. Staff are in a good position, as a result of their training, to undertake this work without intensive support.
129. In Year 1, pupils produce pictures and patterns using an art program effectively. They load the program, follow menus and select different tools confidently. They also use a simulation program to make decisions and test them out. Pupils in Year 2 competently open and close programs and save their work. They can program a robot to move according to their instructions and make it follow complex routes. Pupils use an art program effectively. They show great dexterity in handling the mouse in order to draw pictures of people and then use the fill command competently in order to add colour to their drawing. The quality of the art produced in this way is good. Pupils also use word processing effectively in order to present stories and poems that they have written.
130. In Year 3 pupils continue to build on their good achievements. Pupils use word processing well and enhance their writing by importing illustrations. They edit their work, use a spellchecker to correct spellings and re-position text in order to improve the layout of their work. These activities make a good contribution to their achievement in English. Year 4 pupils build on the skills they acquired in Year 3 by producing booklets on life in India. They research the topic on the Internet in order to find information and photographs to illustrate their work. They also produce their own art-work using a paint program and use a spreadsheet to create graphs of average rainfall throughout the year. Pupils in Year 5 competently use design and paint programs simultaneously to present their work. They also achieve good results by using a control program to make traffic lights flash in sequence. In Year 6 pupils use word processing and desk-top publishing in order to produce work of a good standard. They research history projects such as the story of Anne Frank and the loss of the ship Mary Celeste thoroughly and responsibly. The written work that results from these enquiries is well presented and includes good illustrations. Pupils use spreadsheets to collect data, perform calculations and draw graphs to show results. For instance, the data they collected on body mass enhanced their work in science and health education and also provided insight into the practical application of mathematics.
131. Throughout the school pupils with special education needs achieve well. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that pupils have the same opportunities to use information and communication technology as their classmates. They provide the right balance of advice and support for pupils to develop self-confidence in using the programs independently. As a result, the subject makes a good contribution to their learning and encourages interest in other areas of the curriculum.
132. The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school. Teachers now have sufficient knowledge to enable them to tackle new skills confidently. Lessons are planned effectively to build on previous learning and to give pupils plenty of opportunity to practise and consolidate skills. Teachers provide interesting activities that are related to other subjects in order to teach new skills.

As a consequence, pupils' learning is good because it has a practical purpose and they remember the context in which they learnt the skills. It also motivates pupils well and contributes to the positive attitudes they have towards the subject. Lessons are taught in the computer suite; this enables pupils to work at a computer for a sustained time.

133. Teachers regularly give pupils opportunities for independent work with new techniques. They enjoy the challenges that the new work provides and respond enthusiastically. They use the technology confidently and are not frightened of making mistakes. For instance, in a Year 6 lesson, some pupils who had completed the initial task were able to explore the capabilities of a spreadsheet by creating new formulae and recording data in different ways. A good example of independent learning was seen in a Year 1 lesson where pupils had the opportunity to explore how to use a music program to create their own compositions. Pupils enjoy talking about their work and have good understanding of the programs that they use. They work well together and this enables them to undertake routine tasks quickly. For instance, in a Year 6 lesson pupils helped one another load data into a spreadsheet promptly so that they had plenty of time for the main activity of the lesson. In such ways the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

MUSIC

134. It was not possible to make overall judgements about standards, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning as only one lesson and some instrumental tuition were observed. Judgements made are based on these and on discussions with teachers and pupils and the scrutiny of planning and the scheme of work.

135. Standards of singing are above average throughout the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing well even when unaccompanied. They maintain pitch and tempo as they sing together with the teacher in hymn practice and in acts of collective worship. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to build on this good start. They phrase their singing phrasing well and they create the mood suggested by the words by varying the dynamics appropriately. They maintain pitch well when singing to guitar accompaniment. The quality of singing in Years 1 and 2 has improved since the previous inspection and has been maintained in Years 3 to 6. The repertoire of songs has increased as the result of the introduction of the new scheme of work. Pupils have positive attitudes towards music. They are well behaved during musical activities and join in enthusiastically.

136. In the one lesson observed in Year 2, the quality of teaching was good. The teacher provided opportunities for pupils to compose, perform, review and improve their work. As a consequence, pupils made good progress during the lesson as they learnt to keep time by clapping to beats that increased in complexity. Pupils also used untuned percussion instruments to compose patterns of their own. The lesson was well planned and had a good structure so that the teacher maximised the time and learning took place at a good pace.

137. In Year 2 recorder tuition is provided by a visiting teacher. The quality of teaching was good and pupils made good progress in reading music, fingering, producing notes and playing simple tunes. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have the opportunity of learning keyboard, string, brass and woodwind instruments. There is a charge for instrumental tuition but there is good uptake of lessons. The orchestra is directed by the string teacher and provides a good opportunity for pupils who are learning an instrument to play together. Pupils make good progress in playing together. Pupils with special educational needs who are learning an instrument have increased in self-confidence and their attitudes towards school and learning have also improved as a consequence.

138. The curriculum is based on a published scheme and contains all the elements of the National Curriculum. Music is generally taught weekly but in one class the term's work is blocked and takes place over two days each term. This practice is ineffective as pupils do not remember what they have learnt. Music contributes well to pupils' cultural development, as they are given the opportunity to listen to music and sing songs from a variety of traditions, including non-Western cultures. Information and communication technology is not used extensively yet to enhance the study of music but some pupils in Year 1 and 2 have the opportunity to compose music using a simple program.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

139. Although it was only possible to see outdoor games, and one swimming lesson, it is clear from the planned curriculum that pupils follow a balanced programme that incorporates the required elements of gymnastics, dance and games. The standards that pupils attain at the end of Year 2 are average and this reflects the findings of the previous report. The previous report found that standards at the end of Year 6 were average with a significant minority attaining skills above the national average. Currently at the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are above average. The high expectations and subject expertise of the teachers contribute greatly to these high standards. The achievement of pupils is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, with some good achievement by higher attaining pupils demonstrated in Year 2. Achievement for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is good due to the consistent building of skills. The achievements of pupils with special educational needs are frequently good, as teachers are very aware of when they need further support or explanations.
140. At the end of Year 2 pupils have a clear understanding of the reasons for undertaking a warm-up before engaging in physical activity. They show an awareness of space and good body control over a range of movements such as jumping, hopping and skipping, with good overall co-ordination. The higher attaining pupils particularly rise to the challenge and carefully consider variations in the way they move, and those who find it difficult are helped to improve through good guidance from the teacher. Pupils demonstrate that they are developing sound skills for games and athletics.
141. At the end of Year 6, pupils' skills for games are at a high level. When learning the skills required for using a ball and racquet, they show considerable control and precision in their performance. Their skills for net games are good, and for some pupils they are very good. There are very good levels of collaboration and pupils show that they can work together well in groups and pairs. They understand the importance of self and group evaluation in order to improve their performance. Their awareness of the need for regular exercise to remain healthy and the contribution of a healthy lifestyle to maintain a level of physical fitness are good. Pupils' achievements in swimming are judged to be broadly average. Pupils in Year 4 were observed during a swimming lesson and although a minority were achieving the requirement to swim 25 metres, the majority were making good progress so that their confidence and skills improved considerably during the lesson. They understand well the basic principles of water safety.
142. The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is never less than satisfactory, and for pupils in Years 3 to 6 it is consistently good with one very good lesson observed. The good teaching for younger pupils ensures the acquisition of skills in a purposeful atmosphere, so that pupils are keen to achieve and give of their best. Where teaching was satisfactory, there was less opportunity for pupils and teacher to evaluate performance. When teachers give pupils the opportunity to evaluate each other's work they do so with friendly and realistic criticism. The best teaching combines very good class management and organisation with high expectations and challenging learning activities for pupils of all abilities. This motivates pupils to co-operate in groups and employ strenuous effort to achieve the intentions of the lesson. The good organisation and subject knowledge in Year 4 led to good progress in pupils' swimming skills. Effective use was made of a qualified swimming instructor to challenge and refine the skills of the more competent pupils. Overall, teachers manage their classes well, and as a result, pupils listen well and follow teachers' instructions.
143. The school has maintained a similar provision for physical education as that reported at the last inspection, with outdoor activities now built in to the curriculum. Most pupils dress appropriately for physical education activities, but a minority in most classes do not use the necessary clothing or footwear. Although teachers are well aware of the wider safety issues, in some instances pupils were observed undertaking their activities wearing jewellery. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development as pupils learn to co-operate and to work together as a team. Their participation in various sporting activities and a good range of extra-curricular activities and residential visits contributes much to their social development and they begin to appreciate dance from cultures other than their own. Health education is deliberately linked with physical education and this is making a valuable contribution to pupils' welfare.

144. The co-ordinator has considerable subject expertise and leads the subject well by example and by supporting staff when needed. The high expectations for the teaching of the subject and for pupils' performance are well reflected in the very good policy statement. Pupils make their own assessment of what they feel they have done well, and this is recorded in their achievement files. Teachers make ongoing assessments, but there are no formalised systems. This has been identified for development on the co-ordinator's action plan. Resources are good and effectively used to support the teaching and learning of skills across the subject.