

INSPECTION REPORT

HEATHERLANDS FIRST SCHOOL

Poole

LEA area: Poole

Unique reference number: 113698

Headteacher: Mrs V C Lawson

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Ikin
3349

Date of inspection: 19 - 22 May 2003

Inspection number: 247389

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 -8
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Library Road Parkstone Poole
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Helen Moore
Date of previous inspection:	19/01/98

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3349	Jacqueline Ikin	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music Foundation Stage Equal opportunities	The school's results and achievements? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
1333	Elizabeth Forster	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2414	David Westall	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Science Design and technology Art and design	How good are curricular and other opportunities for pupils?
3856	Sandy Welsted	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language English History	
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	22
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	23
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	26
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	27
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	32

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Heatherlands First School is bigger than other primary schools, having 343 pupils, 184 boys and 159 girls aged from four to eight on roll. The majority of pupils are from the local community of Bourne Valley, where the school is held in high regard. Pupils are mainly of white United Kingdom heritage, although mixed race Asian, black African and Caribbean, Bangladeshi, and Chinese heritages and the traveller community are also represented in the school. There are eight pupils who speak English as an additional language and two of these pupils are at an early stage of language acquisition. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. Most children have attended some form of pre-school provision. A minority of children are reaching the standards expected when they start in the reception class, but many have poorly developed language, mathematical and personal and social skills. The percentage of pupils with special educational need and with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is about average. These needs include emotional and behavioural difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties and speech and communication difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with some very good features where everyone is respected and individuals are valued. It is well led and managed by the headteacher, governors and senior staff, and benefits from a talented and hard working staff team who are dedicated to providing the best education they can for the pupils. Pupils make good progress in their learning as a result of good teaching. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is very good in the reception classes and good in Years 1 to 3. This ensures that pupils get a very good start to their schooling and make good progress as they move through the school.
- Good teaching results in above average standards in art and design throughout the school and in mathematics and science in Year 3.
- The curriculum is rich and thoroughly planned and, as a result, pupils are interested in their learning.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and she is supported well by the deputy head teacher and senior staff. As a result, the staff and governors are highly committed to moving the school forward and improving its provision for the benefit of the pupils.
- The school provides very good standards of pastoral care for its pupils and makes very good provision for their personal, moral and social development. Consequently, most pupils develop positive attitudes, enjoy coming to school and behave very well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The teaching assistants provide very good support, help is directed towards the pupils' specific needs and consequently they make good progress.
- Regular assessments, which includes feedback to parents, result in work being matched to pupils' developing needs and so helps them make progress.

What could be improved

- Weaknesses in pupils' speaking and writing skills prevent them from expressing their ideas clearly both in their speech and in their written work.
- Attendance rates are below average because many parents take their children on holiday in term time. As a result, some pupils miss important work.
- The provision that the school makes for pupils' cultural development does not fully prepare them for a culturally diverse society.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school's improvement since the last inspection has been good. It was last inspected in 1998 and since then it has made good progress in addressing all the issues that were identified. Standards have improved in mathematics, information and communication technology and geography. In addition, standards in art and design are higher than they were. Overall standards have improved in English; however, pupils' speaking and writing skills are not yet as high as they should be. The results of national tests confirm an improving trend, which is greater in reading and mathematics than it is in writing. The school has succeeded in meeting or exceeding all its targets, has set itself challenging targets for further improvements and is on course to meet them. Attendance rates are similar to those found at the last inspection and remain an area of weakness.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	Year-2000	Year-2001	Year-2002	Year-2002
Reading	C	A	B	B
Writing	C	A	C	C
Mathematics	A	A*	B	A

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The table shows that the school's results in the 2002 Year 2 National Curriculum tests were above the national average for reading and mathematics, and in line with the national average for writing; when compared to similar schools the results were well above the average for mathematics, above average for reading and average for writing.

The findings of the inspection are that, overall, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, the higher attainers and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress as they move up the school. Pupils in the current Year 2 make good progress to achieve standards that are average in reading but a little below average in writing. In mathematics and science standards are average. Pupils continue to achieve well in Year 3 where standards are above average in science, and mathematics and

average for English. In Years 1 to 3 the standards are above average in art and design and average in all other subjects. Standards of speaking are not as high as they should be.

Pupils in the reception classes make very good progress in all the areas of learning. Although most reach the expected levels and some children exceed them, about one third do not. However, this still represents very good achievement in relation to their very low starting points when they entered the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are interested in their lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are expected to consider the impact of their behaviour on others and this results in an orderly school community in which effective teaching and learning take place.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils grow in confidence as a result of the very good relationships that are evident throughout the school.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Although the school is doing a great deal to improve attendance, rates remain below average because many parents take their children on holiday in term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Year 3
Quality of teaching	Very 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.

Teaching in the reception classes is very good overall and often it is excellent. Teachers have very high expectations of the children and a very good understanding of the curriculum and of children's developing needs. In Years 1 to 3, teaching is good overall. In some lessons it is very good or excellent. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and this is a significant factor in the good progress that pupils now make in these subjects. However, more needs to be done to improve the skills of all pupils in speaking and writing. Work is matched well to pupils' different abilities in lessons and so most pupils, including those with special educational needs, work at the level they need in order to make progress.

Teaching assistants give very good support, particularly to those pupils who have special educational needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum in the reception classes is very good overall and provides the wide range of worthwhile activities that young children need. In Years 1 to 3 the curriculum is good and includes a clear programme of work and good planning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are very well supported in their learning, and as a result they build steadily on their prior attainment.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school makes full use of the resources provided by the local authority.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal, social and moral development is very good. Provision for spiritual development is good and for cultural development it is satisfactory. The school is aware that it needs to do more to extend pupils' awareness of cultural diversity.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The care and welfare of pupils underpin all aspects of this school. The pastoral support that is provided is very good and the provision of a pastoral support worker is a particular strength.

The school works well with parents, who have very positive views of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well managed by the headteacher. The deputy headteacher and senior staff give good support and work as an effective team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are highly committed to the school and give it very good support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has an effective range of systems to check teaching, learning and standards and uses the information well to inform its future planning.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes good use of all the resources available to it to support the education and care of the pupils. It applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Parents believe that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• teaching is good and children make good progress;• the school expects children to work hard and do their best;• the children behave well;• the school is well led and managed;• the staff are easy to talk to.	<p>Some parents would like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• more extra-curricular opportunities.

Inspection findings fully support parents' positive views. The school has a good range of extra-curricular clubs but some of these are for the older children only.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There is a wide spread of attainment on entry to the school. Overall it is low; nearly two thirds of the children have limited language and communication skills, low levels of confidence and little experience of the wider world. They achieve well in relation to their starting points and, by the end of the reception year, the majority acquire the broad framework of skills and knowledge that they need to support their later learning. However, overall standards remain below average by the end of the reception year because one third of the children do not reach the standards expected for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development.
2. Pupils' results in the 2002 Year 2 National Curriculum tests were above the national average for reading and mathematics, and in line with the national average for writing. When compared to similar schools the results were well above the average for mathematics, above average for reading and average for writing. Inspection findings point to lower attainment overall in the current Year 2 classes than in the previous year because there are more lower attaining pupils in the year group and few higher attainers. For this reason, it is likely that the 2003 results will not be as favourable as those for 2002. However, inspection findings also show that all pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs, make good progress from their starting points at the beginning of Year 1. This good progress is maintained in Year 3.
3. The school places a particular emphasis on the teaching of the basic skills of literacy, tracks pupils' progress carefully, and makes good use of the information to inform future programmes of work for pupils. As a result, lower attaining pupils receive the additional support that they need and there has been an overall improvement in standards since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well in reading to attain broadly average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 3. Their skills of speaking and listening are average overall. Pupils throughout the school listen well and are able to sustain concentration, remember specific points that interest them and make relevant comments about what they hear. However, there are important weaknesses in their speaking skills. Although they are introduced to the vocabulary they need to support their work in specific subjects, their general vocabulary is limited. In addition, many pupils lack confidence when speaking in front of others, find it difficult to choose words with precision, organise what they say and take into account the needs of the listener. These weaknesses are transferred to their writing where standards are below average because pupils lack the vocabulary and grammatical knowledge that they need to use words with precision, vary their writing to suit different purposes, and to make it interesting to the reader.
4. Pupils make good progress in mathematics, and achieve well in reaching standards that are broadly average in Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 3. Standards, as indicated by the results of national tests, have improved since the last inspection, with more pupils achieving the higher levels in 2001 and 2002 test results. There is an emphasis on the teaching of basic numeracy skills from an early stage and this, combined with well-focussed teaching informed by assessment and aimed at the needs of different ability groups, has been a significant factor in the improvements that have been made. Pupils apply their mathematical skills satisfactorily to written problems involving their knowledge of number and they

satisfactorily record their working and check their answers. However, their skills in explaining their methods and reasoning and looking for different ways to overcome difficulties are less well developed. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of shape, space and measure and they satisfactorily collect, represent and interpret data using tables and simple graphs on the computer.

5. Pupils make good progress in science to reach standards that are average by the end of Year 2 and above average in Year 3. This good progress is a result of good teaching which is better than it was at the time of the last inspection. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of life processes; for example, they learn that all animals, including humans, grow and change as they become older. They develop a sound understanding for their ages of physical processes such as electricity and the forces of pushing and pulling, and make good progress in their knowledge of materials and their properties. In Year 2, for example, when sorting materials into groups according to their observable properties, and, in Year 3, when describing how some materials are changed by heating or cooling.
6. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average by the end of Years 2 and 3. This represents satisfactory progress in relation to pupils' starting points on entry to Year 1 and is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average. Standards have improved because teachers have greater confidence in teaching the subject and resources have been greatly improved with the provision of a computer suite. As pupils progress through the school, they demonstrate an increasing confidence with the functions of the computer, save and print their own work and apply their knowledge to help their learning in other subjects of the curriculum.
7. Standards in geography have also improved since the last inspection. Pupils now make satisfactory progress and attain the expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 3. These improvements are a result of a greater emphasis on fieldwork skills and geographical enquiry. Teaching is more focussed, particularly in Year 3, and there is better planning and curriculum guidance for the subject. Standards in design and technology are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 3 and pupils now make satisfactory progress throughout the school. There is now a sound scheme of work and good planning in place and this has benefited pupils because teachers are now able to build on pupils' previous experience and match work more effectively to their developing abilities.
8. Standards in art and design have improved since the last inspection and are now above average by the end of Years 2 and 3. Pupils now make good progress throughout the school in history as a result of better teaching in Year 3, and they reach the standards that are expected for pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 3. Standards in music and physical education are average overall and pupils make good progress in lessons. They make good progress in religious education and achieve standards that are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set out in their individual education plans. They benefit from particularly good support in both literacy and numeracy. They are very well supported in their learning, and they build steadily on their prior attainment, both in mainstream lessons and when, in some cases, they are withdrawn from class, for example, for short but intensive sessions of speech therapy. Pupils learning English as an additional language to their own mother tongue also make good progress in lessons over time. Some of these

pupils quickly make up lost ground and are amongst the highest attaining pupils in their year groups; and all achieve well in relation to their starting points and individual capabilities. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils of all ages and abilities are happy at school and have positive attitudes to learning. Indeed, when some were asked what they would like changed about the school, they suggested shorter holidays. With few exceptions, they are enthusiastic about working hard and settle down quickly in lessons to undertake the tasks set. They try their best and are eager to meet the teachers' expectations in the quantity of work accomplished. They concentrate well, listen carefully and respond quickly to instructions. They can work independently in groups and can be trusted to remain on task when they do not have adult support. Homework is nearly always completed, although a significant minority of pupils do not read at home and lack a real enthusiasm for books. In most lessons, pupils are happy to answer questions and share their views when asked. In the best lessons, pupils participate wholeheartedly and show a relish for learning. Pupils are keen to take up opportunities to join the variety of extra-curricular clubs on offer and enjoy representing the school when performing.
11. Standards of behaviour are very high and make for a happy, orderly and caring community where high self-esteem is the norm. Because each child receives such good pastoral care, they develop a confidence about school life that helps them establish good relationships with their peers. Bullying or unkind behaviour are rare and there have been no exclusions. Pupils are friendly and respectful when talking to each other and are polite and courteous with adults. They listen carefully to each other when classes have discussion times and are sensitive and supportive to those who are open about their feelings. They are lively at playtimes but are particularly good at taking turns and helping each other when using the adventure trail apparatus. During the Victorian day, pupils were excellent at role playing 'children that should be seen and not heard' and entered into the spirit of the day when undertaking unfamiliar lessons such as drill.
12. Relationships are very good throughout the school. They quickly learn to share resources with each other and are supportive of each other's learning when, for example, they are paired for ICT. They are happy to discuss issues with their neighbour when required to do so in lessons, and group work is harmonious, with no one being left out or dominating. Pupils are keen to undertake classroom jobs and carry out the tasks reliably and with pride. Boys and girls mix well together. Pupils readily accept others, regardless of ability, at work and at play. Incidents of racist name-calling are very rare.
13. The recently created School Council, with representation from each class, has discussed a variety of ideas suggested by their classmates to improve the school, some of which have already been adopted. They are mature about how to spend their budget and younger pupils are not overawed by their elders when views are asked for. This is further helping pupils to realise that they can be proactive about improving their school and is helping to encourage personal initiative, an area where there is room for even further development.
14. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all aspects of school life and are respected and valued members of the school community. They relate very well to their classmates and to all the adults who work with them, and they join in

activities with enthusiasm, sometimes in spite of experiencing considerable difficulties. They give of their best, take pride in their achievements, and are warmly supported and encouraged by their peers. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector spoke convincingly about the impact of special needs pupils on the school community as a whole, saying that they believe that pupils learn tolerance and kindness as a result of their interactions with one another. Pupils for whom English is an additional language work hard to assimilate their 'new' language. They listen very carefully when adults explain new ideas or introduce new vocabulary, and are mostly quick to grasp the cues or explanations teachers give to help them.

15. Levels of attendance are below the national average for primary schools and are unsatisfactory. This is partly due to the greater incidence of unavoidable infectious diseases that occur in first schools, but is also because a significant minority of parents are taking children on holiday in term time. Registers are correctly completed and totalled and good use is made of registration time to prepare and settle pupils for the start of lessons. Nearly all pupils are punctual and sessions start promptly

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is very good for children in the reception classes, where some excellent teaching is also evident. In Years 1 to 3 the quality of teaching is good. It has improved since the last inspection as a result of better planning, good use of assessment to match work to the different needs of pupils, higher expectations and a better subject focus and pace in lessons. The teaching of English, mathematics, science, history, music, religious education, physical education, art and design and personal and social education is good. This is a significant factor in the good progress that pupils now make in these subjects. The teaching of ICT, design and technology, and geography is satisfactory.
17. There is very good joint planning and teamwork in the reception classes. Teachers have a very good understanding of the curriculum and of how young children learn best and, as a result, children get the best possible start to their schooling. They have high expectations of the children and plan very effective teacher directed opportunities for the development of children's basic skills of literacy and numeracy. They also plan a range of effective practical and enjoyable experiences, which increase children's knowledge of the world about them and promote their personal and social, physical and creative skills. In addition, a broad range of extremely worthwhile and well-planned opportunities for children to learn through play and take part in activities that they have chosen themselves, is provided in the 'Lets Explore' sessions. This extends their learning and develops their confidence effectively because the children are required to work independently, make decisions for themselves and apply their knowledge and skills to new situations. All teachers interact extremely well with the children, participating in play, extending children's imaginative ideas and promoting learning. The well-trained teaching assistants in the reception classes give invaluable support to the children who need it, including those with special educational needs, and this enables them to take a full part in lessons and to make very good progress. A good example of this is that of a physically disabled child who took her first unaided steps whilst at school.
18. Teachers in Years 1 to 3 show a good level of subject knowledge in the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, and in science, art and design, music, physical education and history. They are supported well in this by good curriculum guidance and helpful subject co-ordinators who monitor planning and offer practical

and constructive advice when it is needed. Year group planning draws on this information and enables teachers to share their skills and expertise to plan well-structured, interesting and purposeful lessons, and prepare appropriate resources. Good links are made between subjects to add purpose and relevance to the content of lessons, particularly in literacy and numeracy. A good example of this was seen in a Year 3 English lesson when the teacher had linked work on information books to the work being done in history. The pupils compiled their own information book about 'Romans in Britain'. They identified the key words from their own writing about aspects of Roman life and then collectively arranged them in alphabetical order to form an index. They developed their understanding of specific historical terminology, and their understanding of how information books work, by writing a glossary.

19. Teachers use questioning effectively in encouraging pupils to think for themselves and develop their own ideas. For example, in mathematics lessons teachers used open ended questions such as, 'Can you think of another way.... [of tackling this problem]' or 'How do you know...[the answer to a question]', to promote the development of logical reasoning. In the best literacy lessons teachers also ask pupils challenging questions, which were effective in helping them to extend their ideas. For example, in a Year 2 lesson the teacher effectively drew pupils' attention to the way that an author had used connecting words to extend sentences and then developed their understanding of the text by asking them why they liked particular words or phrases. Although pupils are taught to listen attentively and, as a result, have a good understanding of what their teachers and classmates are saying, there is less emphasis on correct speech. Single word, inaudible and grammatically incorrect responses are often accepted because they convey meaning and show a level of understanding of the subject in question. However, there is too little intervention in pupils' talk to promote the development of a more sophisticated general vocabulary, the use of grammatically correct sentences and an awareness of audience.
20. The school is currently involved in a research project about effective learning and teaching methods. The results of this work are evident in the wide range of teaching methods, which help pupils who learn in different ways to access learning. For example, Year 2 pupils were encouraged to 'visualise' as the teacher read a poem, and this was effective in helping them to see greater purpose in the poet's use of words. In numeracy lessons, a similar technique helped the pupils to 'see' patterns and relationships between numbers. Teachers use a range of opportunities to involve pupils practically in learning. For example, in a Year 1 lesson the pupils got on to an imaginary ten-seater 'bus' as part of their early work on finding 'unknown' numbers in equations. A Year 3 literacy session was drawn to an extremely effective conclusion when the class 'engineers' brought on a model of a television screen, and members of the class took the parts of interviewees as they reported back on what they had found out about information books.
21. Assessment is used well to inform planning for the different needs of pupils. This ensures that the work is well matched to the needs of pupils in lessons. There is also good use of assessment in the course of lessons. The teachers check what pupils already know before they start the main part of the lesson. They then build on this effectively to develop pupils' understanding. Good marking is evident, with the use of written comments to help pupils know what they have to do in order to improve their work. Teachers amend their planning on a daily basis as a result of marking work and listening to pupils' responses during lessons.
22. Teachers make very good use of all the time that is available in lessons and there is good preparation and use of resources to support pupils' learning. Teaching

assistants are very well deployed to support the pupils who most need help and this makes a significant contribution to the progress that they make. There is very good communication between the teachers and their assistants and this flow of information ensures that pupils' work and progress is monitored carefully. Homework is used appropriately to support work in school.

23. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from very effective teaching and very good support from well-qualified teaching assistants. Teachers and teaching assistants alike have very good relationships with pupils, and they make sure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities. Teachers plan work which is well matched to pupils' individual needs in both literacy and numeracy lessons, and additional support is given in particular circumstances whenever appropriate. For example, one pupil benefits from very good support from a teaching assistant during physical education lessons, several pupils receive speech therapy, and two are given additional 'outreach' support by staff from a local special school. The school has invested heavily in teaching assistants who often support pupils with special educational needs during mainstream lessons, and their intervention is very effective in enabling pupils to make best progress. Many teachers and teaching assistants have undertaken training related to the special needs of those pupils with whom they work closely, and, as a result, they are well informed. The school also has strong links with a wide range of specialists and outside agencies who are able to advise staff and who sometimes develop individual programmes of work for those pupils who need them. One result of the very good teamwork forged amongst all those involved in special needs provision is very effective teaching.
24. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are taught within appropriate ability groups in numeracy lessons, and are supported according to need in other mainstream lessons. A teaching assistant working on behalf of the Ethnic Minorities and Travellers Education Service (EMTAS) provides effective support by giving short periods of tuition once a week to the pupils who need it. The school promotes a variety of teaching and learning approaches which cater for strengths in pupils' own learning styles; inspection evidence shows that the varying emphases on different ways of helping pupils to learn are of particular benefit to pupils learning English as an additional language. Teachers and support staff are well attuned to each pupil's needs, and the teaching is effective in helping them to make good progress.

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

25. Children in reception benefit from a rich curriculum which provides a very good range of learning opportunities. There is a very well-judged balance between tasks which are set by teachers and those which are chosen by the children. Very effective use is made of structured play activities to promote children's learning and a strong emphasis is appropriately given to the development of basic skills. The very good quality of the curriculum for reception children contributes significantly to their very effective progress, often from low starting points on entry to the school. In Years 1 to 3, the quality and range of learning opportunities are good. When the school was last inspected, some subjects received insufficient attention so the balance of the curriculum was unsatisfactory. This is no longer the case. A curriculum map has been formulated which provides a useful overview of provision, and schemes of work are in place for all subjects to promote continuity in pupils' learning. Sufficient time is allocated for literacy and numeracy, and effective use is made of the national strategies to support pupils' learning in these important subjects. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is carefully matched to their learning

requirements, and is very good. Overall, curriculum provision is a strength at the school, and pupils have a broad range of worthwhile activities. Statutory requirements are fully met.

26. A good range of extra-curricular opportunities are provided, and currently include: football for boys and girls, French, rock climbing at the sports centre at the local secondary school, choir and recorder classes, and Latin-American and country dancing. A gardening club is about to be formed. The responses in the parents' questionnaire returns show that a minority believe that the school does not provide a sufficiently interesting range of activities outside lessons but inspection findings do not support this view, especially when the range of educational visits is also taken into account. These include visits to the local museum and local historical sites and buildings including a Roman farm. Pupils visit a local village as part of their work in geography and are able to explore a nearby pond as part of their science explorations. They also visit Shell Bay, Corfe Castle and the local country park.
27. The school makes very good provision for personal, social and health education which includes appropriate aspects relating to drugs and sex education. Good use is made of a variety of visitors to support the programme, such as the community policeman, school nurse and annual visit from the life skills bus. Health education is appropriately put into practice by encouraging pupils to drink plenty of water through the day and by having fruit snacks at break time. Pupils learn about road, water and rail safety, and older pupils benefit from a day experiencing different scenarios that help them learn to cope with everyday situations and emergencies.
28. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and to extra-curricular clubs, although some clubs are designed for older pupils. Although the school organises special weeks focusing on multicultural diversity, there is scope to ensure that this is better planned into curriculum subjects throughout the year. Pupils in similar age classes have the same curriculum opportunities because planning is carried out jointly.

Links with the community and partner institutions

29. Good use is made of facilities in the community to enrich the curriculum. Pupils visit a variety of local places such as the pond, supermarket, museum and seashore to give them first hand experiences relating to topics studied. The school grounds, recently enhanced by the addition of a reflective garden sponsored by the Prince's Trust, are also well exploited. There is a wide range of regular visitors to the school, including church ministers, community policeman and the school nurse, and their contributions are carefully planned into the curriculum. The headteacher is particularly skilful in obtaining business or charitable funding for school projects and this makes a significant contribution to the development of school facilities, such as the new computer suite. Pupils are encouraged to think about others and, as well as charity fundraising activities, they also host an annual harvest tea party for local elderly residents and grandparents. Links are established by e-mail with schools in America and Australia which usefully broaden pupils' horizons.
30. Links with other schools in the area are strong and beneficial. Reception staff visit a number of pre-school settings to get to know prospective pupils and invite them to see school productions. There are ongoing links with a Beacon Special School which helps in the assessment of learning needs, and advice is sought, when necessary, from experts in behaviour management. Pupils mix with others at area concerts and open days and have the opportunity to visit their middle school before transferring. Teachers meet with those from three middle schools to discuss curriculum continuity

and provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pastoral support is planned for those pupils who might need extra help to cope with the transfer to middle school.

31. The school is happy to accept students on work experience and regularly welcomes trainee teachers on placement.

The provision that the school makes for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

32. Overall, the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. However, there are variations between these four elements of pupils' personal development. This is broadly similar to the judgement made at the time of the last inspection.
33. Provision for spiritual development is good. This has been strengthened recently by the introduction of a comprehensive framework to help teachers plan assemblies. Assemblies and acts of collective worship take place daily and comply with statutory requirements. Along with religious education, they provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own and others' experiences, feelings and emotions and make an important contribution to their spiritual awareness. For example, the theme of friendship, introduced by the headteacher to the whole school, was followed up effectively by teachers throughout the week in year group assemblies when thoughtfully chosen prayers and music helped pupils to consider the importance of their own friendships. Regular visitors include a local minister and evangelist who share their views with pupils and provide valuable support for the school in dealing with sensitive issues such as those relating to the war in Iraq. Some good examples were seen of pupils being encouraged to appreciate the intangible, for example, beauty and mystery. In Year 1, one child wrote that her magic box was 'made of butterfly wings', another that she would put 'a diamond from a twinkling star' into her box. Teachers are good at giving pupils opportunities to develop their understanding of human feelings. For example, in Year 3 they consider the rights and wrongs of different aspects of World War 2 and gain an insight into the emotions of the young evacuees. However, the curriculum could be enhanced even further by systematically planning to develop pupils' spiritual awareness in science, art and music.
34. The arrangements for pupils' moral development are very good. A strong moral code is evident in all aspects of school life and this forms the basis of the very good behaviour seen throughout the school. Teachers work hard to promote and reward good behaviour and to raise pupils' self-esteem. Personal, social and health education lessons, and circle time, provide very good opportunities for pupils and teachers to deal with morality, discuss issues and establish codes of behaviour. In Year 1, for example, teachers managed these sessions very successfully, making very effective use of puppets to promote a better understanding of when it is right to speak and when it is better to remain silent. Squawky Crow provoked a wide range of suggestions from pupils about how the teacher might get him to be quiet. Each class discusses and agrees its own set of classroom rules and these help pupils to take responsibility for their actions and to respect the feelings and beliefs of others. It also helps them to develop a clear understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable. They are consistently expected to consider the impact of their behaviour on others. The positive outcome of these approaches is to be seen in the orderly school community in which effective teaching and learning take place.

35. The school's procedures for promoting pupils' social development are also very good. Teachers expect pupils to be positive and supportive members of the school community and, from the start, they are encouraged to share ideas and learning resources. The range of groupings employed by teachers in the classroom is used well to promote social and co-operative skills. The good variety of extra-curricular activities provides many opportunities to take part in team sport and other group and individual activities that broaden pupils' social experience and skills. The school's vision is stated clearly as 'children should be seen, and heard and loved and cherished and nurtured ---, and so on. It is demonstrated by all adults in the way that they value pupils' contributions in lessons and more generally to the life of the school. They present very good role models for the pupils. The school makes good use of its links with the local and wider community to promote a sense of responsibility. Through their support of local and national charities, pupils develop positive attitudes towards those less fortunate than themselves. The School Council and the Oak Base Conference are good examples of opportunities for pupils to influence the work of the school democratically.
36. Overall, there is satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. As they move through the school, there are good opportunities in art, history and dance, for example, to appreciate their own cultural heritage. In geography and religious education they are introduced to the customs, traditions and beliefs of other cultures and faiths. However, the school needs to provide more first hand experiences to extend pupils' awareness of the rich and diverse nature of today's multicultural society. The school recognises that there is considerable scope to create more links with outside groups and individuals through inviting visitors and arranging visits to support pupils' learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Heatherlands is a school where the good care and welfare of pupils underpins all aspects of school life and makes a significant contribution to the development of pupils' positive attitudes to learning and their feelings of security and self-worth. Pastoral care is very good. All adults in the school know the pupils well, treat the pupils with respect and kindness and they provide good role models for the pupils. Particular attention is paid to pupils' pastoral needs and this is a strength of the school. Home visits before children start in reception enable circumstances and concerns to be shared at an early stage and this encourages parents to continue to keep the school informed about any problems their children might have.
38. The school has recently employed a pastoral worker to provide additional specialist support and this is already proving a very worthwhile investment in many areas, including attendance, child protection and playground concerns. Pupils are happy to share their worries with her informally at playtimes and can also ask for a specific appointment if they feel they need more privacy or time to talk. This happens in the friendly and well-equipped accommodation that provides a comfortable and welcoming haven. Similarly, teachers who think that pupils might benefit from a sympathetic ear encourage pupils to take up the opportunity to talk things over with the pastoral worker. She also takes the initiative in speaking to some parents to find out why their children are not coming to school regularly and this is already helping to improve the attendance of some pupils. This comprehensive provision ensures that the various needs of pupils and their parents are listened to and provides very good pastoral care.

39. Child protection issues are well handled by staff and the school is careful to vet any adult who might come in contact with pupils at school, on visits or with after-school activities. The school works hard to promote the importance of good attendance, particularly through following up unexplained absences on the first day; and this is beginning to have an impact on attendance levels. However, there is scope to increase the emphasis on dissuading parents from taking pupils on holidays in term time by reminding them more frequently about the disruption that this causes to learning.
40. The school is successful in promoting high standards of behaviour and a sense of pride in the school. This achievement is helped by the sensitive support provided for pupils who may have difficult home circumstances or who find it hard to meet normal expectations. This helps pupils feel that their needs are taken into account and that the school has their best interests at heart. Consequently, all pupils develop a feeling of self-worth which enables them to form positive relationships. All pupils have a clear understanding of the school rules and they are frequently reminded of the importance of good manners, courtesy and consideration for others. The behaviour policy is consistently applied across the school and pupils are proud to have their acts of kindness or academic achievements recognised in the weekly celebration assembly. Consequently, bullying or racist name-calling incidents are very rare and are always dealt with effectively.
41. Pupils benefit from a well-planned and comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education. The participation in the healthy schools initiative has led to a good focus on encouraging pupils to drink water and eat fruit while at school. Each year there are planned opportunities for drugs and sex education at an appropriate level. Road and water safety is also covered and older pupils learn about how to cope in emergencies, following the St John's Ambulance programme. Pupils also benefit from weekly sessions when they can share their feelings about personal issues and this contributes well to their personal development and sensitivity to others.
42. The school has well-established procedures for accidents, emergencies and medicines and maintains appropriate documentation. There is good provision to meet the needs of pupils who need medical or physical support during the school day. Pupils are reminded of the importance of safe practice in lessons such as physical education and have learnt to use the adventure trail equipment in the grounds sensibly and safely. The buildings, which are clean, tidy and well maintained, are inspected regularly and appropriate risk assessments are made before taking pupils on visits. The extensive grounds are well fenced and pupils are carefully supervised at playtimes.
43. The sensitivity of staff to supporting the needs of pupils with difficult home circumstances enables them to be more confident about themselves and their ability to learn at school. The school ensures that those with medical or other physical conditions can play their full part in all aspects of school life and has appropriate facilities for them. No child is excluded from visits on the grounds of cost.
44. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. The results of statutory national tests and other assessment procedures are used well to build up an overall picture of pupils' progress throughout the school. The school is effective in analysing pupils' progress and using the results to set learning targets, highlight what pupils need to learn next and to give additional support to those individuals who need it. This makes a substantial contribution to the standards that are achieved.

45. At the time of the last OFSTED inspection, pupils' individual education plans were judged to have weaknesses, and a key issue in the inspection report was to 'set more specific targets with smaller steps in learning'. This has been addressed, and targets are now challenging but accessible. The class teachers, teaching assistants and special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) monitor pupils' progress towards their targets very carefully, and the targets are reviewed regularly in the light of the progress pupils make.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Heatherlands is a school that is rightly held in high regard by the parents. They value the good all round education that their children get and praise the pastoral care shown to them and their families. Parents find the staff easy to talk to and believe that the school is well led and managed. These positive views are indicative of the school's successful efforts to build up a worthwhile partnership with them. The use of home visits before children start at school establishes good communication with parents and enables them to get to know the staff. This good practice is further enhanced by the weekly session when parents are invited to the phonics session with their children in reception classes.
47. Parents are well informed about all aspects of school life; the regular newsletters keep them up to date with school events and the prospectus gives a clear indication of the school's aims and expectations. The sound home/school agreement sets out the expectations and obligations on both school and parents in helping children to reach their potential. Curriculum information is shared at a meeting held at the start of the autumn term and booklets on supporting reading and mathematics at home are also available. The school brochure lacks information to help parents compare the school's results in national tests to those of other similar schools.
48. Parents are kept regularly informed about the progress of their children. Although security and school procedures mean that parents do not have easy access to classrooms or teachers, they feel that this does not prevent them from speaking to staff if they need to. In the younger classes, the home/school reading record is soundly used for two-way communication, although parents make less use of this as their children get older and pupils' motivation to read then reduces as a result.
49. As well as consultations on progress each term, parents also share brief written reports on progress and targets in English and mathematics and a comment on their child's personal development. This is good practice. Annual written reports are detailed and perceptive and give good indications of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. More comments, however, could be made on the effect of poor attendance on progress.
50. For their part, parents are supportive of the school; they are happy to be involved in matters relating to their own children, such as teacher consultations or school performances. The flourishing 'Friends of Heatherlands Association' organises successful events which raise additional funds to improve the school environment, such as the adventure trail apparatus. A few parents also help in school or accompany visits, though the number volunteering is quite small. However, a group of parents has usefully been involved with the traffic management project to improve safety outside the school gates. The majority of parents believe that they are supporting their children's learning, although many are not regularly hearing their children read and a significant minority of parents also take holidays in term time so that their children are missing school. These factors are having a negative impact on

pupils' progress because important work is often missed. Nevertheless, the school always receives the wholehearted support of parents in any matters relating to behaviour incidents and are trusting that the school always acts in the best interests of their children.

51. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector spoke warmly and positively about the provision made for pupils with special educational needs, and it is clear that they value the school's efforts on their children's behalf. They believe that the school responds well to their concerns as parents. For its part, the school makes sure that parents are kept informed of their child's progress and does its best to secure the best available help and advice. Most parents attend meetings arranged to discuss their child's progress and provision, and many endorse the school's efforts by helping their children with work at home. Links with the parents of pupils learning English as an additional language are constructive. The school is sometimes able to benefit from support through the local authority services when it needs to establish communication with parents whose own knowledge of English is limited. There is little evidence that parents from ethnic backgrounds share the richness of their culture with pupils. The school is accessible to parents in wheelchairs.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The overall leadership and management of the school are good and have improved since the last inspection. The headteacher provides strong leadership. A clear vision for the school is in place, which is reflected in well-focussed educational direction, a strong sense of teamwork and a determination to succeed. All staff are extremely hard working and highly committed to providing the very best education and care for pupils. Many of the senior staff, including the deputy headteacher, are relatively new to the school. They are a strong and talented team and are already beginning to have a positive impact because of the school's ethos, which encourages and values honest and open debate on the development of new ideas. The teacher led research project is a good example of this. Individual strengths are shared and used well to benefit the school as a whole. For example, the deputy headteacher has introduced new management procedures for the non-teaching staff and is computerising assessment procedures. The reception team leader has led the introduction of the very effective 'Lets Explore' sessions in the reception class. All members of the senior team set very good examples through the quality of their own teaching.
53. The very good delegation of roles and responsibilities ensures that leadership is evident at every level in the school community. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, are involved in the running of the school. They are given the time and training that they need to carry out their work. The management structure ensures that all members of staff have regular contact with the headteacher or her senior team. This ensures that they understand what is expected of them and the importance of their role. As a result, there is a cohesive and enthusiastic staff team, who work well together, and who have a very good understanding of their role in the day-to-day work of the school and its longer-term improvement. They know that their work is valued and are highly dedicated to the school and its pupils. This has been a major factor in bringing about substantial improvements since the last inspection.
54. In the main, governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well and make a substantial contribution to the effectiveness of the school. They share a wide range of experience and expertise and use their combined strengths well for the benefit of the school. Committees and meetings are well organised and attended and issues are

rigorously debated prior to decisions being made. However, the school prospectus does not give information about the results of national tests in comparison with other schools and this needs attention. Governors have responded well to the last inspection and are involved well in monitoring and shaping the direction of the school. There are good procedures for ensuring that governors maintain their overview of the school. They meet with co-ordinators on a regular basis and hear about the development of new initiatives. As result, they have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and of the challenges that it faces.

55. The school's procedures for performance management and the promotion of the professional and personal development of all staff are good. This has made a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and the improvements that have been made since the last inspection. All staff feel that they are given good encouragement and support in the development of their roles and in gaining the experience that they need to further their career aspirations. There are good systems in place to ensure that newly qualified teachers receive the support they need.
56. There are effective checks on teaching, learning and achievement in most subjects of the curriculum and the role of the co-ordinators has developed well since the last inspection. A clear and well-organised programme includes lesson observation, looking at pupils' work and teachers' planning. This ensures that the headteacher, senior management team and co-ordinators have a good overview of the effectiveness of their school improvement efforts, and of the areas for future development. Thorough feedback to individual teachers gives useful pointers on how they can improve. The headteacher collects assessment data, which gives a comprehensive picture of the progress and achievement of every child in the school over the longer term. The results of these checks are used well to inform future developments. Data is currently being entered onto the computer to increase the efficiency of these procedures.
57. Procedures for development planning are good and ensure that everyone understands the main priorities for improvement, the time schedule and their part within school development. Clear foci for improvement are identified as a result of consultations with staff, governors and pupils. Actions are carefully planned so that they are manageable and properly funded. There are very good links with the budget and arrangements for checking progress are clearly identified. There is good day-to-day administration of the school by the school secretary and the finance officer and this makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school.
58. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. A heavy investment has been made in special needs teaching assistants to help teachers and pupils, and their work is very effective in its impact on pupils' progress. Although new to her role this year, the SENCO has quickly appraised herself of special needs work and has a very good overview of pupils' individual needs and of provision. Working in close consultation with the headteacher and with the help of the local authority's special needs support services, she has ensured that staff are suitably trained and that pupils receive appropriate support. She has established very good relationships with external specialists and support agencies, including two local special schools, and has forged positive links with SENCOs in the schools to which pupils transfer. Special equipment has been purchased for those pupils who need it, and disabled facilities have been installed. Individual education plans have been improved following criticisms raised in the last OFSTED report, and are now of good quality. The special needs governor works closely with the school. She is supportive in her role, monitors provision, and, when necessary, raises relevant questions with

the appropriate authorities. Statutory requirements in regard to special needs provision are met. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place and are consistent with Code of Practice recommendations. In addition to her responsibility for the day-to-day management of special needs work, the SENCO is also charged with the oversight of pupils learning English as an additional language. Action plans for both areas of her work set out relevant priorities for development. Inspection evidence strongly indicates that, as in the current year, issues raised will be addressed both energetically and efficiently.

59. Equal opportunities are successfully promoted across the school. The policies for equal opportunities and racial equality are firmly embedded in all aspects of school life and are backed up with rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress. The school is a model of best practice for taking into account fourteen different groups or circumstances when assessing pupils and this allows for additional support to be targeted where necessary. The school has recently given greater emphasis to identifying higher attaining or gifted and talented pupils and is appropriately starting to ensure that they are sufficiently challenged.
60. The school budget is prudently managed and efficiently administered and the principles of best value are applied well. All the recommendations of the last auditor's report have been carried out. The school makes good use of all its allocated funds for their designated purposes and links them closely to its priorities for improvement. It also augments its income effectively by using funding from a range of sources; for example, funding from British Telecom was used to provide computers for classrooms. The parents' association also raise a good amount of money for the school each year. The school has had a particularly high carry over for the last two years. This is as a result of saving monies for capital expenditure projects and of strategic planning for the reduced income that is likely to result from a falling role over the next three years. The school has sufficient staff and resources to cover the needs of the curriculum. The accommodation is adequate for the needs of the curriculum and the very best use is made of it to support learning. Given the good progress that the pupils make from their low starting points on entry, the standards that the school achieves and the high levels of care and welfare that pupils receive, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to improve standards even further the headteacher and governors should attend to the following issues.

(1) Improve pupils' speaking skills and writing skills by:

- the development of pupils' general vocabulary;
- developing pupils' awareness of the differences between their own language and Standard English in both spoken and written forms;
- developing pupils' awareness of the needs of their audience when speaking and writing.

(see paragraphs 3, 19, 90)

(2) *Improve attendance rates by:

- further promoting the importance of good attendance with parents;
- extending the involvement of the pastoral support worker in attendance issues.

(see paragraphs 15)

(3) *Improve the provision that the school makes to prepare pupils for a culturally diverse society by:

- ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to meet with people from ethnic minority groups;
- ensuring that schemes of work include further opportunities for pupils to learn about the cultural traditions of the ethnic groups represented in society.

(see paragraphs 36, 137, 148)

* These issues are already recognised by the school in its school development plan.

In addition, the school and the governors should also:

- ensure that the school prospectus fully meets statutory requirements by including information to help parents compare the school's results in national tests to those of other similar schools.

(see paragraph 47)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	76
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	19	34	19	0	0	0
Percentage	5	25	45	25	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 one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR– Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	343
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	58

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	46

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	6.2
National comparative data	5.4

School data	1.0
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	47	41	88

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	42	43	47
	Girls	39	38	40
	Total	81	81	87
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (89)	92 (94)	99 (91)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	44	45	47
	Girls	38	36	39
	Total	82	81	86
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (92)	92 (91)	98 (94)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89(89)

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	187	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	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	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	62	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y3

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.3
Average class size	26.4

Education support staff: YR– Y4

Total number of education support staff	25
Total aggregate hours worked per week	524

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002-2003
	£
Total income	924,062
Total expenditure	918,818
Expenditure per pupil	2,679
Balance brought forward from previous year	93,635
Balance carried forward to next year	98,879

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	11
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9.4

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	343
Number of questionnaires returned	115

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	26	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	29	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	39	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	47	8	2	0
The teaching is good.	75	23	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	34	2	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	18	2	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	35	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	58	36	4	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	74	24	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	36	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	35	22	2	8

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

62. Provision for children in the reception classes is very good and is a strength of the school. Teaching is very good in all areas of learning, the curriculum is very well planned and a rich environment for learning has been created. This ensures that children get a very good start to their schooling
63. Children are admitted to the reception classes in the September of the school year in which they become five. There are very good arrangements to introduce children and their parents to the school. These include well-planned visits to children's own homes and well-organised opportunities for parents and children to visit the school and spend some time in the reception classrooms. There is a gradual introduction to school life which helps them to feel safe and secure from an early stage.
64. The reception classrooms are of adequate size and benefit from their own enclosed outdoor areas, which are used in all weathers for a range of activities both during playtimes and the 'Lets Explore' sessions, when children learn through a range of play activities that they have chosen themselves.
65. Although a few children enter the school at the level expected for four year old children, the majority have poor communication, language, and mathematical skills. Many lack confidence and imagination, have very little experience of the world around them and their physical skills are underdeveloped. The teaching that the children receive is very good. Teachers have to work extremely hard to raise children's attainment from the low levels on entry. Although about one third of the children do not reach the expected standards by the end of the reception year, they all make good progress because of the very good provision that is made for them.
66. The curriculum for children in the reception classes is very good. It is thoroughly planned and ensures that children make progress in all the areas of learning. Activities are rich and stimulating and skilfully structured to meet children's wide range of needs. The more formal elements of the curriculum, such as the early skills of reading, writing, and number work, are taught in interesting and practical ways. The 'Lets Explore' sessions ensure that children also still have the opportunities that they need to learn through play and talk in tasks that they initiate themselves. Children are well prepared for their work in Year 1. The teaching assistants give very good support to the children they work with, particularly those with special educational needs. This ensures that they are fully involved in lessons and make good progress. A good example of this is that one physically disabled child took her very first steps in school. The moment was captured on a photograph and sent home to her delighted parents.
67. There are very good procedures for keeping track of children's progress and assessing what children know, understand and can do as a result of taking part in activities. This information is used effectively to inform planning for future work.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. On entry to the school, children are often very unsure of themselves and many have few social skills. They gradually gain in confidence because of the supportive and

caring atmosphere that is provided and the very good and sometimes excellent teaching they receive.

69. Many children lack confidence and have to learn to do things, such as getting themselves dressed and undressed, and making choices for themselves when they first start school. They learn to do this because of the consistent responses they receive from all the adults who work with them. Children gain a sense of their own identity, and learn to respect themselves and others as a result of the atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding that is evident in the reception classes, and the very good relationships that all the adults have with the children. A wide range of activities is provided to help the children learn how to work and play together and so, by the end of the reception year, most successfully take part in activities which require them to share equipment and materials, and they understand the importance of turn-taking and sharing.
70. Children develop positive attitudes to their learning and gain confidence in their own ability to do things for themselves because of the very good range of experiences which make learning enjoyable and which they can control, particularly in 'Lets Explore' sessions. The high expectations of behaviour that the teachers have of the children are consistently reinforced and, as a result, good habits of behaving are established from an early stage. By the end of the reception year, most children are keen to do their best, respond well to their teachers' instructions and enjoy taking part in all the activities provided for them.

Communication, language and literacy

71. Teaching in the reception classes gives very good emphasis to the development of children's communication, language and literacy skills. Children have a wide range of opportunities to speak and listen to adults and other children and represent their ideas through drama, and making pictures and models. Many children do not have the language skills and the words that they need to talk about their experiences and to express their needs, ideas and feelings when they enter the school. Although these children are initially quite reticent, they gradually develop the confidence to answer questions and pass comments because of the very good support they receive from the teaching assistants and the encouragement of the teachers. By the end of the reception year, most children are beginning to use the correct words to name objects and can retell their experiences in simple terms when asked to do so. However, they do not yet have a wide vocabulary and many still have difficulty in pronouncing words correctly and speaking in grammatically correct sentences.
72. Teachers work extremely hard to help children to develop their skills in using language for thinking. The children do not readily commentate on their own actions, and make little use of language to describe what they see, to create roles, develop stories and interact imaginatively. Teachers and teaching assistants interact skilfully with the children, however, and, together with the well-organised activities provided, this helps the children to develop these skills in all areas of the curriculum. For example, the teacher played alongside children to help them develop a puppet play using their ideas from their own knowledge of fairy tales and nursery rhymes.
73. Most children have a limited experience of books before they start school. There are regular opportunities for children to look at books and to share them with each other and with adults. By the end of the reception year, children enjoy looking at books, are aware of how they work and some are able to tell their versions of the stories using their emerging knowledge of words and clues from the illustrations. Some are able to

read simple stories independently. Most children listen with enjoyment to stories and show a good understanding of the sequence of a story. They sustain attentive listening during whole-class literacy sessions when they respond with relevant comments to their teachers' questions. Every opportunity is taken to draw children's attention to the written word and the letters that are within words. They learn the initial sounds of words and to associate them with letters of the alphabet. Higher attaining children begin to blend sounds together to build simple three letter words which they can then read for themselves.

74. The children are actively encouraged to make their own attempts at writing from an early stage. All their early attempts at making marks are valued and as a result children develop the confidence they need to begin to write. Opportunities to help children to see a real purpose for writing are created whenever possible. For example, they write their own name labels for their own models. The children took great delight in receiving a letter from a school in Australia and they were keen to reply to a request to tell them more about their recent visit to a pond. As a result of activities such as this, children gain an early understanding that print carries meaning and that writing can be used to record their personal ideas. Children are formally taught how to form their letters correctly and there is a very good range of opportunities for children to use their writing skills independently in the course of play activities, for example, writing tables have a good range of resources to help children to develop their writing skills and their knowledge of letters.

Mathematical development

75. Very good teaching ensures that children in the reception classes have the range of experiences that they need to establish a basic foundation of mathematical understanding.
76. Children gain an early understanding of mathematical ideas as a result of a very wide range of activities within a carefully-planned environment. For example, in the role-play shoe shop they checked whether shoes were the right size, counted money, and counted shoes in pairs. When working with programmable toys and remote controlled vehicles they gain an understanding of speed and direction. They have looked carefully at two-dimensional shapes in the course of their numeracy lessons when they explored some of the properties of three-dimensional shapes. Opportunities to make models from used card, cartons and construction equipment contribute to children's understanding of three-dimensional shapes. Play activities that involve the use of sand and water are used very well to help develop children's learning about shape, space and measure.
77. Children extend their learning of number through both practical and more formal activities. Opportunities for children to count real objects in a range of different ways help most children to develop an understanding that the last one in the count is the same as the number in the set. For example, in one mathematics lesson they helped the teacher sort out the mathematics resources, which had been mysteriously muddled up over night. They enthusiastically sorted and counted pegs, cubes and counters into different bags, and then labelled them with the correct numbers. Activities such as singing and counting rhymes also help the children to develop their counting skills. As a result, most can count accurately from zero to ten by the end of the reception year and many can count well beyond that. Some count to 100 when supported by the teacher. They begin to gain an early understanding of addition and subtraction when they work out how many objects they have when one more is added to a set or one is taken away. Children are taught how to write numbers correctly and

are gradually developing the skills that they need to record their own early calculations.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

78. Very good teaching ensures that children have a wide range of opportunities to develop the confidence that they need to explore their surroundings and to develop their understanding of the world around them.
79. Children in the reception classes have had a very good range of opportunities to think about where they live and the people who help them. For example, they have drawn maps of the route to a local pond and identified significant features along the way. In the course of their role play, they replicated the work of the postman as they collected and delivered parcels, noting names and addresses. There is a need, however, to develop more opportunities to help children to develop an understanding of the wider cultural differences in the society in which we live, for example, by providing a wider range of culturally diverse clothes and artefacts in the role-play area.
80. Very good opportunities for children to explore the natural world have helped them to notice the way living things grow and change. For example, as a result of their visit to a pond they know that a frog develops from a tadpole and that tadpoles emerge from frogspawn. Opportunities to work in the garden as part of the 'Lets Explore' session resulted in them making close observations of snails and noticing the texture of the soil as they planted seedlings in the raised beds. Children's knowledge of the physical and material world was developed well through an activity in which they moved a range of objects on an overhead projector, watching the images and shadows that were produced on the screen.
81. Children are beginning to become familiar with computers and to use cameras to take pictures. A feature of the provision in the reception classes is the way that activities are carefully designed to encourage children to explore and to develop their understanding progressively. For example, in more formal ICT lessons the children are taught to control programmable and remote control toys and to learn the language of direction. The children then used this knowledge in the course of their outdoor play when they steered these same toys around a course that had been set up by the teachers. Children have ample opportunities to investigate how a range of construction materials work and learn how they can be fitted together to make objects of their own choosing. Well-focussed construction activities, such as building an object that might help them to cross the pond, help them to begin to develop their ideas with a purpose in mind. Teaching also ensures that children develop the skills that they need to use simple tools, such as scissors and glue sticks, properly and to learn techniques such as folding and joining materials.

Physical development

82. The very good teaching that children receive ensures the regular and frequent opportunities that young children need for their physical development, both indoors and outside. As a result, they make good progress in improving their co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement.
83. There are opportunities for children to develop their manipulative skills when using construction toys and when drawing and cutting, for example. They are also taught how to hold pencils and scissors correctly and this supports their work in other areas of learning. Children are given ample opportunities to explore and refine their movements and actions as they play outdoors on the climbing frame and other

equipment. They develop increasing control over the way they move, for example, in swinging across the horizontal bars using their hands and arms. Large-scale movements, such as climbing inside boxes and over tyres, also provide opportunities for children to learn words that describe different positions and movements. Children also improve skills such as jumping, skipping and running as they play alongside their classmates. They develop their skills further by taking part in more formal lessons in the hall. They change into appropriate clothing and are taught how to dress and undress themselves independently and to fold their clothes carefully so that they will be ready to put on again. Whilst working in the hall, children learn to move safely and develop a good awareness of their own space and that of others.

Creative development

84. Many children find it hard to use their imagination when they enter the school. All adults who work with the children skilfully help them to make up their own imaginative stories when using the role-play and other areas. This, combined with the well-planned provision of resources, helps the children to begin to develop their own ideas. For example, one area has been equipped as a post office and children quickly develop their play in the role of 'postmen and women'. Another area has been equipped with a range of dressing up clothes and the children make up stories involving the characters that they imagine they are. For example, one child dressed up as a princess and began an imaginative story in this role. The provision of small toys representing the real world enhances the development of children's ability to visualise and think through their imaginative ideas and to practise their use of language in different situations.
85. Children enjoy painting and drawing and respond well to the many opportunities that they have to paint what they see, feel and imagine. They explore colours and the textures of different kinds of paper, for example, when making a collage of a pond, and when mixing colours to paint pictures of the pond.
86. The children readily join in with nursery rhymes and action songs and enjoy opportunities to play instruments and to explore the sounds that they make. Formal opportunities in the hall are used well to help the children to express their imaginative ideas and to move in response to the sounds that they hear. For example, they have composed an imaginative dance representing the development of a frog from frogspawn, moving in different ways to represent each stage of the life cycle.

ENGLISH

87. Although children make very good progress in the reception class, their attainment in communication skills, in language and in literacy is below average, overall, when they enter the Year 1 classes. As a result of good teaching they make good progress in lessons in Years 1, 2 and 3, and good progress over time in relation to their starting points. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language to their mother tongues also make good progress.
88. The school's results in the 2002 national tests in reading were above the national average and were average in writing. In reading, the results were also above the average results of similar schools, while the results for writing were broadly in line with those of similar schools. The percentage of pupils whose performance in reading exceeded the standard expected of pupils aged seven was above the national average. In writing, attainment at this level was in line with the national average. All these results represent good achievement by individual pupils, irrespective of ability.

Inspection findings, drawn from lesson observations and from the scrutiny of pupils' written work, point to lower attainment overall in the current Year 2 classes than in the previous year, and for this reason it is likely that the 2003 results will not be as favourable as those for 2002.

89. Overall, pupils in Year 2 attain standards which are broadly average for their age in speaking and listening and in reading, and slightly below average in writing. In Year 3, attainment is slightly above average in reading and broadly average in writing.
90. Pupils throughout the school listen attentively in lessons and have learned to observe the conventions of following instructions and turn-taking. They are well behaved in lessons, follow closely what their teachers and other adults say to them, and do their best to carry out their tasks. While higher attaining pupils show in their work that they have clearly understood what is expected of them, there are times when some lower attaining pupils experience difficulties processing information and, as a consequence, their initial responses, whether spoken or written, do not always reflect what the teacher intends. The very good support offered to such pupils by teachers and by teaching assistants ensures that they are given the time and help they need to understand the nature of each task and to engage constructively in formulating their responses. Higher attaining pupils are able to engage in sustained discussion, talk about their day-to-day experiences, exchanging formal and informal greetings and discuss aspects of their work. They use colloquial language with their peers and are able to use Standard English when appropriate. However, average and lower attaining pupils are not sufficiently aware of the differences between their own day-to-day speech and Standard English and are not able to adapt their speech to the needs of the listener. All pupils are taught, and acquire, the technical terms necessary to discuss their learning in different subjects as they move up through the school, but few have a wide general vocabulary.
91. Most pupils in Years 2 and 3 have mastered the early stages of reading and can read books appropriate for their age from the school's collection of structured reading resources. They use a suitably wide range of strategies, including an awareness of phonics, to work out unknown words, and they have some understanding of the significant differences between fiction and non-fiction. Most read confidently and with expression. They show awareness of their 'audience', for example by changing the tone of their voice to interpret the different characters, and they observe the cues presented by punctuation. In Year 2, pupils of higher and average attainment can talk about the kinds of reading they prefer and enjoy, giving some indication as to their reasons, though few can name more than one or two authors. Pupils of all abilities can talk about the plot and the characters in the stories they read, although only higher attaining pupils use inference routinely to work out hidden meanings. All pupils in Years 2 and 3 are familiar with the terms used to talk about books and can explain what is meant, for example, by the 'title', the 'author' and the 'illustrator'. Most also know terms such as 'contents', 'index' and 'glossary', and higher attaining pupils can use simple dictionaries with varying degrees of success. In Year 3, most higher and average attaining readers can name several authors whose work they like and are developing more informed preferences for particular types of books such as 'animal stories', 'adventures' or 'books about space'. Both in Year 2 and Year 3, boys express a decided preference for non-fiction, and, although pupils generally read competently for their age, a significant number lack real enthusiasm for reading. The school strongly promotes reading and is supported in its endeavours by many parents who willingly help their children at home, and this has a positive effect on the progress that their children make in reading. Not all pupils benefit from being heard to read at home, however. In Year 2 in particular, in spite of very good teaching, there are a

number of pupils still struggling with the early stages of reading. In Year 3, the higher attaining pupils are beginning to develop higher order reading skills. For example, given directions by their teachers, they can use information books to find things out about a history topic and make their own notes.

92. Most pupils, of all abilities, clearly enjoy communicating their ideas in writing. Overall, pupils make good progress in writing in relation to their starting points and to their capabilities as they move up through the school. By the end of Year 2, and in Year 3, most can write simple stories with a clearly defined opening, main events and a plausible ending, and higher attaining pupils are beginning to show awareness of the reader by including interesting detail and by using bold or capital letters for effect. They learn to use some 'literary' phrases and to replicate the forms of poems and familiar stories that they share with their teachers. They are able to write captions and labels and simple recounts of events. In Years 2 and 3, most pupils can write perceptive diary entries and letters where they assume a particular viewpoint, for example, as an evacuee during the Blitz, or as Samuel Pepys when he witnessed the Great Fire of London. The higher attaining pupils in Year 2 use basic punctuation successfully, spell most common words and some complex words accurately, and achieve overall coherence in their pieces of writing. By Year 3, the higher attaining pupils use a wider range of punctuation, sometimes remember to use speech marks and to write in paragraphs, and, when reminded, use connectives such as 'then', 'first', 'later' and 'meanwhile' when they need to sequence events, for example when writing an account of a school visit. There are, however, some significant weaknesses in the writing of many average and lower attaining pupils in both Year 2 and Year 3 which prevents them from achieving at higher levels. For example, many pupils find it difficult to combine, simultaneously, the many skills required to produce accurately punctuated and coherent pieces of extended writing. Often, their sentences are poorly constructed and their spelling is weak. Sometimes, even the higher attaining pupils use colloquial language and grammar which, while reflecting their spoken language, are not appropriate in a particular context. Overall, few pupils have a wide enough general vocabulary to bring precision to their writing. Most pupils in Years 2 and 3 are capable of producing neat, well-formed cursive handwriting. Low attaining pupils in Years 2 and 3, including some pupils with special educational needs, are making good progress but are still dependent on interaction with an adult to help them formulate and record their ideas.
93. The teaching of English is good and the literacy strategy is implemented well. Very good and occasionally excellent teaching was also seen during the inspection. In spite of the weaknesses identified in pupils' performance in this paragraph, inspection findings show that pupils generally make good - and sometimes very good - progress in lessons. All teachers plan and prepare their lessons well, and there is no doubt that teaching raises pupils' attainment during lessons. Some common strengths of the teaching include: very good relationships with pupils; very good management and organisation; very good provision for, and inclusion of, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language; good knowledge and understanding of the subject requirements; and good attention to the development of pupils' understanding of subject-specific terms. Overall, guided reading is taught very well, and several teachers are particularly successful at helping pupils become independent learners. For example, the teaching of spelling is particularly effective in Year 2 where pupils are required to master a variety of strategies and given the responsibility for checking their own progress. High quality marking of pupils' written work in most classes from Year 1 onwards helps pupils to recognise how to improve their work. There is, however, insufficient intervention in pupils' speaking to help them develop their awareness of their audience, their use of Standard English and to widen

their general vocabulary. All teachers and teaching assistants are enthusiastic, hard working and conscientious. They work very effectively as a team, and their combined efforts already have a very significant impact on pupils' progress and attainment.

94. The literacy co-ordinator assumed her role only at the beginning of the current academic year. She is a very skilled practitioner, and she has been fortunate enough to build on the good work of a talented predecessor. Since her appointment, she has trained all staff in regard to provision for guided reading, updated resources, reviewed medium-term planning and pupils' targets for writing, and disseminated a dynamic approach to the teaching of spelling. She has had some opportunities to monitor teaching and learning, and, as is evident in her action plan for literacy, she is well appraised of what next needs to be done. Resources are now satisfactory overall, although there could usefully be further investment in reading resources for higher attaining readers in Years 2 and 3. The library is at present used too little to help older pupils develop library and research skills, and, in particular, to underpin aspects of reading for information by individual pupils. Although pupils make good progress, some higher and average attaining pupils could do even better, particularly in writing. Through its monitoring and evaluation procedures, the school is aware of priorities for development within its provision for literacy and has already begun to address them.

MATHEMATICS

95. On entry to Year 1 at the age of five, the mathematical knowledge and understanding of most pupils are below average. The evidence of the inspection is that the attainment of the majority of pupils is in line with the standard expected for their age by end of Year 2 and above average in Year 3. This good achievement is a result of the good teaching that pupils receive and is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress as a result of the very good support that they receive. Pupils who are gifted and talented make satisfactory progress. Pupils make satisfactory use of their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum.
96. The school's results in the 2002 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 were above the national average, and well above the results of similar schools, with more pupils than usual attaining at the higher levels. However, the nature of each year group varies from year-to-year. Inspection findings indicate lower attainment overall in the current Year 2 classes than in the previous year, and for this reason it is unlikely that the 2003 results will be as favourable as those for 2002.
97. The good progress that pupils make is evident in their work, and is a result of a sound grasp of basic numeracy skills. Their satisfactory knowledge of mathematical facts, such as addition and subtraction up to 100, odd and even numbers and place value, and their ability to count in a range of different ways, contributes to the accuracy of their calculations. For example, in a Year 1 lesson they demonstrated a logical approach to calculating an unknown number when given addition sums with numbers missing. Pupils in Year 3 also applied their number skills logically when solving word problems which involved addition and subtraction. They recognised that one was the inverse of the other and used this information to check their answers. Although there are opportunities for pupils to talk through their methods of working and to explain their reasoning, they find this difficult and are not as articulate as they should be. This is an area for development.

98. Pupils' sound knowledge of the properties of shapes is evident in their drawings of two-dimensional shapes and their ability to distinguish the different properties of simple three-dimensional shapes by identifying the shapes of their faces and the number of sides. They have a satisfactory understanding of reflective symmetry. Pupils estimate, measure and weigh objects using metric measures and also read scales on metric measuring jugs. Pupils make satisfactory use of ICT in the course of their work on data handling, and have, for example, collected information and compiled block graphs to communicate their findings about eye colour and favourite crisps in their classes.
99. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. Planning has improved since the last inspection and is soundly based on national guidance, contains clear learning objectives which pupils understand and clearly shows how the needs of different pupils will be met. This results in well-structured lessons, and series of lessons, which help pupils to build upon what they already know to acquire new knowledge and skills and consolidate their understanding. In the best teaching, there was very good use of focussed questions to help pupils develop their ideas to deeper levels, for example, in a Year 1 lesson the teacher asked a pupil "How could you do that another way?", which motivated him to adopt a different strategy for his calculation. There are high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and, as a result, pupils work hard to meet the teacher's aspirations and take a real pride in using 'big numbers'. Teachers use a range of practical and visual methods to help their pupils to have access to learning and to remember what they have learned. This is an improvement since the last inspection. For example, in a Year 3 lesson the teacher walked pupils on an imaginary route around the classroom, stopping at various points to illustrate the step-by-step procedures that they had to take in order to solve problems. Teachers value pupils' ideas in the best lessons and engage pupils in 'mathematical conversations'. This promotes logical thinking because pupils do most of the work and are encouraged to talk about the mathematical processes and the strategies that they are using. There is a good pace to learning, which is an improvement since the last inspection, and pupils sustain concentration because they play an active part in the learning process throughout. Assessment is well used during the course of lessons and planning is often adapted from day-to-day according to how well pupils have done. Work is regularly marked and there is good use of constructive comments feedback to help pupils know what they have to do next to improve their work. There is satisfactory use of homework to support pupils' ongoing work at school. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and manage their pupils well. As a result of this, pupils' behaviour in lessons is very good. Firmly established routines and procedures ensure that the best use is made of the time that is available for learning.
100. Mathematics is well managed. The subject leader is new to the role but has already had a significant impact on the school's work in the subject. She has formed a broad overview of its strengths and weaknesses and has started to make improvements. For example, she has introduced a new record keeping system, which gives a clear picture of the progress of individual pupils. There are good assessment procedures in place and good use is made of them to inform planning for improvement. There are sufficient resources which are well organised and accessible.

SCIENCE

101. On entry to Year 1, the scientific knowledge and understanding of pupils are generally below average. The results of the statutory teacher assessments in Year 2, in 2002, were above the national average and well above the average results of similar schools in relation to the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level. The percentage exceeding this level was well above the national average and the average results of similar schools. Inspection findings show that current standards in Year 2 are not as high as last year, and are broadly average. This reduction in standards results from the lower number of higher attainers in the current Year 2 classes, compared with the position in 2002, and does not signal a reduction in the school's effectiveness. Indeed, inspection findings show that all pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs, make good progress from their starting points at the beginning of Year 1. This good progress is maintained in Year 3 where overall standards are above average. When the school was last inspected, standards were above average in Years 2 and 3.
102. In Year 1, pupils can identify and locate the main external parts of the human body and plants, and make good progress when learning that all animals, including humans, grow and change as they become older. They are encouraged to observe the development of beans into plants, and know that movement can be carried by pushes and pulls. Year 1 pupils progress well when recognising and describing sounds, and know that they hear sounds through their ears. In Year 2, pupils understand that humans need food and water to stay alive, and that plants require water and light to remain healthy. They make good progress when describing materials in everyday terms, such as hardness or softness, and when sorting these into groups according to these classifications. Pupils are aware of the dangers of electricity, can name a range of appliances which use electricity and create simple electrical circuits. In lessons observed during the inspection in Year 2, effective teaching enabled pupils to make good progress in developing their understanding about forces and to demonstrate standards which were in line with those expected for their ages.
103. In Year 3, pupils can describe how some materials are changed by heating or cooling and have a good understanding, for their ages, of the basic characteristics of solids and liquids. They know that shadows are formed when light from a source is blocked, and make sensible links between the position of the sun and their measurements of changing shadows during the day. During the inspection, Year 3 pupils made good progress when learning that the shapes of their teeth make them useful for different purposes, and when formulating systematic investigations to discover which drink is the least damaging to their teeth.
104. Science teaching has improved since the last inspection and is good. Teachers plan their lessons well, and individual lessons form part of a coherent series to develop pupils' learning sequentially. All teachers clearly identify the learning intentions of their lessons and ensure that pupils are aware of what they are expected to learn. Their subject knowledge is secure, and they appropriately introduce and reinforce scientific vocabulary during their lessons. Teachers usually make effective use of questions to probe pupils' understanding, and good practice was particularly evident in Year 2 when pupils were challenged to say why, exactly, they predicted that toy cars would travel further over one surface than another. Teachers take care to provide pupils with a range of practical activities to support their scientific learning, and ensure that lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Teaching assistants are well briefed in science lessons and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, especially those with

special educational needs. Regular assessments are made of pupils' achievements, particularly in relation to the development of their scientific enquiry skills, and these are used well to identify areas for improvement. Teachers' relationships with their classes are consistently positive, and they explain tasks clearly and make learning interesting. As a consequence, pupils listen attentively during science lessons, behave well and persevere with their tasks.

105. The science co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and highly conscientious. She is also well informed and is having a beneficial effect on the quality of teaching and learning in science. She has involved her colleagues effectively in the evaluation of the scheme of work, and has good monitoring procedures. Her classroom observations are well focused and her analysis of samples of pupils' work is astute. As a result, she has provided her colleagues with pertinent feedback and led purposeful staff meetings. Resources for science are sound.

ART AND DESIGN

106. Pupils generally achieve well in art and design and overall standards are above average, including in Years 2 and 3. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were average in the subject.
107. In Year 1, pupils have created expressive self portraits, and their pictures of the royal family demonstrate their good skills in pastel, paint and collage techniques. They also achieve well when using their imagination to extend images presented in sections of photographs, and have used a wide range of fabrics to create impressive collage representations of Queen Elizabeth II.
108. In Year 2, pupils use folded, twisted and scrunched paper to make interesting abstract pictures, and benefit from exercises which enable them to experiment with a range of mark-making techniques, using paint. They achieve well when learning about the paintings of Paul Gauguin, and mixed warm colours to create their own island images which reflect elements of the artist's work. In lessons observed during the inspection, Year 2 pupils looked carefully at paintings by Turner, and made good progress when creating their own seascapes. They mixed their paint colours, were able to select different sized brushes for different intended effects, made considered decisions about when to water-down their paint, and created interesting effects by rolling their brushes over the surface of the paper.
109. In Year 3, pupils' pencil drawings of faces demonstrate good achievement, and their pictures of different faces show they can use watercolours effectively. They have studied the work of Bridget Riley very carefully and can talk about her work in an informed manner. Pupils have made detailed drawings which reflect the artist's geometric style, using black and white, and these have informed their larger pieces of 'Op-Art'. These are bold and impressive, and show that pupils have achieved well when using paint, printing and woven paper techniques to create striking images.
110. Insufficient lessons were observed to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. However, the two lessons seen in Year 2 were taught well; and evidence from pupils' completed work provides ample evidence to show that the teaching enables pupils to make good overall progress in Years 1 to 3. Discussions with pupils show they have positive attitudes to the subject, and these were clearly evident in the lessons seen. Teachers ensure that pupils have opportunities to use a range of mediums, including clay, and develop pupils' awareness of the work of famous artists. Evidence suggests that teachers have secure subject knowledge and

comments heard during lessons, such as “Look, I’ve blended these two colours,” suggest they introduce and reinforce appropriate vocabulary. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and make effective use of the guidance provided through the scheme of work to promote continuity in pupils’ work.

111. The art and design co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has worked effectively to make sensible enhancements to the scheme of work provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. She has collected examples of work to judge pupils’ achievements and provides staff with useful feedback. In addition, the co-ordinator readily advises her colleagues, has organised visits by local artists and a successful ‘arts week’ in 2002. Overall, the co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject, and fulfils her role well. Resources for art and design are sound.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

112. Pupils now make consistently sound progress in design and technology throughout the school, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Standards are in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 3.
113. In Year 1, pupils demonstrate satisfactory standards when joining card and paper to create percussion instruments. They understand that there are different kinds of homes, including bungalows and flats, and that homes have main features including roofs, walls, windows and doors. They make sound progress when learning to use masking tape to create hinges for doors and windows, and their designs for model homes are satisfactory for their ages. When creating their model homes, using recycled materials, most demonstrate making skills which are broadly average. In Year 2, pupils demonstrate satisfactory standards when designing glove puppets, and they have learned simple stitching techniques. They also make sound progress when using rolled newspaper to create model stools and chairs. Pupils from Years 2 and 3 enjoyed learning about robot toys from visitors who had designed ‘Razor the Robot’ for a television programme. They were then inspired to create their own robots. In Year 3, pupils have made careful designs for monsters, made from recycled materials, and with some moving parts facilitated by the use of pneumatics. Their completed ‘moving monsters’ show that pupils have developed an understanding of simple pneumatic systems, and the quality of the finished products is broadly satisfactory for their ages.
114. Due to timetabling arrangements, no design and technology lessons were observed in Year 2, so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching across Years 1 and 2. However, the lessons seen in Year 1 ranged from satisfactory to good, and an analysis of pupils’ completed work shows the teaching enables pupils to make sound progress in both Years 1 and 2. The lessons observed in Year 1 were well planned, using guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, and motivated pupils strongly. In the most effective teaching, pupils were successfully encouraged to think carefully about appropriate methods for joining materials before starting on their construction. Less effective practice was evident when pupils required more specific guidance to help them to decide how their home should look and how it could be made. In Year 3, the teaching is satisfactory and results in pupils’ sound progress in the subject. However, pupils sometimes need to be encouraged to formulate clearer success criteria to inform their work in designing and making.
115. The design and technology co-ordinator has formulated a sound policy for the subject, provides useful advice for her colleagues, including in relation to assessment

procedures, and ensures that teachers implement the comprehensive scheme of work. Resources for design and technology are satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

116. In Year 2 and in Year 3, standards in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in geography are average. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching was unsatisfactory and standards were below average. A number of factors have contributed to this improvement. These include the introduction of a whole-school plan that allocates topics for study to each age group. It is based on the national guidelines for geography adopted by the school to support teachers in their planning. As a result, teaching is better and pupils cover a balanced geography curriculum that develops their skills in a structured as they move through the school.
117. Because of the school's timetabling arrangements, only two geography lessons were taught during the inspection, both in Year 2. Judgements are made on the evidence of these lessons, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' earlier work, and discussions with staff.
118. In Year 1, teachers make good use of the neighbourhood when pupils take part in a practical investigation in order to find out how to make the local area safer. They consider traffic and parking and experience a good range of mapwork and modelling techniques. A visit by the local policeman helps to ensure that the work is firmly based in real issues. Their knowledge of places around the world develops appropriately through the use of globes, atlases and wall maps. They pack imaginary suitcases for hot and cold countries, taste Swiss chocolate, Indian poppadoms and Dutch cheese, and design and write postcards from Spain and Scotland.
119. In Year 2, their knowledge of places further afield is extended effectively when they follow the travels of Jeremy Bear to Singapore, New Zealand, Kenya and the USA. Their awareness of geographical features and their use of geographical vocabulary are developed alongside their mapwork skills when they locate the beach, a lake, a wood and waterfall on an imaginary Treasure Island.
120. Teachers in Year 3 build on pupils' earlier experiences by providing valuable fieldwork opportunities in their comparison between Poole and the village of Shapwick. They consider population and land use and make good use of aerial photographs to identify features such as the church, graveyard and the pub.
121. In the lessons seen, teaching and learning were good. Teachers' knowledge of the subject was good and they planned interesting tasks that captured and held pupils' attention. The lessons were carefully planned to promote the key skills of geography and pupils particularly enjoyed the practical, enquiry based nature of the activities. Teachers' questioning was successful in helping pupils to identify features in the local landscape and to compare two different localities. Pupils noted from the photographs, for example, that while there are beach shops selling ice cream at Sandbanks, clothes and grocery shops are more in evidence in Parkstone.
122. The leadership and management of geography are good. The co-ordinator is experienced and well qualified to lead the subject. She has been responsible for geography for less than two years. She has introduced a detailed scheme of work and works closely with colleagues to plan a range of good quality learning experiences. They focus clearly on the key skills of enquiry, and particularly those

associated with mapwork and fieldwork. She has made a good start on developing a portfolio of pupils' work in the subject. It contains a range of photographic evidence and samples of pupils' work, some of which she has assessed accurately against National Curriculum levels. In the absence of formal assessment procedures a more comprehensive survey of this sort would be helpful to teachers in planning to meet the particular needs of their pupils. The use of ICT to support and extend pupils' learning in geography is developing steadily.

HISTORY

123. Pupils benefit from high quality experiences of history which bring the subject to life. They make good progress overall, and their attainment is within the average range for their ages both in Year 2 and Year 3.
124. During the inspection, a 'Victorian Day' in Year 1 marked the culmination of a study of life in Victorian times. With class teachers in role as Victorian schoolmistresses, and both pupils and staff suitably dressed in Victorian style, the day begins in which pupils 'live' and learn as their counterparts might have done 100 years ago.
125. They quickly learn to be 'seen and not heard', to 'speak when spoken to' and to 'mind their manners'. They recite the alphabet in unison, write diligently on their 'slates', and try hard to reproduce the 'fair hand' their teachers demand of them. Later, they do 'drill' in the 'exercise yard'. Throughout the day, pupils live and breathe their roles, and it is evident that, at a deep level, this is an experience they will never forget. They are exposed to the language of Victorian times and to a social structure that places children firmly in a position of subservience and the Queen as the supreme ruler of an extensive Empire and 'mother' to the nation. The pupils' astonishment, when given bread and water to eat instead of their usual fruit, or when reprimanded and asked to 'stand in the corner' for a while, is almost palpable. Pupils in Year 2 learn about famous people and significant historical events. Their written work shows that they understand, and can empathise with, different perspectives on events. For example, they identify with Grace Darling's experiences when she rescued sailors from certain death, but they are also able to encapsulate, in very brief captions, the pride felt by Grace's father and the feelings of the sailors themselves. In some of the best written work in Year 2, based on Samuel Pepys' account of the Great Fire of London, higher attaining pupils in particular capture the drama of the event in their writing, and all pupils demonstrate a very sound level of knowledge and understanding of the main events. Assessments show that most pupils have some understanding of the causes and consequences of the fire, and all are able to identify significant differences between ways used to fight fires today and the methods used in London in the 17th century. They know that the fire started in a baker's shop in Pudding Lane, that tightly-packed timber-framed houses allowed the fire to spread quickly, and that people working in 'human chains' were dependent on river water carried in leather buckets from the Thames to fight the flames because there were neither hose-pipes nor fire hydrants. Written 'eye-witness' accounts of the fire by some pupils are above average for their age. In Year 3, pupils 'experience' life in a Roman school. They learn to exchange greetings and answer the register in Latin, write on 'wax tablets' when they do sums involving Roman numerals, play a variety of games from Roman times, and explore the art of dressing in a 'toga'. In both year groups where lessons were observed, pupils are able to investigate the past through role play and by asking and answering simple questions. Work displayed around the school and brief discussions with pupils show that they know some of the ways in which life in the past was different from life today, and that they are increasingly able to use historical

terms and dates. It is clear that pupils are gradually developing an understanding of chronology. For example, they are able to place some of the events they have studied in the correct sequence on increasingly sophisticated time-lines.

126. The teaching of history is mainly good, and occasionally very good. This marks a significant improvement since the findings of the last inspection when teaching was 'satisfactory' and the pace of lessons often slow. Now, the teaching is securely underpinned by a good scheme of work which plans for progression in the key historical skills. Lively, experiential approaches such as those outlined above, visits to places of historical interest such as the Romano-British farm at Upton House, and visitors who come into school to share their experiences as 'living witnesses', for example of the evacuation, ensure that pupils are well motivated and thoroughly enjoy the subject. There are now some effective curricular links, for example between history, drama and English, although there remains some scope for higher attaining pupils in Year 3 in particular to pursue some of their own lines of enquiry through independent research using secondary sources of evidence, and most pupils would benefit by having at least slightly more opportunities than is currently the case to apply their skills in reading and writing to their studies of history. All teachers plan their lessons well, and many have a particular interest in, and enthusiasm for, history as a subject. They communicate their enthusiasm well to their pupils, and the very good relationships that exist between teachers and pupils mean that imaginative approaches such as role play can be very effective in bringing the subject to life. Certainly, experiences such as those observed have a particularly powerful impact on pupils' ability to empathise with those in the past. In seeking to improve on the already good provision, teachers now need to consider ways of helping pupils to organise and communicate their findings, not only in a variety of interesting ways, but also in greater depth. Sometimes, for example, the discussion which follows role play and other practical experiences deals only superficially, and in a fairly random way, with a consideration of differences between 'then' and 'now'. In Year 3 in particular, there is scope for pupils to begin to develop a more explicit and systematic overview of history which will enable them to see some of the links between the different periods they have studied. For example, higher attaining pupils in particular might begin to consider, explicitly, how recurring themes have changed over time, and why.
127. The history co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the subject and has considerable expertise. She is very well qualified for her role. She has addressed the points raised in the last inspection report in a thoughtful and creative way, and she has gained the whole-hearted commitment of staff to the new scheme of work. She has been instrumental in helping them to plan a dynamic curriculum involving teaching approaches which demand much of them in terms of energy and expertise, and she has worked hard to assemble the resources necessary for them to deliver the planned units of work. She has produced an excellent portfolio of annotated samples of work by pupils of all ages. This resource is particularly helpful for teachers when making annual assessments of pupils' progress, and should also prove useful when teachers plan work for pupils of different abilities. The use of ICT to support work in history is developing well, and pupils are accustomed to using both the Internet and CD-ROMs to find out about the past. The school's museum is a delightful feature that engages pupils' interest through displays of artefacts related to their studies, through the questions displayed, and, not least, through an open invitation to pupils to compete for prizes in regular 'Mystery History' competitions.
128. Although the co-ordinator has worked hard to monitor provision for history through her involvement in planning and through sampling pupils' work, she has not yet had an

opportunity to monitor teaching and learning directly by observing lessons. This would prove a very useful next step.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

129. At the time of the last inspection the school's provision for ICT, including teaching, was judged to be unsatisfactory and standards were below average. Since then the school has made very good progress in updating its resources and developing the curriculum. The school's response to raised national expectations has been managed well with a carefully thought out action plan to guide this rapidly developing area. As a result, pupils now make satisfactory progress and in Years 2 and 3 almost all meet the levels expected for their ages.
130. Teachers are consistently implementing a comprehensive and detailed planning framework. It is based on national guidelines, carefully adapted to meet the school's particular needs and to develop the use of ICT across the curriculum. It ensures that pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding build year-on-year as they move through the school. It also ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum with a suitable emphasis on the processes of finding things out, developing ideas and exchanging and sharing information. There was less evidence of pupils reflecting on their work and talking about their experiences of ICT. The well-equipped computer suite is in use for much of the day and lessons focus clearly on developing pupils' basic computer skills. Teachers are alert to any issues regarding equal opportunities and use teaching assistants well to support pupils who need extra help. As a result, pupils of all abilities achieve well, including those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.
131. Teachers plan carefully to develop pupils' basic skills systematically. For example, they use word banks to enhance their literacy skills in Year 1, write stories in Year 2 and combine pictures and text in Year 3. In Year 2, they use CD-ROMs to research information on countries in Europe and build effectively on this experience in Year 3 when they are introduced to the Internet. ICT is used successfully to support pupils' learning in numeracy. In Year 1, they competently enter data on their homes into a graphics package to create a pictogram, while older pupils understand that ICT can be used to store and sort information as they create a Year 3 database.
132. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Lessons are well planned and include interesting real life tasks. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound and they are supported effectively by well-trained teaching assistants. In the most successful lesson the teacher was well prepared. She shared learning objectives with the pupils and demonstrated confidently what was expected of them. As a result, pupils made positive links with their earlier work and were clear about what they had to do. The ICT suite sometimes gets very hot and then pupils find it difficult to concentrate, both while the teacher is talking and during the activity phase. These are early days in the life of the computer suite and, although teachers have come a long way, their levels of expertise vary. In order to improve the quality of teaching further, the school should consider the particular challenges presented by teaching in the computer suite and seek to establish consistent routines and ways of working.
133. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and hard working and leads the subject very well. She provides good support for colleagues formally, through the scheme of work and by leading training sessions, and informally through advice and guidance on a day-to-day basis. She is well supported by a teaching assistant/technician who is able to deal with most of the everyday technical difficulties as they arise. Basic assessment

procedures linked to each study unit are already in place but a more refined system would help teachers to establish precisely what each pupil already knows and can do. This would enable them to plan more accurately to meet their individual needs. Although all staff have been observed teaching ICT, a more focussed approach to monitoring would help to identify and share strengths and address areas for development. The school is now well placed to move forward.

MUSIC

134. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in music and achieve standards that are in line with those expected nationally for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 3. They enjoy their music making activities and, especially, singing. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also make good progress. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
135. During the course of the inspection, good quality singing was heard in lessons, and during choir practice. Pupils have good diction and pitch control and this enables them to communicate the feelings and moods of the music to the listener. Pupils' skills in working together to practise, rehearse and perform with others are also good. They develop a satisfactory knowledge of the musical elements of pitch, tempo and dynamics and they know how sounds can be made in different ways, for example, by shaking and tapping percussion instruments to create high and low sounds. They can follow simple picture notation in the course of playing their own compositions. Pupils who learn to play the recorder do so with increasing control and learn to read simple formal notation.
136. The quality of teaching in music is good. A part-time music specialist, who also takes the recorder club, teaches singing to all pupils in the school. Her good subject knowledge and her understanding of how to teach pupils how to sing has a significant impact on the standards that are achieved. Class lessons are well planned and structured so that pupils increase their understanding through a variety of musical activities that combine performing, composing and appraising. There are good opportunities for pupils to work independently, in various sized groups and in whole-class situations.
137. The subject co-ordinator has only been in post for a few weeks. Nevertheless, he already has a clear view of where the subject needs to be developed. For example, he rightly recognises that there is a need to provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about music from a wider range of cultures than is currently the case. The school has a satisfactory range of musical instruments which are well organised and cared for. They are used well to support learning in class lessons. Resources for music are good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138. Overall, standards in Year 2 and Year 3 are average. In some lessons, pupils' control and co-ordination when performing basic movements and practising basic skills are above average. Their ability to make judgements and talk about their own performance and that of others is less well developed. There is a broad and balanced range of activities that ensures pupils experience all aspects of the National Curriculum. Dance and gymnastics lessons were seen during the inspection. The programme, based on national guidelines, has been carefully planned to support the development of a wide range of skills. However, there have been no opportunities for the whole staff to discuss and agree the precise levels of skills and challenge for each

age group. Therefore, although most pupils achieve well in most lessons, this limits more rapid progress over time.

139. Teachers are careful to ensure that all pupils, including those who have special educational needs, are fully and actively involved in learning. Often, this is with the valuable support of teaching assistants. There is no difference in the standards reached by boys and girls.
140. In gymnastics, pupils in Year 1 confidently mount and dismount the apparatus and begin to think about the direction and height of their movements. They climb and jump safely and with good awareness of space and others. In one lesson, most pupils demonstrated a good range of balances when performing short, linked sequences of movements. Good links with literacy were seen in dance lessons in Year 2 when pupils responded enthusiastically to the stimulus of the teachers' expressive poetry reading. In Year 3, the school makes good use of a teaching assistant's expertise as a qualified gymnastic coach. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed the whole lesson. They followed her movements closely and carefully, performing stretches, balances and turns in a rigorous warm-up. They showed great confidence on the apparatus, listening attentively and persevering well to refine their balances and body shapes.
141. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when some teaching was unsatisfactory and led to unsatisfactory behaviour. In all lessons, the skilful management of pupils' behaviour, based on very good relationships, is now a strength. Good teamwork was evident in lessons where teaching assistants were available. All staff provide good role models for learning by being fully and actively involved in all lessons. In the most successful lessons, the teacher's secure subject knowledge was evident from the outset with a strong emphasis on the quality of pupils' movements. Her high expectations encouraged them to think carefully about straight legs, pointed toes and 'no spiky fingers' when refining their balances. In some lessons, teachers' objectives for the lesson are too broad and, therefore, do not provide a sharp enough focus for teaching. On other occasions, they do not provide pupils with opportunities to talk about and evaluate their work. This restricts further progress in refining and polishing the quality of their work.
142. The co-ordinator is well qualified, enthusiastic about her subject and provides effective leadership. In consultation with her colleagues, she has produced a detailed scheme of work which is used consistently by teachers to guide their planning. However, as there are no formal procedures in place to assess pupils' progress, it is difficult for teachers without specialist knowledge to identify precisely what pupils need to do next in order to improve. The co-ordinator is, therefore, currently involved in an interesting partnership with other local schools in attempting to deal with this issue.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

143. Teachers' assessments show that pupils enter Year 1 with limited knowledge and understanding of religion. As a result of good teaching, they make good progress as they move through the school. They achieve well to reach standards in Year 2 and Year 3 that are in line with the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus. When learning about religions they gain a sound understanding of key beliefs, people, celebrations, festivals, worship and symbols. Their learning from religion is stronger, particularly the key skills of reflection and empathy. It is reinforced effectively in other

subjects such as literacy and history and by the positive learning climate that the school has successfully established. Pupils are aware that religious traditions in the UK are mainly Christian. However, they also gain a basic awareness of other world faiths and by the time they leave the school they have a satisfactory knowledge of Judaism and Hinduism. The subject makes an important contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

144. In Year 1, pupils begin to develop a secure knowledge of the traditions, stories and festivals of their Christian cultural heritage. Through assemblies, a visit to the local church and through visits by members of the local clergy they become increasingly aware of the importance of symbol and celebration within Christianity. Teachers relate these effectively to everyday events in pupils' own lives when they explore special gifts and special places. They begin to understand that some things are special because of what they represent.
145. In Year 2, this knowledge of Christianity is extended when they learn about the events leading up to Easter. They know that Christians use the sign of the cross in remembrance of Jesus' death. They also begin to develop some awareness of other world faiths and in their work on Judaism learn about the significance of the Shabbat and the festival of Rosh Hashanah. Teachers build effectively on this in Year 3 and pupils successfully draw parallels between the Christian ceremony of baptism and the ritual ear-piercing in the Hindu faith.
146. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. In the lessons seen, a particular strength is the way that teachers establish clear links with aspects of pupils' own lives, including issues and matters of concern. In this way, their learning becomes more purposeful and meaningful. Discussions are handled sensitively and, as a result of the very good relationships seen in all classrooms, pupils are happy to talk about their feelings as well as facts. In Year 2, for example, pupils talked freely about their perceptions of bullying and then went on to deal with the question of who was doing the bullying in the story of Daniel in the Lion's Den. All groups of pupils were fully engaged in the lesson and the choice of activities sustained their interest well. In Year 3, the teacher established a suitably respectful and quiet atmosphere at the start of the lesson by lighting a candle. She skilfully held the interest of all pupils with well-targeted questioning to deepen pupils' understanding of the key rites of passage in the lives of Hindus. Pupils persevered well in trying to explain the significance of each of the ten birth steps. They are clearly keen to understand rather than simply accept the facts and continuously ask the question 'why?'.
147. In the relatively short time since her appointment, the co-ordinator has gained a clear awareness of her role and responsibilities. She is strongly committed to developing her own knowledge and expertise and provides good support for her colleagues. She has made a very good start on a detailed scheme of work to guide teachers' planning and this was an important factor in the good teaching seen during the inspection. Although there are no formal procedures in place to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding, she is beginning to gain an overview of standards across the school through discussions with teachers in each year group. The school is currently awaiting the revised locally agreed syllabus. During its implementation, it will be important to ensure that pupils' learning builds on their earlier experiences and that an appropriate balance is maintained between religious education and the teaching of personal, social and health education and education for citizenship.

148. Resources for religious education are broadly satisfactory although provision could be improved by extending the range of artefacts to support the teaching of Judaism and Hinduism. Effective use is made of the local church to support work on Christianity, and local ministers are regular visitors to assembly. However, there are currently no similar opportunities for pupils to visit places of worship or to receive visitors in connection with their work on other world faiths.