

INSPECTION REPORT

HAMWORTHY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Poole

LEA area: Poole

Unique reference number: 113704

Headteacher: Mrs A.K.Best

Reporting inspector: Paul Bamber
15064

Dates of inspection: 4th-6th November 2002

Inspection number: 247390

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed Primary

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 8-12

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ashmore Crescent
Hamworthy
Poole
Dorset

Postcode: BH15 4DG

Telephone number: 01202 677870

Fax number: 01202 660151

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr G Ollett

Date of previous inspection: January 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15064	Paul Bamber	Registered inspector	Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1329	Kevern Oliver	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?
30864	Corrinne Boyce	Team inspector	Mathematics, Art and design	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22434	Sandra Bradshaw	Team inspector	Information and communication technology, Music	
13164	Pauline Allen	Team Inspector	Science, Design and technology, Special educational needs	
11277	John Moles	Team Inspector	English, English as an additional language, Educational Inclusion	
10782	Henry Moreton	Team Inspector	Geography, History Religious Education	
	John Blanchard	Team Inspector	French, Citizenship	

The inspection contractor was:

Quality Assurance Consultants
The Hucclecote Centre
Churchdown Lane
Hucclecote
Gloucester
GL3 3QN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7-10
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?	11-13
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13-15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15-17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17-18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	18-19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19-21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22-25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26-39

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hamworthy Middle School serves an area of Poole with a greater degree of social and economic deprivation than is the average nationally and locally. There are 334 pupils on roll, aged between eight and twelve. Around a half of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is much higher than average. A significant number of these have emotional and behavioural difficulties. An average proportion of pupils, (around one per cent), have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Very few pupils are in receipt of a free school meal. Evidence indicates that because there are no school lunches available, as is common throughout the Borough, many fewer parents than would normally be the case claim their entitlement. A lower than average (one per cent) number of pupils uses English as an additional language and pupils are from predominantly white British backgrounds. Pupils in Years 6 and 7 entered the school with below average attainment, but more recently pupils have been entering with average attainment. A higher than average number of pupils either enter or leave the school at times other than the normal time of transfer from a first or to a secondary school.

Since the last full inspection (Section 10), there have been several new teachers to the school and considerable changes to the managerial structure and in subject leadership. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs has risen significantly. There has been serious disruption to learning recently, caused by major internal building works, which necessitated the temporary closure of some specialist teaching areas. The headteacher and governors have also had to spend considerable time in consultations over a possible amalgamation with the local First School and/or change of location. With some justification, the school asserts that these factors have slowed the rate of development since the last inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. At the time of the last inspection, it was judged to be underachieving. This is no longer the case, because most pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards in English, mathematics and science are below average, but results in national tests have improved in English and mathematics recently. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory, as are leadership and management. Pupils' moral and social development are good, and as a result, most have positive attitudes to learning and behave well. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in physical education are above average.
- Because teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and have good relationships with them, lessons are normally purposeful and learning positive.
- Pupils' personal, moral and social development are good as a result of effective systems for behaviour management and pastoral care.
- The wide use of specialist accommodation, a stimulating environment and the wide range of out-of-class activities offered, enhance pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Monitoring the planning and teaching of the curriculum to ensure that all subjects are taught in sufficient depth and that what is taught is relevant to pupils.
- The use of assessment and test data to improve standards.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last full inspection (Section 10) in January 2000 when it was judged to have been underachieving. In a subsequent review, of the progress carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors, towards eliminating this underachievement and in addressing the Key Issues identified

in the 2000 inspection, the school was judged to be making good progress. Over the last year, although that progress has been slower, improvements have continued. The overall quality of teaching is better and there have been further improvements in standards in writing and mathematics. Satisfactory progress has been made in addressing the Key Issues from the 2000 inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

The table shows that when compared with all schools standards are below average in mathematics and well below average in English and science. It is not surprising that standards are below or well below average because so many pupils have special educational needs which will tend to lower average standards. The higher than average amount of pupil mobility also tends to lower standards. When compared with similar schools, standards are average in English and mathematics and below average in science.

Over the last few years, the percentage of pupils attaining standards expected of them by the end of Year 6 has gradually risen in English and mathematics, but declined in science. The school has focused acutely upon raising standards in English and mathematics. As a result, it has not paid the same attention to maintaining standards in science. The school, in conjunction with the local education authority, has set very challenging targets for the 2003 Year 6 national tests, in English and mathematics. Present standards in Year 6, in which nearly 60 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, indicate that these will not be met.

Inspection evidence shows that pupils in the present Years 6 and 7 attain below average standards in English, mathematics and science. Standards in physical education are above the national expectation in Years 6 and 7, as a result of very good specialist teaching and good quality accommodation. Standards are in line with national or local expectations in all other subjects, apart from information and communication technology in Year 7 and music in Years 6 and 7, in which they are below expectations. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily. Some pupils with special educational needs achieve well as a result of good support and extra classes, which enable them to attain nationally expected standards for their age. In some lessons, the brightest pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils enjoy lessons and take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and in the playground. There is a small minority who are less well behaved but who are effectively managed so that they rarely disrupt learning.
Personal development and	Good. A strength of the school. Pupils willingly take responsibilities in and

relationships	around the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are in line with the national average. However, unauthorised absence is well above the national average.

Pupils' active participation in the school council and the conscientious way in which they carry out responsibilities, are a strength. Despite the best efforts of the school, there are too many unauthorised absences.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 8-12 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory

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

A strength in teaching throughout the school is the effective way in which pupils' behaviour is managed. This is a crucial factor in a school that has many more pupils than is the average who are challenging in their behaviour. As a result, most lessons are purposeful and conducted in a positive atmosphere. Where teaching is at its best, good use is made of specialists, for example in dance, games and swimming. Teachers help pupils to learn well by using interesting methods and good quality resources. The pace and challenge in lessons promote an enthusiastic response from pupils. Weaknesses in teaching are linked to less effective planning and some lack of subject knowledge, for instance, in science and music, and in some lessons, a lack of challenge for the brightest pupils. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory, but some opportunities are missed to use information and communication technology to support learning across the curriculum.

Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is often good because they are well supported by teaching assistants and have effective individual education plans. Those very few pupils who use English as an additional language are taught satisfactorily.

The quality of learning is satisfactory overall. Most pupils work diligently in lessons and maintain concentration when asked to work independently. The school has placed great emphasis upon developing language skills but, despite this, the pupils' limited range of vocabulary prevails and prevents them reaching higher standards in several subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Generally broad and balanced. Pupils have access to a wide range of out-of-class activities. Weaknesses in the curriculum in science and music result in some underachievement.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. It is most effective for pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. It enables those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English to make rapid progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Personal development is well promoted as a result of the school's positive ethos and the provision of a very effective pastoral care worker. Pupils' social and moral development are good.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are well cared for. Procedures to promote their good behaviour are effective. Assessment procedures in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are underdeveloped
--	---

Parents feel that their children are well cared for and enjoy school. A significant minority is concerned that the school does not work closely enough with them. Despite many school initiatives to involve parents more in their children's learning, little progress has been made.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Strengths include a clear vision and a shared commitment to improve standards. There are some weaknesses in managing the curriculum.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Apart from not having a formal process for assessing risks in the school, governors competently meet statutory duties. They are very supportive of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school is now better placed than in the recent past to accurately measure how much progress individual pupils make. Data from national tests is now being used satisfactorily to help teachers eliminate weaknesses in pupils' learning.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Budget monitoring is rigorous and financial planning effectively focuses upon raising standards. Funds, available to support pupils with special educational needs and to train newly qualified teachers, are used effectively.

The school satisfactorily challenges itself to improve standards, to compare its performance with other schools and to consult with pupils and parents. It successfully seeks good value for money when purchasing goods and services. The school's accommodation is of good quality and its effective use contributes significantly to the standards pupils attain in physical education and design and technology.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like the school • There is good progress • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best • Their children are encouraged to become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of information they receive about their children's progress • The school working more closely with them • A wider range of activities outside lessons • The amount of homework their children are given

Overall, inspectors agree with parents' positive views, although they judge progress to be only satisfactory. Parents receive a good amount of good quality of information about their children's progress, regular and informative newsletters and updates on new school policies. The provision of activities outside lessons is at least as much and wide ranging as most similar schools. The amount of homework set is in line with national guidelines, and, which during the inspection, teachers consistently followed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. At the time of the last full inspection, pupils were judged to be underachieving, especially in mathematics and science. The findings of Her Majesty's Inspectors' subsequent review judged that good progress had been made in raising standards and in eliminating underachievement. Progress has continued to be made in these areas and although there is still some underachievement, most pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons and are achieving as well as they should.

2. In the 2002, Year 6 national tests, pupils attained below average standards in mathematics and well below average standards in English and science. When compared with similar schools, standards were average in English and mathematics, but below average in science. The school has a much higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, which results in a lowering of average standards.

3. The trend in the improvements made in the school's national test results is broadly in line with that nationally. Over the last few years, standards have generally been below or well below average, reflecting the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The difference between boys and girls attainment over the period 2000 to 2002 reflects national trends, with girls outperforming boys in English and the reverse in mathematics and science.

4. The school, in conjunction with the local education authority, has set very challenging targets for improvements in the 2003 Year 6 national tests in English and mathematics. The present level of average attainment indicates that these targets will not be met, but that the school's own slightly less ambitious, but realistic targets will be. If met, the latter targets would still be an improvement upon the 2002 results and would represent good achievement, considering that nearly 60 per cent of pupils in Year 6 have special educational needs.

5. Last year, the school provided extra (booster) classes for those Year 6 pupils who were considered to need further help in order to attain the nationally expected standards in the English and mathematics national tests. As a result, a higher percentage of pupils reached these standards than in previous years. Notably, well over three-quarters of those pupils with special educational needs, who attended these classes, managed to reach the expected standards. The school acknowledges, in its development plan, that this year there is also a need to provide extra classes in science, in order to help raise standards in the national tests in this subject.

6. Pupils' standards in Year 7 have improved in English and science, when compared with those indicated by the 2002 national test results. Although standards remain below average in these subjects and in mathematics, pupils have made good progress this term. Year 7 pupils attain satisfactory standards in French.

7. In Years 6 and 7, standards are above the level expected for their age in physical education as a result of good, specialist teaching, a stimulating curriculum and effective assessment procedures. Standards are in line with expectations in art and design, design and technology, French, history and religious education. Pupils throughout the school attain above average standards in swimming, games and dance. In information and communication technology, pupils in Year 6 attain average standards, but in Year 7, pupils attain below average standards in their keyboard skills and in using computers to control models. In music, throughout

the school, some weaknesses in the curriculum, in teachers' confidence and subject expertise mean that pupils' standards in composing are below average.

8. Overall, pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average because they have a limited range of vocabulary with which to express their ideas or to respond in depth to questions. Pupils' reading lacks understanding. Although many are technically competent in reading words, their lack of understanding limits their ability to read with expression. Whilst pupils in Years 6 and 7 write imaginatively, their lack of vocabulary and ability to structure sentences and paragraphs sufficiently well contributes to the below average standards they attain.

9. In mathematics, pupils have a satisfactory grasp of mathematical concepts and vocabulary and use a variety of strategies to calculate mentally and on paper. They use and interpret symbols, diagrams and tables competently. However, because within their curriculum they are given limited opportunities to use their knowledge to solve problems, which are relevant to them, and because of their difficulties interpreting questions, their attainment is below average overall.

10. In science, pupils' lack of reading skills means that in tests they often misinterpret instructions, which results in them being unable to apply the knowledge they have. Some deficiencies in planning sequences of science lessons means that pupils are expected to carry out investigations before they are given the necessary knowledge beforehand, to apply to these investigations. As a result of their weaknesses in this area, standards are below average. In other aspects of the subject, standards are in line with those expected for their age.

11. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils now enter the school with average attainment and the achievements of pupils in Years 4 and 5 reflect their attainment. Pupils, presently in Years 6 and 7, entered the school with lower than average attainment and whilst there is evidence that the present Year 7 have underachieved in science, the achievements of these pupils is presently satisfactory. In some lessons, throughout the school, the most able pupils are not given difficult enough work, which means that they do not make enough progress. However, the proportion of pupils attaining higher standards than nationally expected, in the Year 6 tests, has risen overall, indicating better achievement. Within the overall satisfactory achievements of pupils with special educational needs, there are some who achieve well. This is a result of the good extra provision for them, including extra classes and effective support for individuals and groups of pupils from teaching assistants. Some weaknesses in planning and in the management of the curriculum and the use of assessment information contribute to some relative underachievement.

12. Pupils who use English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented make satisfactory progress and achieve standards that are appropriate to their particular needs and abilities.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The majority of pupils enjoy their time in Hamworthy Middle School. For them it is a good and happy place in which they learn and play with their friends.

14. Most pupils get on well with each other, their teachers and all the other adults who work with them. They respond very positively to the help and guidance provided by their teachers. Many of them voluntarily turn to the pastoral care worker for confidential advice and support when they are worried about things either in school or at home.

15. Pupils have good attitudes to learning. In a Year 5 poetry lesson, for instance, the class laughed with delight as their teacher read out some amusing examples and then enthusiastically contributed to a whole class effort to create a poem about ice cream. Pupils then moved on to

work enthusiastically, in pairs and alone, on their own poems. In a Year 7 citizenship lesson about the United Nations and the rights of the child, pupils worked hard and gave positive responses.

16. Pupils understand and support the positive behaviour system and the 'golden rules'. They like the rewards given for good behaviour and achievement. As a result, behaviour in school is good overall. In lessons, the majority of pupils maturely cope with the potentially disruptive behaviour of small numbers of their classmates. An example of this was a Year 4 personal, social and health education lesson about 'knowing myself' in which pupils concentrated on their work despite necessary pauses in learning as their teacher dealt with two badly behaved boys.

17. During lunch-times, when pupils have to eat their packed lunches in their classrooms, there is a calm, orderly atmosphere. Playtimes are a happy mixture of running, chatting and chasing and games involving balls and hoops. Play is sometimes boisterous, but rarely oppressive. Pupils report that occasionally there is bullying, but that it is quickly and fairly dealt with by their teachers and the pastoral care worker. The pupils are confident that 'the system' will look after them if they have a problem.

18. Pupils enjoy responsibility. They help to keep the school clean and tidy and willingly help their teachers to set up and clear up after lessons. Older pupils help to organise assemblies and playground games for the younger ones. The school council, which is made up of two elected representatives from each class, takes its responsibilities very seriously. It has recently, for example, made practical suggestions for improvements to the playgrounds, which have been implemented by the headteacher, governors and staff.

19. Pupils care for each other and take great delight in each other's success. In a whole school assembly, for example, everyone listened with great interest when pupils were invited to tell everyone about their 'aiming high' achievements. Award assemblies are occasions for great celebration, which promote pupils' self esteem and sense of belonging very well.

20. Attendance, which is in line with national averages for schools of this type and size, is satisfactory. Punctuality is good with all but a handful of pupils arriving in time for the start of the school day. Lessons start and finish on time. Last year there were thirteen fixed term exclusions as the school dealt with the serious misbehaviour of a small number of pupils.

21. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to their work. Because of the effective strategies employed by class teachers, all pupils take part in lessons and enjoy their learning. Frequent opportunities to work in groups with a high degree of independence, especially in science, supports their personal development and encourages good attitudes to work and each other.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

22. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the last inspection, but there is now less unsatisfactory teaching. Just under half of all lessons observed was good or better and almost a further half was satisfactory. There were two unsatisfactory lessons observed.

23. As at the time of the last full inspection, pupils' learning is enhanced as a result of specialist teaching, throughout the school in physical education and in French in Year 7. The quality of teaching in physical education is good and in all other subjects, it is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is in line with the judgement made in the 2001 Her Majesty's Inspectors review of the school's progress towards the implementation of the 2000 inspection action plan. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory and is making a good contribution to gradually improving standards.

24. In the best lessons, teachers set work, which is of the right degree of difficulty for all pupils, regardless of their ability. As a result, pupils learn and achieve very well. A common characteristic of the best lessons is the skilful way in which teachers use interesting methods and resources to motivate pupils' interest and to clarify more difficult concepts. This was well illustrated in a very good science lesson for Year 6 pupils to find out which materials are soluble. A very significant, positive feature of the teaching is the successful way in which pupils' behaviour is managed in lessons. In most classes, there is a larger than average number of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The skill and patience with which teachers encourage most of these pupils to behave acceptably, to have positive attitudes to their learning and to learn effectively, is a strength. For instance, in a good information and communication technology lesson for Year 6 pupils, the quality of control and support provided by the teacher and the learning support assistant meant that all pupils worked diligently and amicably in pairs, and that the pupils made good progress using computers to change size and style of text to enhance a newspaper report.

25. Most weaknesses in teaching identified in the 2001 Her Majesty's Inspectors' review and/or in the 2000 full report have been addressed, although some still remain. Teaching assistants now play a more active role during the introductions to lessons, often helping the least able pupils, or those who find it difficult to concentrate well, to follow the teachers' explanations and instructions and to respond appropriately to questions. As a result, these pupils are actively involved in lessons and make at least satisfactory progress. Teachers and pupils are now much clearer about learning objectives in lessons. This means that most lessons are well focused upon what pupils should know or can do at their completion. Most teachers use the time at the end of the lesson to encourage pupils to reflect upon lesson objectives and whether they feel they have achieved them. As a result, their learning is well consolidated. However, some weaknesses still remain. In science and music, there are examples of the teachers' lack of secure subject knowledge. In an unsatisfactory Year 7 science lesson, for instance, this caused some confusion amongst pupils about how to find out which type of crisps contained the most energy.

26. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers enable pupils to learn by making it very clear what the learning objectives of the lesson are, and at the end of the lesson encouraging them to evaluate the progress they have made. Tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities and to the targets in their individual educational plans. The class teachers and teaching assistants work well together in lessons to ensure that pupils concentrate well and feel confident in what they are doing. As a result, the instances of poor behaviour are minimised and all pupils can learn. Some pupils with special educational needs do need much more attention and supervision to ensure that they maintain concentration and do enough work in lessons. The inability of a significant minority of pupils to remember things they have already been taught, despite the best efforts of teachers and teaching assistants, is a barrier to them attaining higher standards.

27. The school is successful in providing support for pupils with English as an additional language. Teachers plan activities to ensure they have work that closely matches their understanding of English, but which is also sufficiently challenging.

28. In most cases, the most-able pupils are suitably challenged with the appropriate work. There were good examples of this observed in literacy and numeracy, science and physical education. However, there were also some lessons, for example, in numeracy, history and music in which the most-able pupils were set work which was too easy and, as a result, pupils made insufficient progress.

29. The quality of all pupils' learning is satisfactory overall. Most produce a satisfactory amount of work in lessons and work independently without teachers needing to constantly supervise them. This is particularly true of pupils with average and above average ability.

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

30. Overall, the quality and range of the learning opportunities are satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced, but in some areas it is not always relevant or taught in sufficient depth. A curriculum plan ensures full coverage of the curriculum and provides a range of satisfactory learning opportunities for all pupils. Medium-term and short-term plans, however, do not provide enough detail about the need to make lessons relevant to all pupils. This has an adverse effect on pupils' attainment particularly in science and music. The school does not yet monitor and analyse the curriculum rigorously enough to ensure it has depth and challenge in all areas. The statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed syllabus for religious education are fully met. All curriculum requirements for pupils with special educational needs are met, enabling them to make satisfactory progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. A strength of the school is the good provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship, which encourages pupils to become increasingly self confident and responsible. All pupils are given equal access to the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

31. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy for Years 4 to 6 now form the basis for the school's teaching of English and mathematics. The effectiveness of strategies for teaching the basic skills in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory throughout the school. The development of writing through other subjects, however, has been insufficiently exploited to produce work of quality and depth and there are few cross-curricular links in English or mathematics. The Key Stage 3 National Strategy has been implemented for English and mathematics and other subjects are being introduced in line with government guidelines. More than the recommended time has been allocated for literacy and numeracy in Year 7, but this has only had a satisfactory impact on standards. French is taught to pupils in Year 7 and the new statutory requirement to teach citizenship has been introduced successfully this term. The school follows the latest government guidelines in all other subjects. Overall, planning throughout the school does not always show how pupils will develop key skills and concepts and this, coupled with weaknesses in the use of assessment, inhibits the school's ability to monitor pupils' progress effectively in all subjects. The school improvement plan identifies key areas of the curriculum for improvement. This development is at an early stage and, as yet, has had a limited impact on raising standards. The use of homework throughout the school is satisfactory. The amount set for pupils as they progress through the school is in line with national guidelines and the school provides good home-school diaries, which include targets to aim for and opportunities for parents to comment and to be involved in supporting their children's learning.

32. The school provides a good range of interesting out-of-class activities. A good programme of visits for all classes enhances many curriculum areas. Pupils in Year 7, for example, are taken on a residential visit to Black Rock for adventurous activities and all year groups visit museums and local sites of interest, such as, Scalpens Court, Montacute House and a planetarium. The school has taken part in focused activity days, such as a Caribbean day and the whole school spent a week learning about African art, work from which was successfully entered in a local competition. The school encourages pupils to use their initiative. They help, for example, by taking messages around the school and pupils in Year 7 sometimes man the telephone in the lunch hour. The school is part of a pyramid of schools and has sound links with its feeder school and the local secondary schools. Pupils have opportunities to visit the secondary school and teachers visit Hamworthy Middle School to ensure a smooth transition. There are some links with local businesses and with the local Royal Marines base. A good range of after-school clubs caters for all year groups. These include juggling, chess, computer, choir, craft and games clubs. Pupils give good support to the

clubs and these activities benefit their social, physical, academic, cultural and personal development.

33. The school provides a good personal, social, health education and citizenship programme for pupils, which is well supported by a part-time pastoral worker. The planned programme throughout the school is effective and well led by the co-ordinator. The school takes part in a Healthy Schools project. The 'Healthworks' worker advises the school on ideas for delivering the curriculum, which includes sex education and the Healthy Schools Scheme Life Education van visits the school and offers interactive activities for pupils on a variety of personal development issues. Pupils are given opportunities to consider lifestyles and understand the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse and there are links with the police on matters of personal and road safety. Water safety is given a high priority because of the school's proximity to the sea. There are well-planned opportunities each week for pupils to discuss issues important to them, which successfully promotes pupils' confidence, awareness and sensitivity. Personal, social, health education and citizenship are a strength of the school.

34. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the National Curriculum. For the majority of the time, these pupils are taught with adult support, within the classes and this strategy works well. The school's arrangements for setting by ability in mathematics, enables pupils to work with others of similar ability and activities and teaching are directly related to their needs. Withdrawal sessions for additional support are well organised. Pupils' individual education plans have clear short-term targets. These are well matched to the short-term and medium-term curriculum plans.

35. Throughout the school, pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, those who speak English as an additional language, those with special educational need and the more-able pupils are catered for equally effectively. This is the result of the good quantity and good quality of the additional support provided for pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. Teachers take great care planning for these groups and show awareness of the needs of all pupils in the class.

36. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. No overall judgement was made relating to this area of the curriculum in the last report. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Opportunities are provided in religious education and in assemblies to explore different beliefs and values. In assemblies, pupils learn to reflect on various themes and to appreciate the great efforts of others. Pupils in religious education learn about other world faiths and are encouraged to have respect for other religions. For example, pupils were enthralled when an Indian lady visited the school to talk with them about Sikhism. Pupils in Year 4 were invited to think about what makes a person good. The school is aware of the need to plan more opportunities in lessons to develop pupils' understanding of spirituality.

37. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils learn the difference between right and wrong and the school actively encourages pupils to tell the truth, to respect the rights of others and to be considerate towards each other. The behaviour management policy, which is consistently applied by all staff, gives pupils a clear picture of the high standards of behaviour that are expected of them. Teachers and teaching assistants provide very good role models by dealing with pupils in a calm and confident manner and as a result, pupils respond in a similar way.

38. There is good provision for pupils' social development. There are many opportunities through the school's personal, social and health education programme to discuss social issues, such as respect for others and the effect of one's actions on both family and friends. Pupils learn how to keep safe and healthy and how to manage their own feelings. The school council effectively

discusses a range of issues including behaviour and relationships, which encourages pupils to behave well and to consider others. There is a good level of respect between pupils and teachers and between pupils and pupils. Most pupils work well together in pairs and in groups and are willing to help each other.

39. The provision for cultural education is satisfactory. In religious education, pupils learn about the differences and similarities of other cultures. During the school's art week, an African group visited the school and involved pupils in a series of workshops to create music and dance. Following this, pupils made African masks and printed fabric with bright African patterns. Pupils learn about their own culture by visiting local places of interest, including museums. The school supports pupils in their understanding of the multi-cultural society in which we live.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The governors and staff are totally committed to ensuring that their school is a safe and secure place for the whole-school community. There are, therefore, good security arrangements and the site is secure throughout the school day. There normally are three fully trained first aiders present throughout the school day and all other staff have completed basic first-aid training.

41. Arrangements for child protection are satisfactory. They include close links with the appropriate local agencies. All staff are aware of the procedures that they must follow if they are concerned about the well being of any of their pupils. The school has rigorous, computer-based systems for monitoring and encouraging attendance. There is a well established first day follow up system. The school actively discourages parents from taking their children away on holiday during term time. There is a no compromise approach to punctuality and latecomers are dealt with fairly but firmly.

42. The previous inspection reported that not all health and safety procedures were properly in place. Improvements have been made, but they are still, to some extent, unsatisfactory. The general safety of the site and premises is closely monitored through a number of informal systems such as the site manager's daily tour. There are, however, no formal arrangements for regular, recorded inspections of the school. The governors are aware of this shortcoming and are taking appropriate steps to rectify it. There are, however, good risk assessment procedures for specific activities such as the use of the science laboratory and educational visits to other places.

43. All pupils are well known to the adults who work with them. Teachers and support staff pay close attention to both the pupils' personal and learning needs. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils, whatever their ability, make progress. For example, in a Year 7 lesson using information and communications technology to research the story of Thomas à Becket, everyone made good progress as the teacher circulated, checking their work and advising them on what to do next. Teaching assistants ensure that those with special educational needs are helped to make as much progress as possible. The pastoral care worker, who has been in post since the beginning of 2001, makes an important contribution to pupils' personal development by helping them to manage their emotions, control their behaviour and raise their self-esteem.

44. There is a very good whole-school approach to behaviour and discipline, which the majority of parents support. Throughout the school there are posters and other reminders of how pupils are expected to behave. Based on the 'golden rules' and a set of rewards and sanctions, the system very effectively promotes good behaviour. It ensures that all pupils, including those with behavioural difficulties, are treated fairly and know precisely what is expected of them. Bullying is dealt with in a similar way. If any serious problems do arise, the headteacher, class teachers and pastoral worker work with the children concerned and their parents to solve them.

45. The school makes good provision for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need and the annual review procedure complies with statutory requirements. The policy for special educational needs is based on the new Code of Practice. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of the provision for pupils with special educational needs across the school. The computerised system that is being developed gives each teacher a clear picture of the different needs of pupils in their class and a consistent recording system. The procedures for monitoring and supporting those pupils with behavioural difficulties are very good and contribute well to the good working atmosphere across the school.

46. The procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievement are good. The assessment co-ordinator maintains an electronic database where the test results and assessment information are stored. However, all the staff are not as yet fully involved in using assessment procedures. Tracking procedures to identify the progress pupils make are in place. Results of school and national tests are analysed by the co-ordinators in English, mathematics and science. This information is used to identify particular weaknesses in subject areas within the school. For instance, reading was identified as an area for development throughout the school. However, data is not yet used fully to ensure that pupils' progress in all subjects is monitored effectively.

47. Targets are set for individual pupils and are usefully shared with parents and displayed in pupils' books. However, in some cases the targets tend to be too broad and insufficiently focused on the pupils' next steps in their learning.

48. The marking of pupils' work throughout the school is positive and supportive. However, there are some inconsistencies. Some teachers do not give the pupils sufficient guidance on how to improve the quality of their work and this limits the progress they make.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Parents believe that Hamworthy Middle School is a good school. They are confident that it helps their children to learn and mature. They have confidence in the headteacher and the rest of the staff. The overwhelming majority of parents sign up to the 'home school charter'. They also support the school's rigorous attendance procedures and approve of the way that it encourages good behaviour and deals with bullying.

50. Documents, such as the governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus, are good. They exceed minimum requirements, containing a wealth of information about all aspects of school life. There are regular newsletters to keep parents in touch with what is going on and notes are sent home about one-off events such as educational trips. The school also publishes a very good series of advice and information pamphlets for parents, for example, about homework, how they might help their children learn, school uniform and pastoral care. There are close links with the local first school and information and arrangements for bringing new pupils and parents into the school are good.

51. The quality of the end of year reports is good. They contain detailed information about pupils' progress and targets, not only in English, mathematics and science, but also in the rest of the curriculum. They contain detailed information about pupils' personal and social development and space for pupils and parents to write their own comments. There are three consultation meetings each year for parents, to which pupils are also invited, to discuss their progress, targets and any other points for celebration or concern. The first two meetings are very well attended and the school makes special arrangements for those parents who cannot get there at the scheduled times. The third meeting, which takes place after the end of year reports have been sent to parents is 'optional' and less well supported.

52. The governors, headteacher and staff believe that close working links with parents play an important part in their efforts to help pupils learn and develop. They therefore operate an 'open-door' policy. Teachers are nearly always available for informal meetings at the beginning of the day. The headteacher will, whenever possible, see parents 'on demand' and the pastoral care worker is available for those who wish to see her. Parents and teachers also use homework diaries to keep in touch with each other. The majority of parents encourage their children to do their homework. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed and are closely involved in their children's education plans.

53. The majority of parents feel that they have close links with the school, but some, in spite of the above arrangements, feel that communications are not good enough. The school is aware of this situation and is seeking ways of improving matters. It is also working hard to reach the small number of parents who show little or no interest in their children's education.

54. A handful of parents regularly help out in school and another small group runs the successful parent teacher association. Parental help on school trips is patchy. Sometimes there are plenty of volunteers, but on other occasions the school has to fall back on non-teaching staff in order to provide the right level of care when pupils are away from school.

55. Not all parents of pupils actively involve themselves in their children's education. The special educational needs co-ordinator works closely with those parents who attend meetings. There are some, however, who do not fully appreciate the importance of their involvement, despite the considerable efforts made by the school, and this makes it difficult for the school to meet fully the requirements of the new Code of Practice.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The 2000 report judged the quality of the headteacher's and deputy headteacher's leadership to be very good. Whilst aspects of leadership remain good there are some aspects of management which need improving.

57. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher work very closely as a team and since the last inspection have introduced some successful strategies to eliminate underachievement and to raise standards. However, it is only very recently that effective use of assessment information and test data by year leaders, subject co-ordinators and class teachers is resulting in the elimination of underachievement. There is now a strong sense of commitment throughout the school to improve standards, something which prior to the formation of the existing teaching team, is acknowledged by the school as not always having been the case.

58. The management of the organisation and delivery of the curriculum has weaknesses. Senior managers and subject leaders analyse pupils' work to ensure that school policies on marking, homework and coverage of the National Curriculum are consistently applied by teachers. However, there are weaknesses in the lack of depth and relevance of the curriculum, for instance, in science and music, and also in the way in which lessons are sequenced, which have not been identified. As a result, some underachievement amongst average and higher ability pupils still exists.

59. The co-ordinator for special educational needs ensures that the day-to-day organisation, identification of pupils with special educational needs, compilation of individual education plans and the records of progress are all good. Teachers make this work possible through the use of laptop computers. A suitable program enables them to generate individual educational plans for pupils that are consistent and accessible to all members of staff.

60. The school is self-evaluative. Test data is carefully analysed to highlight strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment and comparative data is used to measure the school's performance against other schools, locally and nationally. Significantly, the information has been used well to raise the standards of a group of pupils with less severe special educational needs, who, through intensive extra teaching attained the standards expected of them in the 2001 national tests in English and mathematics. Results in the Year 6 national tests in science fell below expectations last year. Intensive study of the causes has been made and improvements in the science curriculum, and in its teaching, are now a major priority for this academic year. The school's and the local education authority's evaluations of the quality of lessons and the subsequent targets set for improvement have contributed well to recent improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.

61. Governors are very supportive of the school and their part in the management of the school's performance is well carried out. The governors have set targets for the performance of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, which over the last two years have been largely met. As a result, improvements in standards and achievement have resulted. Few governors are directly involved in the work of the school, but the governing body is sufficiently aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and of the need to direct resources to aid improvements in standards. Governors receive presentations from members of staff to fully inform them of new policies or of strategies about to be put into place to improve standards.

62. There are strengths in the leadership and management of finances and resources. Budget monitoring is rigorous. Financial planning is good. Governors take great care to ensure that enough money is available to absorb unexpected expenditure, for instance, to cover staff absences. Priorities identified in the comprehensive school's improvement plan are costed carefully and governors take into account factors such as likely demographic changes when they plan longer term financial strategy.

63. Parents and pupils are appreciative of the way in which the school consults with them over issues which affect them. The pupils' council has been influential in improving the playground facilities. The parents' concerns about the poor behaviour of their own children and that of others, was part of the reason that the pastoral care worker, who has helped many pupils to behave better and to have higher self-esteem, was appointed.

64. There are sufficient, appropriately qualified staff to teach the National Curriculum. Teams of well trained and highly motivated teaching assistants, supervisors and administrators, a pastoral care worker and a site manager all make valuable contributions to the quality of pupils' education. In particular, the teaching assistants' contribution to pupils' learning, which was judged to need improvement in previous inspection reports, is now good.

65. All members of staff have a job description and a good appraisal system is in place. All teachers have professional development programmes, which ensure that they keep up to date with their specialist areas. The arrangements for introducing newly qualified teachers to the school and for supporting their training and development during their first year in the classroom are very good.

66. The quality of the accommodation is very good. There are not only airy and mostly spacious classrooms, but also a number of well equipped specialist areas, such as the science laboratory, a design and technology room, and a swimming pool on site. The fabric of the buildings is generally in good decorative condition both inside and out. The grounds, which consist of two grassed areas and two hard surfaced playgrounds, are extensive and provide ample space for pupils to relax and play at break times and enjoy a wide range of sports.

67. Overall, resources for teaching and learning are good. They are particularly good in design and technology and science. The provision for information and communications technology, which includes a suite equipped with up-to-date, well-maintained computers, mathematics, and personal social and health education are good. Resources for the rest of the curriculum are sufficient and satisfactory.

68. WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Improve standards in English, mathematics and science by:

- extending pupils' range of vocabulary so that they better understand instructions and interpret written questions;
- developing pupils' ability to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems;
- providing pupils with sufficient knowledge and understanding to enable them to plan and successfully carry out science investigations.
(Paragraphs number 2, 8, 9, 10, 25, 73, 74, 75, 77, 85, 89, 93, 95, 97, 98)

2. More effectively monitoring the planning and teaching of the curriculum to ensure that what is taught is in sufficient depth and is relevant for all pupils by:

- analysing plans more thoroughly to ensure that in not just some, but all subjects, pupils are set work which is wide ranging and in sufficient depth;
- observing more lessons, across a wider range of subjects, to make sure that all teachers set work which draws on pupils' experiences.
(Paragraphs number 7, 30, 31, 58, 93, 95, 97, 120, 121, 128-132)

3. Consolidating recent effective practice in the use of assessment information and test data by:

- providing more training for all teachers about how to use assessment information to improve standards and achievement.
(Paragraphs number 11, 46, 57, 76, 78, 82, 90, 92, 104, 111, 122, 147)

The following minor issue to be considered by the headteacher and governors:

- The governors do not have formal procedures for carrying out risk assessments.
(Paragraphs number 42)
- Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support learning in many subjects.
(Paragraphs number 79, 85, 98, 132, 142, 147)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	66
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	46

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9	39	49	3	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	334
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	156

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	34
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	29

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	6.1

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	1.0
National comparative data	0.3

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	38	47	85

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	27	30
	Girls	31	31	35
	Total	54	58	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (60)	68 (62)	76 (87)
	National	75 (75)	73 (72)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	27	31
	Girls	32	32	34
	Total	55	59	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (54)	69 (69)	76 (81)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	329	13	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: Y4 – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	28

Education support staff: Y4 – Y7

Total number of education support staff	15
---	----

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	825972
Total expenditure	804158
Expenditure per pupil	2372

Total aggregate hours worked per week	263
---------------------------------------	-----

Balance brought forward from previous year	75158
Balance carried forward to next year	96972

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 40 per cent

Number of questionnaires sent out	339
Number of questionnaires returned	136

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	37	55	7	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	30	62	2	1	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	57	9	2	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	13	57	23	3	5
The teaching is good.	26	62	3	0	9
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	44	14	4	11
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	42	46	7	2	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	51	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	26	43	18	2	11
The school is well led and managed.	27	58	4	4	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	30	61	2	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	43	19	3	18

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

ENGLISH

69. By the end of Year 7, when the pupils leave the school, the proportion of pupils attaining the national expectation for their age is below average. However, as pupils entered the school with standards that were below average, this therefore, represents satisfactory achievement over their time in the school.

70. Analysis of the school's 2002 national test results for Year 6 pupils, shows that compared with all schools nationally, standards are well below average. When compared with similar schools, standards are average. Standards fell in 1998-2001, but rose in 2002. Problems encountered by the many pupils with special educational needs in understanding the precise meaning of printed words means that many pupils find test papers difficult to comprehend.

71. Over the period 1998-2002, girls outperformed boys, except in 2001, when their performance was matched by the boys. Inspection evidence shows that the majority of boys are now performing equally as well as girls. This is the result of the school placing greater emphasis on styles of writing that are of interest to boys.

72. The findings of this inspection are that in the present Year 6 the proportion of pupils attaining the national expectation for age is below average. The proportion of those pupils attaining above the expectation for their age is also below that expected nationally. This is non-the-less, an improvement on the standards in last year's national test results and is judged to be the result of greater emphasis on written English and group reading. Pupils with English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as a result of the support they receive.

73. In speaking and listening, in Year 6 and Year 7, standards are below average. Whilst pupils are willing to express opinions and respond with pertinent answers to questions that show they have been listening to the discussion, they have a limited range of vocabulary with which to express their ideas or frame questions. In some lessons, they relate what they have to say to facts previously learned and this satisfactorily extends their learning of what is covered in the lesson. For example, in a Year 6 religious education lesson, many pupils drew on what they had previously learnt about Sikhism to ask pertinent questions of a Sikh lady visiting the school. Some teachers successfully challenge pupils to broaden their vocabulary by insisting on carefully constructed comments or instructions. For example, in a geography lesson, a teacher insisted that pupils draw on their mathematical knowledge to use terms such as right angle, ninety degree turn when writing out instructions for a journey around the school. Such attention to expanding the pupils' vocabulary resulted in good progress and pupils achieving clarity in their speaking in line with that expected for their age.

74. In Years 6 and 7, reading standards are below average. The school has recognised this and is targeting reading as an area for development and additional guided reading sessions are now being used to improve the reading skills of all pupils, but particularly the less-able readers. However, in part, the restricted vocabulary of some pupils is a result of lack of understanding of what they are reading. Many pupils are technically competent in reading the words on the page, but unsure of some the meaning of the words they read. Most pupils accurately describe the plot of a story, comment on characters and make reasonable predictions about how a story will develop. The school is in the process of computerising its library loans system. This is not yet in use and many pupils reported that as a result they do not currently use the school library nor do

they have many books at home. Borrowing from the library needs to be urgently addressed and encouraged.

75. In Year 6 and 7, standards in writing are below the national expectation for age. Pupils' use of grammatical structures and punctuation is not as advanced as is expected for their age. Their vocabulary, whilst imaginative, is limited in range and their sentences do not make use of a sufficiently wide range of link words and phrases to develop themes consistently. The use of white boards for pupils to jot down ideas for their written work is beginning to be widely used throughout the school and is most successful when pupils are given the independence to record their ideas in whatever form best suits them as individuals. Where teachers challenged the level of vocabulary used and pupils were expected to redraft their work, pupils were observed to progress well in their learning during the lesson.

76. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In two-fifths of the lessons observed it was good or better. In these lessons, teachers consistently challenged the pupils' contributions, demanding vocabulary that was precise, and sentences that were complex. They direct pupils to use different ways of connecting these sentences to catch the attention of the listener or reader. Pupils' understanding of what they learn and why, is satisfactory. This is the result of teachers sharing the learning objectives with pupils, both at the beginning and at the end of lessons. This helps pupils assess their improvement during the lesson. Teachers use these assessments to provide extra help in the next lesson for pupils who did not achieve as well as they might. The National Literacy Strategy is used satisfactorily to structure lessons and to identify appropriate work for pupils with special educational need and for more-able pupils. However, assessment information is sometimes not used well enough to inform the planning of work for average attainers in their classes which means individual pupils do not achieve as well as they might. Teaching assistants work well with class teachers and make a significant contribution both to whole-class sessions and individual and group work activities. Their use is efficient and effective in aiding pupils' learning, particularly those who find concentrating well difficult. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

77. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes and behaviour and the relationships established are good. This has a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning. This means that teachers engage in a wide range of lively discussion and that pupils contribute with confidence in these sessions knowing that even if they give an incorrect answer or raise a point that demonstrates a misunderstanding of the subject being discussed, they will not be shown up by either the teacher or their colleagues. Teachers are thus well placed to extend pupils' vocabulary further.

78. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides a satisfactory grounding in the use of English. The school has appropriately targeted writing, particularly boys' writing, which has improved as a result, and is now addressing standards in reading. There is a large amount of assessment data gathered and procedures for gathering this data are good. However, assessment information is not always used effectively to help pupils improve. Insufficient use is made to link the elements of English together, for example, speaking and listening with reading and the development of vocabulary experienced through reading and in writing.

79. The use of writing to support work in other subjects is satisfactory, but could be further enhanced by applying what is learnt in literacy sessions to pupils' writing in other subjects. The use of information and communication technology is limited and used insufficiently to aid less-able pupils to gain the confidence to redraft work before a final printing.

80. There is a satisfactory range and quantity of resources to support classroom teaching. The library contains books of an appropriately broad range to cater for all ages and the main subjects studied. The reorganisation of the library means that currently pupils lack the library

skills normally expected of their age range. Additional literacy support is used satisfactorily to raise the standards of pupils in Years 4 and 5, and extra classes held for some pupils in Year 6 are considered by the school to have raised attainment in national tests.

81. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good because their work is well planned and they receive well-targeted support. Pupils' personal and social development is promoted well through taking their turn in speaking and listening, as a result of working in pairs and through reading and listening to literature which deals with moral issues.

82. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator provides good support to colleagues and undertakes some specialist teaching which is effective in demonstrating particular techniques to the teachers who are present in the lesson. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching in the school and this informs the type of support provided through specialist teaching. Assessment data now needs to be used further to influence the level of work set for pupils of different ability and the range of teaching methods used by teachers.

MATHEMATICS

83. The results of the national tests in mathematics at the end of Year 6 show below average standards in comparison with all schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools standards are average. The analysis of the 2002 assessment tests for Year 6 indicates improvement from the previous year and pupils are making satisfactory progress as they move through the school. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the last full inspection. Boys have outperformed girls in recent years' tests and there is no clear reason for this discrepancy, but in 2002, there was a reverse and girls performed better than the boys. Presently standards are below average in Years 6 and 7.

84. The many pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. No gifted and talented pupils were identified at the time of the inspection, although the school is hoping to enter two pupils for the higher Level 6 papers next year. The introduction of extra classes and support (the Booster and Springboard government initiatives) for pupils who have difficulties with mathematics are helping to improve standards. The school analyses the data from national tests, but the assessment information gained is not yet used effectively enough to raise the performance of all pupils.

85. The National Numeracy Strategy now forms the basis of the teaching of numeracy throughout the school. Pupils in each year group are taught in classes based on their prior attainment. The impact of this on standards is satisfactory. Throughout the school, pupils show a satisfactory grasp of mathematical concepts and language. Pupils' use and interpretation of mathematical symbols and diagrams is satisfactory, but there are few opportunities to use and apply mathematics in real-life situations or to develop initiative. There is a limited use of mathematics across the curriculum and few opportunities for using mathematics outside lessons. No use of information and communication technology was observed in any mathematics lessons.

86. Pupils from Year 4 to 7 make satisfactory progress in the development of their computational skills. This has been maintained since Her Majesty's Inspectors' review in 2001. In Year 4, pupils accurately add and subtract to 100 in words and figures and correctly round three and four digit numbers to the nearest ten and 100. They double and halve, recognise positive and negative numbers and know that addition is the inverse of subtraction. Pupils in Year 5 work with place value to 1000 and solve multiplication and division word problems, with one-digit multiplier or divisor, largely with success. They understand and work with a satisfactory degree of accuracy on equivalent fractions. In Year 6, pupils multiply and divide decimals by ten and, in the sets for the more-able, work with 0.5 and 0.25. Many use informal paper and pencil methods to support,

record and explain their methods of working, which increases their accuracy in calculations. They work with proper and improper fractions with an understanding appropriate to their age. Pupils in Year 7 understand lowest common denominators and add and subtract fractions with the same denominator with a satisfactory level of accuracy. They describe and use simple integer sequences. In all year groups, however, the level of challenge for the more-able pupils is insufficiently high in some lessons. Pupils use a limited range of calculation methods when solving problems, but pupils are encouraged to justify their answers particularly in mental starter sessions. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants to help them achieve satisfactorily.

87. In shape, space and measures, the majority of pupils in Year 4, know the properties of and recognise symmetry in regular two-dimensional shapes. They estimate and measure length, using centimetres and millimetres with an appropriate degree of accuracy. Pupils in Year 5 work on the classification of triangles, but while they are successful in identifying equilateral triangles they are less confident with isosceles and scalene triangles. More-able pupils show good understanding of the relationship between the number of sides of a polygon and the number of diagonals. In Year 6, pupils know and understand the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes and accurately draw and measure lines to the nearest millimetre. Pupils in Year 7 successfully make three-dimensional cubes from nets and draw acute, obtuse, reflex and right-angled triangles with appropriate accuracy.

88. Throughout the school, pupils' skills in data handling are satisfactory. Most pupils plot and read points on graphs confidently and use the x and y axes correctly. Pupils in Year 6, for example, extract and interpret information about test results from a bar chart and use pie charts to investigate the percentage of people with different coloured eyes. They learn about the mean, mode, median and range of a set of data, but need more opportunities to consolidate what they have learnt. Most pupils know how to construct and interpret bar and line charts, but with few exceptions, the information is given by the teacher and pupils are not given opportunities to investigate real-life data collected by themselves.

89. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. From lessons observed, teaching in Years 4 to 6 and in Year 7 ranges from satisfactory to good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed. An analysis of pupils' work and discussions with pupils confirm this judgement. Where lessons are judged to be good, the teaching is focused, the pace brisk and there is a good match between tasks set and the ability of the pupils. This results in pupils making good progress. In lessons, which are found to be satisfactory overall, there is less challenge for the more-able pupils and not such a sharp focus to the lesson. Although pupils are taught in ability sets, the range of ability within each set is wide. In some lessons, the tasks presented are often the same for all pupils with an extension for the more-able pupils. This means that the more-able pupils are expected to do more of the same type of work, which they find too easy. Homework is set regularly and increases appropriately as pupils move through the school. It provides practice in the basic skills, and at times, sets a challenge to find something out before the next lesson. For example, in a Year 7 lesson pupils were set a homework task to find out how they might extend their class work on addition of fractions with a common denominator to working with fractions with different denominators. Teachers have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subject and are committed to raising standards. Class management is good and teachers make good use of teaching assistants, usually to support the less-able pupils and those with special educational needs. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the 2000 Section 10 inspection.

90. Pupils' work is regularly marked to encourage pupils to do their best. Comments in books, however, are often encouraging and do not always help pupils know how they might improve their work. Individual targets for pupils have only been introduced in recent weeks and it is too early to judge the impact of this on standards. Targets are written in home-school diaries and this is a

useful strategy for the school and pupils to share with their parents or guardians. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory, but the information obtained is not always used effectively to plan for pupils' future learning.

91. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject, are interested in their work and appear to enjoy their lessons. Teachers develop positive relationships with their pupils and they respond well. In nearly all lessons, behaviour is good with just a few minor disturbances from pupils with special educational needs. These moments are handled well, particularly by teaching assistants, whose strategies help to diffuse potentially disruptive behaviour. This prevents any negative impact on pupils' learning. Pupils usually co-operate well with each other and listen politely to each other and their teacher. They are encouraged to justify and explain their answers and find their contributions valued by the adults who work with them. This makes a significant contribution to the satisfactory progress made by pupils throughout the school. Pupils' presentation of their work is variable. Some pupils take care and show pride in their work, while others are careless and untidy in their books. There are good numeracy displays in every classroom, some of which are interactive. The weekly learning objectives and targets for the class are prominently displayed on the whiteboards. This focuses pupils on the tasks to be undertaken and makes a good contribution to raising attainment.

92. The newly appointed co-ordinator, who has a good understanding of the present situation and recognises the need to improve standards, provides satisfactory leadership and management. However, the analysis and use of assessment data needs to be more rigorous so that information gained can be used more effectively to improve pupils' performance. The local education authority's numeracy consultant has helped the school monitor the subject, but some relative weaknesses in teaching and learning have yet to be addressed. The resources for mathematics are good in terms of range, quality and quantity and are effectively used to support and encourage learning.

SCIENCE

93. In the 2002 national tests, standards in Year 6 were well below average compared with all schools and below average compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs has been over 50 per cent for the past two years, and has the effect of lowering average standards. The written nature of the national tests limits some of those pupils' standards because they do not understand the wording of the questions. The standards achieved in science fell below those achieved in English and mathematics last year. Contributing factors include the acknowledgement that science has not been the focus for development recently, that there have been no booster classes, and that the school has concentrated more on teaching the science processes rather than a set of facts. Given adequate preparation pupils hypothesise and plan fair tests to a good standard across the school. The teaching of scientific enquiry processes and skills continues to improve since the last inspection although generally standards remain the same. This is due, in part, to a lack of breadth and depth in the planned curriculum, which limits pupils' experiences and contributes to some lack of scientific knowledge and understanding.

94. In the present Year 6 and Year 7, standards are below average. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand the need to plan a fair test, to work carefully and systematically through an investigation, to record the data and arrive at conclusions. Their level of attainment in this area of science is good. They hypothesise what they think will happen, basing their ideas on their scientific knowledge. The level of their independent planning is good and pupils work with good concentration over a long period of time.

95. There are, however, gaps in pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding. Average standards are lowered because many of the pupils with special educational needs find difficulty in

recalling facts accurately. As a result, they often use scientific words incorrectly or make ill informed guesses as to what might happen or why things happen in a particular way.

96. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, ranging between very good to unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, for example, in a Year 4 lesson about forces and one in Year 6 on solubility, teachers' careful explanations, good subject knowledge and use of the correct vocabulary meant that pupils accurately tested various materials using reliable methods and the correct terms to record their findings. Teachers emphasise scientific vocabulary well and pupils use the correct terms confidently in class and group discussions. Teachers use very good questioning techniques in all science lessons and pupils are frequently asked to use their scientific knowledge to explain what they already know and to raise questions. All teachers encourage pupils to plan with a good degree of independence. This motivates pupils well; they co-operate well with each other when working in groups and are enthusiastic about their work. The large number of pupils with special educational needs benefit from the good organisation in the laboratory and from the support of teaching assistants.

97. There are some weaknesses in the quality of teaching linked to a lack of subject knowledge and to ineffective planning. For instance in an unsatisfactory Year 7 lesson, pupils were ill-prepared to carry out their measurement of the energy contained in various types of crisps. Few pupils had sufficient existing knowledge of the key facts, to enable them to carry out their test effectively. The fact that pupils were expected to carry out the test before they were given the necessary knowledge is a result of poor planning. Where teaching is only satisfactory, teachers sometimes fail to use the introduction to lessons to clearly explain what pupils are to do, thus making it very difficult for all pupils to understand what and how they are to carry their investigations. Consequently, this leads to long drawn out explanations, time wasted and insufficient practical activities carried out.

98. The curriculum for the majority of pupils is based on the nationally approved scheme of work. The new curriculum for Year 7 pupils is being put in place this term. Overall, this is satisfactory, but analysis of planned work indicates limited opportunities for pupils to observe, explore and research, in order to make more sense of the good investigation methods that are already in place. Teachers' lesson plans are usually detailed and effective. However, the incorrect sequencing of lessons over a longer period, an example of which is given in the previous paragraph, causes some unsatisfactory learning. Learning opportunities throughout the school for pupils to use information and communication technology for research and recording are limited.

99. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The new co-ordinator has thoroughly investigated why science standards are low and identified areas for improvement. The school development plan indicates actions to be taken to include support for teachers to improve their subject knowledge and understanding of science, an improvement in planning of lessons and the introduction of the Key Stage 3 Strategy. Overall the quality of the accommodation and resources is very good. The school uses the well equipped science laboratory effectively and resources are well prepared by the technician. These factors contribute well to the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN

100. Observations of lessons and analysis of pupils' work indicate that the majority of pupils, including those with special needs, make satisfactory progress and achieve standards that are expected for their age at the end of Year 6 and Year 7 and continue to make good progress in Year 7. Standards, since the inspection of 2000, have been maintained. All pupils are fully included in artistic activities.

101. Pupils explore ideas in sketches and drawings, for example, in a Year 4 lesson, when pupils draw pictures in the style of Breughel in their sketchbooks, and in Year 6, when pupils use pastels effectively to reproduce the colours and shading of cut fruit. They investigate and use a range of materials satisfactorily, including paint, clay, tie-dye and collage. For example, pupils in Year 6 shaped Greek style masks from clay, taking note of the exaggerated features of the dramatic masks of Ancient Greece, and evaluated and improved their designs as they worked. Pupils in Year 5, design their own patterns based on the work of William Morris, considering carefully the effect they achieve. The development of pupils' skills in three-dimensional work is good and pupils are given opportunities to work creatively with textiles, willow sculpture and papier-mache. The African art week for the whole school, last summer, provided exciting opportunities to design colourful hot-air balloons from papier-mache, well crafted model African animals with willow and tissue paper and deftly embroider felt pictures. Pupils work with confidently batik and tie-dye to design patterns for a small pillow and make attractive mosaic self-portraits from torn paper. They study the work of different artists appropriately, such as Van Gogh, as well as art from other cultures, including Africa and Japan. This gives the pupils the sense of what the artists used to achieve different effects and how, for example, artists use line, colour and pattern to create different effects. In a Year 7 lesson, pupils were given a design brief for a CD cover and explored a variety of starting points. Little use of information and communication technology was observed in lessons.

102. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to good and there were no unsatisfactory lessons observed. Art and design is linked to design and technology and the two subjects are planned to alternate during the term. There are good cross-curricular links, especially with history, for instance, in designing folder covers for history topics. The subject makes a good contribution to the cultural and spiritual development of pupils. The school uses a nationally recommended teaching programme that ensures that knowledge, skills and understanding are taught appropriately. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and they manage and organise classes well. Resources are well organised and easily accessible and teachers use a wide range of materials and resources to stimulate pupils' interest. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together and this has a positive impact on pupils' standards.

103. Pupils enjoy their art and design lessons and show good attitudes to their work. They share equipment well and clear away sensibly at the end of the lesson. Pupils concentrate well and take a pride in their work.

104. The subject is satisfactorily led by a knowledgeable and committed co-ordinator, who has, however, not monitored the teaching and learning in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the subject in order to raise standards further. Assessment procedures are under-developed. Assessments are not used effectively during an academic year to identify how some able pupils can be sufficiently challenged. Recently, the retention of evidence by teachers to aid assessment has started and the school is building up portfolios of pupils' work, which promises to address the previous issue. The subject is well displayed in classrooms and corridors and this raises the status of the subject and celebrates the efforts of pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. By Year 6, pupils achieve standards in line with national expectation for their age and in Year 7 progress is satisfactory. Although no lessons were observed, evidence from displays around the school, talking with pupils and with adults, and from analysing pupils' work indicates that standards have improved.

106. The curriculum is now broad and balanced and pupils are taught to use materials and tools skilfully and safely. They critically evaluate the construction of different styles of purses, then

design and make their own using a paper pattern, use the sewing machine, and explore different types of fastenings in Year 4. This is extended to making stuffed toys in Year 5, stitched collages with pinning, tacking and decorative stitching in Year 6 and tie- dye and printed fabric for cushions in Year 7. The provision and development of other areas is less clear, with no evidence of the use of information and communication technology or mechanical components. Teachers do not consistently require pupils to make use of a design brief when planning their work but there is insufficient evidence of the teaching of the design process to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching.

107. The new co-ordinator is beginning to develop the planning of the curriculum in order to improve the quality of provision. Each year group covers the areas of textiles, food, art and clay and construction, based on a nationally recommended teaching programme. These aspects are taught to groups by teachers who have the knowledge and skills, ably supported by teaching assistants. The school has very good facilities with a large well resourced design and technology and food technology rooms which are well equipped to develop the skills of the oldest pupils.

The Humanities (History and Geography)

108. Standards in history meet national expectations by the end of Year 6 and Year 7. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past as they move through Years 4 to 7. This is because the subject is well planned within the curriculum, with each component represented. Teachers give pupils some responsibility for assessing their own progress against learning objectives and make use of resources such as historical objects, photographs and visits such as to Scaplens Court (Victorians and Medieval Times), to instil interest and involvement among pupils. Some teachers present history in a range of interesting ways to motivate pupils. These include a focus on different historical skills, brain storming and notetaking and encouraging pupils to use different styles of writing, for instance, to describe character.

109. Pupils' understanding of the passage of time deepens as they move through the school. Teachers give good emphasis to historical enquiry to aid learning and pupils are routinely encouraged to ask questions. The use of information and communication technology is effective, for instance, to research the history of castles using the Internet. Pupils' work in history also effectively supports their development of literacy and numeracy skills. Year 5 pupils use the 1841 Census returns to enable them to appreciate why they are a useful source of information and they undertake a range of writing, including factual and biographical accounts, which requires them to evaluate and use evidence, using the census data, to produce a range of graphs to show the occupations and size of families. In Year 6, pupils learn about democracy in the Greek City states and compare and contrast the reasons why certain groups of people were discriminated against in Ancient Greece and their in own society.

110. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Good features of lessons include secure subject knowledge, an enthusiastic approach and a clear focus on achieving each lesson's objectives, which are shared with pupils. As a result, pupils are interested and involved in their work. Pupils' attitudes to history were good in most lessons observed.

111. There are, however, weaknesses in the school's provision, which prevent pupils making better progress. The use of records of pupils' attainment and progress are not used effectively enough. Also, some teachers make too much use of tasks, such as drawing, that do not extend pupils' historical understanding.

112. Standards have been maintained since the last full inspection and the quality of marking has improved, as has the range of historical texts used to extend pupils' understanding of original sources.

113. It was not possible to see any geography lessons during the inspection. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to make judgements about the overall quality of teaching and learning or about pupils' response to the teaching of geography.

114. Through the analysis of teachers' plans and some pupils' work, it is possible to gauge that pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through Years 4 to 7. This is because there is a teaching programme which ensures that pupils' work builds on previous learning. Educational visits such as to Wimborne St. Giles (contrasting locality) and to the local beaches (rivers and coastal erosion) are widely used to help bring the subject to life for pupils and help to enrich the curriculum.

115. The quality of the leadership of the subject is satisfactory, although the role of the subject co-ordinator in terms of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching is limited. However, there are weaknesses in current arrangements that prevent pupils making good progress. Work is not targeted at pupils' different abilities. Some tasks given to pupils, such as colouring, are overused and do not help develop important geographical skills. In addition, pupils' progress is insufficiently assessed against national standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

116. In Year 6 pupils' attainment has improved since the last inspection and is now in line with national expectations. In Year 7, standards are below what is expected for pupils of this age because their keyboard skills are under developed and until recently they have not been taught all aspects of the National Curriculum. Pupils' achievement is now satisfactory in both Year 6 and in Year 7 as a result of better provision and teaching. All pupils have time-tabled access to computers in the information and communication technology suite and are supported well by teachers and teaching assistants.

117. By Year 6, pupils adeptly use word processing programs to draft and redraft work at the computer. Many confidently use 'cut and paste' techniques and a variety of clip art and fonts in different colours and sizes to improve the presentation of their work. Good use is made of computers in several other subjects, for instance, using word processing across the curriculum to present work. Pupils are becoming more confident in accessing a wide variety of appropriate programs to support their work in class. For example, when producing a newspaper article, pupils used a search engine to locate an illustration on the Internet to enhance their writing. They flick between various graphical presentations looking for the best picture, then with support, extract it and transfer it to their work before modifying the size appropriate for their writing. They draft and amend text, correcting spelling errors and improving the quality of vocabulary used. Through the range and accuracy of vocabulary needed to carry out these various activities, information and communication technology makes a satisfactory contribution to their literacy skills. This builds on the work that pupils carry out in Year 5, where they design an information leaflet after a visit in connection with a history project. Pupils imported photographs taken during their visit and reduced their size to illustrate their writing.

118. Pupils in Year 7 used the Internet to find information about Thomas à Becket in connection with their work in history. They learned to be selective when downloading information and turn script around when creating headings for their work. The area of weakness in pupils' attainment in Year 7 is in their lack of knowledge and skills in using computer programs to control models and to measure, for instance, temperature.

119. Pupils are keen to use the various computer programs available. Most pupils listen carefully to their teachers, ask sensible questions to check what they have to do and then willingly work with the mouse and keyboard to achieve the task they have been set. From time to time, the

program does not respond as it should. Although more-able pupils confidently use their knowledge to sort out the problem, most pupils ask for help either from the teacher or from other pupils. The level of confidence of pupils is clearly rising as they gain more practice and apply themselves keenly to the interesting range of activities, in which all pupils are included.

120. Overall, the quality of teaching in information and communication technology is satisfactory. In a well taught Year 6 lesson, in which pupils worked hard to compile a newspaper report, the teacher used good subject knowledge to clearly explain how to organise text on the computer screen, to access information from different sources and to combine text and graphics. As a result, pupils made good progress in the lesson and took pride in their achievements. Most teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of computing and make appropriate links with several other curricular areas. Pupils' word processing skills could be developed further, if they were given more encouragement to use both hands. At this time, pupils are not provided with opportunities to use the school digital camera nor have access to email facilities. Pupils find information and communication technology activities interesting and motivating and are keen to use them. The technician often ably supports teachers and as a result, pupils achieve well.

121. Overall, the breadth and range of the information and communication technology curriculum are satisfactory. However, the school does not presently provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to use the full range of information and communication technology tools and information sources to support their work in other subjects. Pupils' work successfully in mixed ability and gender groups and this successfully promotes pupils' social and moral development. Teachers promote well pupils' good attitudes to the subject. Pupils' work well together in pairs and are particularly good trying to help each other.

122. The co-ordinator has been in post for only half a term. However, areas have been identified in need of development and there is great enthusiasm for the subject. The school recognises that there is a need to develop both curricular provision and the assessment procedures used by teachers in order to provide a fully balanced curriculum and to raise standards even further. The quality and quantity of resources are good.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

123. In Year 7, their first year learning French, pupils reach satisfactory standards. A significant proportion of pupils has weaknesses in literacy, but good teaching and the pupils' willingness to try hard enable most to achieve standards in line with national expectations.

124. The pupils recall vocabulary currently being used and respond well to teachers' questions and prompts. Some speak in sentences, but many are reticent and need to be encouraged to be more confident. The pupils listen well to the teacher, and in one class they listened very well to one another when carrying out short conversations. The pupils read well enough to carry out their tasks. They write in a way that helps them to remember key words and to easily find relevant vocabulary.

125. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and sometimes very good when use is made of specialist teaching. The best lessons are well planned, focused, paced and resourced. The teachers' enthusiasm and well structured activities support and challenge all pupils. Mime and word association are used imaginatively to help pupils remember vocabulary. At times, there are weaknesses in teachers' pronunciation and in failure to make grammatical points more explicit. For example, in one lesson pupils could have been helped to see that the command ending -ez is always stressed, in comparison with other verb endings (-er etc.).

126. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Overall, they concentrate well and work to their best ability. In one class, they worked very well in pairs, moving around the room sensibly when

the task was to have a short conversation with several different pupils. Relationships are generally friendly, respectful, and positive, but in another class, a minority of pupils were unable to control their loud disruptive talking.

127. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The members of staff responsible for teaching the subject work well together to organise a clear, balanced, progressive scheme of work. Relevant and accessible textbooks have been bought and are used well. There is a sensible plan to buy a workbook for pupils to use at home. The teaching programme requires pupils to use information and communication technology to write in French. The staff require specific training to strengthen their subject knowledge and fluency in the language.

MUSIC

128. By the time the pupils leave Year 6 and Year 7, standards are below what is expected for their age. This reflects the findings of the last inspection. The standards and achievements pupils attain in singing are satisfactory throughout the school. However, the development of pupils' music skills is unsatisfactory.

129. Pupils sing a variety of songs in tune and with enthusiasm during their assemblies. Good opportunities for developing pupils' appreciation of music are provided by using appropriate music for them to enter and leave the hall. Details of the 'music of the week' are clearly displayed and teachers draw pupils' attention to it. To support the assembly theme of 'Aiming High', 'Proud' sung by *Heather Small*, was played. Pupils enjoyed singing along to this emotive song as they left the hall.

130. In Year 4, the majority of pupils beat a steady rhythm to accompany a song. They also have some understanding that moods and effects can be created by the different elements of music. Year 5 pupils play percussion instruments together, keeping a steady rhythm and many recognise and explore ways in which sounds may be used expressively. By Year 6, pupils listen with interest to varying pieces of music and interpret moods with sensitivity. However, too many pupils are insecure in their knowledge of notation, the value of individual notes and the effect they have on rhythm. Throughout the school pupils' knowledge of musical vocabulary is insufficiently developed.

131. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers follow the teaching programme, although in some cases, there is a lack of rigour in teaching all the requirements of the curriculum. Expectations are sometimes not high enough and very few challenges are set to extend pupils' learning beyond appreciation of a variety of music, developing an understanding of rhythmical patterns and singing together tunefully. In a good lesson in Year 6, pupils were encouraged to listen to a variety of Vivaldi's music and to record their feelings. The teacher also extended their musical vocabulary related to various instruments and moods. This work formed part of the planning of a musical composition. The demands of the tasks were challenging and the teacher developed pupils' learning by her enthusiasm and skilful questioning techniques, which inspired pupils to try hard to improve. Teaching is less satisfactory when the pace slows and the tasks are less interesting and challenging for the pupils. Teaching is less effective when teachers rely too heavily on topic books for singing and pupils have difficulty understanding the words and singing the tune.

132. There is a need to provide support for teachers to increase their subject knowledge and how to teach the music curriculum, which, at times, provides too few challenges for some pupils. There is no whole-school planned approach to the monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject and this means that some relative weaknesses in teaching are not identified. There is a recorder club and a choir for older pupils, which make a satisfactory contribution to their achievements. Pupils enjoy taking part in performances for others and many are involved in

various school productions. Such involvement promotes their personal and social development well. The quality and quantity of resources, which include some multi-cultural instruments, satisfactorily supports pupils' learning. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used to encourage variety in pupils' learning

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

133. Standards in games, dance and swimming are above those expected for age throughout the school as a result of good teaching, especially that of a specialist. Standards have been maintained since the 2000 inspection.

134. Most pupils in Years 6 and 7 have good ball control when playing football, rugby, netball and hockey. Many more-able pupils move adeptly into spaces to receive passes, pass accurately and dodge and feint expertly to evade opponents.

135. The enthusiasm with which pupils, throughout the school, respond to the good teaching of dance, contributes well towards the above average standards they attain in this aspect of the physical education curriculum. For instance, in a very well taught Year 7 lesson, one of a series designed to enable pupils to work towards performing a 'pop video', the teacher's enthusiasm, very good subject knowledge and choice of music, all provoked an extremely positive response from the class. Boys and girls worked amicably in pairs and small groups to work out and perform short dance sequences, which would later combine to form a whole dance. They took great pains to work in synchrony, to design sequences according to given criteria and to start and finish their dance appropriately. They were helped to achieve very well by the teacher's constant advice and encouragement.

136. Pupils swim weekly in Years 4 and 5. By the time they enter Year 6, over 85 per cent swim 25 metres unaided. Many more-able swimmers achieve higher standards, covering long distances using a combination of different strokes, including front and back crawl and breaststroke. An outstanding feature in swimming lessons is the enthusiasm with which pupils participate, especially those who are less confident in water and whose techniques are less well developed. Because these pupils are well taught by a well qualified instructor and have other adults supporting and encouraging them, they work extremely hard to improve and enjoy their successes.

137. A strong feature of the teaching is the organisation of lessons and the setting of tasks to fully challenge pupils of all abilities. In a Year 6 hockey lesson, for instance, pupils were divided into two groups to practice dribbling and shooting skills. The more-able players competed against each other and improved their skills as a result of some fierce competition and the less-able were helped to improve through good personal demonstration by the teacher and by picking up tips from the performance of better players.

138. The curriculum is well balanced and provides pupils with a breadth and depth of experiences which contributes well to their above average standards. There is a wide range of out of school clubs. Pupils of all abilities attend in large numbers, on a regular basis. Evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils' attainments and achievements in football and netball are improved as a result of attending clubs. For less-able swimmers, extra classes are held at lunchtimes to help them to improve their confidence and style and to achieve the standards appropriate for them by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 7. Most of those who attend these classes do indeed achieve their goals.

139. Year 7 pupils experience a range of outdoor activities at a residential centre. As a result of canoeing, climbing and abseiling, archery and completing obstacle courses, they improve their knowledge of a wider variety of physical pursuits than is available in school. For some, the

foundation is laid for a continuing interest in one or more of these pursuits. The residential setting also contributes well to pupil's personal, moral and social development. They learn to become more independent, to work with others in a team under pressure and to apply the moral principles they learn in school and at home, in unfamiliar circumstances.

140. Most pupils achieve well. Teachers ensure that pupils of all abilities are given work which helps them improve. Where individual pupils have a particular talent, the school encourages them to pursue excellence and ensures that their achievements are celebrated widely, both within the school and the wider community.

141. The quality of resources provided to support learning is good. Pupils also have access to a large hard surfaced and a grassed playing area and a well equipped hall and swimming pool. The good quality of these resources and of the accommodation contributes significantly to pupils' above average attainment.

142. The subject is well led and managed. Teachers have useful guidance about how and what to teach. Pupils' progress is assessed thoroughly, which enables teachers to plan series of lessons to challenge all pupils to improve. Although the use of information and communication technology is limited, video recorders are creatively used to film pupils' dance routines as an aid to assessing their individual attainment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

143. By the time they leave the school in Year 7 and at the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed syllabus for pupils of their age. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. All pupils are fully included in religious education.

144. The school makes good use of visitors to bring the subject alive and extend pupils' understanding. For example, a Sikh lady skilfully questioned the pupils about their understanding of Sikhism. The pupils demonstrated a reasonable understanding of the basic facts about the religion. She was able to use these replies to expand their understanding and give personal witness to the way the tenets of her faith helped her to live her life on a daily basis. She encouraged them to visit a Gudwara and explained how they should behave whilst there and how to receive Karah Pashad sweets should they be offered. The pupils were respectful, interested and confidently asked questions and contributed to the discussion in a mature way.

145. Other pupils debated the meaning of the story of the *Good Samaritan* and then listened carefully to the story of *The Sower*. They debated what these parables said to Christians about the way they should behave and how various temptations in life may draw the believer away from God. All pupils debated the points seriously and as the lesson developed demonstrated a deeper understanding of the many moral issues raised.

146. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. In some lessons it is good. Where teaching is good the pupils are questioned very precisely on what they mean in any reply or comment they make. This effectively aids their understanding of the moral and social dilemmas being discussed and contributes well to their skills of speaking and listening. Their thoughtful discussion and sincere questioning contribute well to their spiritual and personal development. Relationships are good, encouraging open questioning and comment by pupils, which enhances pupils' learning well. Pupils' understanding of the way different religious beliefs affect peoples lives makes a good contribution to their cultural development. Pupils who wish to explore Christianity further have the opportunity to attend a weekly Christian group meeting at lunch-time. These sessions are well attended and contribute well to pupils' personal, moral and social development.

147. The subject is led with enthusiasm by a recently appointed co-ordinator, who is in the process of revising the school's teaching programme and working with the local pyramid of schools and the local education authority adviser in this process. Those parts of the teaching programme which have been completed show a clear structure that aids teachers in their planning well. The school is well placed to develop this subject further, it has satisfactory resources, and pupils' attitudes are good. Assessment procedures to aid teachers in checking pupils' understanding of what are often complex issues are less effective. At present, limited use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning.

CITIZENSHIP

148. There is a well-planned teaching programme currently in the early stages of implementation in Year 7. The co-ordinator provides positive leadership and has a clear vision for the further development and integration of citizenship across the curriculum. Evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils' personal development is well promoted through the teaching programme and that the topics covered provide a solid foundation for encouraging pupils to become good citizens. The process for electing school council members and the roles and responsibilities carried out by those members give pupils good experience and insight into the democratic process.