

INSPECTION REPORT

BEARWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Poole

LEA area: Poole

Unique reference number: 113749

Headteacher: Mrs Wendy Govan

Reporting inspector: Rob Crompton
7230

Dates of inspection: 4 – 7th November 2002

Inspection number: 247400

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Barons Road Bearwood Bournemouth
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Chris Chase
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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7230	Rob Crompton	Registered inspector	Design and technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? <i>The school's results and achievements</i> How well are pupils taught?
13874	Jane Chesterfield	Lay inspector		How high are standards? <i>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</i> How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed?
10207	Akram Khan-Cheema	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language Educational inclusion History Religious education	
25778	Andrew Hicks	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music	
14997	Val Emery	Team inspector	Science Art The Foundation Stage	
32124	Heather Ogburn	Team inspector	English Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in a suburb of Poole. It is bigger than other primary schools nationally, with 340 boys and girls aged from four to eleven. Seventeen children attend the nursery on a part-time basis and 28 children in the reception classes currently attend in the morning only. Pupils mainly live locally, with almost half of the pupils living in Bournemouth, the neighbouring education authority. The proportion of pupils entering and leaving the school during each year is high, reflecting the amount of movement in and out of the local area. Attainment on entry to the school is below that of typical four-year-olds. Although most have reasonable social skills, many children have weak language and mathematical skills. About a quarter of all pupils have special educational needs, most of whom have learning or behavioural difficulties, and three pupils have statements of special educational need; both figures are broadly in line with the national average. Almost all pupils have cultural roots in the British Isles. The school serves a broadly average socio-economic area. Although the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low, this does not mean that local circumstances are particularly favourable, as hot meals are not provided and many parents do not claim their entitlement. There have been high levels of staff turnover during the last two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school. It benefits from strong leadership by the headteacher who is well supported by the deputy head and has the confidence and support of the staff and the governing body. The school provides a high level of care for pupils. Standards are satisfactory overall with recent improvements in English and mathematics, although attainment in science and information and communication technology (ICT) is below average. Standards in geography are below expectations by Year 6. Teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6 and, although there is more variation, it is generally effective in other years. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher has managed the school well over a period of high staff turnover and pupil mobility.
- The nursery and reception classes provide a very good foundation for children's future learning.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those with emotional and behavioural difficulties, is good.
- Provision for pupils' social and moral development is good and leads to good attitudes and behaviour.
- Provision for pupils' care and welfare are particularly effective.
- Comprehensive assessment procedures enable the school to track pupils' progress and to set targets for improvement.
- The quality of written information for parents is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards achieved in science by Year 6.
- Standards achieved in information and communication technology (ICT) by Years 2 and Year 6.
- The breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- Aspects of the partnership with parents.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Good improvement has been made in the areas identified as needing attention in the last report. Detailed planning now ensures that all aspects of the National Curriculum are taught systematically, assessment procedures are extensive and the prospectus and governors' annual report meet statutory requirements. Attainment on entry has declined gradually and standards dipped following the last inspection. They are now improving and the recent establishment of a nursery is a major development. The quality of teaching

has significantly improved. The school has moved forward in a number of other ways. Its work on improving standards in literacy and numeracy was recognised by the granting of the Basic Skills Award¹. On balance, overall progress since the last inspect has been good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002		
English	E	D	B	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	E	E	D	D	
science	E	E	E	E	

- Children in the nursery and reception classes are making good progress and are in line to meet the targets set for children at the start of Year 1.
- As the table shows, standards are improving, particularly in English. There is less variation between subjects in pupils' current work in Year 6, with standards being broadly average in English and mathematics and below average in science.
- Seven-year-olds achieved average results in national tests in reading and writing in 2002 and well below average scores in mathematics. Current work in Year 2 in these subjects and in science is broadly at expected levels
- Standards achieved by Year 2 in ICT and by Year 6 in ICT and geography are below expectations and progress is too slow.
- There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in music by Years 2 and 6.
- Standards in all other subjects are in line with those expected of seven and eleven-year-olds. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets.
- Higher attaining pupils do well in English but do not always fulfil their potential in mathematics and science.
- The trend in results of National Curriculum tests over the last five years matches the national picture.
- The school carefully tracks pupils' progress in order to set appropriately challenging targets for each year group. Most are met and some English targets have been exceeded recently.
- Overall, pupils are making steady progress due to the satisfactory or better teaching. High levels of pupil mobility and some aspects of curriculum planning prevent progress from being more rapid.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy being at school and make the most of what it has to offer them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in class, in the playground and around the school.

¹ The Basic Skills Quality Mark Award is given to those schools that have provided clear evidence that they have significantly improved standards in literacy and numeracy.

Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good. Pupils get on well with one another and with adults. Personal development is satisfactory. Pupils have good social skills, but they lack opportunities to show responsibility and to develop an awareness of other cultures.
Attendance	Satisfactory. It is just above the national average. Punctuality is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

- Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is consistently effective.
- In Years 1 and 2 and in Years 5 and 6, around half the lessons observed were good.
- In Years 3 and 4, the lessons were generally satisfactory; the proportion of good lessons was not as high.
- The rate of progress through the school relates closely to the quality of teaching; pupils are making better headway in some year groups than others.
- The effectiveness of lessons is sometimes reduced, not because of weak teaching but because they are too short for pupils to fully engage in the subject before moving on to something else. The opposite is true of some lessons in English. When lessons in reading are immediately followed by the literacy hour pupils lose concentration and the pace of learning slows.
- Teachers follow the national guidelines for English and mathematics with an appropriate focus on literacy and numeracy. Opportunities for pupils to use these skills in other subjects are limited which restricts their learning.
- The teaching of ICT is not effective because it is usually taught in isolation from work in other subjects. As a result, pupils do not progress quickly enough.
- The teaching of science is satisfactory but the level of challenge is often too low and pupils lack the independent investigative skills needed to attain higher standards.
- The school successfully meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs because teachers and learning assistants work closely together to ensure that they are supported well.
- With the exception of ICT in all year groups and geography in Years 3 to 6, the teaching of individual subjects is generally satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching of design and technology (DT) because most classes were studying art, which is taught in alternate blocks with DT.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad but not always appropriately balanced. The focus on English has raised standards but has restricted the time spent on other subjects. Opportunities for teaching literacy, numeracy and ICT in other lessons are limited.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Work is modified to meet individual needs, which enables pupils to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral,	Satisfactory. Pupils' social development is promoted well and provision for moral development is satisfactory. There are weaknesses in the

social and cultural development	support for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school works hard to ensure pupils' welfare and safety. Their learning and personal development is carefully monitored.

A major strength is the quality of written information for parents. Although the school is keen to involve parents in supporting their children's learning, there are not enough opportunities for parents to make informal contact with teachers and this leads to some misunderstandings. Overall, the school's partnership with parents is satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, deputy head and senior management team lead and manage the school well. The contribution made by subject leaders has been limited by the frequent turnover of staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and meet their statutory obligations fully.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Good monitoring and evaluation has been carried out by the headteacher and senior staff, but new subject leaders have not had the chance to do this.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses its finances well and applies the principles of best value adequately.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall.

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 enjoy school and behave well Good teaching helps pupils work hard to make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The range of activities outside lessons The partnership between school and home, including information about how children are getting on Leadership and management

Inspectors agreed that children enjoy school, work hard and behave well. Although there is a significant proportion of good teaching, overall it is satisfactory. Pupils make steady progress but some could be making more rapid headway. Inspectors found that the school is well led and managed. Although not extensive, the school offers a reasonable range of activities outside the classroom, including an appropriate range of educational visits.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 Children entering the school over the last few years have been a little below what is expected in language and mathematical development. Due to the effective provision in the reception classes, these early weaknesses have been overcome to bring children's attainment more in line with that generally found at the start of Year 1. This is clearly the case in the current reception classes where children are making rapid progress and are well on target to achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning. It is already evident that the new nursery will make a very positive impact on children's attainment through the Foundation Stage², with the likelihood that most children will be well prepared for work in Year 1.

2 Standards achieved by pupils at seven and eleven have varied considerably in recent years. At the time of the last inspection, pupils were making good progress in English and mathematics and achieving average standards in these subjects and in science. Results of national tests dipped significantly after that and were well below average in 2000. There has been much improvement in the last two years, particularly in English, where eleven-year-olds achieved above average results in 2002. Results in mathematics were up 20 per cent on the previous year. The results of seven-year-olds in reading and writing were similar to those nationally, although the proportion doing particularly well in writing was above the national average.

3 Pupils' current work indicates that standards in English, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, history and religious education (RE) are broadly in line with those expected at this point in Year 6, but progress in science, ICT and geography is too slow, with pupils not reaching the levels expected. There was insufficient evidence to judge overall standards in music.

4 In Years 1 and 2, there was insufficient evidence to judge standards in music but pupils are making steady progress in all other subjects, with the exception of ICT, and are on course to reach average standards by the time they are seven.

5 Higher attaining pupils are working well in English, but they are not making the same progress in mathematics or science. This is mainly because some work lacks challenge and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to tackle problems independently or to develop investigative skills. These approaches are essential if pupils are to achieve higher levels in National Curriculum tests.

6 The school has had considerable success lately in helping certain groups of pupils to make better progress. Pupils who would benefit most from booster classes in mathematics were allocated extra teaching time and this led to most of them reaching the target level for eleven-year-olds in mathematics. The high priority given to writing paid off as a third of eleven-year-olds achieved the higher levels.

7 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils needing extra help are identified early and care is taken to draw up individual plans to meet their specific needs. Teachers and support staff use these effectively to provide good support in lessons.

² The Foundation Stage is from the child's third birthday to the end of the reception year.

8 Standards have improved over the last five years in line with the national trend. The school sets targets for each year group in English and mathematics, which are based on the effective tracking procedures. These targets are appropriately ambitious. Given the strong leadership, the more stable staffing and the commitment of teachers to build on their strengths, the school is well placed to raise standards and achieve its targets.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9 The school has maintained high standards in this area of its work since the time of the last inspection. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are all good. They enjoy coming to school and are happy to be with one another. In lessons, they are eager to get involved in class discussion and keen to get on with the tasks set. They work well together and support one another. In a Year 6 PE lesson, for example, pupils did their best to co-ordinate their movements and work as a team when working on dancing sequences. Children in the nursery and reception are settled and confident and full of enthusiasm for the rich range of activities available to them. They throw themselves wholeheartedly into their work.

10 Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils know the school routines and the standards of behaviour expected of them, and they are able to follow these without fuss. At the beginning of the day, for example, pupils sort out their belongings and settle themselves quietly in their classroom even if their teacher is on door duty and has left them under the supervision of her year partner. In lessons, most pupils listen attentively and do as they are told so that staff do not have to waste time establishing order. Occasionally, though, one or two pupils take advantage of the background noise caused by the open plan classrooms and use the opportunity to chat with their friends unnoticed. At lunchtime, pupils behave sensibly in the hall and their classrooms as they eat, and show respect for their surroundings. Outside, behaviour is good as pupils show consideration for others and share the space available amicably. Sometimes the games during the junior playtime are rather boisterous, because the pupils do not have playground equipment to keep them occupied. There were only three temporary exclusions during the last year, which represents a marked reduction since the last inspection and over the intervening period.

11 Relationships in the school are good. Pupils get on well with one another and with adults. Older pupils watch out for younger ones in the playground and they in their turn are confident when surrounded by older children. Boys and girls work and play happily together. Pupils are willing to listen to others' opinions and share their feelings in assemblies and circle times³, so that others are willing to express themselves freely.

12 Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. They show a good sense of social awareness which means that the school is an orderly and calm community. However, they lack opportunities to take on responsibility and use their initiative to show the school what they are capable of. There are very few structured roles for this, such as monitors or prefects or a school council. When pupils do have the opportunity to do something for their school, such as the Year 4 being 'buddies' for reception children at lunchtime, they jump at the chance. Additionally, pupils often lack an awareness of other cultures, because the school does not give them enough insight into the realities of life in multi-cultural modern Britain. Although the few pupils from ethnic minorities are well integrated into the school and are treated equally by their peers, opportunities to develop pupils' insight into other cultures are often missed. An example of this occurred during an assembly on difference, where pupils were asked what they could tell about people by looking at them. One suggestion given, that

³ Circle times provide opportunities for pupils to talk over issues that face them as part of everyday life.

you could tell someone's religion from his or her appearance, was not taken up and discussed in order to challenge misconceptions.

13 Attendance at the school is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. It is just above the national average. Unauthorised absence is above the national average, but this is because the school is rightly stringent in refusing to authorise more than ten days holiday a year for pupils during term-time. The school has managed to reduce unauthorised absence during the last year by encouraging parents not to take their children out of school for long periods of holiday. Punctuality is good. Most children arrive promptly each morning so that lessons can begin on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14 Teaching is consistently effective in the Foundation Stage. Since the nursery opened at the beginning of the school year, carefully thought out routines have been established. The atmosphere is very welcoming and there is a very good level of interaction between staff and children. The teacher, nursery nurse and learning assistant work very closely together and have created stimulating indoor and outdoor learning opportunities. As a result, children are eager, adventurous and making rapid progress.

15 The two reception teachers work extremely well together. The shared indoor and outdoor areas are very well organised with teachers and support staff offering children a good range of very worthwhile experiences. Both teachers motivate children successfully, managing lessons very well so that as much time as possible is spent productively. The variety of approaches, including whole class teaching, directed group activities and free play, successfully enables all pupils to learn. Full advantage is taken of the flexibility of the combined indoor and outdoor areas, providing a useful model for teachers in other year groups.

16 Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is generally effective, with half of the lessons observed being good. Lessons in English and mathematics are consistently successful. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good which means there is usually a good working atmosphere in lessons with pupils trying their best. Most lessons are well planned and taken at a good pace, although teachers sometimes spend too long on introductions before setting pupils work to do. Individual pupils are often withdrawn to read to a learning assistant, or to check spellings and this can interrupt the flow of a lesson.

17 The overall quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory, with some good and very good lessons observed. It is stronger in Years 5 and 6 where there is a higher proportion of very effective teaching. Teaching in these year groups is more consistent across subjects, with good lessons observed in mathematics, art and design, PE, ICT, music and PHSE (personal, social and health education). The pupils pick up the teachers' enthusiasm and respond well to being treated as mature individuals. Teaching in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory; with some very good lessons in one Year 4 class, where the structure, pace and rapport with pupils results in rapid progress. In other classes, teachers are enthusiastic and energetic but the level of challenge can be too low and pupils sometimes are unclear about what they are to learn. Where teachers' knowledge of the subject is very secure, such as in history, lessons are more successful.

18 A general weakness in Years 3 to 6 is a lack of consistent challenge, particularly in mathematics and science. Teachers tend to set work which is aimed at the 'average' pupils in the year group or set. As a result, higher attaining pupils sometimes mark time for much of

the lesson. They may be given 'extension' work for a few minutes at the end but this is insufficient to enable pupils to build up the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to achieve the higher levels.

19 The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is generally satisfactory but teachers' planning does not identify opportunities where such skills are to be practised and consolidated in other subjects. Skills in ICT are often taught in isolation from pupils' day-to-day work so they have few chances to use ICT to enhance their learning in other subjects.

20 Teachers make every effort to ensure that boys and girls and pupils with different learning needs are equally supported in lessons. This is more successful when the two teachers in each year group take full advantage of the open-plan classrooms. For example, when pupils in the whole year group are divided into eight groups according to their prior attainment, as in a successful mathematics lesson in Year 1. Where teachers divide the year group into two parts, there are advantages in this, but sometimes work for the lower set lacks sufficient challenge – for example in mathematics - and higher attaining pupils are not given enough investigative work to tackle independently – for example in science. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the close teamwork of teachers and assistants. Work is set at appropriate levels and pupils respond positively to the approach of staff, which is warm but purposeful.

21 The quality of teaching is similar to that seen during the last inspection, although the proportion of unsatisfactory lessons has reduced significantly. Given the high rate of staff turnover, this is quite an achievement and reflects the success of the school in establishing clear guidelines and supporting new teachers. There is a tendency for teachers to follow curriculum guidelines to the letter and this is limiting the effectiveness of some lessons. Where teachers use their own professional judgement to modify planning according to the needs of their pupils, teaching and learning is more successful.

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

22 The nationally recommended curriculum for the Foundation Stage is interpreted imaginatively in the nursery and reception classes. Children benefit from a broad range of carefully planned activities designed to stimulate their interest and structured to ensure that all aspects of their development are supported well during their first years at school.

23 In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is generally broad and relevant to the ages of pupils but lacks balance. The generous weighting of time to support the raising of standards in English, although successful in this respect, has adversely affected other subjects.

24 The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented successfully, but the school has not made adequate provision for pupils to apply basic skills in English, mathematics and ICT across the curriculum. Since the time of the last inspection where planning was very haphazard, much hard work has gone into producing detailed curriculum plans to ensure that pupils cover everything they should. Work has now begun on making links across subjects but so far, there is little evidence of these links in lessons. The school has recognised the need to incorporate planned opportunities for speaking and listening within day-to-day lessons, but this is not happening yet and there are few planned opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning using interactive and investigative approaches.

25 Pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties are well provided for. As a result, they make good or very good progress. The school has reviewed its policies and procedures radically since the last inspection to meet the requirements of the Code of Practice⁴. This process involved all the relevant outside agencies and had a powerful impact on the quality of provision. Teaching and non-teaching staff are well aware of the procedures for identification, assessment and provision for pupils with special educational needs.

26 The school provides a reasonable range of extra-curricular activities for pupils in Years 3 to 6, including a variety of music and sport clubs, gardening, ICT and a maths puzzles club. Access to all these activities is limited as many take place at the same time. More could be done to provide extra-curricular opportunities for younger pupils.

27 The school has reasonable links with the community. The local vicar visits regularly to take assembly; the school nurse visits to talk about keeping healthy; the police visit to talk about 'stranger danger' and visitors who talk about their faith sometimes enhance RE lessons. Field trips around the local area, such as those to Wimborne and Chesil Beach, and residential visits to the Isle of Wight, contribute well to pupils' learning. The school has strong links with the local education authority, which regularly supports in-service training. It is also a training placement for student teachers.

28 The school's approach to educational inclusion has had a very positive impact on pupils' social development since the last inspection. Teachers provide good role models for pupils. The good attitudes and values they teach are evident in pupils' response. The school is successful in raising pupils' attention to the needs of others. Pupils think that the school is good at dealing with incidents of bullying and bad behaviour. They are made to feel welcome in a safe and happy environment. Teachers employ effective strategies to maintain good discipline. The school has succeeded in effectively coping with the few pupils with very challenging behaviour. Support staff make a good contribution to the social and personal development of pupils in class. The staff training and professional support to raise awareness and identify shared roles and responsibilities has resulted in an effective social inclusion strategy.

29 The sensible aims within the school's policy, practice and procedures based on care, code of conduct, co-operation and mutual respect, provide pupils with a clear understanding of what is acceptable and un-acceptable behaviour. This is particularly true for the older pupils. For example, Year 5 pupils participated in a very good lesson during circle time; brainstorming and highlighting situations where 'being fair' could actually mean treating people differently and briefly assessing both sides of the arguments in a lively discussion. Pupils were really engaged in dealing with the concept of fairness by the end of the lesson during a short plenary when it was time to break up and start the next lesson. In younger year groups, although moral issues are discussed at circle time and in personal, health and social education (PHSE) lessons, there is not always sufficient time to allow pupils to draw out reasoned moral decisions. The school enjoys good links with the local parish church and the vicar takes monthly assemblies, which helps in promoting Christian values and beliefs.

30 Although the school promotes awareness and an understanding of pupils' own beliefs and culture within a mainly white school community, opportunities to recognise, appreciate and respect the values, codes and mores of the different cultural groups and faith communities represented in the wider community are missed. Pupils are not offered adequate opportunities to reflect on their own experiences in order to fully develop self knowledge and spiritual awareness. Within the day-to-day curriculum, teachers do not do

⁴ The Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools and local educational authorities about their responsibilities, duties and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help and support to further their learning and personal development.

enough to present authentic and positive accounts of the attitudes, values and traditions of diverse cultures in order to address pupil's attitudes towards racism, promote an understanding of race and gender equality concerns and develop an appreciation of the diversity and interdependence of cultures. There is insufficient celebration of the richness of art, music and dance of different cultural traditions.

32 The headteacher, senior staff and the governors are aware of the need to do more in order to enrich pupils' understanding of their own and others' responsibilities within a culturally plural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33 The school gives its pupils good support and guidance, and makes efforts to ensure their welfare at all times. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Since then, the school has systematically established policies and procedures which make sure that daily routines run very smoothly and that pupils are consistently well cared for. Lunchtimes and playtimes, for example, are very well organised so that pupils always know where they should be, what they should be doing and who is looking after them. Reception children who were staying at school for lunch for the first time during the inspection week were given special attention and appeared happy and comfortable with their new experience. Arrangements for first aid are very good throughout the day. First aid posts are clearly marked around the school and fully manned on a rota basis, so pupils know they can easily find help if they hurt themselves or feel unwell.

34 Arrangements for child protection meet requirements and are satisfactory. The headteacher is responsible for this and there is a good new policy linked to local guidelines. Pupils are taught appropriately about keeping safe through their planned programme of PSHE. However, there is no provision for regular updating and training of staff, which is important in view of the high staff turnover in recent years. The school gives good attention to health and safety matters. Procedures for risk assessments and inspections of the premises have been set up, and site security is rightly a priority. A good policy for Internet safety has been produced. The health and safety issues mentioned in the last inspection report are now no longer of concern.

35 The school promotes attendance and monitors absence very well. Pupils receive awards to acknowledge good attendance, and all absences are chased up on the first day which is reassuring for parents. The school uses its computerised registration system very effectively to get an overview of absences by class and by individual. As a result, it has been able to reduce the level of unauthorised absence over the last year.

36 Behaviour is well managed in the school. There are good systems for rewards and sanctions which are consistently applied by staff and clearly understood by pupils. Those pupils who were interviewed were able to explain exactly how the green and yellow forms worked, for example, and thought that they were fair. Pupils with particular behaviour difficulties are well supported by staff so that they rarely disturb others' learning in lessons. The school takes any instances of bullying or racism very seriously, and deals with them firmly. Pupils say that they feel safe at school and that it is a happy place to be.

37 Great care is taken to help pupils with special educational needs to get the most from their life in school. The progress made by several pupils, in terms of personal development, behaviour, attitudes, and relationships can be described as a real success. All staff are very knowledgeable about pupils' physical, emotional and intellectual needs and contribute regularly towards updating individual education plans and other records. The quality of in-

class and withdrawal support given by the teaching assistants is very good – for example, a pupil with visual impairment has his own laptop, is offered a large yellow sheet of paper to assist him, with the support of an assistant, in focusing on what the rest of the class is doing during lessons.

38 Much progress has been made in assessment procedures since this was found to be a weakness in the last inspection. The school has moved from a situation where there was hardly any information on individual progress to having a wealth of data. The results of national tests, formal assessments and informal observations in lessons are recorded carefully and used as a basis for identifying groups of pupils with similar needs. The school's way of using assessment information to decide whether pupils need further support, such as booster classes in numeracy, or extension, such as more challenging work in English, is highly efficient. It has been adopted widely by other local schools.

39 Class teachers make great efforts to record progress. Assessments are often made at the end of a unit of work and teachers record the results of formally assessed tasks in individual books (known as FAT books), carefully noting strengths and weaknesses and indicating National Curriculum levels where possible. The head teacher regularly discusses each pupil's progress with class teachers and helps them to set individual targets. At the end of a sequence of lessons on a particular topic – such as shape and angles in mathematics, teachers are beginning to note gaps in pupils' learning in order to address them next time the same topic is taught. Currently, there is little evidence this is working as well as it might and the school is exploring ways in which the extensive assessment information available can have more of an impact on day-to-day lessons, without increasing teachers' paper work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40 Most parents have positive views of the school and are pleased with what it offers them and their children. A significant minority, however, are dissatisfied with a number of aspects of school life and feel that the school does not want to work closely in partnership with them. Parents are mistaken to feel this, but it is easy to see why this misconception has come about. Because the school rightly puts a high priority on security, it has become very difficult for parents to enter the school and speak to teachers at the beginning or the end of the day. Parents leave and collect their children at the door to the cloakroom rather than to the classroom, and they are asked to make appointments via the office if they wish to talk to their child's teacher or to the headteacher. As a result, there is no opportunity for staff and parents to build up the sort of friendly, informal relationships which are so important for teachers' information, pupils' well being and parents' goodwill. Office staff are pleasant and helpful, but they are nonetheless perceived as a barrier between the parent and the person they want to see. These arrangements mean that staff and parents often only meet on formal occasions or when there is a problem, and this is unhelpful for staff as well as parents. Parents rarely get the chance to witness the cheerful atmosphere and warm relationships within the school, which their children value so much. Additionally, the need for staff to take turns at manning the cloakroom doors means that they miss valuable pastoral time with their class first thing before registration and the start of lessons.

41 These problems do not exist in the nursery, where the very good practice results in very good relationships. Parents bring their children in each morning, settle them into their activities and tell staff anything they need to know about their child that day. Minor concerns can be shared without any fuss. The atmosphere is relaxed and friendly and parents feel welcomed.

42 The school's links with parents are satisfactory overall, despite the difficulties surrounding staff accessibility, because the quality of the school's written information is very good indeed. There has been very good improvement here since the last inspection, when there was no prospectus and the quality of other information was patchy. The prospectus pack now provided to parents is excellent, and gives them all the information they could possibly want as their child starts school. The governors' annual report is very good and now contains all the details required by law. Termly topic sheets for each year group are very useful in telling parents what their children will be studying and how they can support them, and regular newsletters from the headteacher are friendly and welcoming in tone. Reports to parents on their children's progress are good. The school has acted on the points raised during the previous inspection, and reports now give parents a clear picture of how well their children are doing and what they need to do to improve further.

43 Parents' contribution to the life of the school and to their children's learning is satisfactory. Most support the school's rules and values, attend parents' evenings and ensure that their children complete their homework on time. Some are able to play an active part as parent governors, classroom helpers or members of the parents and friends association, and the school very much appreciates the work they do. A small minority, though, can be unnecessarily critical of the school and the way it operates, and this is often not constructive in the school's efforts to build a positive relationship with parents. The school needs to work towards correcting the misconception of these parents in order to improve matters.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44 The headteacher has continued to lead and manage the school well since the time of the last inspection, and is now strongly supported by the deputy and the senior management team. Good management systems for meetings and communications ensure that all members of the school community are kept well informed and consulted about decisions which affect them. The headteacher's reports to governors are particularly good and help to ensure that the governors have a good insight into the school. The headteacher's clear vision in leading the school is evident in major decisions that have been made, such as the drive to introduce a nursery in order to raise standards as pupils enter the school. The constant turnover of staff has constrained the school since the last inspection, though, as it has limited the effectiveness of the subject leaders, particularly in the foundation subjects. This has weakened the management of the curriculum. The school has handled this situation as best it can, but just as the role of the subject leaders was a concern at the time of the last inspection, so the school still has to have this as an ongoing priority in its current school development plan. Many subject leaders are new to the school or to their subject this term, so they have not yet had the chance to make an impact through monitoring and evaluation of what is going on in the classrooms. They now have job descriptions which set out plainly their responsibilities, and the school fully intends to give them time and support to work with colleagues on their subjects.

45 Some good quality monitoring and evaluation of the core subjects has been undertaken by the headteacher, the senior staff and the local education authority (LEA), and this has resulted in a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses in these areas. These findings, for example in numeracy, have been used well to feed into both the school development plan and the performance management objectives for the whole staff in order to try and improve standards. The school development plan is a well-constructed document which has identified accurately the needs of the school. Concerns that have been identified as key issues in this inspection have already been recognised by the school as areas in need of attention, such as attainment in ICT and science.

46 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has produced a well focused action plan in order to improve attainment of all pupils on the special educational needs register. She acts as a critical friend and keeps all staff informed of developments as part of her ongoing monitoring responsibility; for example, in her last report to staff she says, "Remind the children of their targets – if they know what they are trying to achieve, they are more likely to achieve them!"

47 The governing body makes a good contribution to the work of the school. There has been a big turnover of governors over the years too, so many are fairly new to the role and inexperienced. This means that their role in shaping the strategic direction of the school is still limited. However, with the expertise of the long-standing governors, the training of the LEA and the very good information provided by the headteacher, the governing body has a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and a determination to improve the school by raising standards and broadening the curriculum. The governing body now meets all its statutory obligations fully.

48 The school plans, manages and controls its finances well. Since the last inspection, careful financial management has meant that the deficit has been cleared and the budget balanced. The school has made prudent use of last year's unexpected surplus to help with the setting up of the nursery and to enable the deputy headteacher to carry out her management role full-time rather than have responsibility for a class. The business plan produced by the headteacher and chair of governors shows how carefully this money has been accounted for. The school makes good use of its grants for the intended purposes. Financial administration is strong, and the headteacher and governors are kept well informed about expenditure so that they are able to monitor the budget closely and regularly. All matters arising from the last audit, which was carried out nearly four years ago, have been addressed. The school is beginning to apply the principles of best value to its work, comparing its outcomes with other schools, looking for competition in services where possible, and consulting with parents on occasions.

49 There has been a high turnover of teaching staff in recent years, due to a number of promotions and other factors outside the school's control. This has caused the school some difficulties in maintaining a well-balanced and experienced teaching staff. However, the governing body and the headteacher have worked hard at recruitment and the school is now adequately staffed with teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum and the pupils. Good arrangements for performance management and staff appraisal are linked to whole-school and personal development needs. Consequently, there is a clear, shared focus on significant areas for development which has been successful in improving pupils' writing and improving staff expertise in ICT. There are good systems to support teachers who are new to the school. Newly qualified teachers are supported well and are establishing themselves effectively. New teachers who have taken on subject management responsibilities receive good early training to help them become effective leaders.

50 The school buildings are modern, attractive and well maintained. Stimulating displays add much to the good learning environment. The nursery accommodation is very good. It is well equipped and includes a well-designed outdoor area that provides well for a wide range of exciting activities. The hall and extensive grounds are well equipped for physical education and contribute well to the progress that pupils make. The open plan design of the school offers good potential for teachers to share classes flexibly, which they occasionally do in art lessons for instance, but also causes noise disturbance in adjacent classes which disturbs pupils' concentration. There is no easy way to avoid the hall when moving between different parts of the school, which occasionally disturbs lessons and assemblies that are taking place.

51 The school is well equipped to support pupils with special educational needs, and teachers use resources effectively to support pupils' progress towards their learning targets. The library contains a good range of fiction and non-fiction books that support learning across the curriculum well. The school's stock of computers and other ICT equipment is of good quality and the range of software is sufficient to support learning in all subjects. However, the overall computer provision is less than in primary schools nationally, and teachers do not use what the school has effectively enough in teaching and learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52 In order to continue the upward trend in standards, the school should:

- (1) Improve the standards achieved in science by Year 6 (paragraph 20) by implementing the subject action plan, which includes:
 - i. improving pupils' skills in scientific enquiry;
 - ii. improving pupils ability to interpret their own and given results;
 - iii. providing more opportunities for the subject leader to monitor standards and contribute to the improvement of teaching and learning;
 - iv. identifying links with other subjects, particularly mathematics, English and ICT.
- (2) Improve the standards achieved in information and communication technology (ICT) by Year 2 and Year 6 (paragraph 104) by:
 - i. ensuring that ICT is taught as an integral part of other subjects, as required by the National Curriculum;
 - ii. reviewing the current arrangements for lessons in ICT to enable pupils to have more opportunities to learn, practise and consolidate skills;
 - iii. tracking pupils' progress through the school.
- (3) Improve the balance of the curriculum (paragraph 23) by:
 - i. identifying links across subjects, especially the opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate literacy, numeracy and ICT skills;
 - ii. reviewing the geography curriculum in order to bring standards more in line with those in other subjects;
 - iii. continuing to develop subject leaders' understanding of their role in raising standards and in identifying opportunities for subjects to be linked.
- (4) Improve the provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development (paragraph 30) by:
 - i. providing more culturally rich opportunities for pupils to engage in expressive and creative activities;
 - ii. encouraging pupils to understand a wider range of human feelings and emotions.

- iii. providing more opportunities for pupils to recognise, appreciate and respect the values and traditions of the different cultures and faith communities represented in Britain.

(5) Enable staff and parents to develop a closer partnership (paragraph 40), by:

- i. building on the good practice in the Nursery;
- ii. reviewing procedures for pupils and parents entering and leaving at the beginning and end of the day.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	69
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number		9	27	31	2	0	0
Percentage		13	39	45	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	9	326
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	NA	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	39

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	33
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	50

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	29	27	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	18	24
	Girls	25	24	26
	Total	44	42	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (93)	75 (85)	89 (95)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	23	23
	Girls	25	26	26
	Total	45	49	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (91)	88 (91)	88 (95)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	19	26	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	14	16
	Girls	22	18	18
	Total	37	32	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (69)	71 (53)	76 (84)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	16	12
	Girls	19	19	16
	Total	31	35	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (56)	78 (55)	62 (62)
	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	293	3	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	4	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	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	27	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR –Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	299

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	857977
Total expenditure	822083
Expenditure per pupil	2454
Balance brought forward from previous year	35894
Balance carried forward to next year	55795

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	310
Number of questionnaires returned	139

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	42	4	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	40	45	6	2	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	58	4	1	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	55	6	6	11
The teaching is good.	35	53	4	3	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	42	19	5	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	42	31	15	9	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	49	3	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	19	45	19	9	8
The school is well led and managed.	25	40	11	14	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	30	58	6	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	14	27	25	18	16

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

53 Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and is a considerable strength of the school. Good provision has been maintained and improved since the last inspection. A new nursery unit has recently been opened, which now ensures that there is sufficient provision in the area for pre-schooling. Many children who entered the reception classes prior to the opening of the nursery had little pre-school experience. This is a contributory factor to standards being below what is expected in some areas of learning on entry to the reception classes. In particular, many children's pencil skills and oral language is below what is usually found at this age and there are some gaps in their mathematical knowledge, the nature of which varies from year to year.

54 The new nursery is attractive, spacious and well equipped. Inside and outside areas are carefully planned to provide well for three – four-year-olds. Two main rooms inside the building are freshly decorated with well thought out practical areas. Similar careful attention has been paid to planning and provision for the garden area, where a wide range of exciting and purposeful activities are established for outside learning. For example, children can count the conkers hanging on strings on the fence or dig and care for plants in the garden. Parents are made to feel very welcome in the mornings and accompany their children to the classroom. This helps them to settle quickly and confidently and no time is lost in starting activities for the day.

55 The children enjoy a wide range of activities in both the nursery and reception classes. Areas are carefully planned and resourced to excite and interest them. A carefully thought out staged induction process results in children and parents knowing the school well and children are quickly happy and confident in their new classes. Children enter the school on a part-time basis at first, following home visits for nursery children and visits by teachers to pre-school providers for those children entering the reception classes. Although relatively early in the school year, children had settled in happily at the time of the inspection. The reception children were well prepared to start school on a full-time basis.

56 Children in the nursery and reception classes are benefiting from the same standard of good teaching identified in the last inspection. In the nursery class, the teaching is very good. This means that all children learn well in a suitable environment for children of this age. Very good systems for liaison between the nursery and reception classes are established. The highly skilled nursery teacher, as the Foundation Stage leader, closely monitors the planning and work of all teachers and adults in the three classes. As a result, there is good continuity of provision and teaching. Particular strengths of the teaching include a carefully planned and practical curriculum, which is appropriately related to the recommended Foundation Stage guidance. Very effective liaison between the teachers, nursery nurse and teaching assistants, means that all children receive the same provision, care and respect. Team teaching is successful in both reception classes, because of this good liaison, together with careful planning. Activities are carefully planned to introduce or reinforce skills, which need to be learned, but in an exciting and interesting way. For example, children play, match and pair a range of gloves to try on and peg on their washing line in the nursery, thus learning about comparative language and developing their manipulative skills.

57 In the reception classes, children regularly play an enjoyable game of 'noisy letters', where they carry their cards with recently acquired phonic sounds written on them, sounding the letter and forming a group with other matching letters. In both classes, there is good attention to quickly establishing routines which enable children to feel secure and to be

independent. For example, all classes self register each morning and quickly settle to prepared activities and similar systems for establishing independent and guided work are in operation in all classes.

58 Most children make good overall progress during the year which provides a good start to Year 1.

Personal, social and emotional development

59 All classes provide a welcoming secure environment which helps young children to settle quickly. Children are quick to respond to class routines and even the youngest children organise themselves and work well independently. Children in the nursery were able to link up to others, for example when playing with furniture and figures in a small playhouse. Reception children sustain concentration and persist in activities such as ordering objects for size. All children have good relationships with the adults who care for them and with each other. Reception children are confident in expressing their needs and feelings in whole-class activities, such as first thing in the morning when the class gathers. Classrooms are organised to encourage children to become independent and there are always choices for indirectly supervised activities in group times in all classes. In the role play area for example, which is currently a 'shoe shop' in the reception classes, a range of shoes are at hand for children to make choices and organise themselves. Expectations of clearing up for themselves are firmly established in the reception classes and children complete this impressively when asked to do so at the end of sessions.

Communication, language and literacy

60 All classes provide activities and an environment where children can develop their written and oral skills. Adults use clear speech in discussions, share books and provide writing opportunities. Children enjoy listening to stories and are quick to understand that text has meaning. Books are shared, both by the whole class and individually and children soon join in with the text. The current book of 'Polar Bear' is shared in the reception classes for example and children joined in the repetitive parts of the text, with enjoyment. The development of correct pencil skills and early writing patterns is a high priority in the nursery and is taught very well. For example, shaving foam was spread by children on boards and they made wavy patterns with their fingers. In the reception classes, 'Herby' is taken home by a child each night and the 'Adventures of Herby' are recorded with pictures by the child and adult scribing in Herby's diary. This encourages children to see the purpose of writing and to see themselves as writers. All teachers work hard to plan interesting activities. For example, a teacher was working outside with a group, identifying initial letter sounds (tractor, arrow and pen), matching objects to objects of the same initial letter sound. The children enjoyed being outside and working in a small group and this was a good example of good liaison and team teaching within the reception classes. By the time they enter Year 1, most use knowledge of sounds to write simple words and simple sentences. They can read a range of familiar and common words.

Mathematical development

61 Day-to-day use of numbers in counting objects is well established. Counting the numbers of fingers on gloves in the nursery for example, or in the reception classes, counting the number of spoons they are ordering for size. Children are encouraged to count hand claps, finger snaps and to learn nursery rhymes which involve numbers. As a result of this, children soon learn to count confidently. Children in the reception class were chanting to twenty as a whole class and clapping to mark a multiple of five. Concepts of larger and smaller were being explored in both classes, for example in the nursery, in terms of matching

pairs of gloves and using comparative language. In the reception classes, children were ordering objects by size, in this case dice of various sizes. Good questioning extended the learning such as 'which is your smallest/biggest?' This is a particular strength of very good teaching in the nursery where the teacher takes every opportunity to help the children to extend and think harder in their play activities. By the time the children leave the reception classes, they understand the meaning of addition and subtraction and count and order numbers to at least 20. They understand one more and one less and higher attaining children count ten more and ten less. They know the names of many flat and solid shapes and understand positional language such as over, under, outside and inside.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62 Children are gaining an appropriate understanding of the world they live in through a wide range of practical and imaginative activities. Their activity in the nursery, involving looking at their hand prints in clay through magnifying glasses, is a good example of this. They were successfully looking at similarities, differences and patterns through observation. In the reception class, they were designing and making lunch boxes from a variety of resources, using simple tools and techniques. Additionally, glitter play dough was used successfully by the children to make fireworks. They happily noted how the play dough changed when they added glitter. Planning indicates a wider range of activities such as being healthy, looking after yourself and Christmas customs. In the nursery, children check the bird feeder and make a roadway using big blocks and model cars.

Physical development

63 Children have appropriate opportunities to develop their fine motor skills as they handle small tools such as pencils, crayons, paint brushes, glue and scissors. They frequently put together and take apart construction equipment and play with toys. In the nursery for example, they learn to move large cars with a push or pull movement. Children have good opportunities to use bicycles, tricycles and wheeled toys in their outside play. Additionally, in the reception class they are taken to the school hall, where they learn to throw, catch and balance on large equipment. Teachers pay good attention to the development of early physical skills. For example, a focus in the nursery for this term is to teach and develop correct cutting skills. Pencil control and the correct holding of a pencil is another very important focus in nursery work, ensuring that these skills are correctly established before children enter the reception classes.

Creative development

64 The teachers plan a curriculum where there are regular opportunities for painting and collage and to use a range of materials. They print pictures with their hands and shoes and make collage pictures from a range of papers. In the nursery, they make leaf patterns, string prints and enjoy printing with vegetables. Play in the role play areas enables children to play together creatively, for example in home and garden situations in the nursery and in the 'shoe shop' in the reception classes. Children were observed playing happily together in these situations, using the resources creatively to play out imaginative situations.

ENGLISH

65 The school has made significant progress and standards in English are rising. Seven and eleven-year-olds are now achieving standards which are at least in line with those found nationally. This is the result of effective action to improve pupils' skills knowledge and understanding in reading and writing. The school has adapted the national literacy strategy

guidelines to suit the needs of pupils. Setting is used in a flexible way allowing teachers to make the best use of resources and provide support for all pupils. Experienced teaching assistants effectively support pupils with special educational needs. Although higher attaining pupils have achieved above average results in recent tests the school could do more to provide challenging work for them in current classes.

66 Standards in speaking and listening are in line with national averages. There are some planned opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills but the school does not do enough to promote speaking and listening across the curriculum. Pupils listen and co-operate well but are not provided with experiences that will enable them to develop their abilities to speak for a range of purposes and audiences.

67 Attainment in reading is average for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Teachers use a daily reading workshop to develop pupils reading skills and interest in books. Pupils have a reading book and library book to take home and share with their family. Teaching assistants support independent reading and parents, teachers and teaching assistants use pupils' reading record books to indicate developments in reading for individual pupils. Pupils in Year 2 are enthusiastic about books. Higher attaining pupils are becoming fluent and beginning to read with expression, however, library skills are under-developed, most pupils only knowing the difference between fiction and non-fiction

68 The emphasis on reading is maintained for in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are enthusiastic about reading and most read with confidence, selecting texts for a range of reasons. In Year 4, pupils compare texts and suggest reasons for their effectiveness. In Year 6, one pupil selected 'The Secret Garden' by Frances Hodgson Burnett as she wanted to try out a different author, whilst another selected Tolkein's 'Lord of the Rings' as he thought it would be a challenge. Pupils retrieve fiction books using the alphabetical order system but are not yet confident with the numerical system used for locating non-fiction books.

69 The school library is well stocked with good quality books, including books with audiotapes. Clear reference charts and posters are provided to support pupils in location of the appropriate text. All classes use the library, its bright and inviting environment promoting the status of books and reading throughout the school. To further raise the profile of reading, a book week and poetry week have taken place. Younger pupils have access to 'Story Sacks' to share a reading experience with their families.

70 The whole-school approach to writing targets, linked to structured planning, has contributed to the rise in writing standards, with a good proportion of pupils achieving above average standards. However, opportunities to apply writing skills across the curriculum are under-developed and the school does not make enough links between reading, writing, and speaking and listening.

71 Pupils make steady progress through the school. They have a positive attitude to learning, behave well and are keen to participate. Work by Year 1 pupils, based on the story 'Ah, Said the Stork', develops their ability to construct simple sentences and write stories with accurate sequencing. Year 2 pupils imaginatively create characters and rhyming animal poems using alliteration and adjectives to improve their work. Homework on writing instructions indicates their ability to recognise the features of this type of writing. Pupils in Year 4 understand the basic features of play script and report writing and can identify and understand verbs and adverbs in simple sentences. In Year 5, pupils develop their understanding of instructional writing by re-writing the school fire drill rules and show their understanding of persuasive texts through writing letters to the Prime Minister about whaling. In Year 6, pupils learn about figurative language through a study of poetry by Ted Hughes.

Their written reports include some use of complex sentences, as does their writing linked to biography and autobiography.

72 Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory across the school, with some good teaching in Years 1 and 2. Where teaching is good, teachers make effective use of a range of questioning techniques and encourage collaborative approaches to learning, for example, Year 2 pupils worked well in pairs to develop their thinking. Planning is based securely on local guidance. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound and use of available resources appropriate. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support a variety of needs across the classes. Homework is set and linked to the focus of teaching within each class. Teaching is less effective when work is insufficiently challenging and lessons lack pace.

73 Subject management is sound. The new subject leader, who is supported by the deputy headteacher, is enthusiastic, hardworking and committed to raising standards. Pupils' written work is evaluated against individual targets and this contributes to their progress. Pupils following 'catch up' programmes are carefully timetabled to ensure they have access to the whole curriculum. The school is aware of areas for development, particularly those of speaking and listening, drama and cross-curricular links.

MATHEMATICS

74 Standards in mathematics are improving. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are on target to reach average national standards in the 2003 tests. Few pupils are expected to attain higher levels in the Year 2 tests, but this reflects the lower standards of this group when they started at the school. Pupils progress steadily through the school, with boys and girls doing equally well.

75 Year 2 pupils have a reasonable understanding of number and place value. They add and subtract numbers to 50 or so using number lines and 100 squares. They know short cut methods such as how to add 9 by adding 10 and subtracting 1. However, very few pupils know basic number facts well enough to enable them to work confidently with numbers above 100. Pupils measure objects such as pencils or the distance round their ankle in centimetres, as expected at their age. Some measure larger items in metres and centimetres and know that there are 100 centimetres in a metre.

76 Most Year 6 pupils calculate confidently in their heads and on paper with whole numbers and decimals. However, some pupils make mistakes because they do not fully understand the methods they are taught or they are careless when recalling basic addition and multiplication facts. Pupils know how fractions, decimals and percentages are related and find amounts such as 15% of £12.00. Pupils have a sound knowledge of shape, for example, describing four-sided shapes such as a rhombus or kite using words such as obtuse and acute and what they know about parallel lines. Working with an inspector, a group of pupils devised a rule for working out what the angles in a shape with any number of sides add up to, starting from what they already knew about triangles. However, it was clear from the discussion that they have little experience of developing formulae in this way. This aspect of mathematics is under-developed.

77 Teaching and learning in mathematics are satisfactory over the longer term. During the inspection, teaching was often good. The three-part lesson outlined in the national numeracy strategy is well established. Whole-class teaching at the start of each lesson is generally brisk and gets lessons off to a good start. Teachers engage pupils well in discussion. In a lesson on the properties of different types of triangles, good questions such as "How do you know?" and "How did you do that?" made pupils think. They were given sufficient time to explain in their own words, and were justifiably pleased with their

explanations. Teachers explain well what pupils have to do in the main teaching tasks. Consequently, pupils nearly always settle readily to work with little fuss.

78 Where pupils are taught in groups of broadly equal attainment, work is challenging in top set lessons, although more could be demanded at times. Work for lower ability sets is generally appropriate but, again, sometimes the work could be pitched a little higher. Classroom support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is good. Classroom assistants know the needs of the pupils they work with well and support them effectively in lessons. They assess each pupil in their group and share written comments with the class teacher. This enables the teacher to plan effectively and contributes well to the progress that these pupils make towards their learning targets. Although pupils with special educational needs are generally well supported, analysis of work samples shows that work is sometimes too hard for them to complete in the time.

79 Some teachers use the final summary session at the end of each lesson well to assess pupils' learning through further probing questions, but this is not a strong feature of most lessons. It also means that pupils themselves do not get opportunities to assess their own learning.

80 Teacher's increasing confidence is contributing to rising standards. Pupils have too few opportunities to use mathematics to help learning in other subjects, however, and teachers do not use ICT enough to support learning in mathematics.

81 The action plan for mathematics sets out areas for development based on a clear analysis of needs. There are good systems for keeping track of pupils' attainment and progress; assessment information is used well to determine teaching sets and to identify pupils who would benefit from the 'Booster' and 'Springboard'⁵ support programmes that the school runs later in the year. However, the targets for improvement that are set out in pupils' records are not linked to curriculum learning objectives, and teachers do not use their routine half-term assessments well enough to plan effectively what pupils are to learn next time they meet the same topic.

82 The school has sufficient resources for mathematics and the accommodation is spacious. However, the open plan design affects pupils' learning at times because sound from adjacent classrooms distracts pupils from their work.

SCIENCE

83 Standards in science are in line with the national average at the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement over their time in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. At the end of Year 6, standards are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory. The school has analysed test results and an action plan has been written which identifies relevant issues to support raising attainment in science. The main reasons for this unsatisfactory achievement are the lack of challenge in lessons and the lack of systematic development of science skills, which in particular are related to scientific enquiry. Another weakness is the pupils' ability to interpret their own and given results. This action plan has just been constructed and it is too soon for it to impact fully on pupils' attainment. At the end of Year 6, the 2002 results were well below the national average. The inspection judgement is higher because of the effect of the improvements the school is implementing. In the Year 2000, boys outperformed girls significantly in science. This issue was dealt with effectively by the school, mainly through the development of girls' scientific vocabulary. Consequently, girls and boys now perform equally.

⁵ These centrally funded programmes are designed to support pupils of broadly average prior attainment in increasing their rate of progress.

84 Overall, the teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good in Years 1 and 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress both in gaining scientific knowledge and in scientific enquiry. For example, in Year 1 pupils were learning about materials and their properties through their own investigation of objects in the classroom and their own classification of paper, wood, glass and plastic categories. Teachers were careful not to inhibit scientific knowledge as recording could be pictorial, if that was appropriate. Appropriate scientific skills are established in Years 1 and 2. These skills are not built on systematically in Years 3 to 6, because insufficient attention is paid to giving pupils enough practical investigative experiences. Two factors influence this. The open plan nature of the accommodation is more effectively used when two classes are working in this way at the same time, but sufficient resources are not always available. Additionally, teachers need help and support to identify where there are appropriate opportunities for investigative work. For example, when learning about 'Keeping Healthy', there are opportunities for pupils to look at nutrition labels on packets and discover food groups for themselves, rather than research from information packs as was seen in the lesson. Little evidence was seen of any extra challenge for higher attaining pupils. Lessons were very much planned for the average pupil. It is not surprising therefore that the number of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 in Year 6, is much lower than the national average and lower than the Level 5's achieved in English and mathematics.

85 Although the teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory in science and the pupils were making steady progress in lessons in Years 3 to 6, scrutiny of work indicates other shortcomings. The collection of data in science is not developed systematically. The subject manager correctly identifies that pupils' abilities to interpret their own and given results is a weakness. Pupils have very little experience of this in science in Years 3 to 6. The better teaching in science was always in lessons where there was practical and investigative work. For example, in Year 4, a human circle was made to illustrate an electric circuit and practical work was undertaken to build and test circuits which would or would not work. Additionally, pupils were asked to predict what might happen when more batteries were used. Pupils' responses were good, they behaved well, worked co-operatively and enjoyed finding out for themselves. Consequently, the learning was good. In other lessons, which were teacher directed, pupils often became a little restless and bored and did not learn as well. A group of Year 6 pupils said that science was probably the subject liked least because there was not enough practical work.

ART AND DESIGN

86 Standards are as expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, as at the time of the last inspection. Teaching is satisfactory and pupils make steady progress through the school.

87 There was a particularly good example of art skills being taught well. Year 6 pupils were investigating the proportions of the body by drawing from life. The teacher was giving good support to helping pupils to evaluate the relationships of proportion between different parts of the body by finding out for themselves from the model and translating this proportion to their sketches on squared paper. Good progress was made in this lesson because the pupils learned by practical experience. In a Year 4 lesson, teachers had planned carefully to find an interesting starting point to inspire different types of art, successfully. The weaker part of the lesson was that skills of art were not addressed sufficiently and although pupils' imagination was fired, there was not sufficient progress in improving their artistic skills. Dali's use of imagery and his surreal approach were discussed well but as this was at the end of the lesson, it did not have sufficient impact to influence pupils' own work. The focus of what pupils need to learn and how they will learn it best had not been considered sufficiently in the planning of the order of the lesson.

88 Viewfinders were used appropriately in two lessons to focus pupils' attention on exactly what they wanted to draw and enabled them to give attention to the line and detail within the framework of the viewfinder. Pupils progressed well by their use and made good gains in perspective and compositional elements of picture making. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own and others' work, which supports the development of their knowledge and understanding of art.

89 Pupils' work indicates that they experience an appropriate range of tools and techniques. For example, they have regular experiences of close observational work in drawing portraits and objects. They work with clay, make large three-dimensional figures, as in the stuffed underwater animals seen in the library, and have frequent and varied experiences in printing and collage. Good links are made with the work of a variety of famous artists such as Henri Matisse in Year 2 and Andy Warhol in Year 5. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good, particularly when they are active and involved and have been taught at the beginning of the lesson, how they might improve their work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

90 The subject is taught in alternate blocks with art and design, which meant only one lesson was observed. Photographic evidence of previous work suggested that standards are in line with those expected of seven-year-olds. Teachers' planning indicated that the curriculum follows national guidelines. For example, during the lesson seen, Year 1 pupils were thoroughly absorbed when working with a variety of fruits in order to prepare a fruit salad.

91 Although no lessons were observed in Years 3 to 6, workbooks and classroom displays, together with discussions with pupils, indicated that standards are broadly in line with those expected, as at the time of the last inspection.

92 Pupils in Year 3 design and make photograph frames. Their design sketches show that they understand the need to plan carefully and to select appropriate materials. Pupils also learn about food hygiene and are introduced to the dietary content of food through making sandwiches. As their books indicate, this activity provides good opportunities for them to use their mathematical skills when producing tally charts and bar graphs of favourite fillings. In Year 4, pupils look at various purses and then design their own, first deciding on the user and then choosing the appropriate shape, material and fastenings. The importance of designing for a specific purpose was emphasised further when Year 6 pupils recently made slippers. They talked enthusiastically and knowledgeably about this project, revealing a good grasp of the design/make/evaluate process. They were aware that design and technology is concerned with meeting needs and producing functional objects as distinct from the more visual nature of art and design.

93 It was not possible to judge the quality of teaching from the observation of a single lesson but evidence from pupils' work indicated that teaching is reasonably effective. The new subject leader has made a good start in identifying how standards can be raised by ensuring that pupils build up their skills more systematically through the school. She is aware that the range of tools used is rather limited, with few opportunities for pupils to work with a broad range of materials.

GEOGRAPHY

94 During inspection, only one lesson was observed because year groups are taught history and geography in alternate blocks of time. However, evidence from this lesson, teacher's planning, pupils' past written work and discussions with pupils and staff shows that

pupils make satisfactory progress and attain standards that are similar to those expected by the time they are seven. However, pupils do not achieve the expected standards by Year 6. It was not possible to judge the overall quality of teaching, but pupils' lack of knowledge and understanding suggests some weaknesses.

95 Pupils in Year 1 responded with enthusiasm when the teacher introduced Barnaby, the 'weather bear'. This stimulated pupils' interest and as a result, they were able to select the most appropriate clothing for different weather conditions. Teachers make use of the locality to promote pupils' enquiry skills, frequently using walks in the local area to familiarise pupils with their environment. In Year 2, pupils' work shows that they draw comparisons between a fictional island off the coast of Scotland and Jamaica in order to improve their understanding of climate and location.

96 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are enthusiastic about the use of maps but are unable to use them efficiently to locate a place in England. A field trip to Wimborne had enabled them to begin to develop their understanding of the changing environment through conducting a survey of local people's perceptions of their area. They also contrasted the locations of Poole and Lewisham but were only able to discuss these at a superficial level. Although pupils were able to express views on the changing environment around them, this was limited to their immediate locality. Awareness of the wider world was limited. Year 4 pupils, who had studied the lives of people in their immediate locality and also life in the Indian village of Chembakolli, provided the only evidence of study of another country outside the United Kingdom. This project was supported by an Indian visitor to the school who enabled the pupils to learn about another culture.

97 The subject leader is new and has not had time to make a significant impact on standards. She has a clear vision of the way forward and has begun to develop an action plan which includes an evaluation of teaching and learning with a view to raising standards. She has identified the need for better time management, a broader resource base and subject specific support for teachers. She is committed to improving cross-curricular links and providing pupils with exciting opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in geography.

HISTORY

98 Standards are in line with expectations by Year 2 and by Year 6. The school has maintained its history provision at a satisfactory level since the last inspection although cross-curricular links remain un-explored. During a very good lesson, Year 3 pupils watched a video entitled "Death of a Pharaoh" and showed great interest and enthusiasm about the pet cats which were mummified with their owners. The beautiful golden masks and other very attractively mounted displays on ancient Egyptians engaged the interest of the pupils. They were fascinated with the complexity of the hieroglyphics and asked probing questions about life after death. Discussion about the main features of the period, the attitudes to life and death and the reasons for the differences between events now and during that period were lively and imaginative. They were able to describe aspects of everyday life for the rich and the poor Egyptians and show an appreciation of how events are interpreted in various ways in societies past and present.

99 During another very good lesson, Year 4 pupils participated in an interesting role play to re-enact the events surrounding Henry VIII and his wives. Pupils described what the lives of the queens to be were like before they were selected, how they felt and what it was like to live with the King. Those who played Henry VIII described what it felt like to find out that his queen was in love with someone else. They shared their feelings moments before being beheaded, during pregnancy and childbirth, knowing what might happen if they did not give birth to a son

and heir. History was brought alive by this approach to teaching and injected excitement and enthusiasm in pupils' learning. They discussed the difference in attitudes to marriage and divorce then and now. For homework, they were asked to find out more about one of Henry's queens who gave birth to future queens of England.

100 Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are quite knowledgeable about the life and times of significant local individuals. Pupils learn about changes over time by looking at artefacts, toys, books, household utensils, tools and a variety of other familiar and unfamiliar materials. For example, Year 5 pupils expressed some interesting variety of perceptions about education and schooling during Roman times. They looked at the tools for writing during that period. All pupils know how history is different from the present. Pupils remember with excitement using pictures, films, video programmes and fictional stories to learn about the past and the present way of life. Pupils are encouraged to develop their understanding of sequence of events by working with timelines

101 The quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good. Pupils enjoy history and show a great deal of interest in investigating primary and secondary sources and are very confident in asking and answering questions related to their work. Pupils' interest in history is further heightened by visits to Rockbourne Roman Villa, the toy museum at Arne, Scaplen's Court, Wimborne, and several other local points of historic significance. Pupils respond enthusiastically to learning about and from history which is well planned and integrated into the broad curriculum, although there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to investigate and conduct their own historic enquiries to discover about the past.

102 Pupils are taught about local history, for example through finding out the changing patterns of land use, leisure and buildings of historic interest around Poole and Lewisham. However, not enough use is made of the history of other societies or the study of the influences of social, cultural and religious differences within and between the various communities in Europe represented by migrants and settlers from other parts of the world. Whilst pupils recognise that migration, movement and settlement are recurring experiences in British and world history, they miss the opportunity to adequately explore the similarities and differences between past and present migrants' and asylum seekers' experiences, and in the reactions and responses of local populations.

103 The school has an adequate supply of books, pictures and photographs. Pupils learn about changes over time by looking at toys, artefacts, books, household utensils, tools and a variety of other familiar and unfamiliar materials. Pupils' interest in history is kept alive by staff who put a lot of effort into presenting a very good variety of interactive displays around the school. Teachers work well together with the support staff to ensure that the pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties are fully included in the lessons.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

104 Standards are below national expectations throughout the school. Progress and achievement are unsatisfactory. Standards are below those reported at the last inspection, although more is now required of pupils in order to reach the expected levels. There are two main reasons for the lack of progress. The way ICT is taught means that pupils have insufficient access to computers to complete work at a high enough standard. Secondly, teachers do not exploit links with other subjects enough. This results in pupils learning ICT skills in isolation.

105 Nearly all work available for inspection was confined to the communicating information strand of the subject, that is, manipulating text, graphics and sound. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils prepare name captions and learn simple techniques for computer 'painting'.

Work is not demanding or extensive enough to meet the standard expected for seven-year-olds. Some work by pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 is at the standard expected, but this is not widespread enough. For example, Year 3 pupils make birthday cards, experimenting with different letter styles and pictures. Year 5 pupils use word processors, for example to type up stories. This work is carefully edited to remove spelling mistakes and is well presented. In Year 6, pupils mix text, pictures and sound in attractive multimedia presentations on themes such as 'The Romans' or 'Australia' and a small group of pupils produce 'Tedditorial', a very attractive school magazine.

106 Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory because teachers do not make sufficient use of the available resources and work in ICT is not related well enough to other subjects. Pupils were observed using computers very rarely during the inspection. Teachers demonstrate techniques satisfactorily. Pupils listen attentively and behave well because they are interested in the work. They know what they have to do. However, it takes too long for pupils to complete the work set because they do not have enough time to work at computers, especially during English and mathematics lessons, which take up the majority of the time. For example, pupils learn how to change text styles, colours and effects, to reflect the meaning of the words and to add visual interest to their work. In a short teaching input to revise the skills needed, the discussion showed that many pupils were clear how to manipulate text on the computer screen. However, in the exercise that followed, all pupils worked on the same poem. The work was not related to current work in English and so no time was allocated for pupils to work at computers in English lessons. By the end of the inspection, very few pupils had begun work on the exercise, and little progress had been made. A second example is seen in work on spreadsheets. It has taken half a term for pupils to prepare a spreadsheet to add up a short shopping list. This is much too long, it is not related to work in mathematics, and the excessive time taken means that pupils do not progress at a fast enough rate to achieve more than a very basic level of skill.

107 Teachers' confidence in using computers is growing as a result of skills-focused training. However, training has not gone far enough to help them plan effectively for teaching ICT as a subject in its own right and to exploit its use in other subjects. There are no systems for tracking pupils' progress at present. The co-ordinator is well aware of the weaknesses in teaching and the standards of pupils' work. The ICT action plan sets out appropriate areas for improvement, but more consideration needs to be given to using the barely sufficient resources more efficiently.

MUSIC

108 There was insufficient evidence to judge pupils' standards, progress, achievement or improvement in music since the last inspection.

109 Pupils sing satisfactorily in assembly. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils clearly enjoy singing together. They follow the musical shape of the melody and sing rhythmically. Pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 sing unison and two-part rounds satisfactorily. A performance of He's Got the Whole World in His Hands, complete with actions, was enthusiastic, in tune and sung with a good tone. Pupils made good progress in learning a new version of Psalm 23, 'The Lord is My Shepherd', as a two-part round. They quickly learned the words and melody, holding their parts securely when singing in a large group. Singing standards are in line with national expectations. However, there is insufficient evidence to judge standards in other aspects of the subject.

110 The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons seen varied from good to unsatisfactory. Where teaching is good, teachers have good musical expertise, lessons are well organised, they are taken at a good pace and engage pupils well in a variety of active

tasks that build progressively on what has gone before. For example, one lesson that combined singing, playing and listening made increasing demands on pupils as they learned to sing in up to three parts. At each stage the teacher emphasised correct technique for playing xylophones and chime bars as well as stressing the need to listen carefully so that pupils could match the pitch of their singing to the notes being played. Firm, fair class management ensured that pupils remained on task well. Pupils enjoyed the lesson and made good progress. Some teaching is unsatisfactory, but for different reasons. In one lesson, the teacher's understanding and knowledge of music was weak, and led to incorrect information being taught to the class. This is likely to cause confusion later. In another, the teacher did not manage well enough the unsatisfactory behaviour and attitudes of a significant group of pupils. Consequently, the lesson was frequently interrupted and little was achieved.

111 Planning follows national guidelines and is satisfactory overall. However, there is no system for tracking pupils' attainment and progress in music at present. The level of instrumental teaching by visiting specialists has declined since the last inspection. Only violin lessons are taught at present but there are lunchtime guitar and recorder clubs. Visiting musicians add much to the enjoyment of music making, for example working with pupils to make instruments from old water pipes, which are then used in compositions such as 'The Bathroom Suite'. Year 6 pupils remember with pleasure and genuine sense of achievement their roles in the annual production last year. They recognise and value the contribution that such opportunities to perform in public make to their personal development, for example in developing their self-confidence.

112 The music room is spacious and comfortable, and is well equipped for class music lessons. Learning resources overall are satisfactory, although the co-ordinator plans to extend the range of recordings and instruments from around the world in order to support pupils' cultural development better than at present.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

113 Pupils in Years 2 and 6 achieve standards that are broadly in line with those expected. Pupils enjoy lessons and improve their skills as they move through the school. During a Year 1 lesson, pupils were at an early stage of developing hand/eye co-ordination when throwing and catching but Year 2 pupils demonstrated much better skills when bowling at targets. Similarly, there was a marked difference between the quality of pupils' movement in the dance sessions observed in Years 2 and 5. Brief observation of the oldest pupils during after-school football and netball practice suggested that pupils make good progress in games skills. Although not observed directly, teachers and pupils report that the Year 4 swimming programme is highly effective, with almost all pupils able to swim by the end of the year.

114 The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Teachers structure lessons well, generate enthusiasm and place appropriate emphasis on teaching specific skills. They give clear demonstrations and encourage pupils to try hard. This was seen during lessons on dodging in Year 2. The teachers used their voices effectively to capture pupils' imagination as they 'dodged raindrops' and worked in partners to provide 'shelters'. Sometimes, however, the balance between warm-up, explanation, practical activity and cool-down is inappropriate and pupils have too little time to practise because of over-long introductions and unnecessarily long cool-down times.

115 Three dance sessions were seen in Years 5 and 6 where the overall quality was good. Lessons in Year 5 were particularly effective. They were taken at a brisk pace and pupils responded well to a variety of rhythms. All pupils were involved and enjoying the activities – boys equally as enthusiastic as girls – as they devised their own movements and developed dance sequences. The teacher struck a good balance between instruction and demonstration

and opportunities for pupils to make a more creative, personal response to the rhythms and mood of the music.

116 Pupils' personal development is supported well. Health and fitness are given a good emphasis and lessons often involve cooperative partner and team work. This occurred during a Year 6 lesson, when pupils were encouraged to work together in refining dance sequences and helped one another to improve. The teacher treated them as mature individuals throughout. As a result, pupils behaved very well, tried hard and made good progress. Sports days and after-school clubs provide good opportunities for pupils' social and moral development. Boys and girls play alongside one another well in mixed teams and pupils are developing good sporting attitudes of fair play and competition.

117 The subject is well managed. All teachers have had additional training and their increasing confidence and expertise is beginning to be reflected in the rate of pupils' progress. Outdoor facilities and general resources are extensive but the poor acoustics of the hall sometimes unduly affects lessons.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

118 Standards are satisfactory. The main focus is on learning about elements of Christian teaching set within the context of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have a sound knowledge of Christian festivals like Lent, Harvest, Easter and Christmas. They are taught from Bible stories, such as those about Noah and Jonah, and the main stories about Jesus to reflect the fact that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian. Seven-year-olds recall the story of the Prodigal son and are able to relate that to personal experiences of forgiving and being forgiven. Six and seven-year-olds were able to describe how they pray and whom they prayed to.

119 Pupils show some awareness of the principal features of other faiths and understand that there are people who hold different beliefs. Eleven-year-old pupils remember learning about the main beliefs of Hindus, Sikhs, Jews, Muslims and Christians. They can name the different places of worship and the main festivals like Christmas, Easter, Divali, Eid, Rosh Hashana and Baisakhi. They are very familiar with the stories of Jesus and accurately recalled the parable of the Good Samaritan. Pupils remember Judaism as having hundreds of laws and that the Jews celebrated Sabbath on Friday evenings and on Saturdays. However, they confused aspects of other faiths and made some fundamental errors in describing Muslims as people who "...shave their heads, believe in a black box and many gods". Most of the eleven-year-olds confused aspects of Indian culture with Sikhism, Hinduism and Islam.

120 The quality of teaching is generally sound, with some that is very good. During a very good lesson in Year 4, pupils accurately named Rama, the creator, Vishnu, the protector and Shiva the destroyer as Hindu Gods they had learnt about previously, before moving briskly onto experiencing a Hindu wedding through role play and a sensitively conducted question and answer session. Pupils knew and understood the symbolic use of the seven steps during the ceremony; they discussed the use of good luck charms on such occasions and talked very confidently about similarities and differences between Christian and Hindu weddings. A very good display on Hinduism had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning during this lesson.

121 In other lessons, teachers do not always take adequate advantage of the wider aspects of the syllabus which emphasises both the learning about and learning from the rich diversity of faiths and cultures with their distinct identities and loyalties of culture, language, history, religion, values and customs. Pupils are generally presented with facts about the

religions they study without always being required to ask probing questions or reflecting on religious ideas of their own or other faiths. For example, eleven-year-old pupils who described themselves as Christians and confidently declared that they believed in Jesus as the Son of God, but even after considerable prompting, they were unable to say why this was important for Christians. They show awareness that some things are right and some are wrong but are not always able to relate the moral issues encountered in their daily lives to religious teachings.

122 The scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils indicated that they are presented with information about religions without always being required to ask questions or reflect on their own opinions and perceptions about life. Pupils especially enjoyed learning about Mother Teresa, Terry Waite and Cliff Richard. Year 3 pupils remember a Muslim parent who brought 'lots of stuff' about his religion and talked to them about being a Muslim. Themes for assemblies, circle time, PHSE lessons and other areas of the curriculum are established but could be made more explicit for pupils. The general approach to RE results in pupils learning about religions but not learning enough from religions.

123 The recently appointed co-ordinator is enthusiastic about developing RE throughout the school. She has identified the gaps and has begun to prepare a draft action plan, which should provide good support for the teaching and non-teaching staff. This together with a well developed monitoring and tracking policy system is likely to have a further impact on the quality of teaching and the standards of achievement.