

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **PURLEIGH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Chelmsford

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114918

Headteacher: Mrs D R Dack

Reporting inspector: Mrs E Pickford  
23128

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2003

Inspection number: 247509

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:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pump Lane Purleigh Chelmsford
Postcode:	CM3 6PJ
Telephone number:	(01621) 828282
Fax number:	(01621) 829564
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Walmsley
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23128	Mrs E Pickford	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music Foundation Stage	How well is the school led and managed? How well are pupils taught?
14347	Mrs J Lindsay	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
31029	Mr P Thrussell	Team inspector	Mathematics History Geography Religious education Equality of opportunity	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
31075	Mrs D Harris	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Design and technology Physical education	The school's results and achievements

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Purleigh Community School is a smaller than average primary school situated in the village of Purleigh. Half of the pupils travel by bus from ten surrounding villages. It is a popular school and has grown from four to seven classes over the last few years, with one third of the pupils coming from outside the catchment area. The 177 pupils are organised in seven classes, one for each age group. There are slightly more girls than boys. The majority of pupils come from owner-occupied housing and the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Children join the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. All the children have previously attended playgroups or nurseries in the area. The first assessments made when pupils join the school show a wide range of ability but attainment tends to be average overall. All pupils speak English as their mother tongue. Ninety-nine per cent of pupils are white and the remainder are of dual race from Asian backgrounds. Ten per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs, which is well below average. Some of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties, while others have emotional and behavioural problems or language and communication difficulties. One per cent of pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is below average. There has been a high staff turnover during the last two years but no recruitment difficulties.

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

Purleigh Community Primary is a good school. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are good. Pupils enjoy school, have good attitudes to learning and behave very well. The quality of teaching is mainly good, which enables all pupils to make good progress. Standards are improving steadily, with greater challenge being provided for the higher-attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their attainment when they join the school. The school has effective strategies to make sure pupils are included in all lessons and have equality of opportunity. It provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The headteacher provides strong leadership and management for the school.
- The good teaching enables all pupils to achieve well.
- Behaviour is very good throughout the school.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and contributes significantly to pupils' very good personal development.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and hold it in high regard.
- The range and number of additional activities offered by the school are very good.

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

- There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in subjects other than English.
- The timetable arrangements do not make efficient use of learning time, facilities and resources.
- The time and skills of classroom support staff are not used well.
- Systems for checking the quality of teaching are not thorough enough.
- The outdoor activity area attached to the reception classroom is unsatisfactory.

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

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

The school has made good improvement since it was inspected in January 1998. All the key issues

have been tackled effectively. The school has revised and recently improved the process of school development planning. The plan is regularly monitored by governors and it is helping the school to improve. Schemes of work are now in place, many based on national guidance, and the most effective have been adapted to the particular needs of the school. Assessment systems, which monitor pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science, are in place and provide detailed information that is used to plan work and set targets for improvement. In other subjects, assessment systems are developing. The governors are well informed about the curriculum and have established good links with curriculum co-ordinators. Standards are improving steadily in national tests and greater emphasis is given to identifying and challenging the higher-attaining pupils to secure further success. The amount of very good teaching has improved. Very good standards of behaviour have been maintained. The provision for information and communication technology has improved. The school is committed to further improvement and has the leadership and expertise to succeed.

## STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

In 2002, Year 6 pupils attained average standards in English, mathematics and science when compared with all schools nationally. Compared to schools with a similar proportion of free school meals, standards were below average in mathematics and science and well below average in English. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 was above average in science, well above average in mathematics but well below average in English. Weaknesses in writing lowered overall standards in English. Pupils with special educational needs had made good progress in relation to their earlier attainment. Standards have risen steadily over the last three years. Standards of pupils' current work are above average in mathematics and science, with an above-average percentage of pupils working at the higher levels. In English, standards are average overall, with above-average standards in reading and a steady but not yet significant improvement in writing.

Pupils in Year 2 achieved above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the 2002 national tests. Standards were average in all subjects when compared with those in similar schools. Teacher-assessed standards in science were average when compared to those in other schools but no pupils achieved the higher Level 3. Standards of pupils' current work in reading, writing and mathematics are average overall. There is a much higher proportion of pupils in the current Year 2 needing additional support, but they are making good progress. Pupils of average and above-average ability are achieving well. Children in the Reception class make good progress from the average standards attained when they join the school. By the end of the Reception year, most children meet the Early Learning Goals (nationally expected standards) in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical and creative development. Many pupils exceed these expectations, especially in their personal, social and emotional development. Children with special educational needs and the higher-attaining pupils achieve well.

Pupils' achievements in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, music, history and physical education are as expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in geography. Standards in religious

education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus at the age of seven and 11.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes towards their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave well in lessons, in the playground and when moving around school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. There are good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and develop initiative. Pupils work and play well together and show respect for adults and each other.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above the national average. Punctuality is also good.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and promotes consistently good learning in Reception and Years 1 and 2. Learning in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory and very good in Years 5 and 6, where teaching is very good overall. A small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching occurs in mathematics in Years 3 and 4. In the Reception class, good opportunities are provided for children to develop their social skills and become confident and independent. They quickly develop early reading, writing and mathematical skills as a result of good teaching. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is good and builds effectively on the good start made in the Reception class. Pupils who fall behind are helped to overcome their difficulties. Good challenge is provided for pupils who are identified as gifted and talented. In Years 3 and 4, teaching is satisfactory overall although activities are not always matched closely enough to pupils' needs, which slows the pace of learning. In Years 5 and 6, pupils of all abilities achieve well as a result of careful planning and good use of day-to-day assessment which moves their learning forward. Particular strengths in all teaching are the teachers' good all-round subject knowledge, high expectations of behaviour, good quality of marking and the time given for extra-curricular activities. Teachers assess and monitor pupils' progress well in English, mathematics and science.

The teaching of literacy is good and children's knowledge and use of letter sounds gained in the Reception class provide a firm foundation for the development of reading and spelling. In Years 1 to 6, reading is used well and books, CD ROMs and the Internet are used to find out information. Pupils develop their writing skills in the literacy lessons. However, there is little evidence of extended writing in work samples and opportunities are missed to develop different kinds of writing in other subjects. Numeracy skills are used well in science to draw graphs and display data. Accurate measurements are made during experiments. Information and communication technology is taught well but classroom computers and the computer suite are not used efficiently. Good examples were seen of information and communication technology being used to support a variety of subjects. Teachers do not always plan to make best use of classroom support staff to develop pupils' learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. However, the curriculum is not balanced because the time allocated to some subjects prevents them being covered in sufficient depth. There is a very good range of extra-curricular and additional activities which enrich the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils on the special needs register have appropriate individual education plans and are given effective support in lessons, which enables them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good, overall. The school encourages pupils to take responsibility for their actions, work co-operatively, respect the feelings of others, care for the environment and develop a sense of community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good systems for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development. Procedures for monitoring child protection and health and safety are good. Attendance is carefully monitored and checks are made to ensure that term-time holidays do not exceed legal requirements. The school has an effective policy which promotes racial equality.

The school provides satisfactory information for parents through the prospectus and the Annual Governors' Report. Good information is provided for parents about the curriculum and during 'open class' afternoons and parents' evenings. Parents regularly help in school in a variety of ways and raise funds for equipment. They are very good at supporting their children's learning at home.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The new headteacher has quickly established herself as leader of the school community. Delegation is good and subject and area leaders are a supportive team who work hard to provide training and information for colleagues in order to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The range of skills and experience within governing body enables it to fulfil its duties effectively. It is becoming more involved in shaping the direction of the school and is taking a critical interest in standards and achievements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is beginning to make use of the analysis of test results to set targets for improvement and identify areas for development. Monitoring and evaluation of planning has been improved recently. The monitoring of teaching is not yet sufficiently robust to identify areas for whole-school improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The system for allocating funding to subject areas and establishing priorities is under review. Good use is made of grants for pupils with special educational needs and for staff training. Governors monitor spending effectively and best value for money is sought on purchases. They are not yet evaluating the cost effectiveness of all major spending decisions.

The school is fully staffed with suitably qualified teachers with a wide range of experience and expertise

to teach the Foundation Stage, National Curriculum subjects and religious education. Administrative, caretaking and support staff contribute well to the smooth running of the school. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, with all the available space used but not timetabled efficiently. The Reception classroom is small and the attached outdoor activity area is very small and difficult to supervise. Resources are satisfactory except for geography. Access for the disabled is being improved.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children enjoy school.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school is approachable if problems arise.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework their child is given.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. They find that suitable homework is set on a regular basis. However, there is some inconsistency amongst staff attached to the importance of completing the work.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children join the school in the Reception class with a wide range of ability and skills, but their attainment is generally average. About one sixth of the intake are above average, balanced by a similar number of below-average pupils, and the remaining two thirds are average. Most children achieve the Early Learning Goals (the standards expected of children at the end of the Reception class) in all six areas of learning. At the time of the inspection, many are already working at the expected levels for pupils at the start of Year 1 in the areas of speaking, reading, writing, spelling, mathematics and their personal and social development. The overall good teaching provides pupils with a good start to their schooling and enables them to make good progress. Children with special educational needs make similar progress to average and higher-attaining pupils. Higher-attaining pupils are provided with additional challenge which moves their learning forward and encourages enthusiastic attitudes to learning.
2. In the national tests in 2002, the results for seven-year-olds at the end of Year 2 were above average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared with all schools nationally. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was above average in writing and broadly in line with the national average in reading, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools (based on the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals), standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in reading and mathematics are below the national averages for similar schools and average for writing. In science, which is assessed within the school, the results show that standards are above the national average, although no pupils achieved the higher Level 3.
3. Standards for seven-year-olds have gradually risen over the last three years in reading and writing, and also in mathematics in 2002. The school's predictions for the end of this academic year suggest that the results will be similar to last year for mathematics at the expected Level 2 or above, but a lower percentage of pupils are likely to achieve the higher level. In reading and writing the expected percentages are lower, although the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level in writing is predicted to be the same. The number of pupils with some learning difficulties is higher in this year group and over a fifth of pupils have received extra support during the past year. Pupils who have moved into this year group have changed the overall ability profile of the class. Records show that pupils who have attended the school from Reception are making good progress when compared to their attainment on entry. During the inspection, standards of work in Year 2 in lessons and work samples in reading, writing and mathematics are in line with national expectations, although pupils are making good progress. The individual targets set for the pupils are appropriate and they are clear about what they need to learn in order to progress to the next stage, particularly in writing. Standards in science are above average overall, with almost a quarter of pupils likely to achieve the higher Level 3.
4. In the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2002, standards are average in relation to national figures for English, mathematics and science. At the higher Level 5 in both mathematics and science, pupils achieved well above the national averages but in English they were below average. When compared with similar schools, standards in English and mathematics are below average and are well below average in science. At the higher Level 5, standards are in line with the average in mathematics and science but well below average for English. There are no significant differences between boys' and girls' achievements as they generally follow the national trends, with girls achieving higher scores in English and boys in mathematics and science. No significant differences were seen during the inspection. On average, standards have risen in mathematics over the last few years and in science over the previous year, but dropped in English.
5. In the current Year 6 there is a rise in the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level in

English, but standards remain average overall. In mathematics and science, standards are likely to be above average by the end of the year.

6. The school has analysed the 2002 figures and taken action to improve the English results where writing has been identified as a weakness. To raise standards at the higher levels throughout, the school has begun to identify pupils who are gifted and talented to ensure that they are regularly set appropriate challenges in lessons. These actions are only just beginning to have an impact on the standards and are more evident in Years 5 and 6 than elsewhere. Throughout Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, most pupils are achieving as expected. However, the lack of challenge in Years 3 and 4 means that progress is satisfactory, whereas it is good and often very good in Years 5 and 6. Targets for improvement are set across the school for individual pupils in their English, mathematics and science books but these targets are not always written in child-friendly language.
7. In Years 1 and 2, standards in speaking and listening are average overall. Pupils listen attentively during the introduction to the lessons and answer questions well. In Years 3 to 6, speaking and listening is variable, often depending on the teacher's skill in using open-ended questions to develop pupils' thinking. The use of drama to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and therefore their writing is under-used across the school. Standards in reading are above average across the year groups and there is obvious enjoyment in this activity. The support of parents in hearing their child read is another contributory factor in raising standards in reading. Guided reading is taught outside the literacy hour to ensure there is more time for shared and guided writing to improve standards. Although this is appropriate, pupils are receiving sometimes up to an hour and a half of literacy in one stretch because of the way the present timetable is constructed, which is too long. Time is also now set for extended writing but there is little evidence of this in the work in pupils' books. In Years 3 and 4, the range and types of writing were also limited. Handwriting and presentation are good overall and in Year 6 pupils use their dictionaries and thesauruses well to develop their vocabulary. There is insufficient monitoring of the strategies to ensure that shared and guided writing is taught well across the school.
8. In mathematics, pupils in Year 1 are making good progress and the work is well matched to their abilities. Attainment in Year 2 in the mathematics is average, with pupils making satisfactory progress. Pupils are developing their number skills but they have too few opportunities to apply these to everyday problems. In Year 3 and 4, progress is hindered by the lack of match of work to pupils' needs and a lack of pace and challenge in lessons. Objectives are not clear enough or expressed in language that pupils understand. Standards in Year 6 are above average. The work builds on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding in both Years 5 and 6, so in these year groups pupils make very good progress.
9. In science, standards at the end of Year 2 are above average, with an improvement in the number of pupils working at the higher levels. Pupils have good opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding and to investigate for themselves. In Years 3 and 4, targets are too low and do not build on what has been achieved in Year 2 and progress is unsatisfactory. In Years 5 and 6, progress is good and often very good because expectations are high and pupils are challenged to apply their knowledge to their investigations. Pupils develop good knowledge, understanding and investigative skills. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average. The well-structured lessons build well on pupils' prior learning so that pupils are achieving well.
10. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), history, art and design, design and technology, music, physical education and religious education are as expected for pupils at the age of seven and 11. No judgement could be made about standards in geography because of a lack of evidence and the small number of lessons seen during the inspection. Attainment in these subjects is lowered by the restrictions of the current timetable, preventing subjects being studied in greater depth.
11. Although the number of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average, the school gives good attention to meeting their needs and overall they make good progress. Their

individual education plans have clear targets, which are regularly reviewed and help them progress. They make especially good progress in their acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills because of the variety of additional support they are given. The monitoring of these pupils is well managed by the co-ordinator, enabling them to achieve well. The newly designed policy for gifted and talented pupils has had little time to have an impact on raising standards but the strategies being developed are providing improved opportunities and challenge for the higher-attaining pupils to respond to. Average-attaining pupils achieve well and in Year 2 and Year 6 some are already working at above-average levels.

12. The evidence from the inspection shows that the school is continuing to work hard and is taking effective action to improve standards further. The school makes effective use of data and is beginning to use a tracking system to monitor progress closely. The commitment of staff and the governing body to raising standards and the positive attitudes of pupils provide a secure basis for this to continue to happen.

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

13. Boys and girls of all ages have good attitudes to school. Virtually all the parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that their child likes coming to school. Good admission procedures to the Reception class ensure that children in the Foundation Stage quickly settle in their new surroundings, work and play well together, and become increasingly independent. They quickly understand school routines and involve themselves in the school community. Other pupils also show good levels of enthusiasm in lessons and towards other aspects of school life, such as the very many extra-curricular clubs on offer to them. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about lessons where teaching is of a high standard and tasks are suitably challenging. For example, younger pupils in a music lesson were eager to sort instruments into different categories such as scrapers and shakers. They then played them enthusiastically, following symbols showing which group should play and at what volume and tempo. Older pupils became very enthused by an English lesson where they had to think and write about their feelings during an air raid. They engaged well in the short role-play and were fully involved in the tasks set for them to extend their writing skills. Pupils also maintain their interest and concentration well. They generally remain focused on their tasks and even when the teaching has shortcomings, the great majority of pupils continue to behave well, although their interest and concentration decline. This was the case where there was some repetition of work done previously. Pupils are eager to be involved in other aspects of school life such as the School Council and the great variety of extra-curricular clubs. For example, members of the netball club participated eagerly in and spoke enthusiastically about the matches they had played against other schools.
14. Most pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to their learning. Their behaviour is very good. The support provided by learning support assistants is variable and enables pupils to remain focused during group work, but is less effective in whole-class sessions. The good support for pupils with a statement of special educational needs enables them to gain access to all parts of the curriculum.
15. Behaviour has been maintained at the very good levels seen during the last inspection and again the majority of parents are pleased with the standards of behaviour. When the school's positive behaviour strategies are consistently applied, behaviour is very good in lessons, and there was very little disruptive behaviour seen. Pupils are aware of the high standards expected of them and they respond very well to these expectations. This includes how quietly they move in and out of the hall for lunch and for assembly, and how they behave during these occasions. Outside in the playground, pupils are generally very well behaved. There is no evidence of any harassment or intimidation and pupils do not have concerns about bullying. Adult supervisors are quick to attend to any problems that arise and ensure that they are swiftly and fairly resolved. There have been no recent exclusions from school, which is an improvement since the last inspection when there was one temporary exclusion.
16. Pupils relate well to each other and relationships throughout the school are good. In many

cases there is a good rapport between adults and pupils and this leads to learning being fun whilst maintaining a good level of mutual respect. Pupils have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. For example, the youngest children are encouraged to share and were heard to say, "excuse me" when outside on tricycles. The idea of the school as a community is emphasised, for example, in assembly when pupils agreed it was much better for lots of people to help to tidy up and to assist each other. Pupils also have a good level of respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others through looking at different religions in religious education and through the personal, social and health education lessons. The school's multicultural policy and race equality policy both emphasise the need to respect others. As a result, pupils mix well together regardless of background or ability.

17. Pupils' ability to show initiative and take on responsibility is very good overall. Pupils are particularly positive about the roles they are given to help participate in the running of the school. For example, the School Council is an effective organisation that involves pupils from the Reception class upwards. Even these youngest children participate in decisions about improving the outdoor environment and raising funds to do so. Older pupils take on responsible roles such as prefects, playground monitors, helping in the library and during assemblies. They take an obvious pride in being given such responsibility and this has a very positive impact on their personal development.
18. Attendance levels are good rather than excellent, the judgement during the last inspection. The school's figures for authorised and unauthorised absences are both slightly better than those seen nationally. There has been an increase in the number of parents who remove their children from school for holidays during term-time and in some classes this has accumulated to a relatively high number of days and is affecting pupils' progress. Punctuality is good and there are few latecomers.

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

19. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Ninety-five per cent of teaching is at least satisfactory. Five per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory, occurring in mathematics lessons in Years 3 and 4. Twenty-eight per cent of teaching is very good and sometimes excellent, and seen in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6. The quality of teaching remains similar to that at the time of the last inspection but has a higher percentage of very good or better lessons.
20. Teaching of the Reception class is good overall and enables children in the Foundation Stage to make good progress. Many make very good progress in reading, writing and spelling, acquiring skills quickly. Long sessions of literacy and numeracy are timetabled for the mornings, with little variety of materials and activities for pupils to use and choose. The majority of children maintain their concentration but the organisation is not appropriate for all of the class. Afternoon sessions have a clear focus, with a short session of direct teaching at the start, followed by a variety and choice of activities covering several curriculum areas. Some activities are supervised by the teacher, others by the classroom assistant and children also work independently. This approach is appropriate for the Foundation Stage curriculum and pupils learn well through a range of practical experiences. The number and type of outdoor activities offered are limited by the space available and difficulties of supervising this area. The classroom assistant is not fully involved in all aspects of the morning sessions but is used well in the afternoons. Expectations of behaviour and independence are high. There are few opportunities for children to show their work and evaluate learning at the end of sessions. Relationships between adults and children are good and they show respect for each other. The marking of work in books is good and assessments are made towards the achievement of the Early Learning Goals.
21. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress, building on the work of the Reception class. The teachers in Years 1 and 2 work well as a team, question pupils well and provide good support for pupils with special educational needs as well as challenge for the most capable pupils. Good assessment systems are in place which are used to identify difficulties as they arise and additional support is given quickly. Appropriately challenging targets are set for pupils in

English, mathematics and science which ensure that all pupils achieve well. In both classes pupils are expected to behave well and work hard. Relationships between adults and pupils are good. Teachers expect pupils to take responsibility for their work and own equipment and pupils respond sensibly. In Year 1, the teacher is very knowledgeable about the learning needs of pupils of this age and skilfully matches tasks to the needs of the pupils and as a result, teaching and learning are often very good.

22. Overall, teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. The work does not always build well enough on what has been achieved in Year 2. In Year 3, the teaching approaches are very different to those in other classes. Often the pace of learning is not brisk enough and overlong introductions reduce the time for pupil activity, discussion and evaluation at the end of lessons. The style of questioning, where pupils choose who will answer, is not appropriate in all subjects because it does not enable continuous assessments to be made, nor does it ensure full involvement of all abilities of pupils. Good teaching was seen in the ICT suite where pupils were given guidelines and allowed to explore the program for themselves and discuss in their groups, and this resulted in good learning. In Year 4, planning for the range of attainment within the class does not always take full account of previous learning, resulting in a lack of challenge for the most able and tasks that are too difficult for the lower attainers. In a good design and technology lesson in this class, good opportunities were given for pupils to experiment, choose materials, develop ideas and skills which they could use for their money containers. In this lesson, very good use was made of the additional classroom support and the pupils made good progress.
23. Teaching is very good in Years 5 and 6. Lessons are well planned and build effectively on what has gone before. Group activities are carefully matched to pupils' ability and influenced by learning in the previous lesson. The expected learning is shared with the pupils and described in language which they understand. Lessons move at a good pace, giving plenty of time for pupils' tasks and some evaluation at the end of the lesson. Pupils behave well because they are fully absorbed in their work. Lessons are lively and fun and relationships are very good. Teachers circulate during activities, assessing pupils' learning through questioning and challenging thinking to move learning forward. Homework generally links well to preparing pupils for the next lesson.
24. Teachers' subject expertise is used to devise schemes of work to ensure progression in learning as pupils move through the school. Teachers have good all-round subject knowledge and share their expertise well with other colleagues, for example, music in Years 5 and 6. Teachers are confident in their teaching and in their use of ICT and have benefited from the training they have been given. Adjustments have been made to long-term planning now that the school has a class for each age group and co-ordinators check that the planned curriculum is covered. The time of the support staff is not always planned effectively to improve learning or to make assessments of what has been achieved in the lesson. Pupils are managed very well by their class teachers and expectations of behaviour and effort are high.
25. The quality of teaching in literacy lessons is good in the Reception class, although it follows the National Literacy strategy rather than being adjusted to the Foundation Stage curriculum. Targets set for individual children are generally related to the earliest stages of the National Curriculum. The majority of children achieve very well in reading, spelling and writing. Learning objectives are frequently shared with children but are not always presented in words that are easily understood by them. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching of literacy is good overall and builds well on the attainment in the Reception class. Good use is made of reading in other curriculum areas to find out information and pupils are expected to record for themselves in most subjects. In Years 3 to 6 there is some variation in the quality of literacy teaching, varying from satisfactory to excellent in Year 6. Reading in all year groups is used well for research, from books, CD ROMs and the Internet. Writing skills learnt in the literacy lessons are not always developed sufficiently in other subjects because of the current timetable organisation. Time allocation for history, geography and religious education is limiting opportunities for extended writing and the chance to study these subjects in greater depth.
26. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory in the Reception class and follows the National



Numeracy Strategy. The long sessions are not appropriate for the concentration and attainment of most children. In mathematics, children are given insufficient variety of practical experiences of number to consolidate their learning. In Years 1 and 2, pupils take measurements in their science experiments and draw graphs of data they collect. There are few opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. Some unsatisfactory teaching occurs in Years 3 and 4 but numeracy is used in science and accurate measurements are taken during experiments. In Years 5 and 6, graphs are drawn and in science are used to explain the results of investigations. In the more effective lessons appropriate time is spent on each part of the lesson, the introduction, direct teaching to the whole class, followed by group activities. Throughout the school, insufficient time is given at the end of most lessons to measure learning against what was expected. Sometimes a traffic light system is used to indicate the level of difficulty but opportunities to learn from each other are often missed. In numeracy lessons pupils do not often have the opportunity to discuss difficulties or to explain successful strategies. Groups undertaking different activities rarely report back to the class or show their work.

27. Teachers identify and group pupils with special educational needs appropriately. Planning is suitable to meet all these pupils' needs in broad terms. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, different group activities are planned. Planning to ensure that special needs pupils are fully supported and involved during whole-class teaching is not evident in all lessons. In the most effective lessons, pupils receive clear explanations and are included in discussion through targeted questioning. Where partner work is used effectively, progress is good, for example, in a Year 1 class where a pupil with special needs was partnered with an able pupil. Together they shared a book, with the able child reading the story but pointing to the words for him. When they came to a word whose meaning he did not understand (for example, pain), she gave an explanation, thereby confirming her own use of language – "its when you get hurt or when you get pinched or when it hurts inside your body". The teachers write the Individual Education plans (IEPs) for the pupils with special educational needs in their class and have copies of these in their files. These targets are not clearly identified in their planning but in the more effective lessons, account is taken of them.
28. Marking and presentation of work are of a high standard in most classes. Teachers make useful comments which tell pupils how they can improve their work. They often note particular difficulties or additional support pupils have been given to achieve the task. Work in the books is generally completed and corrections made if necessary. Homework books are also marked well. Pupils' work is attractively displayed in classrooms and around the school. Assessment is used well in English, mathematics and science to set targets and plan lessons which enable pupils of all abilities to progress well. In other subjects, assessment systems do not yet monitor progress as closely and tasks are not so well matched to the range of attainment. In these subjects, similar tasks are planned but different results expected. Day-to-day assessments are used well in Years 1, 5 and 6 to adjust activities to meet the needs of individuals within the class. Teaching strategies for gifted and talented pupils have recently been identified in a new school policy. In the most effective lessons, the high expectations and challenge for these pupils are clearly identifiable but this is not so in all classes.

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

29. The planned curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum, which provides all pupils with equality of learning opportunities that prepares them well for the next stage of education. In some lessons, however, planning does not take full account of the range of ability within classes; activities for lower-attaining pupils, for example, are not always sufficiently adapted to their particular learning needs, or effectively supported by learning support assistants, to enable them to make enough progress. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, when the schemes of work in some subjects provided insufficient information on what was to be taught. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been fully implemented; national guidelines have been introduced in other

subjects, but these have yet to be fully monitored and adapted to the particular needs of the school.

30. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Reception class are satisfactory. Planning takes full account of the six areas of learning recommended in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. Long sessions of literacy and numeracy are planned each morning which are not always appropriate for the age, ability and concentration levels of all pupils. Other areas of learning are covered in the afternoon sessions where there is more variety and opportunity to work in small groups and for pupils to choose activities. The restrictions this places on the time available for learning does not allow these areas to be covered in sufficient depth. Integration and close links between the six areas of learning are not always evident in planning and teaching.
31. In Years 1 to 6, there is some imbalance in the curriculum, both in weekly timetabling and long-term planning. The school has rightly placed an emphasis on literacy and numeracy to help maintain and improve standards in English and mathematics. However, the structure of the school day, often with over-long sessions in the morning for literacy and numeracy, has reduced the time available for other subjects, so that they are not always taught in sufficient depth to enable pupils to attain higher standards. The time allocated for religious education does not always meet the recommendation of the locally agreed syllabus. This structure has also meant that facilities, such as the hall and the computer suite, are not used as fully and efficiently as they might be, and that equipment is not readily available when, for instance, three classes are doing design and technology at the same time. Curriculum planning over the year, particularly in history and geography, shows that there are times when some subjects are not being taught, and that the time elapsing between units of study in some subjects restricts the systematic development of the skills related to them. Some relevant and purposeful links between subjects are now being developed. For example, art and design and design and technology skills have been used in history to design and construct models of World War II shelters, and computer skills have been used to question a simulation of life in ancient Greece. In literacy, some texts linked to other subjects are being used.
32. The effectiveness of the strategies for teaching literacy skills is satisfactory. Pupils are expected to use their literacy skills in other subject areas. However, overall, there are insufficient opportunities for them to use and develop their writing skills at levels that are both appropriate and challenging to different levels of attainment. The strategies for teaching numeracy have been effective in raising standards.
33. Good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE), which includes sex education and drugs' awareness. Planning for PSHE lessons is now based on national guidelines. Further provision is made within different subject areas, such as religious education and science, and through assembly themes.
34. The curriculum is enriched by the provision of a very good range of clubs and activities that take place at lunchtimes and after school. These include a number of sports clubs, homework, computer, stamp, environmental and recorder clubs. They are all keenly attended. Through concerns raised at the School Council, more activities are becoming open to and planned for younger pupils, for example, chess and ball skills for Year 1 pupils. Annual residential visits for Year 6 pupils give them access to outdoor adventure activities, and develop their self-awareness and ability to respond to the needs of others. Visitors to the school, such as theatre groups, and visits to different museums and places of interest further enhance the curriculum.
35. The school has established good links with secondary schools and with the playgroup run on the school site, which help to ensure smooth transfer between schools. The headteacher meets with other local headteachers and curriculum links are starting to develop that involve other teaching staff, for example, in science.
36. There are good links with the community that support pupils' personal development and learning. Police, road safety officers and local clergy visit the school. Pupils take part in village events

and local music and dance festivals. Two local parish councils fund the school's swimming pool.

37. The school makes good provision overall for pupils' personal development, maintaining the position found during the last inspection. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The development of pupils' self-esteem is central to the school's ethos, and is generally evident in teaching where pupils are praised and encouraged in their learning. Few 'magic moments', however, were observed in lessons where pupils' spirits were raised. Their school achievements, both academic and personal, are recognised through Purleigh stamps', which build up into different certificates that are awarded in assemblies. A wall of fame celebrates achievements out of school. Assemblies, when well planned, provide a special occasion that pupils enjoy. The requirements of the daily act of collective worship are met and the majority offer a moment of reflection or time for prayer. Music is played for assemblies, but pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to listen to it carefully or to pass an opinion on it.
38. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Staff provide good role models and reinforce pupils' growing awareness of right and wrong through the successful implementation of the school's behaviour policy. Pupils discuss and agree their own rules for classroom conduct; Year 6 pupils show their agreement by signing a contract, whereas younger pupils illustrate their consent through drawings displayed with the rules. Assemblies, PSHE and religious education lessons provide good opportunities to discuss moral issues. Especially good behaviour and attitudes are celebrated in a weekly achievement assembly. A Greenwatch club encourages pupils to care for the environment.
39. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils have day-to-day classroom responsibilities, for example, giving out materials and tidying up. Older pupils have responsibilities around school; for example, they become library or playground monitors, organise the equipment for assemblies and run litter collections. All classes elect members to the School Council, which has been active in raising funds to improve the school environment and extra-curricular provision for younger pupils. Year 6 pupils have helped to organise a talent show. Visits provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills away from school, particularly in Year 5, where they have a sleepover at the Science Museum, and in Year 6 where they participate in a residential visit.
40. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school provides a curriculum that helps pupils to develop an understanding of their own culture through art, music, dance and literature. This provision is reinforced through regular assemblies, in particular, displays around the school and by visits to museums and places of interest. Some provision is made to learn about the way of life in other countries and cultures, for example, through religious education and geography, but overall the school has identified the need to prepare pupils more effectively for life in a multicultural society as an area for development.

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

41. Overall, the school has continued to make good provision for pupils' welfare. The child protection procedures are very good as the headteacher, who is the designated teacher, has had regular training in such matters and is experienced in dealing with the appropriate agencies. Provision is made to talk to other members of staff, including support staff, about what the school's procedures are and to give guidance as to what the signs of child abuse may be. The child protection policy has not been updated to reflect the change of headteacher. There is an appropriate policy in place for the use of physical restraint with pupils. Other welfare matters are dealt with well. There are several members of staff who are trained in first aid and appropriate records are kept of any accidents, illnesses and special medical needs. All the necessary checks are carried out on electrical and fire equipment and there are regular fire drills. The school had a recent health and safety audit carried out by the local education authority where no major issues were raised. However, the school pond area is not appropriately secured.

42. The educational and personal support and guidance for pupils are good overall. The procedures to monitor and improve attendance are good. Registers are marked promptly and checked on a daily basis. Parents are contacted if their child is absent and they have not informed the school. The educational welfare officer visits the school regularly and will follow up any prolonged absences. As more parents are removing their children from school for holidays, the headteacher has reinforced the procedures to request this time off, with a letter sent to parents and informing them of the need to request authorisation. Time lost due to holidays is beginning to restrict progress. Good attendance is promoted through the awarding of certificates to pupils with full attendance each term.
43. Improving the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress was a key issue in the last inspection. The school has made good progress in addressing this issue, led by the well-informed co-ordinator. Staff have gathered a large amount of data in English, mathematics and science which is being used to plan work that is appropriate to the individual needs of the different abilities, and to provide additional support or challenge where necessary to improve progress. Statutory assessments take place in English, mathematics and science at the end of Years 2 and 6. Results are analysed in detail to identify strengths and weaknesses and how well different groups achieve. The weakness recently identified in boys' writing has become a focus for whole-school development. In Years 3, 4 and 5, annual assessments are made in English and mathematics. The first assessments made when children join the Reception class, with the resulting attainment and predictions it gives, are used to monitor what the school adds to pupils' learning. In the Reception class, progress toward the Early Learning Goals is monitored in all six areas of learning. In science, a bank of assessment tasks has been collected and is used at the end of each unit of work to ensure that staff have an overview of how well pupils are achieving and to provide good information on which to base teacher assessments. All the information relating to these three subjects is stored on a database so that the progress made by individuals can be regularly checked. The database is updated on a termly basis and assessments used to set individual targets. In the other subjects of the curriculum, assessment systems are not as well developed. In some subjects, notes are made at the end of a topic as to which pupils achieved well and those who had difficulties, but there are no systems to monitor skills and attainment over time. In subjects such as music, physical education and religious education, there are no continuous assessment procedures.
44. The school has no disabled pupils at the current time. Although it is possible to reach all parts of the building in a wheelchair, the school is aware of the problems and has plans to improve access for the disabled. The aims of the school support the ethos of care that is shown by staff and pupils alike. The assessments of pupils identified by teachers or parents as having special needs and requiring extra help are carried out generally through class assessments, test analysis and the use of a computerised database. If this data suggests that insufficient progress is being made and additional help is required, then outside agencies become involved, including the educational psychologist. Teachers recognise their responsibilities in identifying pupils who are having difficulties and have received training on the new Code of Practice from the special educational needs co-ordinator.
45. There are very good procedures in place to monitor and promote good behaviour. An incident book is kept of any episodes of poor behaviour that occur and although rarely necessary, a behaviour diary can be used to monitor an individual's behaviour. The school will involve outside support agencies when needed but generally the positive behaviour strategies used are effective in promoting good behaviour. Pupils are also encouraged to behave well through the use of rewards such as the 'Purleigh stamp' and the bronze, silver and gold certificates that are awarded to them. Oppressive behaviour is also very well monitored and on the rare occasion when an incident occurs, it is recorded and reported appropriately and parents are informed. The school has the necessary procedures to record any racist incidents but there have been no such issues.
46. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. In a school of this size, much of the monitoring is done informally because all staff know the pupils very well and are alert to any issues that may affect them. In addition, there are regular circle time

sessions that are used to monitor personal development. The annual progress report contains a section on the pupil's personal development and is used to check progress through the school. Pupils' personal development is also supported through the very many opportunities they have to take on responsible roles and through, for example, the presentation of a cup to someone from each class for being caring and considerate. All the parents who returned the questionnaire feel that school helps their child to become mature and responsible.

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

47. Parents have very positive views of the school. They are especially pleased with how approachable the school is, the standards of behaviour and how well the school helps children to become mature and responsible. Inspection findings endorse all of these views. A small number of parents do not feel that the right amount of homework is given out and this was also a concern at the last inspection. Since then, the school has developed a homework policy and there is also a homework club. All pupils are expected to read at home regularly and a timetable of other tasks is laid out. However, although overall homework is judged to be good throughout the school, there is some inconsistency in the importance attached to completing the work and how carefully the homework timetable is followed.
48. Links with parents are very effective and the great majority of parents are very supportive of the school. This has a very positive impact on the work of the school. Parents contribute a great deal by helping their children with homework. For example, there was a very good response to a session where parents were given advice about helping their child in the Reception class understand 'Jolly Phonics'. This enabled parents to work effectively with them at home. In addition, parents regularly come into class to help with practical activities and in lessons, such as a Year 1 history lesson looking at old toys. A large number of parents help when pupils have swimming lessons and some are also involved in helping with extra-curricular activities such as the football club. All parents have signed the Home-School agreement. The Parent Teacher Association is a very active organisation that is effective in raising substantial amounts for the benefit of pupils as well as developing the school as a social community. Parent governors play a full and active part in the running of the school and bring a range of skills to the governing body. In addition, parents are willing to help with improving the environment by donating their time and any suitable equipment. The accumulation of all this parental support has a very beneficial impact on the sense of community in school and particularly on pupils' learning.
49. Arrangements for the admission of pupils with special educational needs or with other disabilities are as yet not outlined in the school prospectus. However, it does explain the process of identifying pupils and that parents should contact the headteacher with any queries. The school works hard to make parents aware of their child's position on the Code of Practice register and involve them in reviews and target setting.
50. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory overall. Parents now receive curriculum information, which is an improvement since the last inspection. There are also regular monthly newsletters. The prospectus and governors' annual report have a couple of minor omissions which are being rectified. Parents have two formal consultation meetings each year as well as regular opportunities to view their child's work during the 'open class' afternoons. In addition, the teaching staff and headteacher are very approachable should parents have any concerns. The annual progress report that parents receive is satisfactory overall, although many of the comments are descriptive of what has been covered rather than how well the pupil has achieved. The school does not yet use National Curriculum levels in the reports to monitor progress in core subjects as traditionally they have been produced too early in the summer term to include the results of any statutory or non-statutory tests.

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

51. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher, key staff and governors are good overall. The headteacher has only been in post for a term and a half but has quickly gained the

confidence and respect of the whole-school community by setting and achieving clear priorities and targets for improvement. She shares her ideas for shaping the direction of the school with staff and governors, who have been very welcoming and supportive of the initial changes made. The senior management team has been streamlined and responsibilities have been delegated for key developments in the life and work of the school. Senior staff meet regularly to exchange ideas, discuss issues and to enable the headteacher to maintain a clear overview of events. The deputy supports the headteacher but currently is not having a strong enough influence on the leadership of the school.

52. Subject co-ordinators have appropriate responsibility for the development of their respective subjects and areas. Several have considerable influence on the development of their subject, the training of staff and the raising of standards across the school. This is particularly evident in English, science and mathematics. Several members of the senior staff are currently undertaking management training and this is reflected in the influence they are having on developments in their area. Subject co-ordinators are responsible for schemes of work and long-term planning. In most subjects, schemes of work have been adopted which follow national guidance but some of these have not been adapted to meet the specific needs of the school. All co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning and check coverage of the planned curriculum. Most co-ordinators sample work and some organise workshops to grade work. The monitoring of teaching and the curriculum that has taken place since September by the headteacher and deputy has been linked to literacy and numeracy and individual targets have been set for performance management. The monitoring has been used to identify some whole-school issues for improvement, such as the teaching of guided writing and more detailed planning. In English and mathematics, co-ordinators have observed lessons but following this there has been little opportunity for teachers to share best practice in order to achieve a more consistent standard across the school.
53. The leadership of special educational needs is generally good. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) attends training in her role to ensure she fulfils the statutory requirements. The SEN policy has been updated to take account of the new Code of Practice and the SENCO has led training for other staff. Further co-ordination and training of the learning support assistants are now required to ensure they are used more effectively in the classroom.
54. The aims of the school, concisely stated, are reflected closely in its work. They refer to 'achievement for all in a community that cares'. Staff ensure that all pupils are included in every activity and are giving greater emphasis to setting work that matches the learning needs of all pupils, supporting those experiencing difficulties and challenging average-attaining and higher-attaining pupils. There is an improving staff commitment to improve and the school has the capacity to succeed.
55. Drawing on a wide range of experience, the governing body offers good support in shaping the direction of the school and fulfils the majority of its statutory duties appropriately. Governors are keen to learn, are increasingly involved and use their expertise for the benefit of the school. The headteacher ensures that the governing body is carefully briefed and well placed to make the right strategic decisions for future development. Good channels of communication have quickly been established and governors are gaining a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are beginning to take a critical interest in the school's achievements and standards following an informative presentation on data analysis and are better equipped to judge the school's effectiveness. Governors have good links with subject co-ordinators, discussing new policies and bids for funding. They make regular visits to the school to observe lessons. There is considerable enthusiasm within the governing body and a determination to improve their role.
56. Governors draw on the particular knowledge of the office and premises manager to ensure that they are well informed on all aspects of school life. The day-to-day financial management is efficient and appropriate procedures and safeguards are in place. The experienced office manager keeps the governors and headteacher well informed and provides accurate and up-to-date information for finance meetings and budget setting. Good use is made of technology to

manage budgets and store information and documents. The high surplus of funding has been used to provide the additional class. Money is also held in the budget to pay for the refurbishment of the swimming pool. Once this has been completed, contingency funds will fall to an acceptable level of below five per cent. The Parent Teacher Association makes regular, generous donations to the school and is currently contributing to the development of the computer suite. Other grants, such as funding for special educational needs and staff training, are used appropriately. The last audit took place four years ago and the few recommendations made have been acted upon. The office manager seeks best value on purchases made and governors get several tenders for improvements made to the premises. The school is monitoring its performance more closely and is beginning to take effective action to secure improvements, for example, by identifying gifted and talented pupils and providing 'booster classes' for those falling behind. Governors are not yet considering the cost effectiveness of major spending decisions and checking that expensive equipment is utilised to the full.

57. The governors' finance committee closely monitors the school's budget and is beginning to link the principal areas of expenditure to the priorities in the school's improvement plan. The headteacher has changed the format of the existing school development plan so that it is more of a working document and can be monitored easily. This new format is being trialled and evaluated at present as preparations are being made for the next three-year plan. More attention is being given to meeting the school's targets through detailed data analysis to identify trends and taking action to improve weaknesses. Gifted and talented pupils are now identified and greater challenge is provided for them in lessons. Through careful monitoring, pupils who are falling behind are given extra support. This shows improvement since the last inspection when school improvement and the costing of the development plan were key issues. Governors are far more involved in setting priorities and delegating budgets to subject areas. All teachers are responsible for ordering their own stock and managing their own class budget.
58. The numbers of teaching staff support the demands of the curriculum well. The deputy headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator are given regular release time from their classes to fulfil their management roles. There is a good range of subject expertise within the staff. Several staff are very experienced and staffing costs are high. Most staff generously give of their time to provide additional activities at lunchtime and after school. Support staff are adequate in number but classroom assistants are not used well enough. The role of the learning support assistants within the classroom is not always clearly defined. They were not sufficiently involved during whole-class sessions. The communication between the class teacher and the learning support assistants is not well established and so their contribution is reduced. Support staff are involved in performance management but require more training and opportunities to be involved in planning and assessment. The school has satisfactory procedures to help new staff settle into the school but communication between cover staff and a class teachers who are being released must be improved to ensure continuity of learning for pupils.
59. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and is enhanced by attractive displays. There is a room for every class, although one classroom is not connected to the main building and has no toilets. Two classrooms do not have water. The newer classrooms are light and spacious. The specialist facilities such as the large hall, computer suite, the resource room and library area are good. The Reception classroom is small for the demands of the Foundation Stage curriculum and the linked outdoor area is unsatisfactory for the requirements of the curriculum. All the classrooms for the youngest pupils are dark, have high windows and limited storage space. The grounds are attractive, with wildlife areas and a range of climbing and play equipment. There is a suitable hard play area for games.
60. Resources are adequate and the number of computers is in line with government ratios for primary schools. There are a range of good quality resources to meet the demands of the curriculum, except in geography where resources are unsatisfactory. Not all resources, including computers, are efficiently used because of the timetable structure. Resources for subjects such as design and technology could be better used if classes had their lessons at different times. Taking account of these factors, the average standards of attainment on entry, the overall satisfactory standards achieved, the good leadership and the high unit costs, the

school provides satisfactory value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

The school should:

- (1) Continue to raise standards in writing by planning more opportunities for pupils to extend and develop their writing skills in subjects other than English.

*(paragraphs: 7, 25, 32, 75, 115, 121, 142)*

- (2) Restructure the timetable to create a more balanced and varied school day in order to make better use of learning time, facilities and resources.

*(paragraphs: 7, 20, 25, 26, 29, 30, 62, 65)*

- (3) Make more efficient use of classroom support staff through planning their full involvement in all parts of the lesson so that they have a greater impact on pupils' learning.

*(paragraphs: 20, 24, 58, 79, 90)*

- (4) Develop the current systems for checking the quality of teaching in order to improve the consistency between classes and share best practice.

*(paragraphs: 52, 78, 93, 111, 116, 122, 128, 141)*

- (5) Improve the outdoor activity area for Reception children to meet the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

*(paragraphs: 59, 67)*



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	14	22	14	3	0	0
Percentage	2	26	41	26	5	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

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	177
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	19

#### 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	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

%
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#### Unauthorised absence

%
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School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.4

School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	15	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	15
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	28	28	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (97)	100 (90)	100 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	14
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	28	28	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (97)	100 (97)	96 (90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	11	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	10
	Girls	13	11	13
	Total	21	20	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (85)	77 (77)	88 (85)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	8	10
	Girls	12	8	12
	Total	18	16	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (77)	62 (69)	85 (81)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils****Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	174	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.1
Average class size	25

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y 6**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	92

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	418,326
Total expenditure	407,684
Expenditure per pupil	2,303
Balance brought forward from the previous year	55,353
Balance carried forward to next year	65,734

### **Recruitment of teachers**

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

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	177
Number of questionnaires returned	110

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	27	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	40	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	44	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	49	11	5	0
The teaching is good.	61	37	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	39	6	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	26	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	38	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	42	2	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	55	43	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	44	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	44	5	0	2

## **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**

61. Children join the Reception class in the September of the year in which they are five. All 22 children were attending full-time at the time of the inspection. Good links are established with the parents. Children are given the opportunity to come into school on a weekly basis at the end of the summer term before they start school to work with their teacher. The small classroom has a good range of resources but storage space that is accessible to the children is limited. When children are choosing from a variety of equipment and moving from one activity to another, conditions become very cramped. The outdoor area joined to the class is very small and limits the range of outdoor learning activities and does not free up space indoors.

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

62. Children come into class and leave happily at the end of the day, some travelling on the school bus from other villages. Many of the children have attended a playgroup on the school site, are familiar with the surroundings and have friends in the class. They quickly settle into the class routines of registration, hanging up their coats and being responsible for their reading books. They are very good at changing for physical education and dressing themselves afterwards. Not all children remember to put up their hands to answer questions but they generally listen carefully to instructions and are able to make their own choices and decisions. Children co-operate well with each other sharing a popular toy, or playing in a group with construction equipment. They are able to concentrate on an activity for long periods of time, especially in literacy and numeracy lessons. At snack time children take turns to help set out the food and count the numbers of pupils choosing different drinks. Children are sensible and polite when choosing their snack and afterwards they wash the cups and plates on a rota basis. They wash their hands before lunch and after visiting the toilet. Children do not always show sufficient responsibility for clearing up after themselves and putting equipment back in the right place. Staff have to remind them of this expectation regularly. Adults manage the children well and they soon learn the appropriate behaviour for a variety of settings including whole-school assemblies, the dining room and playtimes. They develop a sense of community and form friendships within their class and with older pupils who watch over them in the playground sensitively. All children achieve what is expected in these areas of development by the end of the Reception year and many exceed this in the maturity and confidence they show.

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

63. There is good provision for communication, language and literacy in the Reception class which enables all children to achieve well. The majority of children have a wide basic vocabulary when they join the school and are orally confident with adults and other children. Staff are very good at developing new subject vocabulary and encouraging children to use this in their answers. Children who have a limited vocabulary are given adult support to develop their language skills by acting out situations, such as breakfast time in the Three Bears' cottage. All children listen well to the teacher when working in a large group but are not so good at listening to each other, something the staff work hard to encourage. Progress in communication is good and class members who are School Council representatives are very self-assured.
64. The teaching of early reading and writing skills is very good. Children are systematically taught letter sounds and encouraged to blend these together to read unfamiliar words. Parents play a very supportive role by giving daily practice which contributes significantly to the rapid progress they make. After one and a half terms, the majority of the class build up simple words and the most capable can build up complex words such as 'sharper'. They also gain a good sight vocabulary and learn to spell frequently used words which cannot be built up with individual sounds. Children enjoy books and listening to stories and some can re-tell these in their own words. When reading 'Big Books' in whole-class sessions, some children show that they can

follow the text and pick out words and sounds. Most children know about full stops, question marks and sentences and the most able know about speech marks. Children take home books to share with their parents and regularly read to adults in school. There is good communication between home and school through the reading diary and all children are given reading targets. All children achieve well and standards of reading are above those expected for their age. Their achievement in writing is good because expectations are high. Work samples show that at the start of the year most children are mark-making in their writing books and soon their writing includes recognisable letters, often from their own name. Children learn to form letters correctly and most can write their name. They are confident to 'have a go' at writing their own news and most can use their knowledge of sounds to write their own sentences. Many children show a good grasp of the initial sounds of the words they want to write. Some of the higher-attaining children were able to write a sentence such as, 'I went shopping with Mummy and Daddy.' for themselves. Children made good attempts at writing sentences for a story about the 'Three Bears' under the teacher's skilful guidance. No opportunities were observed for children who chose writing during play either to send messages or to write letters. By the end of the Reception year the majority of children achieve the standards expected for age in reading and writing. Over half of the children exceed these standards and are working at National Curriculum levels.

### **Mathematical development**

65. Levels of mathematical development are average for the majority of children when they start school. Mathematics is mainly taught through a daily numeracy session where the emphasis is on number work. Many of the children chant numbers to 20 and beyond. Most recognise and write the numbers one to 10. Some recognise larger numbers and over half the class use the number line in the classroom to record numbers up to 20. Children find one more than a given number. Most accurately count and record the number of pea and bean seeds and total the two numbers. Half of the class can write this down as an addition sum using mathematical signs and symbols. A quarter of the class combine the numbers by 'counting on' from one of the numbers. Most of the others total well and recognise which was the largest or smallest. Children know the names of two-dimensional shapes such as circle, square, triangle and rectangle and they know their colours. Puzzles and construction toys also help to develop ideas of shape and size. Children are developing ideas of measurement and use cubes to measure and compare the height of teddy bears. Class graphs have been made of eye colour. Bears had been sorted into two groups according to whether they were brown or not. Children have access to 'compost' and water activities to develop ideas of capacity but these free-choice activities do not have a specific focus. Staff work hard to develop mathematical vocabulary in the whole-class sessions and encourage children to use the correct terms when answering questions. The majority of children make good progress and are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in mathematics by the end of the Reception year. Teaching is satisfactory overall because the methods used are not always appropriate for some of the lower-attaining children. The sessions are too long and there is an insufficient variety of oral and practical counting activities.

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

66. There is good provision for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Most children have good background knowledge because of the experiences they are given at home. In school they are encouraged to use their senses to find out more about the world around them. Children know that plants grow from seeds and from their observations of growing bean seeds learn that the roots grow first and get water for the plant. They know that the shoot grows up to the light. Most know that a seed needs soil, water and warmth in order to grow. They learn about their local environment by going on walks. They are able to draw simple maps when going on a Bear Hunt from a house to the bear's cave, describing the ground between. They can also draw a map to show how Goldilocks got to the Three Bears' home. Many include woods, rivers, ponds, fields and bridges on their picture. Children are developing an idea of time by looking at teddy bears and deciding what makes them old and then ordering them from the oldest to the youngest. They know the Christmas story and remember the part they played in the Christmas play. They talked about Pancake Day after assembly. Children enjoy dressing up and are keen



to point out photographs of the characters they dressed as during Book Week. On the computer they develop good mouse control and 'click and drag' items to dress a teddy and to correctly assemble the parts of a plant. Children have used a drawing program to create Mr Square, which they printed out and displayed. They confidently listen to story tapes, taking charge of the controls and headsets. The vast majority of children make good progress in this area and achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. Teaching is good as a result of the range and variety of activities planned, enabling many children to exceed the expected standard.

### **Physical development**

67. Indoor provision for their physical development is good and children are able to make use of the school hall. In the hall children show good awareness of personal space. In these lessons children show good control in throwing, bouncing and catching balls and controlling balls with their feet. They understand the importance of warming up and cooling down at the beginning and end of sessions. The outdoor provision linked to the classroom is unsatisfactory because it is too small and slopes. There is no large climbing apparatus. Although large wheeled toys are used, the area is unsuitable for this and its shape makes supervision very difficult. A fenced play area in another part of the school is sometimes used but all the heavy equipment has to be carried there. The whole class has to be there at the same time to ensure suitable supervision. By the time children leave the Reception class the majority achieve the Early Learning Goals in both movement with apparatus and in using tools to write, paint, cut and draw with increasing control. They are able to make structures using a variety of construction kits. Teaching is good because it is well structured but progress is restricted in some areas by the limited facilities.

### **Creative development**

68. Children have a good knowledge of colours and know how to mix paint. Some have a good knowledge of shades of a colour and understand how to make colours lighter or darker. The teaching of basic skills is good and children choose brushes of the appropriate size and thickness, and understand how to wash brushes and palettes. They can observe and paint spring flowers such as primulas and daffodils carefully, some adding a lot of detail. Children were not seen to experiment sufficiently with their own ideas and much of the work displayed was on too small a scale for pupils of this age. Children make collages of a Rainbow fish using glue carefully and create three-dimensional aquarium models to a high standard. During the inspection, children were making a three-dimensional cottage to a set design. Children showed skill with scissors, but there was no choice of materials nor of methods to join sections together. Adults did not use these activities sufficiently to develop children's own ideas or vocabulary. Children had opportunities to take part in role-play in the Garden Centre. This was a stimulating area, well stocked with live plants and seed packets which had been designed by the children. Children are reluctant to get involved in these activities unless staff are there and modelling what is expected. Insufficient opportunities are provided to develop children's imaginative play. Children enjoy singing rhymes, songs and choruses in assembly. In class they showed a good sense of rhythm when accompanying songs with percussion instruments and are able to count the beats in a bar. All these activities only take place in the afternoon and are not fully integrated into the other areas of learning. Overall, teaching is satisfactory in this area and most children achieve the expected standard at the end of the Reception year.

## **ENGLISH**

69. Over the last three years standards for seven-year-olds in the national tests in reading and writing have been improving. The 2002 results in both reading and writing were very high for pupils attaining the expected Level 2. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was above the average for writing and broadly in line for reading. In comparison with similar schools, standards were very high for reading and writing but the percentage achieving Level 3 is below average for reading and average for writing. Progress is good across Year 1 and 2, although the present pupils in Year 2 are not expected to achieve as well as last year. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels is expected to be similar. The inspection evidence confirms this. The last inspection report found that attainment was in line with the national

average and therefore the current results show an improvement.

70. The test results for English at the age of 11 over the last three years have remained generally static. The results for 2002 were in line with the national average for all schools, but when compared with similar schools, are below those expected. At the higher Level 5, the results are below average and when compared with similar schools, were well below average. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of pupils currently in Year 6 are in line with the national average overall in English, although reading is above. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level is predicted by the school to be above the national average. Although there are no significant differences between boys and girls, the results have followed the national trend, with girls achieving higher results for both reading and writing. In lessons, there were no apparent differences between the boys and girls in their contributions to discussions and in their willingness to answer questions. Pupils across the school identified as having special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets in their individual education plans and in the subject itself. These results are similar to the last inspection except that pupils' progress has improved. Improvement since the last inspection is the result of good quality teaching and the school's effective response to the National Literacy Strategy. The school has carefully examined its results over time and analysed data to review the strategies necessary to make improvements.
71. Inspection evidence confirms that standards in speaking and listening are in line with expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In some classes, the high level of questioning by the teacher effectively develops the pupils' speaking skills but this is not sustained throughout the school. Most teachers also provide good role models in their own use of language to pupils. In a Year 1 class, the teacher's open questions provided pupils with opportunities to discuss the people in the story, "The Fisherman's Wife" that was read on the previous day. The pupils used the word "characters" to describe the people and the above-average pupils were beginning to make inferences, such as "She was ungrateful", and "He was scared" and to explain their reasons for the statements. In a Year 5 class the teacher used challenging vocabulary such as "implicit", which the pupils then began to use. However, there was no evidence of drama being used as a medium for improving speaking and listening skills across the school and links between speaking and writing are not always established. In the Year 6 class "hot seating" is used to develop pupils' questioning skills when the class questioned a "witness to a robbery" in a role-play situation.
72. In reading, standards are good overall but vary between year groups. Pupils leave the Reception year with a good foundation of reading skills and strong, positive attitudes to books. This is built on well during Years 1 and 2 so that by the end of Year 2, pupils' reading skills are generally at least in line and often above those expected for their age. Average and higher-attaining pupils in Year 1 understand that a fiction book has stories within it and that non-fiction books are 'true' and can be used to find out information. Pupils in Year 2 read simple texts with accuracy, interest and developing fluency. Higher attainers read with expression and are able to predict using context clues and inference. In Years 3 and 4 pupils develop their reading skills and use these for a variety of research purposes. Interest and good progress are maintained. Teachers in Year 5 and 6 encourage a wide range of reading to ensure all pupils continue to be active readers. One pupil explained that she preferred to read poetry for pleasure. Guided reading takes place outside the literacy hour to provide more time for shared and guided writing. Most pupils are supported with reading at home, and this helps to raise standards. Reading records track the range or level of difficulty of the reading choices pupils make, through a banding system for books, and the teachers regularly check the reading diaries.
73. The school has an attractive library area but at present it contains only non-fiction books. No evidence was seen of pupils being taught how to find information books or to develop their research skills during the inspection. However, when discussing this with pupils the younger ones could explain how to find a book using a colour-coded system whilst pupils in Year 6 explained how they could find a book using the Dewey system. At present, library books cannot be taken home but the co-ordinator has plans to remedy this as one of her priorities.

74. Handwriting is generally good throughout the school; pupils take a great deal of care with the presentation of their work. By Year 2, pupils form letters accurately, legibly and their joined writing is developing appropriately. By Year 6, pupils' handwriting is generally fluent and neat. No teaching of handwriting was observed during the inspection.
75. Standards in writing are in line with expectations by Year 6, although they are variable across the school. The school recognises that further improvements are required and has put appropriate measures in place. The evidence from pupils' work in their books shows that there is a lack of extended pieces of writing. This is despite the introduction of time to do this. Also, the range of writing is often narrow within a year group. In Year 2, most pupils are able to write in sentences, spelling many words correctly and using full stops and capital letters. In Year 1, pupils are recognising and blending sounds and beginning to use these in their writing. In Year 3, the range of writing has included letter writing, report and instructional writing. However, in Year 4, many pupils have yet to develop the skill of writing instructions, often reverting to report writing. There is a greater range of writing in both Years 5 and 6 and pupils are making good progress and this is due to the very good teaching. The measures that have been put in place are starting to improve standards but need more rigorous monitoring. Writing is not well developed across other subjects and this is limiting opportunities, particularly for account writing in subjects such as religious education, geography and history. There is little evidence of pupils using their learning in the literacy hour across other subjects.
76. The quality of the teaching is good overall and this is an improvement since the last inspection. It is good and sometimes very good in Years 1 and 2. It is more variable in Years 3 to 6 but never less than satisfactory. The very good and sometimes excellent teaching was seen particularly in the classes containing the oldest pupils, where the teachers are very well organised, have very high expectations of the pupils and a very good grasp of the subject. This means that all pupils, including the higher attainers and those with special educational needs, are stretched and make very good progress in relation to their starting points. In a third of lessons, the teaching is very good. The school uses the structure of the literacy hour, as recommended in the National Literacy Strategy, effectively. In the very good lessons observed, the pace of the lesson and very good use of open-ended questioning are used to establish the knowledge pupils already have and remember. This is then taken into account in the teaching, and the variety of teaching strategies used meets the needs of all pupils.
77. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were reminded about adjectives, alliteration, similes, and syllables before pupils started writing their poems about the school pond. This was very challenging but the higher attainers achieved well whilst others received support through using the language of the original poem. In a Year 6 class, the teacher gave the pupils clear explanations of formal language as they prepared to write their witness statements after seeing a police video. The shared writing at the beginning ensured all pupils understood the strategies required and the lesson was structured in stages so that all pupils could succeed. The topic was of interest to the pupils, enthusing them to develop their skills. Where teaching is satisfactory, lessons are characterised by insufficient checking of pupils' understanding, or a lack of conclusions to learning, a failure to match group work to pupils' attainment, or assessment not informing planning and a lack of pace in lessons. The final part of the lesson is often under-used as time is not given to referring back to the learning objective and reviewing the learning. In all lessons teachers manage pupils well.
78. The management of English is very good. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the subject's development and has made many improvements. She is committed to raising standards further, attends courses and provides training for teachers in school. As co-ordinator she has monitored the guided writing and has a clear evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses in this area. Up to now she has not worked alongside other teachers to improve their skills and this is an area for development. However, she does review planning and pupils' books. She is involved in analysing pupils' performance and target setting. The co-ordinator has an effective action plan that is updated and actions evaluated.
79. The contribution of teaching assistants is variable. In some lessons, they are contributing to

group work but their involvement in the whole-class sessions is limited. However, the support provided for pupils with special educational needs is often good as they focus on the targets in pupils' individual education plans. The school is also running a range of intervention programmes to support pupils' literacy development in Years 1, 3 and 5 and booster units in Year 6. Formal and informal assessments, including writing, spelling and reading tests (managed and analysed by the headteacher twice yearly), supplement the statutory tests well. The marking of work is good and supports pupils in understanding how they can improve.

80. The timetabling of literacy is at present unsatisfactory as pupils are often working on literacy activities for up to an hour and a half. There is also scope for more use of ICT to support English skills within most year groups. Resources in English are sufficient and there is good use of visits and visitors and book weeks to extend these.
81. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in English are very good, particularly when lessons are presented in an interesting and challenging way. Pupils take care with their work and try to incorporate the advice of their teachers in it.

## **MATHEMATICS**

82. The standards of work seen in Year 2 are average overall. The National test results for 2002 were above the national average. In the current Year 2, however, there is a greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs and several lower-attaining pupils who have recently joined the school. Although pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress, overall attainment has nevertheless fallen since last year. This good progress is due to the overall good quality of teaching.
83. The standards of work by the end of Year 6 are above average. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress as a result of the very good quality of teaching and learning, which has resulted in these improved standards. In Years 3 and 4, where teaching is not as strong, pupils only make satisfactory progress.
84. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have been improving at a greater rate than nationally as a result of the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the introduction of whole-school assessment procedures. These now track individual progress and identify where further support is required.
85. In Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of place value, working with numbers up to 100. Lower-attaining pupils order numbers to 20; higher-attaining pupils understand place value beyond 100, and have an appropriate knowledge of multiplication tables and their associated division facts. Pupils divide shapes into halves and quarters, with higher-attaining pupils working out simple fractions of numbers. They know the names of basic two- and three-dimensional shapes and can identify them by their basic properties; they recognise right angles. Pupils collect simple data and record this on pictograms and bar charts. Higher-attaining pupils interpret this data. Within lessons, where teachers question well, higher-attaining pupils especially give answers explaining their reasoning.
86. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of larger numbers and place value, and use this to multiply and divide whole numbers by 10, 100 and 1000. Higher-attaining pupils apply this to decimals. They calculate percentages, linking them to fraction and decimal equivalents. They reduce fractions to their simplest terms when working on ratio and proportion. Pupils use strategies, such as partitioning, to multiply numbers, and start to use efficient written methods to show calculations. Most find the area and perimeter of simple shapes; higher-attaining pupils measure and draw angles accurately, and know the angle sum of a triangle. Pupils recognise imperial measures, with higher-attaining pupils confidently converting these measures into their metric equivalents, understanding the advantages of using metric measures. They draw block and line graphs to display and effectively compare information. Pupils are quite confident when discussing their work and explaining their reasoning. The work in their books is well organised and presented, and shows that skills and strategies are applied well to problem solving in this

year group.

87. From lessons and an analysis of pupils' past work, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In Years 1 and 2, it is good and in Years 5 and 6, very good. However, some of the teaching in Years 3 and 4 is unsatisfactory.
88. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. These lessons are very well planned and prepared, based on careful regular assessments of pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers have very good relationships with these classes, continually praising and encouraging pupils, so raising their self-esteem and confidence. This was evident from the very good questioning that involved all pupils; it showed that they were prepared to 'have a go' at answering questions, giving reasons for their replies and so developing their understanding further. Activities were well planned for the range of ability within classes, providing challenge, particularly for higher-attaining pupils, so that all made good progress.
89. Where teaching is unsatisfactory there is some lack of organisation and planning. In one lesson, not taken by the class teacher, a breakdown in communication meant that a previous lesson was repeated, resulting in restlessness by pupils and little progress in their learning. In another lesson on data handling, the class teacher had not carefully thought through the process of pupils surveying each other for information. This resulted in numerous interruptions by the teacher as additional instructions were given. The pace of the lesson was very slow and little progress was made in learning. In another lesson on times tables, the activities planned were too difficult for the lower-attaining group, and did not provide sufficient challenge for the higher-attaining pupils.
90. Pupils' books contain a breakdown of the assessed level at which they are working. However, lessons are not always planned with these sufficiently in mind, following the National Numeracy Strategy rather than relating learning to National Curriculum levels, particularly for lower-attaining pupils. At the start of a lesson, learning objectives are displayed and shared with pupils so that they know the purpose of the lesson. However, at the end of lessons, there are not always opportunities for pupils to evaluate their learning against these objectives, for example, by discussing what they have found difficult or easy. Often they just indicate by a colour code how easy or difficult they have found the work, without any further explanation expected. In the best marking seen, teachers refer to learning objectives, informing pupils how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. Teachers' planning does not always indicate what learning support assistants are to do during lessons, and therefore their support lacks a clear focus and is not always as effective as it might be. When used well, they are actively involved throughout lessons. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, during the introduction, the learning support assistant withdrew and supported a pupil with special educational needs. She then gave good support to the lower-attaining group by further discussing the activity with them, to check their understanding before they started working.
91. In all lessons, pupils are managed well. As a result, behaviour is good, even when lessons are over-long, the pace is slow and pupils are not sufficiently involved. The provision for homework is good and provides opportunities for pupils to consolidate their learning in school. Their work is well presented.
92. Pupils have some opportunities to carry out mathematical investigations, but there is scope for placing greater emphasis on solving number problems in most year groups. The school recognises this. Pupils have suitable opportunities to use their mathematical skills across the curriculum, for example, by measuring and comparing results in science investigations. Information and communication technology is not used enough to support learning, both within the classroom and the computer suite.
93. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator. She is aware of what needs to be done to secure further improvement. Pupils' work, teachers' planning and lessons have been monitored with a view to improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising standards. However, this monitoring has not been sufficiently rigorous to iron out inconsistencies in

teaching and learning. There are good assessment procedures. The results of national and other optional testing have been analysed for strengths and weaknesses, and are informing future planning and organisation, for example, by identifying ability groupings within classes. Individual progress is now being monitored, and shows where further support is needed, for instance, through Springboard and booster groups, and learning support in lessons.

## SCIENCE

94. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are found to be above average. This shows an improvement from the average standards at the time of the last inspection. In 2002, teacher-assessed standards by the end of Year 2 were average overall and no pupils achieved the higher Level 3. As a result of the revised scheme of work, improved challenge for the most capable pupils and tighter assessment systems, standards are rising. A quarter of Year 2 are already working at Level 3. In Year 6, over a third of the 17 pupils are working at the higher Level 5 and the majority of others achieving the expected Level 4. This is the result of the consistently very good teaching and challenge given, which builds on the very good progress made by all pupils in Year 5.
95. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of living things through a variety of experiences and the visits they make. Many pupils have good background knowledge and subject vocabulary. Some are very knowledgeable and passionate about environmental issues and are involved with developing habitats within the school grounds. They know why certain plants and animals are only found in particular places. They know about health and growth and the safe use of medicines. They collect information and draw graphs of their favourite foods. Pupils know about forces and movement, relating this to their use of scooters and skateboards. They plan their own experiments to see how far a car will travel down a ramp and predict the results. They have ideas of how to make the test fair and measure the distance accurately in centimetres. They are able to draw and label the equipment they use and write about their experiments well.
96. The work in Year 1 follows on well from activities in the Reception class. Pupils name the parts of the body well and confidently interpret the class graphs about hair and eye colour. They find similarities and differences between animals. They identify different materials and describe their properties, such as, metal is hard and strong. Pupils devise their own experiments to compare different sources of light and measure the beam of a torch. They understand why it is important to wear luminous clothing at night. Through experiment, pupils have a good understanding of magnetic forces. In a very good lesson seen in Year 1, pupils were able to identify objects which could be moved by pushing and pulling and make informed predictions before testing. They were able to sort the toys into sets. Good challenge was given to the higher-attaining pupils who were able to add toys not found in the classroom to their groupings. Good support was given to the lower-attaining pupils by the classroom assistant and drama was used effectively to develop their understanding.
97. All pupils in Year 1 and 2 achieve well. They develop their observational and experimental skills and the majority are able to predict and plan their own experiments. They work well in pairs and small groups and show a good level of independence in recording observations for themselves. Knowledge and understanding develop well and pupils are encouraged to use information books and CD ROMs to extend their learning.
98. In Year 6, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of a healthy lifestyle and the damage that smoking and drugs can do to your health. They sort materials into groups and know how heating and cooling changes materials. Pupils show good understanding of the risks and hazards caused by burning some substances. They gain a deeper understanding of forces and can make, test and record electrical circuits using symbols. Pupils set up investigations and design a fair test, suggesting the equipment they will need and the measurements they will take. Many are able to draw a graph to show their predictions. Whilst they experiment, pupils co-operate well and time accurately with a stopwatch. They understand the importance of repeating a test to find an average result. Some groups finish their experiment and complete

their line graphs by the end of the session. Most groups give good scientific explanations for the results they collected and identify trends, showing that they relate their knowledge of forces to this experiment. They have good attitudes to work, behave very well and develop a wide scientific vocabulary.

99. In Year 5, pupils have a clear understanding of how particles are arranged and behave in solids, liquids and gases. They apply this knowledge to their observations of cans of drink which have just been taken from the fridge. They understand evaporation and condensation and relate this to the water cycle and other examples seen in their everyday lives. They make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding and are given good opportunities to investigate for themselves and record and present their results in a variety of ways. The day-to-day assessment by the teacher is used extremely well in this class to match activities to the learning needs of pupils of different abilities and contributes significantly to the progress made. In Years 3 and 4, pupils follow the scheme of work and make satisfactory progress. The targets set for these classes are not high enough and do not build on what has already been achieved in Year 2. In Year 3, there is a good emphasis on building vocabulary but the pace of learning is slow and there is not enough variety of activity and freedom for pupils to experiment for themselves. Expectations of presentation and the quality of written work are not high enough in Year 4.
100. Teaching is good overall. Very good teaching was seen in Year 1 and Year 6. All teachers have secure subject knowledge and encourage pupils to develop their scientific vocabulary. Pupils are well managed. Planning has improved and in most classes takes good account of the different abilities within the class and provides challenge for the most able and support where necessary. Most teachers are good at challenging the pupils' thinking through their questioning, both to the whole class and as they circulate whilst pupils are experimenting. Classroom support staff are not used well enough during the whole-class introductions to monitor responses nor to make assessments as the pupils experiment. In most classes, better use could be made of the time at the end of the lesson to share and evaluate the learning that has taken place. Work in books is carefully marked and useful comments for improvement are made. Expectations of presentation and work rate are good. In some classes, the lengthy weekly afternoon sessions are not always appropriate for the concentration span of the age group nor the topic being studied and this restricts the learning which takes place. Resources are adequate and of satisfactory quality, although the tendency for several classes to be timetabled for science at the same time does not ensure their efficient use.
101. The subject is very well managed by the co-ordinator who has been in post for a year and a half. The changes she has made to the scheme of work, assessment systems and resources have contributed significantly to the much improved standards. The subject now has a high profile in the school and, as a result of the training she has given, staff are more confident to teach through an investigative approach. The co-ordinator monitors planning, samples work and observes lessons. She has made a careful analysis of Year 6 tests with a view to improving the teaching of certain topics. Links with other areas of the curriculum are good. ICT is being used to develop knowledge through using CD-ROMs and the Internet. Pupils are creating databases and presenting information as graphs and charts using the computer. Good use is being made of Intel microscopes to look closely at living things and different materials. Digital cameras are used by pupils for a variety of scientific purposes. 'Big books' are being used well by younger pupils to find out information, for example, about forces. The curriculum is enriched by visits to museums, garden centres and visits from specialists, such as a Falconry team. A successful Science week helped to raise the profile of the subject last year and is to be repeated. The Greenwatch club is very active and oversubscribed. Grants have been obtained to develop the pond and wildlife areas in the school grounds. Science is becoming a strength of the school.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

102. During the inspection, only three art and design lessons were seen. Additional evidence is taken from a scrutiny of work, displays and evaluation by the co-ordinator. The last inspection judged that pupils' attainment exceeded expectations but from the limited evidence seen during

this inspection, standards are at the expected levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The scheme of work is based on national guidance but has not been adapted to meet the needs of the pupils in this school. From the evidence collected, sufficient emphasis is being given to all six aspects of the subject. These include drawing, painting, textiles, collage, printing and sculpture.

103. In Year 2, pupils use their own digital pictures depicting spring to develop collage pictures. They are beginning to look at each other's work and evaluate it. All pupils throughout the school have sketch-books that are used both for art and design and design and technology. These are underused for art and there is a lack of evidence of progression as pupils sketch and colour, for example, kiwi fruit in both the infants and juniors. However, the subject is enhanced through visits to the Tate Modern and this year, Year 5 have visited Hyde Hall Gardens where they observed plants and later drew and painted cut flowers in the style of Vincent Van Gogh.
104. Display work around the school, incorporating pupils' efforts, confirms that a range of techniques is being developed. In one infant class, the self-portraits demonstrate pupils' observational skills and the use of paint. This is further developed in another class where cars in the car park were observed and painted, with the extra dimension of the digital camera used to show accuracy. In the lower Juniors, there are links with literacy as pupils have used crayon effectively to depict 'The Iron Man'. Pupils have also printed repeated patterns using tools and mechanical shapes. In another class there has been a focus on background as cut-out silhouettes enhance the strategies used. The mixing and changing of colours are evident in the paintings of flowers in the upper school. These pupils also designed the frames for their pictures in the appropriate style. Displays overall are of a good quality and enhance the school.
105. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen ranges from satisfactory to very good and overall it is good. In the most effective lesson, the planning and the resources inspire and motivate pupils. The teacher's very good use of questioning encouraged pupils to reflect on how they will translate a piece of text based on the Egyptian story of Osiris into a picture on textile. The planning of how each part of the text would contribute to the whole was clearly explained. Also, pupils were given opportunities through drama and discussion to develop their planning and reflect on the benefits and disadvantages of using different mediums on the background fabric. In a less successful lesson, pupils were not provided with the correct tools for sketching or given the support they required to sketch figures with accuracy. Links were, however, made with pupils looking at posters of paintings but opportunities were missed to develop their knowledge of the artists. Good use was made of praise throughout the lesson.
106. Although the co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the subject and the management is satisfactory, some improvement to support the progression of skills and their assessment is needed. At present, most resources are ordered and stored by the class teachers but there is no up-to-date inventory of stock, preventing efficient use of the resources being made across the school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

107. The school has maintained the satisfactory provision seen at the time of the last inspection and standards match those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and in Year 6. Lessons were observed in four classes and further evidence was obtained through discussion with pupils in Year 6, work samples, photographs and displays. Throughout the school, there are indications that all strands of the curriculum are covered, including food technology and control technology. Pupils with special educational needs are equally as successful in making things as other pupils and this helps to raise their self-esteem.
108. Pupils are accustomed to working from designs for their models but these vary in quality as pupils do not always list the materials and tools they require. In Year 2, pupils are able to design a moving part to be added to the three-dimensional habitats they are making using a wind-up mechanism. This is linked to their previous work on axles. By the time they reach Year 6, they have sound knowledge of a variety of methods to fasten materials together, which include clips and glue, and have used a range of tools such as wire cutters, saws and craft



knives. They cut and join a variety of materials safely and assemble simple models carefully. In Year 6, pupils are able to describe the difficulties they encountered when using papier maché to make their models of Egyptian mummies and their solutions to the problem. They have begun to use a control programme to light up a pyramid that includes timing for speaking. Although some classes are evaluating their own finished products and commenting on what they would do better, these skills not systematically developed throughout the school.

109. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and sometimes very good. In an infant class pupils used construction kits to make the models of the playground apparatus using their designs and photographs. They found the expectations challenging since their models had to be stable and carry a “play” person. In a less successful lesson in a Junior class, pupils were unable to describe the various methods of joining and primarily used Sellotape to join different parts of their models. However, pupils are enthusiastic and work hard to complete their products from their designs. The evidence from displays shows a wide range of ‘design and make’ assignments. These include weaving and vehicles that will move in the infant classes, to pop-up cards, clay pots and cushions in the junior classes.
110. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan their lessons effectively to give pupils a broad range of experiences. Planning is based on the national guidance and a curriculum map covers what will be taught in each year group. The subject is linked sometimes with other areas of the curriculum, such as history, science and ICT. Examples include the Egyptian mummies and pyramid in Year 6 and the habitats in an infant class. At present, the school has no assessment procedures other than a general evaluation of whether a pupils’ achievement is above, average or below at the end of each unit of work. This information and the skills used are not passed on to the next teacher.
111. The co-ordinator has further plans to raise the profile of the subject further. Although she has not undertaken any formal monitoring of teaching, she reviews planning, evaluates displays and notes evidence from the ‘Sharing’ assemblies. The resources are well organised and the new food technology area enables pupils to have improved access to this area of the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

112. Very little geography was taught in the term prior to the inspection. Some continuous units of study are being followed, for example, 'Where in the world is Barnaby Bear?' in Years 1 and 2, and 'What's in the News?' in Year 6. These provide very little recorded work on which to make a secure judgement on standards either in Year 2 or Year 6, or on the progress made throughout the school. No judgement is therefore made on improvement since the last inspection.
113. Year 2 pupils have identified some of the places visited by Barnaby Bear, and are aware of hot and cold places in the world, and how climate affects the clothes we need to take on holiday. Year 3 pupils have looked further at weather around the world and at holidays in different countries. Year 5 pupils have looked at water and rainfall in different parts of the world. They understand that it is a vital resource that should not be wasted. Year 6 pupils have built up a fact-file on different European countries, and use atlases to locate them and the principal towns and cities. A discussion with Year 6 pupils shows that topics, for example, on rivers and climate, have been studied in previous years, but not in sufficient depth.
114. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In a Year 2 lesson, good use was made of a pupil who talked to the class about his skiing holiday and showed the clothes he had to wear in a cold, snowy climate. He invited questions from a ready audience and responded very well. Year 5 pupils worked in groups, preparing an information leaflet on reducing water consumption in the home. Questions were not sufficiently targeted to gain full attention during the introduction. The class was well managed as they found some difficulty in sharing out tasks within groups. A Year 6 lesson was well introduced using a video of a weather forecast. Clear targets were given for the work to be produced, helping to maintain a good pace in quite a short lesson.
115. From the work seen, there are suitable opportunities for pupils to use literacy skills, for

example, when writing about holidays. However, there are insufficient writing opportunities that are appropriate and challenging for different levels of ability. Suitable use is made of numeracy skills, for example, when comparing climate and rainfall data. Little use is made of information and communication technology to support learning.

116. The co-ordinator is new to the school and is aware of the weaknesses. She has made a satisfactory start and is keen to move the subject forward. Provision for the subject is unsatisfactory at present. Planning is based on national guidelines, but the allocation of units of study, both where and when they are taught, do not ensure continuity and progression in learning. There has not yet been sufficient monitoring of teaching and learning, with a view to improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. There are no whole-school assessment procedures. Resources for the subject are unsatisfactory, especially in terms of up-to-date atlases and visual materials. The co-ordinator has identified the need to develop assessment procedures, improve resources and establish better multicultural links.

## HISTORY

117. Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are as expected for the pupils' age, and have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school.
118. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to understand the concept of time and events that happened a short while or a long time ago. They know aspects of the lives of famous people from the past. For example, pupils show a satisfactory knowledge of the historical events around the time of Florence Nightingale. By looking at and comparing toys past and present, pupils begin to understand how things change over the course of time.
119. In Year 6, pupils are learning about the ancient Egyptians and aspects of life at that time. They know that archaeologists look for clues about the past, as primary sources of evidence. Through whole-class and group discussions, and their own research using books, the Internet and CD-ROMs, pupils develop their research skills well.
120. Teaching and learning in history are satisfactory overall. Lessons are generally well planned and resources well prepared. Good methods are employed for pupils to learn through their own research, although in some lessons more guidance is needed on these methods. Year 3 pupils used a computer simulation program on ancient Greece, learning how to search the program for relevant information; in Year 4, pupils worked in groups, researching the Anglo-Saxon burial at Sutton Hoo. Lessons are not always timed to allow sufficient time for pupils to complete activities. A long introduction to a Year 1 lesson left insufficient time for pupils to draw and write about the toys they had brought to school, and to discuss what they had found out at the end of the lesson. Pupils are generally interested in the work they are doing, and as a result behave well and co-operate sensibly in groups. This was strongly evident in a Year 6 lesson where groups researched aspects of ancient Egyptian life, and then gave presentations to the class.
121. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills. Year 2 pupils wrote a character description of Florence Nightingale and described the hospital at Scutari; Year 5 pupils wrote about 'memories of World War II'. However, generally there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop and extend their writing skills. Developing use is made of information and communication technology through simulation programs and the use of the Internet and CD-ROMs for research. Relevant links are made with other subjects such as art and design and design and technology. For example, Year 5 pupils designed and made good models of World War II shelters.
122. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has already begun to move the subject forward. Planning is based on national guidelines, but the current allocation of study units is unsatisfactory because it does not support the continuity of pupils' learning. There has not yet been sufficient monitoring of teaching and learning, with a view to improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. There are no whole-school assessment procedures. Good use

is made of visits and visitors to enrich pupils' learning. Relatives visited Year 5 to recall their World War II experiences, and pupils visited Chatham Dockyard to learn about life during World War II. Pupils visit the British Museum to find out about life in ancient Egypt and Greece. The school makes good use of the library service for books and artefacts.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

123. Standards at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally. Although standards are similar to those seen at the time of the last inspection, national expectations have been raised through changes to the National Curriculum in 2000. Resources in the school have been improved through the development of a computer suite. Teachers have completed their training which was funded by the government. The school is now connected to the Internet which pupils use for research and sending electronic mail. Scanners, digital cameras, programmable toys, electronic microscopes and tape recorders are now used confidently by pupils in their work.
124. Provision is good and all classes have timetabled access to the computer suite on a weekly basis. Some of the larger classes are split for teaching purposes because there are not enough computers in the suite for a whole class to use. The room has recently been extended and new equipment is about to be installed. Pupils also have access to classroom computers. The current timetabling arrangements for the computer suite do not make the most efficient use of the equipment. During the inspection week some classes did not use all of their allocated time because they were working on other activities in the classroom. Very little use was made of classroom computers during literacy and numeracy lessons. Only one class was seen to operate a system of checking equality of access to classroom equipment. Classroom support staff were not used to enable best use of the good resources available, although they have been given some training. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and show confidence in using a range of equipment and software. Many of the pupils have computers and access to the Internet at home which they use to develop their skills and to do their homework.
125. In Year 2, pupils use a computer with confidence to write a poem and to add speech marks and punctuation to text. They can use a drawing program to assemble shapes and fill them with colours in the style of the artist Mondrian. Pupils know their way around the keyboard. They open, save, file and print work. Pupils with special educational needs confidently use a CD-ROM to find animals which live in different habitats. Other pupils use the electronic microscope to examine plants and animals. They are learning how to programme a robot to move forwards and backwards. Pupils use a digital camera to take and print out their own photographs for use in an art and design lesson. Word processing is not used on a regular basis in literacy lessons. In Year 1, pupils use the computer to draw self-portraits, choosing appropriate colours, brushes of different thickness and spray tools, and they show good control.
126. In Year 6, pupils have developed good word processing skills which they use to write and display poems. They use a variety of letter styles, sizes and colours. They can use a word publishing program to write eye-catching newspaper articles which include pictures. Pupils can confidently use scanners and digital cameras. They assist staff by taking photographs for displays around the school and prepare posters and notices to advertise school events. In lessons they show that they understand how computers monitor and control systems such as traffic lights. They write commands for the computer to control bulbs, buzzers and dialogue for their information boards about Ancient Egypt. Pupils have plenty of ideas for different sequences and ways in which additional effects can be created, for example, flashing lights. They show good concentration and the perseverance to overcome difficulties which arise. Pupils are made very aware of Internet safety.
127. The scheme of work which is now in place is based on national guidance, covers all areas of the national curriculum and promotes continuity and progression of learning as pupils move through the school. Good progress occurs in Years 3 to 6, where skills are built up progressively in each area of the curriculum. In Year 3, pupils improve their knowledge of word processing, use a variety of colours and letter styles to create information posters about Greece and add some

clip-art. During a lesson in the computer suite, linked with history, pupils researched the beliefs of the Ancient Greeks and used a computer simulation well. In Year 4, pupils use an information program to present data they have collected in different ways. Year 5 pupils use a search engine to collect information about different kinds of bread. In a very good lesson, pupils interrogated a database which they had created using personal measurements. They were able to find pupils who met two criteria, having a particular head circumference and of a certain height. They were able to manually put information onto a Venn diagram, which linked with their mathematics lessons. Pupils also used this data to produce scattergrams and discussed 'best fit' and trends. The majority of pupils were able to make predictions and explain the graphs generated, for example, 'The tallest children have the biggest feet'.

128. The teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching occurring in Years 5 and 6. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are well supported by the co-ordinator if problems arise with equipment. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and coverage of the units of work. There has been no monitoring of teaching nor checking of timetables to ensure that computer equipment is used efficiently. An assessment system has recently been introduced but it is not yet being used to provide different activities to meet pupils' needs, for example, extension work for the most capable. There are good examples of ICT being used in curriculum areas, such as art and design, music, literacy, numeracy, science, history and geography. Pupils have e-mail links with friends in other local schools and plans are in hand to link with Canadian schools, recently visited by the co-ordinator. The school plans to develop its own website. There is a popular computer club for pupils in Years 3 to 6.

## **MUSIC**

129. Standards are in line with those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and are similar to those seen at the time of the last inspection. Lessons in Years 3 and 4 were not observed during the inspection, however, pupils from these classes were observed in instrumental lessons, singing and listening to music in assemblies.
130. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is good. Pupils in Year 1 know the names of a number of percussion instruments and can sort them into sets according to the way they are played, for example, a 'shaker and a tapper.' They follow symbols for the different instruments and play as the teacher conducts. They adjust their playing to make loud or soft sounds and long and short notes. Pupils are eager to conduct the orchestra. A pupil with special educational needs was given good individual support by the classroom assistant which enabled him later to perform with a group. In Year 2, pupils show that they can listen to a piece of music and guess which animal it represented. Pupils sang a song about Noah's Ark. They build on work from the previous lesson in which groups had composed music for each of the verses. Pupils had chosen appropriate instruments to suggest the building of the ark, the rain falling and the animals going into the ark. The pupils worked well as a group and the teacher had good strategies to ensure that pupils listened to and evaluated each performance. Pupils have a good sense of beat and one member of the class who conducted the 'orchestra' had very clear ideas about the order he wanted the instruments to play in. Performance improved during the lesson and was left for further development in the next session. Pupils sing tunefully and in their answers and oral evaluations showed that they are developing a good musical vocabulary. Pupils in both classes enjoy making music, behave well and treat equipment with respect.
131. In Years 5 and 6, the good progress continues and the co-ordinator shares her expertise by teaching both classes. In the lesson observed, questioning showed that pupils have a good knowledge of musical terms, such as bar and pitch, and can recognise when a piece of music changes tempo. Pupils dance and respond to rhythms and rhythm changes. Pupils can write an accompaniment for a song which changes metre using untuned percussion instruments. They demonstrated very good attitudes to the task and co-operated well with their partners. However, there was little opportunity to evaluate each other's performance with a view to improving their own. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn to play the recorder from Year 1 onwards. Older accomplished players regularly play in assembly, although no their age. Recently piano lessons have been introduced and these are in great demand and a number of boys have taken up the option. Pupils in these lessons are making good progress.

132. The co-ordinator, who has only been in post for a short time, is maintaining the strong musical traditions developed by the previous headteacher. She is managing the subject well. Music is an important part of school life. In assembly, pupils sing hymns and songs accompanied by the piano and recorders. A range of music from different cultures is played as pupils enter and leave the hall. Music is used in other subjects such as geography and history, which links with the countries or periods being studied. There are programs on the computer which allow pupils to compose or listen to music, but this was not seen during the inspection. Several staff have a strong musical background. There is a scheme or work based on a commercial scheme, which is used to support staff with less musical expertise. Resources are adequate and of good quality. There is no assessment system which monitors pupils' progress over time. Pupils join with other schools and take part in local music festivals. There are good opportunities to perform to an audience in assembly, school concerts and most recently in the school talent show. Plans are in hand to start a school choir.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

133. Standards are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There is no difference in the standards between boys and girls and all pupils are included in all activities. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection.
134. During the inspection, both indoor and outdoor activities were observed. These included ball skills, throwing and catching a rugby ball, evasion techniques, and sequences of dance movements. Although only a limited range of activities covering games and dance was seen during the inspection, the school does offer a wide range of varied activities to support pupils' physical development. These include gymnastics, dance, athletics, adventure activities, games and swimming. For games such as football, rugby, netball, hockey, tennis, cricket, rounders, pupils are beginning to learn the skills required to play them and the rules that govern them. These are supplemented by after-school activities, some of which are supported and led by parents. From Easter until the middle of the autumn term, pupils receive swimming lessons on a weekly basis in the school's own heated indoor pool under a qualified swimming instructor. Therefore all pupils learn to swim at an early stage and all are able to swim the recommended 25 metres by the time they leave the school. In swimming, standards are above those expected nationally.
135. The quality of teaching is good overall and sometimes very good, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. When the teaching is well planned and structured, pupils enjoy their lessons and work hard to improve their skills. Teachers generally have a secure knowledge of the subject, providing pupils with clear expectations in physical education, and as a result, pupils make good or very good gains in most lessons. In the best lessons, the work focuses on building on what the pupils have already learned and can do and develops their skills and techniques. In the dance lesson seen in an infant class, the teacher praises pupils appropriately and makes good use of demonstration to improve performance. The pupils reflect on their performance and demonstrate their understanding of a sequence of movements that represent the world under the sea. In all lessons, pupils show that they understand the importance of a warm-up at the start of the lesson and a cool-down at the end. Pupils behave considerately towards each other and show respect for the equipment they use. In all lessons, they are suitably dressed for the activities and generally change quickly. There were no non-participants in any lesson observed. Where teaching is less strong, it is due to pupils waiting their turn to participate and who are therefore having less opportunity to make gains in their skills.
136. In a younger class, pupils are challenged throughout the lesson on throwing and catching by increasing the level of difficulty. Many pupils are able to clap their hands whilst bouncing the ball. By the end of this lesson, pupils were able to throw the ball in three different ways, preparing them for the games they will learn further up the school. In Year 6, pupils have appropriate levels of co-ordination and control; for example, when handling, throwing and

catching a rugby ball. During the lesson they learned how to evade an opponent and the teacher used her language to increase the pupils' understanding of the techniques in the game.

137. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has recently rewritten the policy and planning is based on national guidance but adapted to meet the needs of pupils at the school. This now ensures that pupils' skills are developed systemically from year to year. The curriculum is broad and balanced but because of the organisation of the school day, most activities take place during the afternoon sessions and this poses an extra problem in planning the curriculum. The organisation of the equipment is effective so that both pupils and staff are able to use it with ease. The range of resources available for the teaching of physical education is satisfactory. The school has a playing field and adventure playground as well as a hard playground and an indoor swimming pool. It makes good use of both the indoor and outdoor facilities for physical education.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

138. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are broadly in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
139. Pupils in Year 2 recall some of the parables told by Jesus, such as the Lost Sheep and the Prodigal Son. They think of their own celebrations, such as their birthdays, and link this with the Christian celebration of Christmas and the birth of Jesus, and the Hindu festival of Divali. They look at special books, for example, the Torah in Judaism, and learn how the scrolls are written and deeply respected.
140. Pupils in Year 6 learn something of the history of the Jews, of their exodus from Egypt and of Moses' covenant with God. They find out about the types of literature contained in the Bible. By studying the life of people such as Martin Luther King, they start to understand how religion can guide people's lives and how they are lived. In discussion with Year 6 pupils, they recall facts from the different religions studied, Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. However, they do not have a sufficiently clear picture and understanding of these different religions, of their history, their beliefs and how they are practised.
141. From pupils' past work and lessons seen, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are well managed and as a result, pupils behave well and show interest in their learning. Teachers prepare lessons well, but in their introductions do not always provide sufficient opportunities for questioning and discussion in order to further understanding. For example, in a Year 3 lesson where pupils heard about young Krishna and his mischief making, discussion would have helped pupils to distinguish between mischief and naughtiness, an objective for the lesson. In better lessons there is a variety of activities that helps maintain pupils' interest. For instance, in a Year 2 lesson on the Torah scrolls, some pupils practised writing Hebrew letters with a quill pen and ink; others looked at a replica of the scrolls and the yad or pointer used when reading them, before drawing them.
142. Some opportunities are provided for pupils to use their writing skills, but these are not always sufficiently challenging. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 copied down an annotated time line of the life of Martin Luther King; higher-attaining pupils, in particular, were not challenged to write their own simple biography. Information and communication technology is not yet being used to support learning.
143. The time allocation for religious education does not always meet the recommendations of the local agreed syllabus. As a result, there is some lack of depth in the studies undertaken, and insufficient time for pupils to record work at an appropriately challenging level. There has not been any monitoring of teaching and learning with a view to improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. There are no whole-school assessment procedures. The school has identified this as an area for improvement. Visits are made to a local church to identify its

various features and their purpose, but visits are not yet being made to the places of worship of other faiths. Artefacts from different religions form good informative displays in classrooms.