

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WOODMANCOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Woodmancote, Cheltenham

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115576

Headteacher: Mrs C Williams

Reporting inspector: Ian Nelson  
2220

Dates of inspection: 16<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> June 2003

Inspection number: 247563

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 to 11  |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed  |
| School address:              | Station Road<br>Woodmancote<br>Cheltenham<br>Gloucestershire |
| Postcode:                    | GL52 9HN   |
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| Appropriate authority:       | The governing body   |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Jeff Stanford  |
| Date of previous inspection: | November 1997  |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members |                 |                      | Subject responsibilities   | Aspect responsibilities  |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 2220         | Ian Nelson      | Registered inspector | Information and communication technology (ICT)   | What sort of school is it?<br>Standards, results and achievements<br>Quality of teaching and learning<br>Leadership and management<br>What the school should do to improve |
| 13762        | Norman Shelley  | Lay inspector        |  | Attitudes, behaviour and personal development<br>Care of pupils<br>Links with parents  |
| 7593         | John Collier    | Team inspector       | Mathematics<br>Music   |  |
| 25623        | Ted Cox         | Team inspector       | English<br>Design and technology (DT)<br>Educational inclusion<br>Special educational needs<br>English as an additional language |  |
| 25384        | Rob Bonner      | Team inspector       | Science<br>Physical education (PE)   |  |
| 22421        | Valerie McGrath | Team inspector       | Art and design<br>Religious education (RE)<br>The Foundation Stage   |  |
| 28170        | Ian Chearman    | Team inspector       | Geography<br>History   | The curriculum   |

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Number on roll                                      | 324 (Bigger than other primary schools) |
| Pupils entitled to free school meals                | 4.3% (Below average)                    |
| Pupils whose mother tongue is not English           | 1.8% (Broadly average)                  |
| Pupils on the register of special educational needs | 8.3% (Below average)                    |

This is a large village primary school for pupils aged four to eleven. There are a few pupils of Indian or Black Caribbean descent but the vast majority are of white British heritage. Pupils come mainly from advantaged homes with professional parents. Those pupils identified with special educational needs have, in the main, moderate learning difficulties. The school is reducing the numbers it takes into reception each year to give it one and a half classes for each year group instead of the present two to accommodate the opening of a new school in the neighbourhood. At the time of the inspection six of the teachers had been at the school for less than a full year because of recent secondments, promotions, illnesses and maternity leave. The deputy head has been seconded to the advisory service for the year and has now secured a permanent post so will not be returning to the school. Year 6 saw more than usual movement of pupils in and out of school during the year. Attainment on entry to reception is above average.

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

This is a good school. Teaching and learning are good overall so that most pupils learn well in lessons and attain good standards. However, because the school does not make effective enough use of the information it gathers on how well pupils are doing, tasks are not always as challenging as they might be for all pupils and lessons sometimes follow the national guidelines too closely and lack creativity. Leadership and management are good and have kept the school on an even keel during a period of substantial changes in staffing. The school is now well placed to reflect, re-focus, and re-direct its energies to drive forward further improvements and become even better. It provides good value for money.

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

- Overall leadership and management are good.
- The pupils attain good standards in English and mathematics.
- Some of the teaching is very good.
- The school makes very good provision for moral and social development
- Pupils are very well behaved and responsible, displaying a maturity beyond their years.
- The school provides a very good range of after-school clubs and activities.
- The school works very closely with parents and with the neighbouring secondary school.

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

- The school could make more effective use of the information it gathers on how well pupils are doing to match the work teachers give them more closely to their abilities, aptitudes and interests.
- Standards and progress in music are not good enough.

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

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

The school was last inspected in 1997. It has addressed most of the key issues from that report, although music remains unsatisfactory and there is still work to be done on improving the use of assessment and providing more opportunities for investigative work by pupils. The school has made good improvements in developing information and communication technology (ICT) and pupils' social skills. The quality of teaching has improved, pupils behave better and the whole National Curriculum is now covered. In the light of the number of staff changes since the previous inspection, including the lack of a permanent deputy head for the last year, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

## 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         | A             | A    | B    | D               |
| Mathematics     | A             | A    | A    | C               |
| Science         | A             | B    | B    | C               |

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

The table shows that in the national tests for eleven year olds in 2002 pupils attained above average standards in English and science and well above average standards in mathematics compared with all schools. Compared with schools with similar pupils, standards in mathematics and science were average but in English they were below average. Test results at Year 6 were affected by the number of pupils who had not been long at the school. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2002 the pupils attained well above average standards in reading and writing and above average standards in mathematics compared with all schools. Compared with similar schools, standards were above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Standards have been consistently high over recent years, although since 2000 they have dipped from well above to above average. The school missed its targets for English and mathematics at Year 6 in 2002 and has set suitably challenging targets for 2003. Standards now are judged to be well above average in mathematics at Year 6, above average in English and average in science. At Year 2 standards are judged to be above average in mathematics and English. In music standards are below average. In geography and physical education (PE) attainment is above average at eleven while in all other subjects it is average. While most pupils achieve satisfactorily, and those with special educational needs achieve well, some of the most able could achieve more if the school took account of learning within and beyond school and structured lessons more flexibly.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school                | Very good. Pupils are very keen to learn, enjoy their lessons and show great enthusiasm for learning. Older pupils enjoy following up school work at home, as Year 6 did with their individual projects on mountains. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons, assemblies, the dining hall and playground. Behaviour is energetic and lively at break times but also very responsible and sensible.                                   |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. Pupils get on very well with each other and with the adults they work with. The oldest pupils show great self-confidence in relationships with adults, conducting themselves in a very mature way.         |
| Attendance                             | Very good. Attendance is well above average.  |

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching is good throughout the school. It is good in all subjects except science and history where it is satisfactory and music where it is unsatisfactory because too many teachers lack confidence in the subject. Teaching and learning in English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, are good overall. Effective teaching of basic skills ensures that pupils have a good grounding on which to base their future learning. This is also very evident in ICT where teachers now have the confidence to give clear instructions at the beginning of new work so that pupils succeed with it. In most lessons teachers manage their pupils well so that behaviour and attitudes are good. On rare occasions the structure of lessons bores pupils so that they become restless and do not learn enough. In the best lessons teachers adapt national subject guidelines to allow and encourage pupils to follow their interests but too often learning is constrained by sticking too closely to the guidance and not enabling the most able to flourish as they might. An exception was in Year 6 where pupils were encouraged to undertake their own projects on mountains: learning included research skills and ICT as well as geography and how to plan and organise their own learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and consequently achieve well.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect   | Comment   |
|--|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum  | Good. The school covers all subjects of the National Curriculum and provides a very good range of after-school clubs and activities to enhance the learning that takes place in lessons.  |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs  | Good. The school provides good levels of support for pupils with special educational needs and helps them to make good progress towards their targets.  |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development | Good overall. The school provides very good opportunities for moral and social development so that pupils grow in stature and confidence, conducting themselves in a very mature way by Year 6. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils   | Good overall. This is a caring school where teachers know their pupils well and have their best interests at heart. However, the school does not make the most of information on how well pupils are doing.   |

The parents have positive views of the school and home-school links are good. The parents make a very good contribution to, and are very involved in, their children's learning through helping them with homework, teaching them skills on computers and involving them in clubs and activities related to particular skills and interests. The school has very good links with a neighbouring secondary school that has technology status.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good overall. The head has led the school through a period of great change in staffing and managed to keep it running effectively. With many new staff she is well placed now to re-focus and build upon their enthusiasm to make the school even better. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | Good overall. The governors take their responsibilities seriously and have a good understanding of how to check how well the school is doing.   |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | Satisfactory. The school has good procedures for checking how well it is doing and now needs to apply these with more rigour and to take more vigorous action in the drive towards excellence.  |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Good. The school makes effective use of the resources it has and the head and governors understand and apply the principles of best value in planning the use of those resources.   |

There are a good number of suitably qualified teaching and non-teaching staff at the school and they work well together. Resources are good overall and the school has plenty of accommodation.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most  | What parents would like to see improved   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of teaching.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable bringing any concerns to the school's attention.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard and do their best.</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress.</li> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The school helps children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information about how well their children are doing.</li> <li>• The school should work more closely with parents.</li> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• The range of after-school clubs and activities.</li> </ul> |

Inspectors agree with most of the parents' positive views but judge that some pupils do not achieve as much as they might because teaching does not always take full account of how much they know already. The school provides good opportunities for parents to find out how well their children are doing, although the annual reports could be more concise and helpful. Teachers make good use of homework to supplement class work and they provide a very good range of after-school clubs and activities that are appreciated by the children. The school tries very hard to work closely with parents and meet their high expectations. Teachers are accessible to parents and good communications are maintained.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 Attainment is above average in most subjects across the school. Achievement, however, is broadly average. This is because, although pupils with special educational needs and the lower attaining are well supported in class and largely able to achieve well, reaching the levels expected of their age, the highest attaining pupils are not always given work that is hard enough to challenge them and they could achieve more. Children enter reception with above average attainment and this standard is maintained so that most exceed the levels expected of children of this age in communication, language and literacy and mathematics before they leave reception. The needs of all children, including the more able and those with special educational needs, are well met at this age.

2 In the 2002 national tests for eleven year olds, the school was above average in English and science and well above average in mathematics compared with all schools. Compared with similar schools, standards were below average in English and average in mathematics and science. These results show that the school has maintained its standards compared with all schools in mathematics over recent years but in English and science they dipped from the previous peak in the year 2000 when they were well above average. The school explains this with reference to evidence indicating the proportion of Year 6 pupils in 2002 that had not completed all their junior years at Woodmancote. Out of 48 who took the national tests in 2002 only 28 were in the school for the Year 2 tests. This is an unusual level of mobility and, coupled with the staff changes in Year 6 because of illnesses and maternity leave, caused the downturn compared with all schools. Taking account only of the pupils who were in Woodmancote throughout Years 4 to 6, standards compared to similar schools were average in English and science and above average in mathematics. The overall trend is for standards to be rising at Woodmancote in line with national trends. The school missed its targets for the 2002 tests and has set challenging ones for 2003. The proportion of eleven year olds gaining the higher than expected level 5 was above average in mathematics and science and average in English. Compared with similar schools at this level, however, the proportions are average in mathematics and science and below average in English.

3 In the 2002 tests for seven year olds, attainment was well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics compared with all schools. These high standards have been maintained over recent years although mathematics has dipped from well above average to above average since 2000. In the teacher assessments of science at seven, standards were average in 2002 compared with all schools. Compared with similar schools, standards were above average in reading and writing, average in mathematics and below average in science. At the higher than expected level 3, the school achieved well above average results in writing, above average in reading and mathematics and average standards in science.

4 Although standards in tests indicate above average attainment at eleven in science, the work pupils do in their books gives a different picture and current attainment in science is therefore judged average overall at both seven and eleven. This is because pupils do not get enough opportunities for real investigative work and to take the initiative for their own learning in lessons. In mathematics, including numeracy, standards are judged well above average at Year 6, which indicates a rise since the 2002 tests and results from effective teaching. At Year 2 standards in mathematics are judged above average. In English, including literacy, standards are judged above average currently at both seven and eleven, although there are indications that standards in the 2003 tests might show well above average attainment. This is partly because the lessons stick too rigidly to the guidance of the

National Literacy Strategy and do not allow the highest attaining pupils enough scope to achieve as well as they might if they were given the opportunity to take more responsibility for planning, organising and evaluating their own work.

5 Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards that are below average but appropriate to their level of understanding. By the ages of seven and eleven they make good progress. This reflects the position at the previous inspection. The good quality of teaching they receive in lessons and the good quality of support they receive from the special educational needs teacher enhances the progress of these pupils. The good support from learning support workers contributes well to the learning these pupils make within lessons.

6 The previous report criticised the progress of pupils in art, music and information and communication technology (ICT). Art and ICT have both improved so that standards are now average in both but standards in music are still below average. There are good indications that this situation is being very well addressed currently with the appointment of a keen and committed music co-ordinator, but at the time of the inspection standards remained below what they should be throughout the school. The table below shows the judgements on standards for each subject at the time of the inspection.

| <b>Subject</b>  | <b>Year 2</b> | <b>Year 6</b>      |
|---|---------------|--------------------|
| <b>English</b>  | Above average | Above average      |
| <b>Mathematics</b>                                    | Above average | Well above average |
| <b>Science</b>  | Average       | Average            |
| <b>Design and technology (DT)</b>                     | Average       | Average            |
| <b>Information and communication technology (ICT)</b> | Average       | Average            |
| <b>Geography</b>                                      | Above average | Above average      |
| <b>History</b>  | Average       | Average            |
| <b>Art and design</b>                                 | Average       | Average            |
| <b>Music</b>  | Below average | Below average      |
| <b>Physical education (PE)</b>                        | Average       | Above average      |
| <b>Religious education (RE)</b>                       | Above average | Average            |

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

7 Pupils' attitudes, values, personal development and attendance are very good. They are significantly better than at the time of the previous inspection. Parents are pleased with the pupils' personal standards.

8 Pupils are well justified in their enthusiasm for the school. They enjoy almost all of their experiences in school and feel safe and valued. They describe their teachers as kind yet strict. They say that teachers explain things clearly and lessons are very enjoyable. Their support for extra-curricular activities is high and the residential visit to an outdoor centre is very popular. They appreciate being given responsibilities but say that the peer mediation arrangements are not working very well and the few incidents of poor behaviour are not always dealt with effectively by some teachers and lunch-time supervisors. Some of those who receive instrumental tuition say that they do not like missing lessons to do so. Overall, however, pupils hold very positive views about the school and express them articulately and in a mature manner. They are conscientious and value their education.

9 Pupils' behaviour is almost always good or very good during lessons and contributes very much to the quality of learning. Unsatisfactory behaviour occurs only occasionally. Pupils are pleased to co-operate with their teachers and participate in the lessons. In a Year 3 circle time lesson, pupils were reminded that they could only speak when it was their turn to hold the teddy bear and every pupil complied throughout the entire lesson. Behaviour

other than in lessons is very commendable. Pupils demonstrate consideration for others, for example by holding doors open for adults; they offer polite and happy greetings and generally conduct themselves in an orderly manner. In the grounds pupils play energetically but good-naturedly with each other and take full advantage of the play equipment and resources available. Teachers and pupils confirm that incidents of anti-social behaviour are very few. There have not been any exclusions during the present school year.

10 Relationships between pupils are very good. They are friendly, tolerant and considerate towards each other in lessons and socially and are also appropriately competitive when the occasion demands. They work very well in groups and, for example, enjoy preparing and presenting class assemblies as a team.

11 Pupils develop very well their awareness of moral and social principles and issues and this is very evident in their conduct and responses. Their spiritual awareness is less well developed because opportunities to consider some aspects of the awe, wonder and experiences of life are limited. Whilst pupils have a satisfactory understanding of other religions and lifestyles they have only a limited understanding of the multi-cultural nature of today's society. They respect the feeling, values and views of others.

12 Pupils are very mature and responsible beyond what is normally expected for their age. They express themselves articulately and confidently and conduct themselves very responsibly. They are developing well some of the important personal skills such as problem solving and self-evaluation. They are well able to take on more responsibility and are capable of more enterprising use of initiative but are not given sufficient opportunities and, consequently, are not as highly independent as they could be.

13 Pupils with special educational needs are well behaved and have good attitudes to learning. They respond well to learning support workers. Older pupils in particular enjoy working in small groups with the special educational needs teacher.

14 Attendance is very good because it is well above the average for primary schools. The large majority of pupils arrive on time for the start of the school day.

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

15 Overall teaching is good throughout the school. The previous report made no overall judgement on teaching but it did say half the teaching was good or very good and that 10 per cent was unsatisfactory. On that basis the quality has improved since then, as 70 per cent of the lessons seen were in the range of good to excellent, and only three per cent, that is two lessons, were judged unsatisfactory.

16 Teaching at the Foundation Stage is consistently good. Of the eight lessons seen seven were judged good and the other one satisfactory. While teaching of communication, language and literacy and mathematics is good overall and prepares children well for the literacy and numeracy hours, there is a tendency for activities in reception to be over-directed by adults, depriving children of the opportunity to make choices and take decisions and become engrossed in structured play activities. This is what stops teaching from reaching a very good standard.

17 At Years 1 and 2 teaching ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory. The single unsatisfactory lesson was against the trend. This was in music, where a lack of teacher confidence resulted in lively pupils becoming restless so that behaviour deteriorated and not enough learning took place. At the other end of the scale an excellent English lesson saw Year 1 and 2 pupils fully engrossed in understanding and composing riddles. The very effective use of a well-briefed classroom assistant led to the class being split into mixed

ability groups after a very short and well-focused whole-class session. Thereafter the pupils' attention was tightly focused on the task in hand, which was to compose between them a riddle about snails. They learned about the structure of riddles and starting each line as far as possible with 'I'. They learned that each line was to give a clue as to what the riddle was about without giving the whole answer. One particularly bright pupil pointed out near the end of the lesson that one line did indeed contain the word 'snail' and this led to some editing of the text before the final version could be presented to the other pupils. The teacher kept the pupils very well focused on each aspect of the riddle and would not allow them to wander off onto interesting but less relevant trains of thought. She expected them to achieve really well, to listen, concentrate and contribute, which they did. Although this lesson broke most of the rules of the traditional literacy hour it was most appropriate at the time for those pupils. This was an excellent example of a teacher adapting the strategy to meet the needs the pupils and would serve as a useful example for other staff to take confidence and to drive national guidance rather than being driven by it.

18 At Years 3 to 6 teaching ranged from very good to a single unsatisfactory lesson. This lesson failed to reach an acceptable standard because the pupils became bored and restless with the low level of the task they were asked to complete. The activities were all directed by the teacher, were uninspired and failed to catch and hold the pupils' interest. As a consequence the pace slowed and little learning took place. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils so that most lessons benefit from good pupil management. Only in rare cases does boredom lead to inappropriate behaviour. In most lessons pupils are keen to take part, answer the teachers' questions and work hard. These positive attitudes mean that when teachers encourage collaborative working on a common task the pupils rise to the occasion and work well together. For example, when sharing computers in pairs in the computer suite pupils take turns and work well together because the teachers set the right tone. Most lessons are well paced so that pupils work hard and concentrate well. They respond well, too, when teachers teach basic skills and give them clear and direct instructions in how to do something new. This happens particularly in literacy and numeracy and is one of the keys to pupils' growing skills in English and mathematics. It is also evident in ICT where greatly increased teacher confidence ensures that they tell pupils exactly what to do in introducing new programs or skills.

19 Some of the pupils' books show some very good examples of teachers marking work thoroughly and telling pupils what is good and what could be better. Notes on some ICT work at Year 2, for example, comment in detail on how well the pupils completed their tasks and how much support they had. Just by looking at the work itself no one would know that one pupil, "found it difficult to use the mouse and backspace key to control spacing", or that another was, "able to use two hands and confident about the placing of the keys". However, even marking of this quality is not being used to plan effectively for different tasks for different pupils in the next lesson to take them on from where they are at the moment, as the follow-up lessons still follow the format of the national guidance regardless of this detailed knowledge and recording of individual progress. The teacher still lacks the confidence to depart from the guidance in order to match the tasks more closely to the pupils' assessed needs. The tendency to stick rigidly to the national guidance in subjects is not allowing some of the most capable pupils to achieve as much as they might.

20 In the main the two lessons during the inspection that failed to reach an adequate standard were extreme examples of teachers following national guidance too closely, not giving pupils enough responsibility for their own learning, particularly in the junior classes, and not encouraging them to learn at their own level. More creative and dynamic approaches to adapting and modifying the national guidance would enable teachers to structure lessons so that even the most able pupils were challenged regularly, and would elevate the quality of teaching and learning to a higher level more consistently. For example, in science, too often the investigations are set and prescribed by the teachers. In ICT the

pupils generally all do the same task at the same time in the same way even when some have already learned that skill at home a long time previously. In history all the content of the period being studied is prescribed by the teacher so that instead of equipping the pupils with the skills of historical research and letting them become engrossed with their own particular interests and sharing their learning with others afterwards they are constrained by the content. While teaching currently is good at supporting the pupils with special educational needs and providing a clear structure in which they can succeed and often achieve the expected levels for their age, it also needs to be flexible enough to let the high fliers fly higher.

21 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers know their pupils well and plan activities that are matched to their needs. The care taken in planning is seen when pupils with special educational needs are taught in small groups away from the rest of the class because they are easily distracted. They rejoin the class later for the final discussion. Teachers use learning support workers well to ensure that all pupils have the chance to participate in lessons.

22 The only subject where teaching is judged unsatisfactory overall is music. This is because not enough teachers have the confidence and competence to teach the subject effectively. In science and history, teaching and learning are broadly satisfactory while in all other subjects teaching is good.

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

23 The school provides a good, broadly based and balanced curriculum that includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements for all subjects. Comprehensive schemes of work are in place. The school has given a high priority to literacy and numeracy planning to raise standards and has improved standards in numeracy at Year 6. Planning for religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

24 The use of topic structures is well supported by effective planning across subjects, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. For example, planning for topics in history and geography defines coverage where possible for other subjects. Except for music, pupils experience a rich, creative curriculum. Planning links between subjects are good overall.

25 A key issue at the last inspection was to ensure that sufficient time was allocated to ICT. This has been achieved and all pupils have an equal opportunity to learn. The provision for science is good. The school has adopted national guidelines, including the literacy and numeracy strategies, for all subjects. This generally ensures consistently good provision for the development of pupils' skills and knowledge, except for a few pupils when they are withdrawn for instrumental music tuition.

26 The school misses some useful opportunities for the consolidation of literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects, although this has improved since the last inspection. The good provision throughout the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is evident in all lessons. They are fully integrated into all aspects of learning. Teachers and learning support assistants plan very well together to achieve this.

27 The provision for after-school clubs and activities is very good, both in quantity and quality. This enriches the whole curriculum and particularly in physical education and the arts. All pupils have access, although there is less available for the younger pupils. Inspectors noted a very good level of attendance and a good input into pupils' learning. In

observing, inspectors noted the high quality of pupils' sportsmanship, co-operation and determination to succeed.

28 The school makes good use of the local and wider community to enhance learning for pupils. This includes, for instance, residential adventurous pursuits at Red Ridge, outings to historical sites and field trips, and visits to the school by the local church leader, firemen, or drama workshops. The school has very good contacts with other local schools and makes very good use of the opportunities available for enhancing pupils' learning. The nearby secondary school works very well with this school and advanced skills teachers have supported the school in science, mathematics and technology. Pupils visit the secondary school for events such as pizza days, the Top Link sports festival, and use of the school's facilities during the summer term.

29 Provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities is good. Pupils are enabled to access the same opportunities as others, both inside and outside the classroom. For example, on a recent residential visit, a pupil with a disability was able to take part in all the physical activities the trip involved.

30 Pupils have good access to the curriculum the school offers. Sufficient learning support workers are employed to support pupils with special educational needs. The school goes out of its way to ensure that pupils with disabilities have access to the curriculum. For example, non-physical activities, such as a singing club, are provided out of school hours. However, the school has not paid enough attention to meeting the needs of higher attaining pupils in lessons such as English, mathematics and science.

31 The school's arrangements for personal, social and health education are good. Much of the sex and drugs awareness education is taught through this aspect of the curriculum, and supported by topics in science. This good provision permeates the whole curriculum through well-planned circle time that allows the pupils to discuss issues of importance to them.

32 Plans are very well implemented to support a structured programme in education for citizenship. The school council is well established and this gives pupils good opportunities to take responsibility and be proud of their input into improving the school. The council raises funds and is supporting a child in Ghana. The school recently introduced a mediator system on the playgrounds where appointed pupils are the first port of call in solving pupils' disputes. This demonstrates the very good relationships and mutual respect that exists between staff and pupils. The class councils are operating well but are not monitored carefully enough so that pupils' goals can be consistently achieved. In discussion some pupils thought that the time allocated was sometimes too short. There is potential to enhance the class and school councils' effectiveness by giving pupils more opportunities to share views and opinions about the running of the school, and to develop an appreciation of the rights and responsibilities of individuals within school

33 Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school is very successful at promoting pupils' moral and social development. The very good provision is implicit in the ethos of the school and explicit in the school aims, where emphasis is placed on teamwork, making teachers and children feel valued, and the promotion of self-discipline. This demonstrates very good improvement since the last inspection, when the provision for social development was judged to be unsatisfactory, and that for moral development was satisfactory. The spiritual and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory, maintaining the quality provided at the time of the last inspection.

34 The school meets statutory requirements for a daily act of worship and provision is satisfactory. Pupils participate briefly in prayers and hymns during assemblies, although few

opportunities for personal reflection were observed. They show respect for each other in lessons, and care towards each other when friends are hurt or upset. In RE, pupils learn about other faiths as well as Christianity. However, the school does not plan effectively enough for pupils to reflect on their own and others' beliefs, and to show respect for the views and beliefs of others. Opportunities for pupils to express their individuality, creativity and imagination are provided in some art lessons, although there is potential for this to be developed across the curriculum, particularly in music.

35 The very good provision for the moral development of pupils is evident in their very good, and sometimes excellent, behaviour. Clear expectations for behaviour are set, both in lessons and at break-times. Rules for life are discussed in RE and codes of behaviour are explored in personal, social and health education lessons. When dealing with conflicts, teachers and supervisors encourage pupils to consider the effects of their behaviour on others. Older pupils take on the role of mentors in the playground and they actively promote conflict resolution. An issue raised by a few pupils related to a concern that teachers could listen more, and be more responsive on the rare occasions when bullying was reported.

36 The very good provision for promoting social development includes a wide range of after-school clubs, school performances and an annual residential visit. These opportunities promote a sense of teamwork and positive shared experiences. Social skills are also promoted well in lessons when pupils collaborate in group or paired tasks. For example, in Year 4, pupils showed high levels of collaboration as they planned and carried out a science investigation. Pupils exercise responsibility well, in the way they conduct themselves around school, and in the roles they exercise as helpers. The RE curriculum provides a framework for developing an understanding of what it means to fit into a range of structures in society, such as the family, the school, clubs and other groups in the wider community.

37 Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are provided with an appropriate range of opportunities to appreciate their own culture through their involvement in local traditions, such as maypole and country dancing, sporting events, an annual visit to the theatre and productions in school. In their appreciation of art, music and literature pupils learn to value the work of artists, primarily from western cultures, and are beginning to understand their cultural heritage through history units such as the Tudors and Victorians. Unfortunately, however, there were few examples of pupils developing an awareness of other cultures or an in-depth appreciation of the cultural diversity in modern western society.

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

38 The arrangements for pupils' welfare are good. Pupils are treated with care and sensitivity. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic performance and personal development are satisfactory. Educational and personal support and guidance for pupils are satisfactory. Some aspects of provision have improved since the previous inspection but there has been insufficient improvement in the use of assessment to raise standards. Parents are pleased with the quality of care, support and guidance that is provided.

39 Pupils feel valued, supported and safe because relationships between teachers and pupils are constructive, trusting and mutually respectful. The ambience of the school is happy and calm. Child protection procedures are in place but reminders to staff about requirements are insufficiently frequent and the briefing of temporary and non-teaching staff is not sufficiently detailed. The routine procedures for health and safety are satisfactory but governors do not carry out their own safety checks of the premises. During the inspection, safe practices were observed in lessons but risk assessments for relevant curricular activities are not formally carried out so that teachers, including new and temporary teachers, know the precautions that should be taken. Most members of staff have received



training in first aid. The services of specialist education and health agencies supplement the school's provision. There is a good level of supervision during breaks and lunchtimes. Teachers provide a very good standard of pastoral care, for example by trying to meet the personal needs of individual pupils and maintaining frequent communications with parents mainly by the very good use of the home/school diaries. Pupils are inducted into the school with care and very good arrangements are in place for the smooth and sensitive transfer of pupils to secondary schools.

40 Attendance is effectively monitored and promoted. Absence is quickly followed up and the school engages well the co-operation of parents to provide reasons for absence. Parents and pupils are well motivated to attend and pupils enjoy school. No further significant promotion is necessary at this time because attendance is well above the average.

41 The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Teachers manage behaviour well or very well in almost all lessons. A code of conduct is clearly displayed and is reinforced by recognition, rewards and sanctions that are effectively applied. The difference between right and wrong is conveyed very well, for example through assemblies and circle time. When necessary, pupils' responses to correction and guidance are closely monitored and parental support engaged. The school successfully minimises the number of incidents of anti-social behaviour by developing appropriate awareness of acceptable behaviour and promoting relevant aspects of citizenship. The strength of relationships throughout the school contributes much to the quality of pupils' conduct towards each other and pupils are able to refer to their own peer mediators for help.

42 Personal development is monitored mainly in a reactive way. Relevant personal skills are taught but are not assessed and tracked throughout the pupils' lives in school so that targeting and strategies can be systematically applied to improve pupils' application to their work. A good range of responsibilities and experiences out of school is offered and the programme for personal, social and health education contributes well to personal development. Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to develop the use of initiative and to achieve the high level of academic and social independence that they are capable of.

43 Pupils having difficulties with learning are identified early. Pupils whose progress or behaviour is giving cause for concern are monitored closely before it is decided if they need placing on the register of special educational needs. Individual education plans and individual behaviour plans focus well on pupils' needs. Targets contained in individual education plans are generally good but some are too broad and this makes progress difficult to measure. Good plans refer to pupils learning how to spell specific words or write individual letters. They are less useful when they make broad statements such as 'Continue strategies for coping with word problems'.

44 There are satisfactory systems for assessing the standards that pupils achieve but progress is not always tracked systematically and teachers do not use the information carefully enough to plan work that exactly meets individual needs. Teachers keep suitable records of attainment in English that they complete regularly. They assess pupils' ability to spell key words correctly, record the words that they read by sight and the reading level that they have reached. Writing skills are judged against a set of statements. In mathematics, pupils are also assessed against a list of key learning objectives. Teachers keep a record of what has been taught and indicate any difficulties that particular pupils have had with a piece of work. In science and ICT, a record is kept of the skills that pupils acquire, such as research and testing skills in science and word-processing skills in ICT. In other subjects, assessments are made at the end of a unit of work. Pupils are assessed against a core statement of what they should have learned and those who have gone further in their learning and those who have not acquired it are listed. These systems are satisfactory.

Teachers have a suitable summary of the knowledge and understanding that the pupils in their class have acquired and, in some subjects, of the skills they have mastered.

45 As well as the statutory tests at seven and eleven, pupils are given formal tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5 in English and mathematics. The results for each pupil as he/she passes through the school are held centrally. A teacher receiving a new class is given the test result that the pupil has just achieved. This makes it difficult for the teacher to track progress from further back and the system for alerting a teacher to a pupil who has not made sufficient progress over time is informal. Similarly, there is no requirement that the test results are analysed to highlight areas of work that have proved difficult or easy for the majority of pupils although this sometimes happens at the instigation of individual teachers or subject co-ordinators. In mathematics, for example, the national tests for Year 2 pupils in 2002 were analysed and weaknesses highlighted. Some of the other records that teachers receive when taking on a new class are not readily accessible except in mathematics where all pupils are listed on one sheet of paper with an indication of whether or not they have acquired a number of key elements of learning. For English, science and ICT, each pupil's attainment is recorded on a separate sheet so that a teacher has to analyse every one to gain a picture of where the whole class is in terms of their skill, knowledge and understanding.

46 Pupils receive satisfactory support and guidance to help them improve their work. Some are identified as needing help in booster classes for English and mathematics and all have targets to aim for in these subjects. The targets are communicated to parents in the home/school diary and are written on a card for each pupil. Once four targets have been achieved, a certificate is awarded. The system is not as effective as it might be because targets are not reviewed as regularly in some classes as in others and very few teachers refer to them in their marking. An example of good practice was seen in a display of written work in Year 4 where each pupil was required to concentrate on his/her target during the task so that the teacher could assess the progress towards achieving it.

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

47 Parents have a high regard for the school and say that most of their high expectations of it are met. The partnership between the school and parents is good. The good standards described in the previous inspection report have been maintained.

48 Parents are right to be pleased with the overall standards of education and care that are provided. They are pleased with the quality of teaching and the consequent progress that their children make but inspectors judge that some pupils do not achieve as well as they could because some of the work set for them does not enable them to achieve their full potential. Parents' concerns about homework are not fully justified because the amount set is generally appropriate and usefully helps to extend pupils' learning. The range of after-school activities is very good and caters for pupils of all ages.

49 Parents have frequent opportunities to be aware of their children's progress. Annual school reports provide satisfactory academic and personal information but are not always sufficiently pertinent and concise, and targets for improvement could be more clearly presented. The termly consultation meetings for parents are very well attended. The home/school diaries are used very well for two-way communications. Teachers are easily accessible, pupils' targets for improvement are shared with parents and the diaries enable parents to see when their children have achieved the targets. Termly curricular plans are published. Teachers work closely with many parents to jointly support pupils who have particular difficulties. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are fully involved in the review process. Monthly newsletters keep parents in touch with life in school and especially pupils' personal achievements. The prospectus does not tell parents the number

of pupils on roll and the governors' annual report omits details of the professional development of staff and the effects on teaching and learning, which it is required to include.

50 Relationships between the school and parents are positive and constructive and parents are very supportive. Many parents, relatives and local residents help in school either regularly or occasionally. Parents' attendance at various events is high. The friends of school association contributes much to school resources. Parents are able to offer their views and comments to the school in different ways and are formally consulted from time to time. The school is very approachable.

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

51 Overall leadership and management are good. As the previous report did not include an overall judgement but merely referred to supportive leadership it is not possible to comment on improvement since then. The school has undergone a large turnover of staff in the last two years and the deputy head has been seconded to the advisory service for this year. She has now accepted a permanent post with the local education authority. The head has managed this period of change effectively so that the potential disruption to learning has been minimal and standards have been largely maintained. She has provided the stability required to keep the school on an even keel and to induct new staff to the team. Given the way the staff all work together and complement each other's roles in a cohesive team, this induction has been at least sound which is an improvement since the last inspection when there was no induction policy. Now that the school faces a more settled future with the new staff largely in place and a new acting deputy head appointed, the school is well placed to reflect, re-focus and re-direct its energies in its drive towards excellence. The inspection has been seen as a crucial part of that reflection process, indicating a clear vision on the part of the head, of the need to sharpen the focus and check for the most appropriate direction taking account of the recent changes and speeding up the improvement process even further.

52 The leadership and management of the governors are good overall. They have a clear understanding of how well the school is doing in terms of the results of national tests at seven and eleven. They rely on the head to report on analyses of results and any implications for future planning, and also make regular visits to the school to see it in action and ensure that any reports they receive from staff are borne out in practice. All the appropriate policies, including those for racial equality, access for the disabled and Internet safety, are in place. Governors are fully involved in school improvement planning and keep a close eye on the budget. Financial management therefore is good. The budget is set according to the priorities of the school improvement plan and value for money is determined by how effectively a spending decision impacts on raising standards or improving progress. They have a competent understanding of the principles of best value, and apply them effectively. Although overall funding is below average the careful allocation of funds to specific priorities has allowed the school to have an above average surplus in its budget currently as part of the governors' policy to cushion the reduction from a two-form entry school to a one and a half form entry one due to the opening of a new school nearby. The governors ensure that grants for specific purposes like special educational needs are used to meet those needs. The office staff play an effective role in the day-to-day management of the school and in budget management and administration. Given the amount the school receives and the standards it achieves, it provides good value for money overall.

53 While the members of the senior management team are committed and keen they do not yet have a strong enough grasp of what leadership and management are, to be as effective as they could be in either leadership or management terms. In terms of management they play a significant role in ensuring that performance management is effectively implemented and in the day-to-day running of the school, although at the time of

the inspection they also had responsibilities for routine administrative tasks that could have been done by administrative or support staff. Subject co-ordination is generally good although the Foundation Stage does not benefit from a discrete co-ordinator.

54 The management of special educational needs is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator is up to date with recent changes in this area. All pupils on the register of special educational needs are provided with individual education plans and, if necessary, with individual behaviour plans. Parents are given the chance to be involved in the procedures at all stages. The progress of these pupils is assessed when the plans are checked each term. The co-ordinator also monitors pupils' work over a period of a week each term. The results of National Curriculum tests and optional tests are checked to identify pupils who might require extra help. There is a good amount of rigour in the procedures when pupils begin to give cause for concern. Once a teacher has expressed concern, the pupil's work or behaviour is checked closely and a decision about future provision is taken after two terms. Sound provision is made for pupils with special educational needs to use ICT. For example, a typing tutor program is available to help pupils with disabilities.

55 The school has been effective in checking how well it is doing but, given the recent staff changes and lack of a permanent deputy, it has not been quite as effective in making the best use of that information to identify with absolute clarity the best ways forward to further school improvement. Consequently, it is a good school currently with the potential to become an even better one once it is refocused and set its sights on how best to achieve excellence.

56 The school's procedures for supporting new staff and newly qualified staff are satisfactory. Senior staff are appropriately allocated responsibility for the induction of new members of staff and teachers support each other within year groups. New staff are quickly made to feel welcome and valued and as a result there is a good team spirit. The newly qualified teacher has attended a range of appropriate courses and reports he has been well supported since joining the school. The match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory. Support staff are very well qualified and make a significant contribution to the learning of the pupils they support.

57 The accommodation is good overall and meets the demands of the curriculum. Most classrooms are spacious; there are shared practical areas, and a number of specialist rooms including a well-equipped computer suite, a library and rooms for special educational needs and music. The interior of the building is well maintained and enhanced by good displays of pupils' work. The school grounds are spacious with sufficient playground space for the size of the school and access to a playing field that is used for physical education and as an additional play area. The playgrounds are well marked with a range of games for pupils to play, and there are also two covered seating areas for pupils to use during playtimes. The school is currently developing an environmental area that will support learning in science and other areas of the curriculum. There is an outdoor area for the children in the reception classes but it is not really adequate and there is insufficient equipment to effectively promote children's physical development and enhance their personal and social skills.

58 Overall, resources for learning are good. The development of a new computer suite has contributed well to an improvement in the computer skills of pupils and the steady improvement in standards.

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

59 In order to raise standards and improve progress further, particularly in music, the school should:

- Make more effective use of the information it gathers on how well pupils are doing, and take full account of what they learn outside school, to ensure that the tasks they are given are challenging enough to stretch even the most able and accomplished;

(Paragraphs 19, 45, 46, 47, 85, 89, 95, 101, 121)

- Be creative and adventurous in the use of the national guidelines for each subject by adapting and modifying that guidance and giving pupils much more responsibility for planning, organising and evaluating their own learning;

(Paragraphs 16, 18, 19, 20, 63, 77, 81, 85, 91, 101, 119.)

- Be more rigorous in checking how good teaching and learning are, and using the examples of excellent and very good teaching to drive the overall quality up to that level consistently throughout the school;

(Paragraphs 17, 56, 70, 83, 86, 93, 101, 115, 119.)

- Ensure that staff receive high quality support and development in music, and in their various leadership roles so that they can play a stronger and more effective part in driving school improvement.

(Paragraphs 6, 17, 22, 54, 110, 132, 138.)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 65 |
| 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        | 31   | 17           | 2              | 0    | 0         |
| Percentage | 2         | 22        | 48   | 26           | 3              | 0    | 0         |

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

### Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll   | YR-Y6 |
|---|-------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)      | 324   |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 14    |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs   | YR-Y6 |
|---|-------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 4     |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 27    |

| English as an additional language                       | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 6            |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year                                       | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 14           |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 19           |

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 3.2 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

#### Unauthorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 0.1 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  | 2002 | 23   | 22    | 45    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing  | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|----------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 21      | 21       | 21          |
|   | Girls    | 22      | 22       | 22          |
|   | Total    | 43      | 43       | 43          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 96 (96) | 96 (100) | 96 (96)     |
|   | National | 84 (84) | 86 (86)  | 90 (91)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 20      | 19          | 20      |
|   | Girls    | 21      | 21          | 22      |
|   | Total    | 41      | 40          | 42      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 91 (98) | 89 (96)     | 93 (94) |
|   | 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 | 25   | 24    | 49    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 20      | 23          | 24      |
|   | Girls    | 22      | 20          | 24      |
|   | Total    | 42      | 43          | 48      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 86 (89) | 88 (89)     | 98 (95) |
|   | National | 75 (75) | 73 (71)     | 86 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 21      | 21          | 22      |
|   | Girls    | 21      | 18          | 22      |
|   | Total    | 42      | 39          | 44      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 86 (89) | 80 (89)     | 90 (95) |
|   | 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                                     | 267                  | 8                                 | 0                              |
| White – Irish                                       | 2                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| White – any other White background                  | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean                   | 1                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – White and Black African                     | 1                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – White and Asian                             | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – any other mixed background                  | 2                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British - Indian                     | 3                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British - Pakistani                  | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi                | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 1                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean                  | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Black or Black British – African                    | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Chinese   | 1                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Any other ethnic group                              | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| No ethnic group recorded                            | 2                    | 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) | 14.49 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 22.36 |
| Average class size                       | 25    |

#### **Education support staff: YR-Y6**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 8   |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 149 |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years   | 7.4  |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years   | 10.4 |
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)  | 0    |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)                           | 2    |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0    |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Financial year                             | 2002/03 |
|  | £       |
| Total income                               | 791,955 |
| Total expenditure                          | 669,155 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 2,065   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 96,059  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 218,859 |

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 324 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 159 |

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

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 43             | 48            | 8                | 1                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 41             | 52            | 6                | 1                 | 1          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 29             | 60            | 6                | 2                 | 3          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 22             | 58            | 16               | 4                 | 0          |
| The teaching is good.  | 50             | 47            | 2                | 0                 | 1          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 26             | 50            | 21               | 3                 | 0          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 57             | 36            | 6                | 1                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 46             | 50            | 3                | 0                 | 1          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 21             | 57            | 16               | 1                 | 4          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 40             | 49            | 3                | 3                 | 4          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 36             | 54            | 5                | 0                 | 4          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 40             | 39            | 13               | 4                 | 4          |

## **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**

60 The Foundation Stage maintains the good standards which were evident at the time of the last inspection. The school's provision for the youngest children is good in all areas of learning, except in physical development, which is sound. Teaching and learning of early writing is very good, and a strength in the curriculum. The policy of keeping classes at a maximum of 23 children to one teacher, with a support worker in each class, contributes positively to these good standards. The needs of higher and lower attaining children, including those with special needs, are met well.

61 On entry children's attainment is above average overall, with the full range of attainment represented. Most children experience nursery education in a range of pre-school and private nursery settings. They make good progress and a majority have exceeded the early learning goals by the end of the reception year in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. There are good procedures for staff to visit children in their pre-school settings before starting school, and for preliminary visits to Woodmancote. Combined with part-time attendance at the beginning of the term, this supports children's emotional development well. Parents also attend information evenings and receive information about the curriculum and children's progress. There are good procedures in place for assessment of individual children, for all areas of learning.

62 Teaching is consistently good, except in physical development, where it is sound. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is given appropriate emphasis in the morning sessions, and children learn through directed practical, creative and play contexts during the afternoons. This promotes good personal, social and emotional development, evident in the children's good levels of co-operation and social interaction. However, there are not enough opportunities for children to exercise independence and initiative. Teaching of physical development is constrained by the limitations in the outdoor learning environment, which has been acknowledged as an area for further development.

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

63 The quality of teaching is good and children develop well, exceeding the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. As a result of the positive relationships, welcoming atmosphere and clear expectations set by staff, children behave very well, and show respect for each other. For example in their role-play, in the vet's surgery, they take on roles confidently, ask and answer questions about their pets and use their early writing skills to complete forms and lists. They dress and undress independently and sensibly for their PE session. They concentrate well, persevering when the work is demanding, and they have very positive attitudes to learning.

64 The daily routine enhances children's sense of self-esteem as they engage in well-planned and challenging adult-led activities. However, the opportunities for children to work independently are limited to using resources and activities selected for them. Independence, imagination and creativity need further development by providing opportunities, both indoors and out, for children to explore, experiment, create and plan for themselves.

#### *Communication, language and literacy*

65 Provision is good overall, and very good in the teaching of letter sounds and word building. Most children enter reception with above average communication and language skills. They make good progress, due to good teaching, throughout their reception year. The

vast majority will attain the early learning goals for writing and reading by the time they enter Year 1, and a substantial minority will exceed the goals. Their independent writing is promoted very well. For example, most children wrote their own ending to the 'What if...?' story. Most children spell simple common words correctly and make plausible attempts at unfamiliar words. The children show exceptional confidence as they write.

66 The children engage in sustained conversations with each other and demonstrate good speaking and listening. For example, when asked what it means when the dove flew back to the ark with a branch, children were able to explain "The trees aren't under the water any more", and "The water's going down". Role-play also provides good opportunities to develop communication, language and literacy skills. For instance, having talked to a visiting vet, the children had clear ideas about playing such a role, and engaged in the kinds of conversations which take place in a surgery. Both classroom environments are rich in print, with accessible reading and writing areas. Labels are clear and relevant to the children, and their writing is displayed and valued.

67 Children develop good early reading skills. They are able to talk about the title, author, story and characters in their reading books. They demonstrate a good knowledge of phonics as they use initial sounds, and have good knowledge of common words. Higher attaining children read books with confidence, fluency and pleasure. Parents provide very good support at home. This is demonstrated in their comments in reading diaries. Teachers consistently share information with parents about their child's progress in group reading activities, and about which aspects of reading need to be developed. A very good range of early reading books is sorted into reading levels. They are effectively used to give children consolidation and progression in reading.

#### *Mathematical development*

68 Children make good progress due to good teaching. Most children are in line to meet the early learning goals by the start of Year 1, and a significant minority will exceed them. Most count accurately to 20 and are able to read and write numerals. They understand that addition entails combining two groups of objects, and they record simple addition number sentences. In practical activities they take away, and are very competent at recognising simple number patterns, and using repeating patterns in their printing.

69 Teaching is good overall. Effective teaching of mathematics is evident when children are actively involved in practical activities, for example when they arrange frogs in two ponds and count how many altogether. In this activity the teacher promoted progress well by encouraging children to remember how many were in one pond and to count on from that number. The pace of learning slows, however, when children are expected to maintain listening without opportunities for all children to be actively involved. Children respond well, taking care with their recording, and showing very good concentration when working practically.

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

70 Teaching is good. A good range of visits and visitors supports learning well. Children explore their local environment through a village walk, and consolidate learning about animals and their young on a farm visit. Visitors, including the school cleaner, secretary, lunchtime supervisor, vet and nurse, share their experiences of work. Teachers make good use of learning resources such as video, pictures, jigsaws, small world play, water play and big books to teach the ways in which baby animals are cared for by their mothers, and the needs of pets.

71 The outdoor environment offers some opportunities to observe living things but is not used as effectively as it might be in order to make provision in this area very good. There are not enough opportunities for children to engage in first-hand investigation and exploration, using all their senses. The children use computers well, practising control of the mouse as they click and drag images on the screen. They use the *Dazzle* program to create and colour animal images. Children control the tape recorder, when listening to a jungle soundtrack and story tapes. They are familiar with the library and demonstrate good early research skills when they use pictures and print in non-fiction books to find out about animals.

#### *Physical development*

72 Provision and teaching for physical development are satisfactory overall, and progress is satisfactory. At this stage, near the end of the reception year, most children are attaining the expected levels for physical development. Provision and progress are constrained because the children lack frequent access to an appropriate outdoor environment, in which they can travel around, over, under and through climbing and balancing equipment. The present area is not large enough to enable them to move freely, with confidence, imagination and safety. Children's physical development, as they handle tools and materials, is well supported by the range of experiences offered for drawing, writing, cutting and using construction equipment. Children have access to the hall for dance and gymnastics, and to the playground for using small games equipment. Good teaching was observed during a whole-class session for developing skills in throwing, catching, rolling and aiming.

#### *Creative development*

73 Provision is good, and all children make good progress in their creative development due to good quality teaching. The vast majority of children are attaining the early learning goals for creative development as they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. In this area of learning children are given opportunities to engage in dancing, music making, appreciation of music, role-play, creating pictures, printing, constructing with structured equipment and mask making. A good range of paints, collage materials and tools is easily accessible to children. However, opportunities for children to initiate creative work with paint, or modelling with recycled and malleable materials, were not observed during the inspection. Promoting initiative in this area of learning is necessary in order to further develop children's individual imaginative and creative work. Similarly, opportunities for creative development could be enhanced in sand and water play by offering children access to a good range of displayed resources, from which they can select for their planned purposes. Very good links are made between subjects, enabling children to listen to jungle noises, play musical instruments to make jungle sounds and to sing songs, such as *The Animals Went In Two By Two*. They sing and make music confidently, and clearly enjoy such opportunities.

74 In order to further improve standards and progress the school should:

- provide more opportunities for children to make choices of activities and materials in their work and play;
- improve the reception class outdoor play area to make it more suitable for the full range of Foundation Stage activities.

## **ENGLISH**

75 Standards achieved by eleven year olds in the National Curriculum tests in 2002 were above average for schools nationally but below average for similar schools. Recent trends show that standards are improving broadly in line with the national trend. Standards achieved in reading and writing by seven year olds in the National Curriculum tests in 2002 were well above average when compared to all schools nationally. Compared to similar

schools, they were above average. These results broadly reflect the situation at the time of the previous inspection, since when improvement has been satisfactory.

76 Inspection evidence shows that standards are above average by the ages of seven and eleven. However, unconfirmed assessments of pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds taken in 2003 show pupils' points scores could be well above average compared to schools nationally and above average compared to similar schools. Results of the tests may give a better indication of pupils' ability because work seen indicates that, in lessons, teachers keep too rigidly to the guidance of the National Literacy Strategy. This denies pupils, particularly higher attaining pupils, the chance to express themselves as well as they are able.

77 In 2002, teachers assessed pupils' skills in speaking and listening by the age of seven as well below average. Inspection evidence shows this to be unduly pessimistic. Speaking and listening for seven and eleven year olds are generally above average and some pupils have well above average skills. Pupils are articulate, explaining what they want to say in good English and can invariably find the correct words and language to express themselves. They speak well to an audience. For example, in an assembly pupils in Year 5 explained the life-cycle of a plant in easily understood terms. They showed good listening and reasoning skills when they talked about issues around car parking. After listening to a teacher read two poems by William Wordsworth, *Upon Westminster Bridge* and *Daffodils*, good listening skills by one pupil enabled him to describe the atmosphere created by the poet when he said "*Upon Westminster Bridge* has a calm feeling." While discussing how the school might be improved, Year 6 pupils listened carefully to the different points of view and came to their own conclusions. In response to one viewpoint that there should be more out-of-school activities, one pupil considered the arguments before saying it would be unreasonable to expect a married teacher to give up more time out of school because "her husband would have to wash the dishes and look after the children more." Pupils' speaking only became indistinct when they were unsure of their ground, for example when pupils in Year 3 were introduced to limericks for the first time. In almost all cases, pupils listen to teachers carefully and carry out instructions well.

78 By the ages of seven and eleven, standards in reading are above average. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 are well above average and read with very good understanding. They read expressively, using the punctuation very well to make good sense of the story. Some higher attaining pupils in this and other years tend to read rather too quickly but they have pleasant reading voices. Their knowledge of words is very good and this helps them understand the motives behind some of the stories and predict what will happen next. Pupils use the context of the story to work out the meaning of unusual words and phrases. For example, one pupil decided correctly that 'coney' referred to a rabbit. A large number of pupils in Year 6 show above average reading skills, including some who are judged to be average or below in their writing. They give clear explanations why characters act as they do and obviously enjoy reading. Lower attaining pupils, however, often make mistakes but carry on reading, not realising that what they read does not make sense. Their reading lacks expression and they sometimes find difficulty remembering where they have reached in the story. By the age of seven, higher attaining pupils read accurately and take note of punctuation. They read speech particularly well, giving a good idea of the character of the person speaking. These pupils, and some average attaining pupils, know most of the words in their books. They understand how authors use words to build images. A higher attaining pupil, for example, explained why 'waddle' was a good word to describe how a very fat character walked. Lower attaining pupils are unsure of how to use letter sounds to help them say unknown words. They do not relate what they are reading to the pictures in the books.

79 Pupils make good progress in reading. Parents and teachers use the home/school diary very well to pass on messages. Both comment on what has been successful and what

still needs doing to improve pupils' reading. Pupils from Year 2 upwards understand terms such as 'author', 'illustrator' and 'glossary'. A higher attaining pupil in Year 2 commented how the humorous drawings of Quentin Blake added to his enjoyment of reading books by Roald Dahl. Pupils in junior classes and some in Year 2 use the contents and index pages to find information. Most do this quickly, using the alphabetical listing to help them. However, teachers make unsatisfactory use of the library because they do not give pupils opportunities to choose books for research for themselves. Reading is a popular pastime with many pupils. Some make good use of lending libraries in the area. Pupils in Year 6 name a wide range of authors. They appreciate the humour of authors such as Terry Deary. They talk about enjoying the realism of books by Jacqueline Wilson and sympathise with characters in books such *Goodnight, Mr Tom*. In Year 2, only higher attaining pupils could name any authors. They talked about books they had read by authors as varied as Enid Blyton, J K Rowling and Alfred Hitchcock. Average attaining pupils like adventure stories and reading non-fiction books but some lower attaining pupils say they find reading boring.

80 Standards in writing are above average at seven and eleven. However, predicted scores for National Curriculum tests for seven year olds suggest that standards for those pupils could be well above average. Not enough pupils at the ages of seven and eleven reach higher standards. This is because lessons stick too rigidly to the guidance of the National Literacy Strategy and do not allow the highest attaining pupils enough scope to achieve as well as they might. Nevertheless, eleven year olds show good standards of English. They use punctuation such as commas, apostrophes and inverted commas accurately. Pupils draft and edit their work to make sure it reads as they want it to. Dialogue is used well to make intentions clear and to build atmosphere. Average and above average attaining pupils spell words accurately and use paragraphs well to show how their stories progress. Pupils give much thought to making the introductions of their stories interesting using a mixture of long and short sentences or by using interesting constructions. For example, one higher attaining pupil caught the reader's attention by starting with:

"Ok! So I'm a baby bear, and I am not a very happy bear."

In doing this, pupils build effectively on work in previous years. In Year 5, for example, average attaining pupils used interesting words such as 'oozing' and caught the flavour of writing in the style of an author from an earlier age by writing:

"Twas a terrible day when Old Nick came back three months ago. Wasn't pleased, he wasn't....."

Lower attaining pupils do not show this amount of precision in their work, which often has long sentences, lacking punctuation to make their intention clear.

81 Seven year olds make good progress learning the basics of English writing. Lower attaining pupils, who found spelling difficult at the start of the year now spell most common words correctly or make a recognisable attempt. Average attaining pupils write in a logical way, although their writing often lacks imagination. They are beginning to use full stops and capital letters more frequently, while higher attaining pupils have progressed well to using speech marks and some apostrophes. They successfully use complex sentences to make their writing more interesting, for example when writing:

"It was a stormy day. Everything looked grey with an occasional quick, yellow flash of lightning."

The repetition of 'grey' in the next few sentences established a feeling of gloom.

82 The standard of handwriting is satisfactory but could be better. There is no set scheme. The handwriting policy does not give clear guidance about what should be taught and the description of the style of handwriting to be used is vague. However, pupils are

introduced to joined writing early, sometimes by the age of seven, and by the age of ten all pupils join their letters. Teachers are not consistent in their approach to pupils' handwriting. They seldom make comments about poorly shaped or incorrectly joined letters. The lack of a common approach leads to inconsistencies. Some teachers encourage pupils to make letters such as 't' too large, which makes the writing look clumsy. In one lesson, the teacher told a pupil not to slope her writing forward, although this is generally accepted as making it easier to develop a fluent style. On the other hand, the care and attention paid by the teacher to pupils' handwriting in one lower junior class resulted in legible, fluent writing, presented in a way that showed that pupils were proud of what they had done.

83 Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Work is provided which is suited to their needs and allows them to achieve success. Classroom assistants work hard to make sure that these pupils take an active part in lessons and keep them working hard. Pupils receive good help from the special educational needs co-ordinator, either in the classroom or when withdrawn in small groups. For example, when a Year 6 class studied poems by William Wordsworth, the special educational needs co-ordinator withdrew two pupils who were easily distracted in the classroom and taught them together. This ensured that they concentrated on a simpler poem about Robin Hood, covering the same areas as the rest of the class.

84 Teaching is good in both infant and junior classes with a significant amount of very good, and some excellent, teaching. Teachers make good use of the introduction to lessons to ensure that pupils know what they have to do. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and this, combined with the purposeful start to lessons, means that many lessons move at good pace and pupils work hard. Teachers know the subject well and teach the basics of grammar effectively. They use questions well to find out how well pupils have understood and to consolidate learning. In doing this, teachers often ask questions of pupils who are reluctant to put up their hand. However, teachers stick too rigidly to the structure of the National Literacy Strategy and this holds back higher attaining pupils in particular, who do not have enough opportunities to be responsible for planning, organising and evaluating their own work. Not enough attention is paid to the presentation of work and to encouraging pupils to develop neat, fluent handwriting. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' work but, in general, teachers do not make enough use of the information to have an impact on helping more pupils reach higher levels. Teachers' use of marking is inconsistent. When it is used well, teachers make comments which help pupils to improve their work. Sometimes, however, teachers' comments do not tell pupils why their work is good or how it can be improved. Some teachers set pupils targets to try to improve standards. A particularly good example of this was seen in a class with nine year olds where pupils had individual targets to be achieved in a piece of writing and new targets were set when the work was marked. Teachers make good use of classroom assistants to support pupils with special educational needs and to ensure that these pupils are included in all aspects of the lessons. A notable example was in an excellent lesson with six and seven year olds where, following a lively opening session reading a book of riddles, the support assistant took half the class and maintained their interest. This lesson, which had started with pupils looking at snails, made very good links to science work. Pupils were totally absorbed watching the snails, whispering so as not to disturb them. The development of language skills was excellent, with pupils producing sentences for the riddle such as "I slowly slither in the shade." Teachers do not make enough use of ICT in English lessons.

85 The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinators check teaching and learning in lessons. The assessment of pupils' work is good. However, the use made of the information gathered is satisfactory and not enough use is made of the information collected to raise standards, particularly for higher attaining pupils. The analysis of pupils' work in National Curriculum tests has enabled teachers to identify areas of writing



which need improving. The quality of pupils' work is checked twice a year and pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 undertake optional national tests.

86 In order to raise standards further, the school should:

- raise the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils;
- make better use of assessment information and marking to set targets for pupils;
- use the library to encourage independent learning;
- review, and improve, the way handwriting is taught.

## MATHEMATICS

87 Standards are well above average in Year 6 and above average in Year 2 and are similar to the results achieved in the national tests in 2002. Similar standards for the seven year olds were reported at the time of the last inspection but standards at eleven are better now than in 1997, when they were above rather than well above average.

88 Pupils in Year 2 have completed work in all aspects of mathematics. They are mentally adept at working out problems involving money. The higher attaining pupils calculate the cost of buying five items at a given price by using multiplication and the less able use repeated addition. Pupils regularly apply their knowledge to solve problems such as 'If you have six different toppings for pizzas and a customer wants two, how many different combinations could be offered?' The scrutiny of pupils' work showed that teachers plan different work in number to meet the specific needs of their pupils but that the same commercial 'fill-in' book is used in at least one class for consolidating work with shapes, measures and data. Because of this, the higher attaining pupils are not being challenged sufficiently in these areas. In number work, there is a wider range of understanding and work given to pupils is different. The more able work confidently with numbers above 100, for example counting on 10 and then 5 from 92 to solve  $92+15$ . They understand the value of each digit in a three-digit number. The lower attaining pupils work with smaller numbers but, with the help of pictures, they understand how to share a number of objects between a given number of people and calculate the cost of three ice-creams costing 5p each.

89 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught in classes that are arranged according to ability. This helps teachers to match work even more closely to the pupils' needs so that they make faster progress. By eleven, the higher attaining pupils are confident with fractions, decimals and percentages and with co-ordinates involving negative numbers. They create scatter graphs and interpret information from them. The lower attaining pupils round numbers to the nearest 10, 100 or 1000 and compute using the four rules of number<sup>1</sup>. However, they struggle with long multiplication. They complete a Venn diagram to classify triangles and identify the diagonals in various two-dimensional shapes.

90 Teachers generally conduct brisk mental mathematics sessions at the start of lessons that exercise pupils' brains. In the best lessons, all pupils are involved because they have to write answers on boards that they display at a given signal. In Year 3, for example, higher attaining pupils enjoyed a 'doubling game' and had instant recall of doubles up to 12 so that the teacher could challenge them further. In Year 6, pupils had to quickly calculate from a graph how far a bee travels between the second and third hour of its journey from the hive. These activities are enjoyable and help to maintain interest. Similarly, there are regular opportunities for pupils to use mathematical knowledge to solve practical problems such as, 'Find two consecutive numbers that have a product of...'. However pupils are not often given enough opportunities to exercise their own initiative in setting up investigations. In most lessons, teachers prescribe exactly how pupils should set about a task. In a Year 2 lesson,

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<sup>1</sup> Addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

however, pupils were encouraged to devise their own table of results for calculating the cost of a family going to the swimming pool and spending money on bus fares, admission and an ice-cream.

91 The National Numeracy Strategy is being well used to plan lessons and promote high standards. Numeracy skills are being promoted well in other subjects, particularly science and geography. In Year 5, for example, tally charts have been created to show the different usages for water. The co-ordinators are very keen to encourage the use of computer programs to promote work in mathematics and the software is available. However, classes are not allotted a time in the suite specifically for numeracy and this area of work is neglected in classrooms. However, a teacher in Year 5 effectively used a laptop with a small group of pupils to help them understand the concept of 'area'. They created shapes by moving the mouse to colour squares red and counted how many of them were contained within the final shape. This demonstration would have been valuable for all pupils if they had been in the computer suite with access to the projector that displays the data on a large screen.

92 During the inspection, there was good teaching in lessons overall with three out of eight in the juniors being very good. The work in books, however, reveals practice that is sometimes less impressive. There is inconsistency in expectations for neat presentation and for an appropriate amount of work in a session. There is also an over-reliance on worksheets in some year groups, reducing the opportunities for pupils to decide on their own methods of recording work because the worksheet requires them to simply fill in answers. Marking varies too. Teachers praise pupils' efforts but occasionally are too effusive, saying something is "excellent" when it is only what one would expect. In their marking, not all teachers regularly point out how pupils can improve their work. The work given to different pupils according to their need is more evident in Years 3 to 6 and teaching there is judged to be good overall, with good progress being made by the pupils. In Years 1 and 2, progress is satisfactory as is teaching over time.

93 Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and use resources well. They realise the importance of practical apparatus, particularly for younger pupils, and the school has good resources for teachers to use. There is a 'library' of mathematical games in Years 1 and 2 that parents can borrow to play at home. During the inspection, all pupils in Years 1 and 2 were tackling money problems and coins were readily available. In two classes, areas were set aside for a Beach Café and a shop in which pupils could practise adding up the cost of items and giving change. Basic skills are taught well. A Year 6 teacher paid particular attention to the mathematical vocabulary associated with work on scatter graphs – 'correlation', 'discrete data' and 'continuous data'. Occasionally teachers talk for too long and activity time is foreshortened but most have good questioning techniques and conduct informative discussions that reveal pupils' level of understanding. Not all teachers routinely explain at the beginning of the lesson what it is they want the pupils to learn and very few return to this at the end to ask pupils to evaluate themselves whether or not they have acquired that learning. However, most teachers write the 'lesson objective' on the board. Teaching assistants are used very well throughout lessons to support individuals or small groups. In a lesson with younger pupils, for example, the teacher required most of the class to think in their heads of the combinations of silver coins that would make 20p. The assistant sat with three less able pupils and had coins to help them work out the answers so that they could be fully included in the discussion. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported throughout the school and make the same progress as their classmates. The special educational needs co-ordinator withdrew a group of pupils from Year 6 for a specific activity that reinforced their understanding that an angle is a degree of turn. She used straws very effectively so that they could see the actual turn and from this they could identify a right angle and an obtuse and an acute angle.

94 The co-ordinators are full of enthusiasm and have many ideas for improving provision in mathematics. They must guard against overwhelming their colleagues with fresh initiatives and decide which ones are most important. A recent focus on problem-solving has resulted in better practice and they have monitored how this has been done by observing lessons. An improved system for assessing pupils' attainment has been introduced and has the advantage of all pupils being on one sheet of paper with marks to identify firstly that they have been taught each of a number of key elements of learning, secondly that they have practised it and finally that they have understood it. Teachers are also evaluating their lessons and noting down pupils who have experienced difficulties. This helps them to plan subsequent lessons. However, not enough use is being made of assessment information that can be gleaned from standardised testing. When they receive a new class, teachers are given the results of the most recent national test.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes these results are analysed. The 2002 tests for seven year olds, for example, revealed that more work needed to be done on identifying missing mathematical symbols as well as missing numbers in some tasks. However, this type of analysis is not always made available to new teachers and sometimes not enough is done to address these identified weaknesses.

95 Areas for development:

- develop the use of computer programs to promote the development of numeracy skills;
- use assessment information more fully so that lessons are planned to address the gaps in knowledge and understanding that have been identified.

## SCIENCE

96 Standards attained by seven year olds are broadly average with a significant minority of pupils achieving at a high level. Standards attained by eleven year olds are in line with the national average. In comparison to the national average these standards are lower than those recorded at the time of the last inspection. A significant minority of pupils make good progress in their learning; however, there are groups of the most able and less able pupils who do not make the progress they should. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactory standards in relation to their prior attainment, but standards could be higher.

97 By the age of seven, pupils identify the characteristics of plants and animals and label a diagram of a flowering plant correctly. They have a good insight into the importance of healthy eating and the effect of exercise on the body. More able pupils identify different food groups and understand the importance of a balanced diet. Pupils identify forces, for example push and pull, and draw and explain electrical circuits accurately. More able pupils demonstrate good understanding of the properties of different materials but some average and less able find this difficult. When recording the results of experiments, for example the effect of lighting a candle or heating chocolate, many average and more able pupils present their information with clarity and precision, drawing appropriate conclusions. A minority of average and less able pupils find this difficult.

98 By the age of eleven, pupils conduct and record the results of experiments in charts and graphs. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the characteristics of living things, and describe how animals have become adapted to their environments. More able pupils clearly describe the functions of the most important human and plant organs. In discussions, one more able pupil explained how the liver "cleans nasty chemicals from the blood". However, the knowledge and understanding of a few average and less able pupils are not so secure. Pupils describe some methods, for example filtration, for separating simple mixtures and recognise that some changes are reversible whilst others are not. Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of forces, for example gravity and air resistance,

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<sup>2</sup> Pupils take the statutory tests at seven and eleven and the optional tests at the end of Years 3,4 and 5.

and explain how shadows are formed. There are weaknesses in pupils' use of correct scientific language, and in their ability to compare and evaluate evidence, and draw appropriate conclusions.

99 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Although teaching during the inspection was at least good, careful examination of pupils' previous work indicates a number of shortcomings. In lessons, teachers manage pupils well and as a result pupils behave well and try hard with their work. The relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves are very good. Teachers value the contributions that pupils make and this effectively promotes their self-esteem and encourages them to work harder. In the best lessons teachers share the learning objectives so pupils understand what they are expected to achieve. During the introduction to these lessons teachers make good links with previous learning, and ensure that the lessons carefully build upon pupils' knowledge and understanding. In a very good lesson in a Year 4 class, the teacher presented the lesson in a lively and interesting way that engaged and maintained the interest of the pupils. He demonstrated very well how electricity flows around a circuit, placing strong emphasis on the importance of subject specific vocabulary. He displayed very good subject knowledge through his clear explanations that enabled pupils to make connections in their learning. Pupils were provided with very good opportunities to experiment and draw their own conclusions. In another very good lesson in a Year 3 class, the teacher questioned the pupils particularly well, checking their understanding, and helping them to make the next steps in their learning. She set high expectations of the pupils' effort and behaviour and in response the pupils tried hard, worked well together as members of a group and enjoyed the activity. In both these lessons the teachers used the session at the end of the lesson effectively to revisit the learning objectives of the lesson, check pupils' understanding and point them to the next stage in their learning. In lessons that are not so successful teachers do not provide more able pupils with sufficient opportunities to develop scientific skills.

100 Examination of pupils' previous work indicates that some teachers give the same tasks to all pupils, with little consideration given to individual learning needs. This sometimes leads to work not being completed by less able pupils and does not provide sufficient challenge to the most able. Assessment information is clearly not being used effectively to plan appropriate work that builds on pupils' previous learning. Teachers often rely too heavily on worksheets and this inhibits pupils' ability to record their own work and make connections in their learning. Some teachers do not focus sufficiently on the development of scientific skills, for example prediction, comparing results and drawing conclusions. As a result of the work of the subject co-ordinator more opportunities are being provided for pupils to design and conduct their own experiments, but there is still room for further improvements. Teachers often do not have sufficiently high expectations of the pupils and their work. This results in careless work that is not well presented. The quality of teachers' marking is satisfactory overall but is variable. In the best examples it informs pupils of the quality of their work and provides pointers for further improvement, but in some cases issues raised in marking are not pursued.

101 The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The school has recently made changes to the curriculum as a result of a careful analysis of test results and the work in pupils' books. Through this activity the school identified particular weaknesses relating to pupils' skills of scientific enquiry. In response, a greater emphasis is being placed on the development of these skills. There is good provision for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in this subject. For example, pupils use rulers and instruments such as force meters for measuring, and display their findings on charts and graphs. There are weaknesses, however, in the use of literacy skills. Teachers often pay too little attention to the care and accuracy with which pupils record their work or to their use of technical vocabulary. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to research scientific topics using the Internet, and to use computer

programs to display and present their work. In physical education lessons throughout the school, teachers often make good reference to the effect of exercise on the body, and this effectively supports pupils' learning in this subject. The assessment procedures to record and chart pupils' progress as they move through the school are generally satisfactory, but require improvement. Teachers appropriately assess pupils' learning in Years 2 and 6 and the analysis of the tests in Year 6 has been effective in identifying areas for improvement. Teachers conduct tests at the end of each unit of work, but the results of these assessments are not used effectively enough to plan the next stage of pupils' learning.

102 The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator works very hard and has been instrumental in the recent positive developments in this subject. He regularly monitors teachers' planning, has observed teaching and learning in several classes and has analysed the work in pupils' books. As a result he has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school and where improvements need to be made. Resources for the teaching of the subject are good.

103 In order to improve standards further the school should:

- improve the quality of teaching and learning to the level of the best by sharing good practice throughout the school;
- continue to improve provision for pupils to develop scientific skills;
- use assessment more effectively to tailor work to the needs of all pupils.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

104 Standards are above average in Year 2. Pupils make good progress in art and design in the infant stage, and this shows good improvement since the last inspection. Standards are average at Year 6. The pace of learning slows down in the junior stage, and progress is largely satisfactory, maintaining the standards at the time of the last inspection.

105 In Years 1 and 2, teaching is good overall, and some very good teaching was observed. Where teaching is very good, pupils look closely at natural materials such as wood, shells and stones, and high expectations are placed on pupils to record differences in texture. Good skills teaching was evident as pupils were taught different techniques for shading and for noticing detail by using magnifiers. As pupils recorded their observations the guidance given to individuals led to immediate improvement. This promoted good progress for all ability groups, including pupils with special educational needs. Good opportunities were offered in another lesson to investigate the tactile qualities of materials as pupils experimented with pleating, crumpling and wrinkling tissue paper. These techniques were well matched to the work's purpose and consequently pupils were very proud of their pictures of fruit and vegetables. These pupils show very good enthusiasm for the subject and they concentrate and persevere very well.

106 Overall teaching is satisfactory in the junior stage. Increasing emphasis is placed on planning, designing and researching for pupils' work. For example, Year 5 pupils looked at paintings and illustrations of life in Tudor times prior to planning large-scale pictures. Planning was protracted, eroding the time available for pupils to work practically. As pupils move through from Year 3 to 6 they design chairs for specific characters, and use clay, water-colours, chalk, graphite, fabric and collage. However, junior stage pupils show insufficient progress in their competencies in the application of materials for a purpose, and in their knowledge of colour, texture, line, tone and shape as they draw and paint. Pupils' response in Years 5 and 6, evident in lessons and in their completed work, is satisfactory. In Years 3 and 4 response is good, and is demonstrated in the quality of presentation of their finished work.

107 In all age groups, pupils study the work of other artists. For example, infant pupils blend and mix colours as they create concentric circles in the style of Kandinski and Year 5 pupils create detailed patterned landscapes in the style of Joanne Short. However, the artists studied are largely from western cultures, and this range needs to be extended to promote wider awareness of art from other cultures. Pupils also use ICT effectively to draw, colour and create repeating patterns. The art and design curriculum ensures that pupils of all ability groups have equal access to activities. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve good results as a consequence.

108 The enthusiastic co-ordinator has led the subject since just before the last inspection. An art exhibition and a whole-school focus on art displays promote the subject and cultural awareness well. Since the last inspection a scheme of work has been implemented, the policy reviewed, and teaching resources and art materials have been improved. This shows good improvement in leadership since then.

109 In order to further improve teaching and learning the school now needs to:

- develop teacher subject knowledge and planning guidance to ensure better progression in drawing and painting skills as pupils move through from Year 3 to 6;
- improve the pace of learning for older pupils by extending the opportunities for pupils to participate practically in art and craft work, using a wide range of media.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)**

110 Pupils' attainment is broadly average for seven and eleven year olds. This represents satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The curriculum is planned well. The decision to teach DT in blocks of time gives pupils ample opportunity to get work finished. Not enough teaching was seen to make judgements but evidence from work produced suggests that teaching is at least satisfactory. In the one lesson seen, teaching was good. The two co-ordinators give a good lead to their colleagues. As one of them teaches part-time, there is not sufficient time to carry out all their roles. For example, teaching and learning in lessons has not been monitored this year. However, they check teachers' planning and the work produced by pupils. The co-ordinators have good plans to improve the management of the subject by producing a checklist of skills that pupils should have and by making greater use of ICT. The school is well placed to bring about improvements.

111 Teaching was good in the one lesson seen. The teacher used effective methods to show pupils how to approach their task of building a model with a winding mechanism in a logical and structured way. She broke down the construction of a model based on a nursery rhyme into nine steps. Each step was carefully explained and displayed so that pupils could check what to do next. Very good use was made of the classroom support assistant when pupils chose materials for their models. The assistant made pupils explain why they had chosen particular materials and asked them to say what problems they might have, for example when trying to fasten the materials together. This approach was particularly helpful to lower attaining pupils. Good use was made of design books, in which pupils drew out their ideas. Pupils practised their ideas using construction kits before making their models. Sometimes the teacher gave pupils the answer to problems instead of making them think for themselves. This happened when pupils were faced with sticking down the flaps on the end of boxes and the teacher told them how to do it.

112 Work in displays shows that teachers introduce pupils to a range of techniques. In Year 4, pupils designed and wrote storybooks and used simple pivots, levers and folded paper springs to make characters move. In Year 6, pupils brought together skills they had learned to make a frame with wheels and simple motor to make a controllable vehicle. They wrote clear instructions for this task and also to show how to make a pair of fabric slippers. Making the slippers enabled pupils to work in different materials and to choose the materials

for themselves. Pupils used their workbooks very well to show with labelled drawings how they approached the task. They evaluated the finished product and described how they would improve it. The quality of the work produced is generally satisfactory.

113 The school is well placed to raise standards. The co-ordinators give freely of their time in attending conferences and exhibitions to keep up with new ideas. However, more time is needed for co-ordinators to check teaching and learning in lessons. The assessment of pupils' work and the use of the assessment information to plan future work are satisfactory but a simple checklist of skills for pupils would help teachers assess progress more easily. Plans are in hand to make greater use of ICT.

114 In order to raise standards further, the school should:

- monitor teaching and learning in lessons;
- produce a checklist of skills for pupils to help with assessment;
- develop the use of ICT in DT.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

115 Standards are above average at seven and eleven and have improved since the last inspection. Pupils now have good opportunities to undertake individual research and record their findings in their own project booklets. This allows pupils, and especially the more able, to consolidate geographical skills and understanding such as enquiry, knowledge and understanding of places, environmental change and sustainable development, and they now achieve well. A good start has been made on improving mapping skills but more work is still required to bring it up to the same level. The school has adopted the national guidance which ensures that the National Curriculum is taught. However, this requires some modifications to meet the learning needs of all pupils more closely. The subject co-ordinator already has this in hand. Procedures for checking how well pupils are doing in geography are unsatisfactory at the moment. Information collected about their progress is not used well enough to ensure that all progress as fast as they might.

116 By the age of seven pupils have shared the travels of Barnaby Bear to many places in the world, and learned how different environments influence the way people live. Barnaby is a character in a national scheme of work used very well by teachers to give pupils a good knowledge of countries and their different environments, and experience of using sources of evidence. There is written work on the wall about Barnaby's visits that show good knowledge and writing skills. When he visited St Lucia pupils showed good skills in comparing and contrasting different environments in the good quality project booklets prepared by teachers. Work is well matched to pupils of average ability and those with special educational needs but the more able pupils are not fully extended and challenged in the work. Most pupils are able to tell Barnaby what he will need for a journey to a hot or cold climate and help him to find his way.

117 Older pupils clearly develop a keen sense of caring for their world through learning about the impact that people have on the environment. They consider the advantages and disadvantages of closing a high street to traffic and have a good understanding of the issues. They are able to describe the features of a river and the more able use high quality geographical vocabulary and terms with confidence in defining its stages, erosion and deposition. Water systems are studied with particular reference to environmental issues and they know that conflicting demands occur. Pupils demonstrate good ability in describing and contrasting geographical differences and similarities, such as in their work on comparing Tewkesbury and Holmfirth. They select information and sources of evidence for their work. This is seen clearly in the good quality project on mountains at Year 6. All abilities produce booklets containing individual research and choices that stretch all abilities and demonstrate their ability to communicate their findings. Many make good use of the Internet and CD-

ROMs for their work for both presentation and information. Mathematical learning is consolidated well by teachers, for instance when pupils tabulate data from a litter survey and recycling study and use spreadsheets and derived graphs on the computer to display results. Teachers use ICT well in this subject.

118 Teaching in geography is good overall although one lesson seen during the inspection was judged unsatisfactory. This was largely because the pace of the lesson was too slow, pupils became bored and restless and behaviour deteriorated. Pupils produce a good volume of quality work and this is because of teachers' high expectations, good teaching skills and good marking. Marking gives the pupils good feedback on what they do well and what they need to improve. There is good topic work to be seen in all year groups and teachers work as a team to ensure that one step in learning is logically followed by the next. For example the good quality 'Weather around the World' project in Year 3 builds very well on Barnaby's travels. The good Year 4 topic on improving the environment leads very well into the recycling work in Year 5 where teachers make greater demands of pupils. Thus good teaching consistently challenges pupils in a rich and stimulating learning environment. This why they learn well, have pride in their work, and work hard. Visits are used well to support learning in geography. Teachers are only just beginning to think about assessment of pupils' learning of geographical skills and knowledge. Its use to target areas for improvement will inform planning and curriculum review, thus matching these more closely to meeting pupils' needs.

119 The leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has supported teachers in making learning better. There is currently no opportunity for him to observe teaching. There are clear plans to improve the subject that are regularly reviewed and amended

## **HISTORY**

120 Standards are broadly average at Year 2 and Year 6 and have been maintained since the last inspection. There has been an improvement in the marking of pupils' work and in opportunities for them to undertake historical research. There is no difference in standards between boys and girls and pupils of all abilities make sound progress.

121 By the time pupils are seven they have a sound understanding of how people lived in the past. They develop a sense of chronology through looking at their own lives, by talking to parents and grandparents, by discussing events with senior citizens and through visits, such as to Bishop's Cleeve war memorial. They recognise changes in domestic life and in medicine in their work on Florence Nightingale and how hospitals have changed from then to now. Pupils in discussion were able to draw a comparison between the streets of old London before the Great Fire and the unsanitary conditions in hospitals during the Crimean War and showed they understood the need for hygiene to improve health and healing.

122 By the time they are eleven they have a sound historical knowledge of a range of periods. They know for example about the Ancient Greeks and Egyptians as well as about more modern periods such as the Victorians and British life since 1948. They know about the role of famous personalities, such as Dr Barnado, in shaping changes to people's lives in the past. More able pupils have a good chronological understanding in placing the different periods on a time-line with good accuracy, whilst most others have sound knowledge, making few errors and applying time-lines to investigate recent history through sequencing events during their own and their relatives' lives. There is evidence of pupils using CD-ROMs, the Internet, and reference books in classrooms, but not in the library, for information in extending their own lines of enquiry. Pupils think about change and difference and relate them sometimes to the future. For instance, one pupil after researching recent life in Britain thought that it is very possible that a child could be the Prime Minister by 2050.



123 Teaching is satisfactory. The teaching seen during the inspection was mainly good. However, the analysis of work in pupils' books shows that teaching is only sound overall. Teachers have sound knowledge of the subject and use question and answer sessions well to enable pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, and sharing it with others so that all are actively engaged in learning. This was evident in a good Year 3 lesson when pupils understood the place of the Celts and the Romans in British history and who conquered whom! The teacher used previous knowledge well when pupils constructed a pictorial time-line to place them in historical context. In discussion the more able pupils knew that although Julius Caesar led the first invasion, Claudius settled England. In a Year 5 lesson the teacher had good resources available to compare the dwellings of rich and poor Tudor people. This excited pupils' interest and they were quick to derive the reasons for overhangs above the ground floor. The resulting amusement showed the maturity of pupils in their response and the good relationships existing between them and staff. During the hot and humid week of the inspection the pupils wilted during the long afternoon session without a break, and concentration levels and so learning diminished. Some older pupils are withdrawn regularly during history for instrumental tuition. Pupils say that they miss learning and the opportunity to do well. Teachers' planning has clear expectations which identify what is to be learned in each lesson. Lessons move at an appropriate pace and pupils have good attitudes to learning and want to succeed. This is because of teachers' expectations, and the good quality of marking seen that gives information to pupils on how well they are doing. Pupils' opportunity to develop literacy skills is improved since the last inspection but there is still over-use of limiting worksheets in some classes and this restricts opportunity for the more able pupils to achieve well.

124 The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and works hard to secure an improvement in the quality of worksheets, and in encouraging teachers to give better opportunities for pupils' individual research. He gives good leadership and has a clear idea of what needs to be done to improve learning further. He is working hard to reduce the variability between parallel classes in the quality of learning. He monitors planning within the new national scheme, and has adopted a system of pupil assessment that will guide future planning to improve pupils' development of historical skills. However, he has no opportunity to observe lessons yet, and little information from the management's monitoring of teaching.

125 In order to improve standards and progress even further the school should:

- give pupils the skills and opportunities for more independent historical research rather than relying so heavily on worksheets.

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

126 Attainment in school is broadly average at both seven and eleven and this shows a good improvement since the previous inspection where standards were judged to be below expectations. However, it is clear from speaking with pupils that many have access to computers at home and are very proficient at using them to the extent that the work they are doing in school is really not teaching them much in the way of new skills. At the other end of the spectrum are those who struggle to remember where particular keys are on the keyboard, how to move down on to a new line and very simple skills of that nature. Good support for those pupils ensures that they are able to achieve well and complete the same tasks as the rest of the class. So, although attainment is average overall it could be a lot higher if the most able were challenged sufficiently and encouraged to achieve as well as the least able.

127 For example, in a lesson on sending emails, Year 3 pupils had written out by hand on a copy of the screen precisely what they would type into their email including the recipient's address and the actual message. They then accessed the correct program on their computers and typed up their previously handwritten message. For the least able this was a

great achievement as they learned how to locate keys on the keyboard and to use the space bar and shift keys. Other pupils, however, said they regularly send emails from home with bits of clip art as attachments so spending two lessons on something at a lower level than they work at in their spare time is not a good use of their time in school. Indeed, one pupil commented, "I already know all this so I'm not really learning very much". Year 6 pupils talked about how much they use computers at home. "I nearly always do my homework on the Internet so there's no point in teaching us about that," said one, a view echoed by others. They said how frustrating it was wasting time on the Internet in school when it takes so long to log on because so many others are doing the same – "It is much quicker at home". Similarly with presentations in *Powerpoint*, a pupil commented, "I learned more from my mum and dad." Several were very confident in how to include text and clip art in their presentations, with the most able also confident in adding sound and video clips. Several said they would love the opportunity to present more of their work in other subjects in this way instead of using more traditional ways of recording what they have learned.

128 The school was criticised in the last inspection for not covering all the requirements of the National Curriculum in ICT. It has rectified this situation very well and covers all that it should by adopting the national guidelines in the subject. However, in doing so the school is constraining the learning of too many pupils by not adapting that guidance sufficiently to allow the real high fliers to progress much faster. As it is, all pupils in a class are required to complete the same tasks at the same time and at much the same level, regardless of ability or aptitude. Now that teachers have all received training and gained enormously in confidence and competence on ICT the school is well placed to build upon the improvements it has made to move forward through more creative teaching that gives much more responsibility to pupils for their own learning and encourages them to achieve as much as they can rather than being limited to following national guidance too closely.

129 Overall teaching is good. This is the main reason for the rise in attainment since the previous report. Teachers are much more confident with computers and so lessons go far beyond a bit of word processing. Pupils learn to use spreadsheets and databases. They learn how to turn statistical information into attractive graphs. They learn to illustrate their writing with appropriate pictures and regularly seek information from the Internet when researching given topics. For example, Year 6 pupils completed individual projects on mountains, making good use of ICT at home showing good levels of initiative and responsibility. Teaching of basic skills is particularly good. Teachers are confident enough to show and tell pupils how to do various tasks on the computer and to insist on the importance of accuracy at all times. For example, in sending emails or accessing websites the teachers make it quite clear that a simple error in typing addresses will lead to frustration. They reinforce the necessity to take care to type the correct amounts in the correct cells in spreadsheets to ensure the totals make sense. They show pupils exactly which icons or keys to use to access particular programs or parts of programs and constantly stress the importance of working logically through the correct procedures for logging on and off. Teachers do not yet make effective enough use of assessment information to plan work in ICT to meet the full range of abilities within classes. A sharper focus on what pupils are achieving both within and beyond school would help teachers to plan more effectively to take all pupils from their current position rather than simply ploughing methodically through the national guidance. Pupils enjoy ICT. They are keen to learn and work enthusiastically at the tasks they are given so that behaviour is invariably good or very good. They share computers happily and help each other if someone gets stuck at any stage. There was little evidence, however, of teachers capitalising on the pupils' enthusiasm by following up work done in the computer suite with work on the classroom machines. The use of spreadsheets, word processing and presentations helps pupils to build upon their literacy and numeracy skills through ICT. ICT is also used satisfactorily to find information in other subjects like history and geography.

130 In order to improve standards and progress in ICT even further the school should:

- make better use of information on how well pupils are progressing in ICT both within and beyond school to set work that challenges all pupils, particularly the most able;
- give pupils more responsibility for planning, organising and evaluating their own work;
- make more effective use of classroom computers to follow up learning in the suite.

## MUSIC

131 After the last inspection the school was required to improve the provision for music so that pupils could make better progress. Too little has been done since then and standards in Year 2 and in Year 6 are currently below average. Pupils across the school make unsatisfactory progress. A co-ordinator has been in post since the beginning of this school year and he is beginning to address the weaknesses in provision. He realises that one of the biggest obstacles to overcome is the lack of confidence and expertise amongst some of his colleagues with the result that some classes have not had regular music lessons in the recent past. These weaknesses became apparent in the replies to a questionnaire that he issued to all teachers. To support them, he has re-written the programme of work and provided teachers with helpful advice on the activities to include in their lessons. He has also given demonstration lessons for the Year 3 teachers and takes a weekly singing assembly with the whole school. Unfortunately, some teachers chose not to attend this assembly during the inspection and therefore missed the opportunity to see good practice in the teaching of singing. When the whole school is together, the standard of singing is satisfactory. Pupils show an awareness of mood and sing more contemplative songs quietly in contrast to those that require a robust approach. Most sing rhythmically and in tune, with proper attention to diction.

132 The focus this year has been to improve musical composition and provision has undoubtedly improved. However, because of the lack of previous experience, pupils are not yet performing at the expected levels. Pupils in Year 6, for example, composed pieces of music to reflect a picture but performances were ragged with very little contrast within the composition, except in the depiction of 'A Storm'. Year 2 pupils composed music to accompany a poem about a train but did not always play in strict time with the pupils who were reciting the poem. A start has been made on guiding pupils to draw graphic scores for their compositions but some are untidy and not easy to understand, except in Year 5 where symbols to indicate 'diminuendo' and 'crescendo' are clear.

133 Pupils regularly hear the music of famous composers in their lessons and as they enter the hall for assemblies. This makes a satisfactory contribution to their cultural development. However, there is little difference in the responses of Year 5 pupils who listened to Stravinsky's *Firebird* and Year 6 pupils who appraised Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. All drew pictures that were conjured up in their mind but an opportunity was missed to reinforce literacy skills by asking the older pupils to write about the feelings that the music evoked.

134 Teaching seen during the inspection is judged satisfactory overall though there was one unsatisfactory lesson because some pupils were not willing to take the task seriously and stopped the majority from getting on. Teaching over time, however, has been unsatisfactory but this is not entirely due to the current teachers, many of whom are new to the school. Pupils generally react positively to their lessons. In Year 5, for example, they were keen to create a tactile 'score' using a variety of objects such as stones, feathers, leaves and corrugated paper and suggested musical sounds that could represent the different textures. All teachers realise the importance of the practical nature of music lessons. In Year 1, pupils marched to *The Grand Old Duke of York* slowly and then faster and recognised the need to keep together.

135 The school is well poised to raise the profile of music. The provision of instrumental teaching is good and the range of instruments taught is due to widen in the near future. At present, there is tuition for the violin, clarinet, flute and guitar and a small orchestra has recently been formed. As these pupils become confident to play regularly, for example in assemblies, the school will become a more musical place. Music plays a crucial role in school productions and Year 6 pupils are currently practising for their 'Leaving Concert', learning songs with difficult rhythmical structures and performing them competently. A choir meets as an after-school activity when a particular event is coming up.

136 The school has a designated music room and this is a good feature of the accommodation. There are good resources too and some of the instruments are of very good quality. There is very little use of computers to promote musical skills, such as composition. Assessment systems are currently being overhauled to make it easier for teachers to judge the standards that pupils achieve against learning objectives that are easy to understand. However, the school has untapped potential for good standards in music and has the capacity to improve rapidly under the leadership of the newly appointed co-ordinator with the support of the headteacher.

137 Areas for development:

- provide training to develop the confidence and musical expertise of teachers;
- raise the profile of music by taking every opportunity, particularly in assemblies, to sing and play and reflect what is happening in the school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

138 The attainment of seven year olds and eleven year olds is above average. Standards are better than those recorded at the time of the last inspection. Pupils achieve well in relation to their previous learning as a result of good teaching and good provision of activities outside lessons.

139 By the age of seven, pupils display good awareness of space and well-developed co-ordination as they travel on the floor and apparatus. They demonstrate particularly good control and extension when creating balances on different parts of their body. Many pupils confidently move across and along benches through a series of hops and leaps, and then jump from the apparatus, creating different shapes in the air. In a lesson in a Year 2 class, a more able pupil performed a sequence of leaps on a bench with such lightness and agility that it resembled a gymnastic beam routine. More able pupils perform forward rolls and cartwheels, using well the skills that they have learnt in the local gymnastics club they attend. Pupils throw and catch a ball competently and are beginning to understand some of the effects of exercise on the body.

140 By the age of eleven, pupils have continued to develop skills of receiving and sending a ball and demonstrate this when hitting, throwing and catching a ball in lessons. In a lesson in a Year 4 class, for example, pupils displayed good levels of control as they used tennis rackets to propel the ball to one another, using their backhand and forehand. In another lesson, pupils in Year 6 demonstrated good levels of control as they performed a long jump and as they developed the skills needed to perform a triple jump. There are a significant number of pupils in this year group that perform to a high standard in various athletics events. In dance lessons, pupils create patterns, changing the level, speed and direction of their actions. In a lesson in a Year 6 class, for example, pupils effectively worked together in groups to create a sequence of movements, with turns and spins to resemble the movements of a river. During competitive games activities in lessons, pupils show a clear understanding of the rules of the game, and where they have responsibilities. In these and other lessons, pupils explain the importance of warming up before an activity and the benefits to health and fitness. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, most

pupils swim 25 metres, with a significant number swimming much longer distances. In discussions, pupils speak enthusiastically about the variety of sports and games that are available to them.

141 The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers ensure that the pupils are fully warmed up at the start of lessons and cooled down at the end. In the best lessons work is well planned and structured to include all pupils. In a lesson in Year 6 class, for example, a pupil with physical disabilities was fully involved in a games lesson: throwing a ball, running with a walking frame and seeking to improve her performance alongside all the other pupils in the class. In some lessons, however, teachers do not plan effectively to take into account the learning needs of the most able and as a result these pupils do not always make the progress they should. Teachers often display good subject knowledge through their explanations and directions to pupils at the beginning of lessons. They intervene well as the lesson proceeds, providing good guidance on how pupils might improve their performances. Teachers often use the performance of individuals and groups of pupils to demonstrate good practice and this enables others to see how they might improve their work. On occasions, teachers miss opportunities to develop pupils' skills of evaluation. Teachers have a supportive approach to the pupils and their learning, which promotes confidence and self-esteem. In the best lessons teachers manage and organise the pupils well and set high expectations of their concentration and effort. In response, pupils have positive attitudes; they try hard and work effectively together. Teachers often provide pupils with good opportunities to work together in pairs and groups and to take greater responsibility for their learning. Most pupils respond to these opportunities well, for example in Year 6 where pupils developed dance sequences, or measured distances and times and recorded the performance of themselves and others. In a few lessons, however, a small minority of boys find it difficult to listen well or behave properly.

142 The school has an up-to-date policy and scheme of work to guide teachers' planning. Pupils are provided with a good range of extra-curricular activities of a sporting nature, and these activities are well attended. These include rugby, football netball, athletics, gymnastics, chess and country dancing. Pupils participate in local country-dance festivals and compete against other schools in athletics, football, netball and rounders. Pupils in Year 6 attend an outdoor and adventurous activity centre where they participate in a range of activities including, for example, water sports and climbing. All these opportunities contribute well to pupils' social development. The school is developing a system of recording pupils' performance, noting those pupils who achieve particularly well and those who need further practice. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and influential within the school. She monitors teachers' planning and informally supports individual members of staff on a day-to-day basis. The school has a large playing field and a good number of resources that are well used.

143 In order to improve standards further the school should:

- make use of the best teaching to demonstrate techniques to raise the quality of teaching overall;
- provide improved opportunities for pupils to develop skills of evaluation.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)**

144 Standards are above average at seven and average at eleven. Pupils make good progress in the infant stage and satisfactory progress in the junior stage. This demonstrates good improvement since the last inspection in Years 1 and 2, where standards were judged to be satisfactory. In Years 3 to 6 standards have been maintained at a satisfactory level since 1997. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus.

145 Pupils learn primarily about Christianity, as well as Hinduism in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 4 they study Judaism and Islam, as well as Christianity. The curriculum requires learning about religions, the beliefs, practices and the influences on lifestyle. For example, in Years 1 and 2 they study religious festivals, places of worship, religious stories and practices, such as prayer. In Years 3 to 6 pupils develop an understanding of sacred texts, artefacts and rituals, holy places and religious leaders as they learn about religions. The curriculum also requires pupils to learn from religion, reflecting on their own experiences and responding to questions of meaning and moral issues. Discussions with Year 6 pupils indicate that this aspect of RE is less well taught to older pupils; some said that their views were not always respected by their peers, and that some lessons lacked relevance. There is evidence that pupils demonstrate high levels of respect and good listening skills in classroom discussions in personal, social and health education. Therefore, there is potential to transfer some of this good practice to the teaching of RE.

146 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and ranges from satisfactory to very good. In one very good lesson in Year 1, personal reflection was very well promoted as pupils considered their own experiences of hurting others and how they might apologise for their actions, and make those they have hurt feel better. This was extended to thinking about saying sorry to God. The scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils indicated that in Years 3 to 6 teaching and learning about religions are satisfactory. However, there are weaknesses in promoting pupils' personal responses to questions of meaning, purpose and value. Discussions with older pupils indicate that they fail to find relevance in some RE teaching, and experience a sense of repetition. The subject has the potential to make a positive contribution to pupils' cultural awareness, as they consider the religious practices and lifestyles in other cultures, but this is not fully exploited.

147 Pupils respond through discussions, artwork, writing and worksheets. Unfortunately, the latter fail to offer pupils sufficient opportunity to communicate their own ideas, views and creative responses. The co-ordinator has focused on improving this during the last year. There is very little evidence of pupils using ICT for researching or for recording their work in RE. Pupils demonstrated good behaviour during the lessons observed, responding well to questions and persevering to complete work. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and respond well.

148 The co-ordinator has led the subject for two years and during this time good progress has been made in developing the scheme of work. The new scheme ensures the agreed syllabus units are taught with stronger links with other subjects. The implementation of the new scheme has been audited to ensure all units are taught. The curriculum could be further improved by ensuring the long and medium-term planning includes activities to promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Ensuring older pupils enjoy contexts for learning which are relevant and meaningful, and which do not repeat previous work, is another area for development. The purchase of artefacts has improved the provision of learning resources, although this needs further development by increasing the number of reference books and ICT programs, which are currently under-resourced.

149 In order to improve standards further the school should:

- make the learning from religions more relevant to the lives of the pupils;
- make more effective use of ICT to promote learning in RE.