

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **WHITCHURCH C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Whitchurch

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116324

Headteacher: Mr R Sawyerr

Reporting inspector: Mr M S Burghart  
20865

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> March 2003

Inspection number: 247642

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: Voluntary Controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Daniel Road  
Whitchurch  
Hampshire

Postcode: RG28 7LS  
Telephone number: 01256 892755  
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body  
Name of chair of governors: Mr D Titcomb

Date of previous inspection: January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20865	Mr M Burghart Registered inspector	Information and communication technology; Art and design; Special educational needs; English as an additional language.	How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9487	Dr F Hurd Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20977	Mr R Thelwell Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage; English.	
20671	Mr J Palethorpe Team inspector	Science; Music; Physical education.	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
30438	Mr R Guest Team inspector	Mathematics; Design and technology; Religious education; Educational inclusion.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
32286	Mrs J Parker Team inspector	Geography; History.	

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>30</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Whitchurch Church of England School is an above average sized primary school in the town of the same name east of Andover in Hampshire. The school provides good accommodation for twelve classes. All except reception children are taught in classes which contain pupils from more than one age group. There are 342 children on the school roll aged four to eleven. There is an average of 28 pupils per class. Pupils are drawn from the surrounding area from a mix of accommodation, mostly from the local estates. Most of the pupils attend some kind of pre-school group before starting Year R. Their attainment on entry to the school, aged four, varies, but overall is about average. The headteacher has been at the school for five years. He is supported by thirteen full time teachers. The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register is above the national average. Two pupils have formal statements under the terms of the DfES Code of Practice<sup>1</sup>, which proportionally is below average. A below average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Only one pupil requires extra support as a consequence of having English as an additional language. This is below average. The proportion of pupils joining the school other than at the start of reception is relatively low. Since the last inspection the turnover of staff has been high (especially in the last two years) notably, but not exclusively, mostly affecting pupils between Years 3 and 6. The quality of acts of collective worship was inspected by a representative of the diocese. This report appears under a separate cover.

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

Whitchurch Primary School provides a consistently good education for children in reception and for pupils in Years 1 and 2. During a difficult period of considerable staff turnover and long term absence, some lack of continuity, principally in Years 3 and 4, led to a fall in standards at the end of Year 6. This is being addressed although pupils' results in National Curriculum assessments are unlikely to be substantially better in 2003 because special educational needs levels are high, and new initiatives have yet to take full effect. Improvements to planning and intentions for better use of assessment are areas beginning to prove effective in moving the school forward. These will complement the highly successful care and provision for pupils' personal development, and the school's good ethos. Good teaching, renewed management, and good elements of leadership, mean that provision is improving and that the school is on track towards regaining its previously good status. Currently the school gives satisfactory value for money, this reflects the apparent decline in standards. However, the situation is being improved.

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

- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and standards of behaviour are very good.
- Opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are very good.
- Provision for special educational needs is good.
- The quality of relationships is very good.
- The school takes very good care of pupils.

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<sup>1</sup> Code of Practice: This gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

## What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science as measured in National Curriculum assessments for eleven year olds.
- The management roles of subject co-ordinators other than English and mathematics.
- The use of assessment to measure standards and gauge progress.
- The quality of subject planning is in need of further improvement.
- Some aspects of the use of time.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection in January 1998 raised four key issues for improvement. The school has made good progress in improving arrangements to ensure pupils are fully involved in all activities, and that higher attaining pupils are better challenged. Homework is managed effectively. There is a better match and balance of staff responsibilities, but progress in this aspect has been severely hampered by a large turnover of teachers and prolonged absences. Health and safety issues have been appropriately dealt with and information reported to parents now meets statutory requirements. In addition the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been introduced well and major improvements to the building have had a very good impact on the quality of the learning environment. Following the uncertain period in staffing, which had negative effects on standards, the school is redefining its policies and planning whilst maintaining its very caring ethos. Staff changes are being effectively managed. The school is improving and is appropriately placed for future development.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores<sup>2</sup> in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools <sup>3</sup>
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	C	C	C
Mathematics	C	C	D	E
Science	B	B	C	D

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

The table indicates that standards were average in English and science in 2002, but below in mathematics. Comparisons with similar schools were average in English, but below in science and well below in mathematics. This represents a decline since the last inspection and the school failed to reach the targets set by the local education authority. However, a good feature was that in 2002 the proportions of pupils achieving the higher level, Level 5, in each subject, although still below average, were improved over 2001 results. In 2002 the year group tested made unsatisfactory progress compared with its own performance when pupils were seven, and this indicates that a variety of pupils were underachieving. Reasons for this

<sup>2</sup> Average points scores refers to the average of pupils' scores weighted by Ofsted for each level attained in each subject.

<sup>3</sup> Schools with less than 8 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

underachievement include high staff turnover, particularly between Years 3 and 6, and the newness of some curriculum initiatives. A lack of planning and an increase in special educational needs levels contributed to lower standards. The school is seeking to improve the situation in 2003, but staff expectations are guarded, with an even higher proportion of pupils with special needs in Year 6. Inspectors find that standards are broadly in line with national averages for mathematics, below, but fast approaching these for English, and below average in science for pupils aged eleven. The school can demonstrate that it does add value to pupils' attainment in both the academic and personal senses. Standards for seven year olds are consistently above average for reading and mathematics. Standards in writing are now above average, having been below in 2002. Good provision in reception means children usually achieve the Early Learning Goals<sup>4</sup> before they join Year 1. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well for their ability.

Standards in all other subjects are consistent with national expectations at the end of Year 2. Pupils' attainment in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 6. In information and communication technology (ICT) and art and design standards of work undertaken are satisfactory, but not all elements of the curriculum have been covered in sufficient depth. Consequently the school is already aware that attainment in these subjects is less than satisfactory at the end of Year 6. In religious education pupils reach standards that match the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus aged eleven and are currently doing better than this aged seven.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Very good: pupils appear keen and interested and most enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good: in all lessons observed, at breaks and during assemblies, pupils of all ages and abilities behaved very well.
Personal development and relationships	Good: pupils respond well to expectations that they should be considerate, tolerant and act responsibly. Relationships are judged very good.
Attendance	Good: being above the national average.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Reception</b>	<b>Years 1 – 2</b>	<b>Years 3 – 6</b>
Quality of teaching	Good.	Good.	Satisfactory overall, with good and some very good features.

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

<sup>4</sup> QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals' for children in this stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of six. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

The overall quality of teaching is good. All teachers were observed on a variety of occasions, across a range of subjects, unannounced. All but one lesson was satisfactory or better with three-quarters at least good and one in five very good or better. Two lessons (a Years 1 and 2 numeracy and a Years 1 and 2 literacy) were excellent. Teaching was consistently at least good in the Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2. For Years 3 to 6 teaching was satisfactory, sometimes good and occasionally better. All teachers had at least one good lesson and eleven had sessions judged very good.

Throughout, obvious strengths in teaching are in literacy and numeracy (as a result of good planning), the quality of relationships, teachers' questioning, pupil management, and when work is set for different ability levels. Teaching and support for special educational needs is good resulting in pupils achieving well. Learning support assistants make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching. Aspects which even in this good profile could be improved are in science (further developing experimental and investigational skills), improving the pace of some lessons, planning even more carefully to identify learning objectives and to ensure that skills build systematically on those already learned, as well as making better use of time. Successful monitoring of teaching in literacy and numeracy is resulting in improving standards and this is a good role model for developments in other subjects. However, the absence of an up to date staff handbook negatively affects how new teachers are inducted.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good and much improved provision for the Foundation Stage. A satisfactory curriculum for Years 1 to 6, broad and relevant. The balance of the curriculum over the year is satisfactory, but some extended gaps between blocks of time spent on some subjects negatively affect progress. Some elements of ICT and art and design are underemphasised.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: needs are identified early and well supported through individual education plans. Learning support assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good: such pupils are fully included in all activities and achieve well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good: especially in spiritual, moral and social provision. The school does very well to support pupils' personal development. Cultural opportunities are satisfactory including provision to promote pupils' multicultural awareness.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good levels of physical care. Assessment procedures, and the use of data, are in need of improvement other than in literacy and numeracy, to measure standards, gauge progress and set targets.

Although some parents disagree, most have positive views about how well the school works with them. Links between home and school are judged good overall.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Sound overall: with good features in the leadership of the head. More to do to improve the effectiveness of management of subject co-ordinators using the good models already established for literacy and numeracy.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good: governors give very good support and have a good awareness of strengths and weaknesses. Very good involvement in financial and building matters.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory, recently much improved following some gaps which were the result of staff change and illness. The school's development plan priorities already take note of most of the issues raised by this inspection.
The strategic use of resources	Good: all funds are used efficiently and effectively and are well monitored by the head, governors and administrative officer. Best value principles are used effectively.

Staffing problems over the past two years have been difficult to manage and have had negative effects. These appear now to have been overcome. The building is clean and well maintained, with the premises manager making a significant contribution. There have been considerable improvements to accommodation and resources since the last inspection. However, the lack of an ICT suite restricts teaching and learning. Currently the school gives satisfactory value for money. This is lower than in the last inspection and reflects the apparent decline in standards.

## 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>• Children like school.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school is approachable.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Expectations are high.</li> <li>• Children are helped to become mature.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extracurricular activities.</li> <li>• Homework: too much or too little.</li> <li>• Some aspects of management.</li> <li>• Music provision.</li> <li>• How the school works with parents.</li> <li>• Information about pupils' progress.</li> </ul>

The large majority of parents think the school is approachable, but a minority would not find it easy to come with a problem or a suggestion. Inspectors find that communications are generally good and that the school is working to make this even better by making more use of assessment to report to parents. Following a difficult period, the management of the school is back on track. Homework is considered at least satisfactory, and for older pupils good. Music provision is good for the fifty or so pupils who learn instruments and satisfactory overall as part of the curriculum. Extracurricular activities are judged good for pupils in Years 3 to 6, and, consistent with the majority of other schools, satisfactory for Years 1 and 2.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Results of 2002 National Curriculum assessments for Year 2 pupils showed the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2, the expected level, to be very high in reading, writing and mathematics. At the higher Level 3, results were still very good in reading and mathematics, but average for writing. Results of the comparisons were the same when looking at similar schools. Results have fluctuated over the past few years, but all subjects showed a good rise in 2002.

2. Results of 2002 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils showed the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4, the expected level, in English, to be in line with the national average. In science, the percentage was below the national average, and in mathematics, it was well below. When compared with the performance of similar schools English was average, science below average and mathematics well below average. This was particularly disappointing when compared with this year group's performance at the end of Year 2, when they were well above the national average in all subjects. There have been fluctuations over the past few years, but results show a decline over the last two years.

3. There are several factors influencing the school's end of Year 6 results in 2002. Firstly, there was a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in this year group. Secondly, the school had had considerable difficulty with staffing which affected pupils in Years 3 to 6 for some time. For example, there were long term sick leaves, a maternity leave, a job share, and a teacher exchange, all of which undermined the continuity of education and the confidence of pupils. These had detrimental effects on pupils' progress. Fortunately, the school now has a more settled staffing situation, and these problems are likely to be historical. However, there is evidence of pupils having underachieved in the last Year 6. Another contributory factor when comparing pupils' achievements with their performance in Year 2 is the now stricter administration of tests. The school has well founded and convincing evidence to show that pupils have made progress, albeit not at the rate the school would have wished.

4. Targets are set in conjunction with the local education authority for attainment in English and mathematics for Year 6. In 2002 these were missed by 8 per cent in English and by 19 per cent in mathematics, largely due to the factors described above. Targets for 2003 are equally challenging and the school is not at present on course to meet them. Results in English and mathematics are analysed carefully and future work is geared to eradicate weaknesses, but this does not yet happen in science. Individual targets are set for pupils, and those who are not making sufficient progress towards them are identified for extra help.

5. Children in the Foundation Stage usually achieve the expected Early Learning Goals before joining Year 1. This is the result of good learning in reception. Standards of work of Year 2 pupils seen during the inspection are above average in reading, writing and religious education. This is good progress in writing, and is as a result of the school's focus on what was an area of relative weakness. In mathematics, where the school has placed particular emphasis on numeracy, standards are well above average. This indicates that pupils are achieving well. In all other subjects, pupils are achieving in line with national expectations for their age.

6. Standards of work of Year 6 pupils seen during the inspection were broadly average in mathematics, but below average in English and science. The high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in this year group, together with the factors mentioned above,

contribute to the reasons for this judgement. In English good attention to speaking and listening skills enables pupils to meet expectations in this area, and reading skills are developed appropriately in English lessons and through the use of the library. Although the focus on writing is having a beneficial effect on pupils' writing skills, these remain below expectations for pupils of their age. In science, the staffing difficulties mentioned earlier have caused gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. This, together with insufficient attention to investigative science, means that standards are below average. Work is in hand to remedy this, but improvements in results may not be immediate.

7. In art and design and in ICT, pupils' attainment is below expectation. In art and design, it is because not all the required elements are covered in sufficient depth. In ICT, current work undertaken is satisfactory, but recent changes in requirements and staff changes have meant that there are gaps in the work covered. The school is aware of this situation, and is making the necessary amendments to the curriculum. In all other subjects, pupils are achieving in line with national expectations for pupils of their age.

8. Since the previous inspection the national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills have been effectively implemented and are having a positive effect on standards, particularly for numeracy. The system of setting for English and mathematics enables appropriate work to be set for pupils of all abilities, and usually ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are suitably challenged. In observed lessons, pupils were often working at full stretch and constantly engaged, enabling them to make as much progress as possible. However, this has not always happened in the past, leading to some underachievement, and standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection. Good use is made of literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, in science, numeracy skills are used when observing, measuring and recording results of experiments, and literacy skills are then used when writing about what has happened and what conclusions can be drawn. Information and communication technology skills are being developed in other subjects, but this aspect is still underdeveloped.

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

9. Pupils have very good attitudes towards their school, and generally good attitudes towards learning. They enter school in an orderly fashion, and quickly settle down to whatever activities are usual for the start of the day without needing any direction to do so. Most are enthusiastic about learning, expect to find their lessons interesting, and are always willing to contribute their own ideas and suggestions. The prompt start to the day and sensible behaviour between lessons are an aid to good learning. Pupils move about the school sensibly and purposefully. They are proud of their school, particularly of the attractive grounds, and are friendly and welcoming towards visitors. The inspection team were particularly impressed with pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils listen attentively and concentrate well for long periods on the tasks they are given, needing very little supervision from adults. Pupils work well together whether in groups or pairs, and show no hesitation about working with pupils of the opposite gender. Classrooms are noticeably quiet during lessons.

10. Behaviour is very good, an improvement from the last inspection. There have been no exclusions in the last year. Behaviour in class was graded good or better in three-quarters of the lessons observed during the inspection. No unsatisfactory behaviour was observed in or out of class. Pupils move quietly and sensibly around the school: they hold doors open and are always keen to see if they can help visitors in any way. Lunchtimes are happy well ordered occasions. Behaviour in assembly is outstandingly good: although it takes some time for the whole school to enter, pupils remain quiet and attentive, cheerfully joining in singing or other activities. The school has received many favourable comments on pupils' behaviour during offsite visits. Pupils play well together, and different ages and sexes mix happily. However, some of those whose class was not on the rota to have playground equipment said

they were bored. All pupils are instantly still and silent when staff on duty blow the whistle, and quietly line up to return inside.

11. Personal development is good overall, an improvement from the last inspection. Relationships, both amongst pupils themselves, and between adults and children, are generally very good, sometimes excellent and never less than good. Pupils know they can rely on the adults in the school community to listen to them courteously and treat their comments with respect. They are keen to help each other, both informally and formally. Children look after each other in the playground, and work together well in the classroom. They show a good level of respect for feelings, values and beliefs, and of understanding of the impact of their actions on others. Parents are pleased with the values their children have developed at school: "My children have a huge sense of right and wrong from this school." At the school council meeting, which took place during the inspection, it was clear that pupils are still unsure about the roles they should be playing, and much guidance was provided by staff. Most had very little to say or to report back from their classes. It is clear from the reports given at the council of the persistent wasting of resources and mess making in the toilets that some pupils have yet to develop an adequate sense of responsibility towards their environment. Pupils carry out responsibilities given to them in class competently, and older pupils set out and clear up after assemblies without supervision. Pupils have organised Blue Peter sales and have produced a school newsletter on events and activities with some help from staff. However, as at the time of the last inspection pupils have only limited opportunities in lessons (particularly in science) to display initiative and become independent learners. They have little awareness of their own progress in learning apart from the comments they contribute to their annual reports.

12. Attendance is good, as at the last inspection. Attendance in 2001 - 2002 was above national averages (94.9 per cent as against 94.1); unauthorised absence was above and authorised absence was below average (4 per cent as against 5.4). The vast majority of pupils arrive promptly for school and move purposefully around the school, although some time is lost when pupils change classes for sets.

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

13. The overall profile of teaching is (as 96 per cent of parents in the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaire reported) good. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning which as a consequence is good. With 21 per cent very good or better lessons in this inspection compared with 14 per cent last time, the quality of teaching has improved.

14. During the inspection all teachers were observed unannounced on a variety of occasions and across a range of subjects. All but one of the 90 lessons seen were at least satisfactory with almost three quarters good or better. One in five lessons were very good and two (a Year 1 and 2 literacy session and a Year 1 and 2 numeracy session) were excellent. All teachers had at least one good lesson, eleven very good and two excellent.

15. Teaching for those children in the Foundation Stage in reception was consistently good. This constitutes very good improvement. Staff give reception children a good start to their education and make good use of space inside and out, as well as providing good opportunities to work towards the Early Learning Goals recommended nationally for this age group.

16. Strengths in teaching throughout the school include:

- Very good relationships which provide an atmosphere of trust where pupils know they will be listened to and are not afraid to make mistakes;
- Good questioning which encourages pupils to think and reason before they answer in full sentences, expressing their opinions and preferences;

- Literacy and numeracy teaching which benefit from good planning and good support from co-ordinators who monitor their subjects effectively;
- Setting, whereby pupils of similar abilities are taught together both in class and table groups.

17. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and are well taught in withdrawal groups and as part of classes or sets. Learning support assistants make a strong contribution to the quality of teaching, making good use of in-service training and the example of teachers to help pupils progress. The very small proportion of pupils with English as an additional language makes very good progress.

18. Although there is still more for co-ordinators to do to observe and evaluate the quality of teaching in their subjects, good monitoring of the effectiveness of teaching, recently redeveloped by head and governors, is having positive effects on pupils' learning: for example in Year R. With many staff changes since the last inspection (particularly for Years 3 and 4 over the most recent year) maintaining the quality of teaching has not been easy. Standards have suffered: for example Year 6 results in National Curriculum assessments declined over a two year period and may not recover in 2003. The good quality of teaching evident in the comprehensive set of observations from this inspection shows that the school is set fair to make improvements.

19. Areas for improvement even in this good overall profile of teaching are in:

- Further developing science teaching: for example in more experimental and investigative work;
- Improving the pace of some lessons to make better use of time: for example to avoid mathematics and science sessions being overlong (some observed lessons for Years 3 and 4 were scheduled to last for one and a half hours);
- Ensuring that short term planning clearly builds on work already covered, and that learning objectives are always identified and well communicated to pupils at the start of lessons. The school is aware that planning for some subjects is incomplete, or in need of updating to reflect new initiatives. Most subject co-ordinators have recently produced action plans as a basis of future development.
- Completing and introducing a staff handbook to support new and temporary teachers; not only in terms of daily routines, but to take account of subject policy and planning;
- Making yet more use of ICT across the curriculum;
- Developing the quality of marking and the use of ongoing assessment, taking advantage of examples of good practice already in the school.

20. Throughout the school, teachers manage pupils very effectively with very positive effects on pupils' personal development. This represents very good progress since the last report where this aspect was considered a weakness.

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

21. The school offers its pupils a curriculum of appropriate breadth, balance and relevance. The quality and range of learning opportunities in the Foundation Stage are good. The curriculum generally meets statutory requirements, including the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, with the exception of aspects of provision in art and design and ICT mentioned elsewhere in the report.

22. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is balanced over the course of the year, and is appropriate. However, allocation of time to some components of the National Curriculum, and the planning to support this, is complicated, unwieldy and not fully understood by some staff.

This, coupled with some time being lost with pupils moving to and from sets for mathematics and English lessons means that best use of time is not always being made. The school has recognised this in its development plan, which indicates that it will undertake a review of this aspect of curriculum provision. Many policies to support the curriculum are new or in draft form. When the governing body have agreed all policies, their full implementation should ensure that all elements of the curriculum are covered in sufficient depth and in a more consistent manner. Appropriate progression from previous learning could be improved by applying a more rigorous system of assessment including a more effective marking policy. Similarly schemes of work need to be more rigorously defined to ensure that they support more detailed planning for day-to-day delivery of the curriculum, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics. The overall structure of the curriculum currently lacks cohesion, and in some subjects continuity. This has contributed to the decline in standards evident in some subjects over the last two years.

23. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills throughout the school however is good. Provision is good and the school has successfully implemented both strategies. Pupils are carefully assessed in these subjects and assessment is used to inform future planning. Planning for lessons is good and provides structure and work for pupils of differing abilities. Pupils are grouped in ability sets for these subjects and teaching therein is effectively managed. Opportunities for practising skills acquired in lessons are more noticeable in extending literacy in other areas of the curriculum than in numeracy. Effective 'booster' classes are arranged for pupils to achieve higher standards in standard assessment tasks. Policies and schemes of work for numeracy and literacy ensure, more fully than those in other subjects, that the elements of subjects are covered in depth and progress is made in pupils' knowledge and understanding.

24. Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the fully inclusive ethos of the school ensures all pupils have very good equality of opportunity. Individual education plans are appropriate, reviewed properly and class teachers give good support to all pupils. Learning support assistants are generally well used to enhance this support. The curriculum is designed to enable pupils of all abilities and backgrounds to have equal access and this is very successful, a significant improvement since the last report. All pupils are fully included in the curriculum regardless of ability, race, gender or physical capacity. The stairs leading to the first floor unit may present some difficulty in the future if wheelchair access is to be considered.

25. The school provides a good range of extracurricular activities for Years 3 to 6 and a satisfactory range for those in Years 1 and 2. This includes a number of visits to broaden provision, and games clubs (rugby being especially strong), chess, mathematics club for able pupils, recorder groups, and a choir. Some of these clubs have been by invitation and the French club, for example, is provided by an outside organisation. Access to clubs for younger pupils is more restricted and the school is reviewing current practice with this fact in mind. Parental concerns (35 per cent of those returning the Ofsted questionnaire) may reflect this restricted opportunity for younger pupils as well as the assumption that various clubs offer a limited number of spaces.

26. The school provision for personal, social and health education is good. The governing body have approved and publicised their sex education and drug education policies. Health education is effectively taught. Pupils were considering how to maintain healthy teeth at the time of inspection and many were observed revealing good knowledge of this in circle time<sup>5</sup>. Lessons for personal, social and health education have been used, at present, for the development of a school council; but are due for reinstatement soon. The school has very good links with the local community, many members of which support the school in practical

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<sup>5</sup> In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle and through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other talking about issues, which touch them all.

ways. Members of the local clergy assist with assemblies, local sports teams and drama groups provide expertise. Friends of the school provide fun evenings. The school has effective links with partner institutions fully involving itself with other primary schools to liaise with the local secondary schools which the majority of pupils will attend. It participates in inter-school sporting events, the most notable recent success being victory in a tag rugby tournament.

27. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall and has improved since the last inspection. The school's values continue to be underpinned by its strong Christian ethos and the school has retained its 'family atmosphere and caring approach' despite the increase in the number of pupils attending the school, and throughout many staff changes.

28. The school's positive attitude and tone make a significant contribution to the development of pupils' attitudes and values. The buildings are well cared for and there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere. The displays around the school are attractive and of good quality and promote positive messages. They reflect a range of work from pupils of all ages and include a 'good work' board and information and photographs of community and extracurricular activities.

29. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. It is carefully nurtured in assemblies and in the opportunities for prayer and reflection planned into the daily acts of collective worship. There is a good rapport established between pupils and teachers and both readily share personal experiences. The vicar and other local clergy make valuable contributions to the life of the school through their regular participation in school worship. However, the school should do more to reduce the number of interruptions during class assemblies as these detract from the otherwise calm and worshipful atmosphere created during this time.

30. The spiritual development of pupils is further enhanced by planned activities in the formal curriculum. For example, reception children went for a walk around the school to look for new life and were delighted at finding tadpoles and newts in the pond and blossom on the trees. Having listened to the story about Badger's Parting Gift, which deals sensitively with the subject of death, younger pupils worked in small groups to discuss and share their experiences about loss. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 listened to Orinoco Flow by Enya and Die Moldau by Smetana when learning about rivers, and wrote about the feelings and imagery created by the music.

31. Opportunities to promote pupils' moral development are very good. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is of a high standard and makes a significant contribution to the good quality teaching and learning observed in nearly three quarters of lessons. The school's code of behaviour is prominently displayed and pupils, including reception children, negotiate their own classroom rules each half term. Parents are pleased by the standards of behaviour achieved.

32. Staff and visitors to the school provide positive role models and all individuals are equally valued for the contribution they make to the school community. Teachers plan for opportunities for pupils to discuss moral issues within lessons and assemblies. Years 5 and 6 pupils confidently discussed what is meant by being 'well off' in a personal, social and health education lesson on children's rights, whilst pupils in Years 1 and 2 were able to compare the rules of the Victorian classroom with those of today.

33. Pupils' social development opportunities are very good. Pupils move sensibly around the school and exhibit good manners and friendly relationships. They play well together at break and lunchtimes using a range of play equipment, which they treat with respect. They co-operate well in lessons. In a Years 5 and 6 art and design lesson pupils collaborated well

in small groups to create their own Aboriginal images. They were able to share ideas, plan their design and organise tasks and equipment in a mature and sensible manner.

34. The recently formed school council provides pupils with the opportunity to learn about the democratic process. The meeting observed during the inspection had a formal structure with a Year 3 pupil taking the chair, votes being cast and decisions recorded. The headteacher and premises manager were invited to attend and were questioned about reintroducing afternoon breaks and the use of toilets. Views were clearly expressed, pupils listened to each other very courteously and older pupils were very supportive of younger children.

35. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. Aspects of religious education, art, geography, history and music contribute to pupils' cultural development: for example the assembly theme linked to Mothering Sunday, work on the Paschal candle and visits to places of interest such as Highclere Castle and Hampton Court. The use of Victorian artefacts and the competition to design the stained glass window planned for the school hall all enrich pupils' experiences.

36. The school is aware of the importance of preparing pupils for life in a culturally diverse society. Since the last inspection the school has taken steps to provide pupils with greater access to other cultures. The school has purchased a range of good quality books with a multicultural element to restock the library and to be used in whole class and group reading sessions. In a Years 3 and 4 class assembly pupils listened to poems from Western and developing countries to reflect on the role of mothers. Photographs of children from Third World countries helped older pupils to discuss the expectations of children living in different cultures. Years 5 and 6 pupils learnt about Aboriginal art and discussed thoughtfully the techniques used by the artists and the meaning of the paintings. African music played as pupils entered assemblies and teaching about other faiths provide rich opportunities to enhance appreciation of pupils' own culture and respect for others' beliefs and values.

37. Overall the school provides rich experiences to support pupils' personal development but there is no documentation (for example in a staff handbook) to ensure that opportunities are consistently planned in all classes. The school has no formal monitoring of how well it is doing.

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

38. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are very good. The child protection policy follows local authority guidelines, and the school has good links with outside agencies. The headteacher is the child protection liaison officer, and has undertaken both basic training and update courses. He briefs all new members of staff on appropriate procedures, and updates the school's documentation whenever necessary. The head is to hold a whole staff training session during the next academic year. The school has a detailed health and safety policy and a separate security policy, which outline everyone's responsibilities and cover topics as diverse as computer data safety, lone working and trespassing. A policy on offsite visits gives guidance on health and safety issues. Governors carry out a risk assessment of the whole site annually, using a local authority checklist. Any hazards noted are then followed up at meetings of the governors' premises committee. A fire risk assessment was carried out after the construction of the new extension. All electrical items and physical education equipment are checked for safety annually by approved contractors. The school holds fire drills regularly at different times of day. All visitors have to sign in and anyone who helps regularly in school has been police checked. Pupils are always supervised by appropriate numbers of adults.

39. There is a dedicated medical room and prescription medicines are locked away. Owing to staff changes, there is currently only one fully qualified first aider, although a staff member

is undertaking training. Staff have had a basic one day training and lunchtime staff all carry first aid supplies. All first aid given is recorded. Pupils with long term medical problems such as allergies are clearly identified to staff, who have been trained in the administration of epipens, anapens, and diazepam. There have been virtually no problems with vandalism or intruders. No aspects of the school posed obvious health and safety hazards.

40. Procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour, and monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour, are very good, an improvement from the last inspection. Teaching staff need to spend very little time dealing with discipline issues in class. There are no raised voices, and pupils are treated with great courtesy and respect. The rewards and sanctions system is clear and consistently applied. Staff were consulted when the behaviour policy was reviewed, and lunchtime supervisors are regularly consulted and supported over behaviour issues. Pupils devise their own class rules every half term. The school ensures that parents are made aware of any behaviour problems at an early stage, as are other staff. Staff provide very good role models for pupils by their team spirit and courtesy. Careful records are kept if a child's behaviour begins to cause concern, and if necessary a plan is drawn up in consultation with the child and their parents to help him or her improve their behaviour. There are clear strategies for dealing with bullying. A range of playground toys is provided, at present on a rota system for different age groups each day, and there is an adventure trail for younger pupils.

41. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Registration is carried out correctly and registers fulfil statutory requirements. Class teachers are expected to do their own monitoring of patterns of attendance and to inform the headteacher of any unusual patterns or discrepancies. He will monitor attendance himself when alerted by a teacher or when the education welfare officer visits (about every six weeks). Most parents are very good at letting the school know if a child is going to be absent: the school office checks any unexplained absences on the first day. Late arrivals have to come to the office and sign in: other doors are locked after the start of school. Attendance and punctuality are strongly promoted to parents through the prospectus and newsletters. Pupils taken out for medical visits are signed in and out by a parent.

42. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Pupils are given a clear understanding of right and wrong by their teachers, and are treated with courtesy, affection and consideration. At present the school has no consistent system which would allow pupils to talk about their personal development and their feelings to teachers, although in some classes there are arrangements whereby pupils can discreetly indicate that they would like a private word. It is hoped to restart the informal counselling system which an ex-member of staff offered in the past. Occasional use is made of circle time sessions. The school has a scheme of work for personal, social, health and citizenship education, but the co-ordinator has no opportunity to monitor teaching, and staff have had no training in its delivery. No evidence was seen during the inspection of opportunities for pupils to debate moral issues, such as bullying. Teachers prepare a transfer document when pupils move to another class, which sometimes mentions personal information. However, these are only for the benefit of the next teacher, and there is no formal system for monitoring and recording pupils' personal development except in the reception classes. In the autumn term pupils learnt about the role of a school council, and this term councillors have been elected and have met twice. There are class councils as well, with separate councillors. Older pupils are responsible for setting out the hall for assembly, and dealing with the playground toys. Pupils are encouraged to get involved with the school's fundraising activities for national and local charities. A range of awards for achievement in work and sport are given every week and a range of work is displayed on the 'good work' wall.

43. Since the last inspection, insufficient attention has been given to developing procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Currently, there are no systematic, agreed procedures for assessment and record keeping in any subject other than English and

mathematics. It is therefore a complex task to track what pupils know, understand and can do in all other subjects. Consequently teachers often lack important information necessary for planning appropriate work in order to raise levels of attainment. Whilst a number of teachers undertake informal evaluation of pupil performance as compared with National Curriculum levels of attainment, this is not always the case for all staff, or for all subjects. The school has identified the need to address the situation through the provision of a school assessment policy that is to incorporate assessment procedures for all subjects.

44. In addition to end of year assessments in English and mathematics, pupils are assessed termly for reading and writing. These assessments enable staff to monitor and support pupils' progress as they move through the school. Data from statutory assessments is used to good advantage to determine curriculum modification in English and mathematics, but not as yet effectively in science. At its best assessment is used to set targets for pupils' learning and raise standards.

45. Procedures for initial assessment of children's attainment on entry to reception are currently based on local authority procedures. Information gained from such assessments is used well to guide subsequent planning and teaching. The school has good procedures to identify, assess and monitor pupils with special educational needs. Although staff give pupils good oral feedback and encouragement during lessons, the equality of written marking is inconsistent. Whilst it is often constructive and sensitive, all too often pupils are not given sufficiently clear information as to what they must do to improve. Again, the provision of an agreed, whole school policy as part of a school handbook would go a long way to addressing this situation.

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

46. The involvement of parents has a good impact on the work of the school, not least through the significant number of parents on the governing body. The parents' association is a hardworking organisation which raised the impressive total of £7,000 to pay for the adventure trail for younger pupils, as well as fundraising for other items. It aims to be a social as well as a fundraising organisation for pupils and parents. Parents are always willing to help with school trips and swimming lessons, and special events like Book Week and sports day. Some regularly run a secondhand uniform shop, while others will be helping with cycling proficiency training. A parent who is a landscape gardener designed the new terrace planting scheme. About twelve parents regularly help in school with reading, cookery and sewing activities.

47. The school has good, effective links with parents, as at the time of the last inspection. It always encourages parents to get involved in its activities. Its open door policy means that teachers are readily accessible at the end of school, and the headteacher can be seen at short notice. The school office staff provide a friendly and efficient 'public face' for the school. Parents are welcome to attend the weekly celebration assemblies, and are told in advance if their child will receive an award. Parents are invited to the nativity service and other special events, such as the pantomime staged last year. A very successful curriculum evening on mathematics was held recently and parents are keen for similar events. The reception teacher holds regular story and song sessions for new entrants before they start school, and has close links with the feeder playgroup. The school has two consultation evenings a year, and provides a crèche for younger siblings. An open evening is held in the summer when parents can see displays of work. The school has begun to make use of questionnaires to parents to get a clearer idea of their views on important issues. Parents are encouraged to get involved with the school and come in to help: for instance the curriculum information sent out at the start of each term has a tear-off slip -- 'I would be willing to help in school'. A coffee morning is held to thank those who come in to school to help.

48. The quality of information for parents is good overall. However, although the governors' annual report has been combined with the prospectus, which is legally acceptable, it does not include information about the implementation of the special needs policy during the past year; and the progress made since the last Ofsted inspection. Nevertheless, the prospectus gives parents a clear picture of the school. Newsletters give parents full details of forthcoming and past events. They are attractively designed and make good use of photographs. Parents who miss the governors' annual meeting are sent full details. Information on the curriculum is sent out at the start of each term. The main report on pupil progress is issued to parents towards the end of the spring term: a shorter version is sent out towards the end of the summer term. Both reports include an evaluation by the child ('where have I improved most', 'what I enjoyed most', 'what I'd like to improve'). Scores are given for attainment and effort in all subjects. Targets are given for literacy and numeracy, but sometimes in language which obscures the meaning: for example 'to secure the skills of solving division problems including those that give rise to a remainder'. Parents are usually asked to help by 'continuing to support homework' which may not be specific enough. In other instances instructions are confusing, for instance 'ask your child to divide items into sets and record how many complete sets and how many were left over'. Comments on progress in English and mathematics are written by the teacher of that child's ability set. However, a minority of parents find it frustrating not to have the opportunity to speak to these teachers at parents' evenings.

49. Parents make a good contribution to children's learning at school and at home. Virtually all parents come to parent consultation evenings, and a good proportion attend other school information events. The overwhelming majority of parents provide their children with appropriate facilities and support for their homework. Virtually all homework set gets done. Parents respond enthusiastically when they are asked to help with homework, as a fine display of 'Egyptian' items demonstrated during the inspection. The school had a special task for parents in the autumn term in 2002 when they were asked to help with 'VE Day celebrations' by making up an evacuee's bag, providing a costume, and food cooked to wartime recipes. The majority of parents, particularly in lower age groups, hear children read regularly. The attendance rate is good: few families take holidays in term time.

50. Overall parents have satisfactory views of the school. A third of the parent body returned questionnaires to the registered inspector. The majority of parents felt the school had high expectations of its pupils, that teaching and behaviour were good, that the school helped children to become more mature, and that pupils made good progress. However, over a third of those who replied were dissatisfied with the extracurricular provision and 21 per cent were critical of the school's provision for parent partnership, information for parents, and arrangements for homework. At the meetings for parents held before and during the inspection, those present were satisfied with the academic standards pupils attained and felt children's behaviour was very good. Parents wanted more creative opportunities for children in art and drama, and most particularly in music, both in class and from the peripatetic music service. They were critical of the classrooms used by older children – 'cramped and hot'. A minority of parents expressed their views strongly that they sometimes found senior managers defensive and that they could not readily discuss concerns or suggestions.

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

51. The last inspection soon after the head was appointed gave a positive message about the school's new found direction and the quality of planning for development. It is clear that this continued following the inspection and succeeded in taking the school forward. In the interim time between inspections the school went through a period of uncertainty in staffing which negatively affected its momentum. At the same time there was a decline in standards achieved by Year 6 pupils, with some of them underachieving when compared with their own previous performance when in Year 2. Factors which contributed to this trend included:

- High staff turnover for a mixture of promotion, retirement and family relocation. Ten staff out of fourteen are new since the last inspection and nine of these were appointed in the last two years;
- Prolonged staff illness;
- Staff family serious illness.

52. These factors resulted in planning not being as up to date or complete as it would have been and a lack of the use of information gained as part of assessment. Both of these elements led to some loss of continuity especially in work for Years 3 to 6. Most subject managers are only recently in post and some of their initiatives have yet to take effect. Three teachers are in their first year of teaching and cannot carry responsibility. This has meant that some staff (including the head) cover a variety of subjects and aspects.

53. The school is very aware of the need to improve aspects of subject management in order to raise standards. Some planning is incomplete: for example in art and design, and does not always build on what pupils already know. Coupled with a lack of assessment and its analysis, (with the notable exceptions of English and mathematics) this sometimes leads to work covered in insufficient depth and managers not having enough information to predict pupils' performance.

54. Currently the monitoring of the quality of teaching is successfully managed by the head and the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators. As a result teaching is now good overall with particular strengths in English and mathematics and is beginning to have positive effects on standards. However such monitoring as part of the management role of managers in other subjects has not yet guaranteed coverage, nor that expectations have been high enough. Although staff plan effectively in teams based on their year teams, there is a wide variation in ways in which planning is presented; for example documentation and timetables in different styles and the lack of a staff handbook make it difficult for managers to track activities, and for new staff to appreciate what pupils have yet to cover.

55. Some aspects of time management restrict learning: for example some mathematics and science lessons for Years 3 and 4 are scheduled for an hour and a half and in some cases more, making it difficult especially for less able pupils to sustain learning. Long gaps between blocks of time when some subjects are taught over the year appear to have affected standards: for example science has not been taught every week to some year groups. Some activities observed in physical education did not make the best use of time, such as bench ball games twice a week for those not timetabled to go swimming, and are not best suited to the learning objectives identified in planning. In some lessons observed during the inspection which were satisfactory (and in the only one judged unsatisfactory) slow pace had a negative impact on learning. In each of these time-related issues, more rigorous monitoring by subject managers would improve the situation.

56. The overall management of the school is currently judged satisfactory and is improving with redefined educational direction and a strong commitment to raising standards. As a result of the good leadership of the head and the positive contribution of governors, there is a good development plan for the school. This clearly identifies priorities for improvement and is effectively costed. Finances are managed well and are targeted at educational needs. All funds are used for designated purposes and spent wisely with due consideration of the principles of best value. Office staff make a positive contribution to day to day financial management and control. The most recent audit carried out by local education authority representatives raised few issues for improvement and was complimentary about efficiency. Governors are very successfully involved in finance and building matters and have managed considerable improvements to accommodation very effectively within budget.

57. Provision for special educational needs and for the very small number of pupils with English as an additional language is good. Pupils make good, and in some cases very good, progress as a result and respond well to extra help.

58. The last report found that the school gave 'good value' for money. Since that time the school has gone through a difficult period when standards at the end of Year 6 declined. This inspection judges that currently the school represents satisfactory value for money. It takes into account the overall quality of provision (not least of which is good teaching), pupils' very good personal development, and the standards achieved. Inspectors see this as an improving situation with the school trying hard to return to its previously good status.

59. The school has an appropriate number of teaching staff who are suitably qualified to deliver the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, their deployment does not effectively match their areas of expertise or experience in some instances. Staff with areas of responsibility not matching their qualifications overcome this with appropriate training, the continuation of which will enhance provision. Teaching staff are appropriately qualified for the age of pupils whom they teach. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching and other staff.

60. Other school staff are of appropriate numbers and are effectively deployed. All staff have the support of performance management and appraisal opportunities. Clerical staff are valued and ensure the smooth, efficient running of the school. Lunchtime assistants look after pupils well. The premises manager is a highly valued and an effective member of the school community assisted by an appropriate team of cleaners.

61. Governors effectively support the headteacher in staffing matters with the chair of personnel involved in construction of job descriptions and being present or represented on appointment committees.

62. Since the last inspection the turnover of staff has been high. Four of these changes were in the last year with three teachers replaced by newly qualified staff. Inspectors have investigated reasons for staff leaving and find that the turnover has been the result of promotion, family relocation and illness.

63. The accommodation is adequate overall. The external accommodation is very good. The school is situated in beautiful and extensive grounds sloping down to the River Test. During the past two years the premises manager has worked hard to develop the grounds by tree surgery, clearing brambles and undergrowth, planting and landscaping. A small lawned amphitheatre and an outside classroom have been created as well as an attractive new terraced area. The premises manager is currently building a rockery and waterfall feature by the main entrance and plans to create a bog garden and new pond area. There are two hard surfaced playgrounds with an adventure trail for younger pupils, as well as a separate outside play area for those in reception. At the last inspection the site was being used as a short cut, with consequent dog fouling and litter problems. Improved security has eliminated these difficulties. The grounds are well kept and immaculately tidy. The school building was mainly constructed in the 1970s, with a new four class extension added since the last inspection. It is in good condition: various windows and doors have recently been replaced because of rotting, and asbestos has been removed since the last inspection. The flat roof has needed some repairs but is basically sound.

64. Much maintenance and repair work is carried out by the premises manager with consequent savings to the school. The hall is adequate for the numbers on roll. The new reception area built since the last inspection is attractive and has made it possible to improve security arrangements. Storage space is adequate. As the building has two storeys wheelchair access would be difficult. Despite the best efforts of the cleaning staff, the quantity and quality of the pupil toilets are barely adequate for the numbers on roll, a problem

exacerbated by the inconsiderate behaviour of some pupils. The classrooms used for pupils in Years 3 to 6, particularly those on the upper floor, significantly handicap teachers in the delivery of the curriculum because they become extremely hot and are poorly ventilated. They are very cramped when pupils in Years 5 and 6 are working in classes of thirty or more. The school has no separate, designated accommodation for ICT and this restricts the subject's teaching and pupils' progress, especially between Years 3 and 6. Governors and head are looking at ways to overcome this.

65. The last report identified a number of gaps in the provision of resources. Increased spending in this area has led to good improvement, and resources are now good in English, mathematics, design and technology, music, physical education, the library, the Foundation Stage, and for pupils with special educational needs. There are some issues concerning resources for Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 in geography, and in religious education where there are insufficient artefacts to enable classes to cover the same topics at the same time.

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

66. In order to improve the school further governors, headteacher and staff should:

- **Raise** standards still further in English, mathematics and science as measured in National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds to avoid the possibility of underachievement.

Paragraphs: 2, 3, 4, 6, 11, 18, 52, 53, 58, 79, 83, 88, 97, 99, 102.

- **Develop**, as already intended, the roles of senior and subject managers using the good models now established in English and mathematics to:
  - Make more use of assessment to evaluate and improve standards, gauge progress, predict pupils' performances, set targets and, where needed, modify planning;
  - Complete policies and planning to ensure that all required elements of the curriculum are covered in sufficient depth and that skills build progressively on pupils' previous learning;
  - Monitor the quality of teaching and learning;
  - Work with other managers towards a more uniform presentation of planning and timetables.

Paragraphs: 18, 19, 22, 43, 45, 52, 53, 54, 55, 97, 102, 109, 110, 114, 115, 121, 130, 138, 141, 142, 143, 147, 154, 155.

- **Improve** the use of time to confirm that:
  - Lessons are not overlong, and are all well paced;
  - Gaps between subjects taught in blocks are not so extended as to affect pupils' progress negatively;
  - Activities planned make the best use of time available.

Paragraphs: 12, 19, 22, 55, 97, 103, 125, 130, 141, 143, 146.

The following minor issues should be considered for inclusion in the governors' action plan:

- Developing planning, facilities and resources to raise standards in ICT, making yet more use of skills to support other curriculum areas, and allocating more time to teaching ICT as a subject in its own right.

Paragraphs: 7, 19, 21, 64, 91, 95, 102, 111, 130, 132, 135, 137, 142.

- Confirming school policy and practice for marking to develop greater accuracy and consistency, and to highlight how pupils can make improvements.

Paragraphs: 19, 45, 92, 102, 120, 129.

- Completing a staff handbook to guide staff and induct teachers new to the school in routines, policies and procedures.

Paragraphs: 19, 22, 37, 45, 54, 92.

- Ensuring that requirements for art and design are fully met, notably in terms of increasing the amount of three-dimensional work, working in the style of other artists, and appreciation of art.

Paragraphs: 7, 21, 104, 107, 110, 111.

- Improving, as intended, the quality of ventilation in upstairs classrooms.

Paragraphs: 50, 64.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	90
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	17	47	24	1	0	0
Percentage	2	19	52	27	1	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Due to rounding percentages do not total 100.

### 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)	342
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	78

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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	19	26	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	19
	Girls	26	26	26
	Total	45	45	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (83)	100 (85)	100 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	19
	Girls	26	26	26
	Total	45	45	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (83)	100 (88)	100 (88)
	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	30	30	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	19	27
	Girls	24	19	25
	Total	44	38	52
Percentage of pupils	School	73 (84)	63 (81)	87 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	25	23
	Girls	22	23	26
	Total	40	48	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (81)	80 (77)	82 (84)
	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**

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	333	0	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.4
Average class size	28.5

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

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	195

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001 – 2002
	£
Total income	665485
Total expenditure	669707
Expenditure per pupil	1947
Balance brought forward from previous year	10819
Balance carried forward to next year	6598

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	344
Number of questionnaires returned	119

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	42	46	8	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	39	51	8	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	65	2	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	56	16	3	0
The teaching is good.	43	53	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	52	19	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	31	8	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	51	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	23	55	18	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	34	43	14	3	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	55	5	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	30	30	5	13

*Due to rounding percentages do not always total 100.*

## **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**

67. At present, 54 children are in reception. They enter reception at the start of the school year in which they become five. Nearly all attend pre-school groups before joining school. Initial assessment, guided by local authority procedures, shows overall attainment on entry to be in line with that expected for children of this age. The school has responded well to the recommendations of the last inspection to improve opportunities for the development of children's independence, together with greater provision for learning through structured play activities. As a result, the school now makes good provision for its young children. In lessons observed teaching was never less than good with a third of sessions judged very good. Teachers and learning support assistants work well as a team and have a good understanding of the needs for the age group. Children with special educational needs benefit from early identification and the good expertise of adults who work with them. All children are given a wide range of interesting and relevant activities, well matched to their different stages of development and understanding in each of the required areas of learning. This enables children to gain confidence and prepares them well for work in the National Curriculum in Year 1.

68. For children currently in reception, inspection evidence indicates they make sound progress overall. Whilst nearly all are on course to reach the recommended Early Learning Goals in each area of learning by the end of reception, around a quarter are on line to reach the expected levels of personal, social and emotional development, and communication, language and literacy, earlier.

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

69. Children make good progress in this area of learning. Adults working with children successfully create a happy and purposeful atmosphere where children settle quickly and enthusiastically into the routines of school. Children work and play together in a friendly manner, and show respect for each other. Appropriate talk and guidance from adults helps children understand the difference between right and wrong, and, along with displays of class rules including, 'We share with our friends' and 'We try hard to use quiet voices', reinforces their understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. This strategy results in children being well behaved, able to show growing independence in making sensible choices from a range of activities, and sustain concentration when working. Where adults set up activities that require children to share or take turns, children do so willingly. Adults give clear, well paced instructions. As a result, children listen attentively to what they are told, follow instructions well, and begin work eagerly.

70. Staff provide many opportunities for the development of children's self esteem, confidence and independence. Children carry out a number of 'class helper' activities enthusiastically, and wear their badges, such as 'Book Box Tidier' and 'Register Helper', with pride. An important feature of the good practice observed during the inspection was that in all activities, staff gave children good encouragement and praise for noteworthy effort. Children line up and move around school in a sensible manner, and undress and dress themselves for physical activities with increasing speed and ability. They show good levels of initiative when getting out and putting away different activities in the classroom. A variety of food technology activities reinforces children's awareness of washing hands before handling food.

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

71. Good progress is made in this area of learning. Children have many planned opportunities to talk and listen to adults and to each other, in groups or as a whole class. For example, during the inspection, children listened attentively, and when required, answered questions about, and retold, the story of 'Barn on Fire'. In preparation for the visit of a fireman, children enthusiastically decided what questions they might ask him about his work. Throughout their work, children responded well to the teacher's prompting and encouragement. The use of talk and questioning by adults is very effective, and the many opportunities created to develop and extend children's language are a positive feature of the good practice observed, and result in children's growing confidence when answering questions.

72. Carefully chosen stories are used well by teachers and support assistants to help children recognise an increasing number of words in familiar contexts. On many occasions children were observed enjoying books or sharing them with friends in their book corners. An impressive display created by children depicts the several books they have enjoyed by the author Mick Inkpen. Through a structured and well taught programme of phonics (letter sounds), children recognise the letters of the alphabet, and associate sounds with them. For example, children were observed identifying and naming items starting with 'bl' and 'br'. Whilst a number of older, higher attaining children were heard to read texts confidently from the reading scheme, others use picture clues and their growing phonic ability to interpret and enjoy books.

73. Good provision is made for the development of writing. Children undertake much 'pretend' writing as part of their activities in role play and writing areas, where they make lists, write cards and take down messages. Children showed much enthusiasm when exercising their fingers before handwriting practice. In the lesson that followed, the teacher gave children clear and effective demonstrations of how to write and join letter shapes that resulted in children producing work of high quality. A review of work confirms that by the end of reception, most children write sentences unaided. Examples of such writing include sentences about 'My Teddy', and work for their book 'Keeping Safe on the Road', a compilation of sentences about road safety.

### **Mathematical development**

74. Mathematical development is good. Children count and recognise numbers to twenty and beyond. They sing and play a range of number rhymes and finger games, and put together number puzzles and jigsaws to reinforce learning. Through a variety of carefully directed activities, children develop understanding of number bonds to ten, as for example, when 'having popped the number 8 in their heads', they count on 2 to make 10. Children were observed 'popping other numbers into their heads', then finding what they had to count on in order to reach ten. They sort objects in a variety of ways, for instance by colour, shape and size; by threading objects and repeating patterns. Children use correct mathematical language for simple three-dimensional shapes. In one lesson, children demonstrated good understanding of the properties of shapes when playing a game that involved the teacher holding a shape above a child's head, whilst others gave clues from which the child had to identify the shape. For example, when told, "It has two square faces" followed by "It has four rectangle faces", the child correctly stated, "It's a cuboid". Another group of children went on a 'shape walk' around the school to find, identify and digitally photograph shapes including circles, squares and triangles. Throughout all activities, adults work directly with children to support, reassure, question and praise.

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

75. Although limited direct teaching of this area of learning was observed, a review of work on display confirms a wide range of purposeful activities are planned that enable children to make satisfactory progress. During a well planned, resourced and managed lesson on 'new life around our school', children responded well when told, "You will have to look very carefully" as they used hand lenses to help them to examine and sketch spring flowers. Others, on their return from a visit to the school pond, talked excitedly about, and showed, their sketches of tadpoles and water snails. A 'touchy feely table' invites children to explore the textures of a range of materials and objects by way of them learning the importance of the sense of touch. Children's awareness of space was enhanced when they journeyed from the school to a nearby park. An impressive, large collaboratively made map of the route taken includes many of the features they noticed along the way. Children receive a sound introduction to 'design and make' activities; work on display includes well made 'Tooth Fairy purses' and chairs for the fictional characters Kipper and Wibbly. An appropriate range of food technology activities provides children with satisfactory opportunities for observation, language development and preparation skills. Good opportunities are given for children to develop skills of information and communication technology; they handle computers with growing confidence and enjoy interactive programs and use the mouse to control, colour and move items on screen. At the time of inspection, children had used computers to draw and colour in houses to support work related to their walk to the park.

### **Physical development**

76. Children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. They handle scissors, paint brushes, construction kits and malleable materials safely and with increasing control. In an indoor activity lesson, children showed appropriate control of movement as they explored different ways of travelling over and along a range of equipment. When dismounting apparatus, children jumped and stretched tall before landing safely. They concentrated well and put much effort into their performance. At all times, children responded well to the expectations, encouragement and praise of their teacher. In outdoor structured play, children enjoy an appropriate range of wheeled toys which they use with increasing control of speed and direction. In all activities, children show growing confidence, together with a willingness to share and take turns; in keeping with their good levels of personal and social development.

### **Creative development**

77. A review of work confirms children make sound progress in this area of learning. They use a range of media to draw, paint, model and print. Many pieces of vibrant, collaborative art reflect the various activities children have undertaken across each of the six areas of learning. They are carefully taught a range of important skills. For example, when sketching flowers, children are taught the importance of 'drawing lightly'. They then learn how adding white to a colour gives a different shade. Children experiment with 'texture pictures' that give the feel of prickly, rough or smooth, depending on the material or fabrics incorporated in the picture. When using 'small world' equipment, children create small, imaginary environments and act out scenes in them, exploring ideas and feelings. Children were heard singing songs tunefully from memory, and playing a range of untuned instruments enthusiastically and with a developing sense of rhythm.

78. Provision for children in reception is well managed. Good procedures are in place to support children's induction, and a helpful policy supports planning for the six areas of learning. In keeping with local authority procedures, an initial assessment of children's skills and understanding is carried out shortly after entry and provides information that is then used well to inform subsequent teaching. Working in an 'open plan setting' that houses all reception children, the 'team leader' has ongoing contact and dialogue with her colleague teacher and support assistants. Children's development in learning is aided by careful observations, record keeping and ongoing assessment.

## ENGLISH

79. Inspection evidence confirms overall attainment for pupils nearing the end of Year 2 to be above national average for their age; a similar picture to that reported at the time of the last inspection. At that time, standards for pupils at the end of Year 6 were found to be above average. However, since then, a high turnover of staff between Years 3 and 6 has inhibited pupils' continuity of learning, and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 has risen to a position where it is now over a third. Although attainment for several elements of the English curriculum meet nationally expected levels, overall performance for those currently in Year 6, is below expectation. When taking into account the levels of special educational needs in both Year 2 and Year 6, attainment reflects good progress in learning; a number of pupils with special educational needs in both year groups achieve very well to gain or come close to nationally expected levels for aspects of English. Despite good progress being made, there is every indication that the school will not meet the over optimistic targets set by the local education authority for the proportion of pupils to achieve the expected levels when assessed later this year. A review of pupils' work shows there is no marked difference in the performance of boys and girls.

80. One of the school's ongoing foci is on developing pupils' skills in speaking and listening. This results in attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 meeting expected average levels of performance. The opening and closing (plenary) sessions of the literacy hour are used well to focus on this aspect of language. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, readily take part in oral work, knowing their contributions will be accepted and valued even if they are not accurate. By the end of Year 2, pupils listen attentively to teachers and other adults, and to each others' contributions. For example, having listened to 'Badger's Parting Gift', dealing sensitively with the subject of death, pupils discussed and shared their experiences of loss with their friends. In so doing, pupils responded with sequenced and well structured sentences. Between Years 3 and 6, pupils' confidence and skills in speaking and listening are supported by questions such as, "Who can explain.....?" "What makes you think that?" and, "Can you give me another word for.....?" By the end of Year 6, the greater majority of pupils respond to what others have to say perceptively, using an appropriate range of vocabulary. 'Performance poetry' is used well to develop pupils' collaborative reading aloud. In an observed lesson, pupils in Years 3 and 4, when given a selection of poems, discussed and planned how each should be read. Whilst performances included choral and alternate speaking, one group improvised a melody to accentuate the rhythm of the words. Having listened to friends reciting their poems, pupils sensibly evaluated performances, stating aspects they considered successful, and where improvements might be made.

81. Standards in reading are above average at the end of Year 2, and are broadly average in Year 6. This reflects good learning for both year groups when taking into account the average proportion of special educational needs in Year 2, and the above average proportion in Year 6. Such pupils receive good support that enables many to attain average standards. Higher attaining pupils are challenged well in reading. By Year 2, most pupils read with fluency and confidence, and have a variety of strategies to decode new words, including a well taught and sequenced programme of phonics. Pupils read with understanding and expression. They express opinions about the main events in the stories they have read, and predict what will happen next. By Year 6, more able readers read challenging texts with expression. They, together with most 'average' readers, show a clear understanding of how punctuation determines the way text is to be read. Several pupils speak of favourite authors and give considered reasons for their preferences. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, pupils are adept at using information within the text to justifying their views. For example, in a very successful lesson, a group of pupils in Years 3 and 4 studied 'Silver' by Walter de la Mare. A meaningful discussion then followed in which they challenged each other's viewpoint as to what 'silver' referred to. Pupils posed questions including, "How do

you know?” and “Does the text tell you that?” Discussions demonstrated clearly pupils’ understanding of the power of adjectives in descriptive writing and interpretation.

82. Since the last inspection, the library, which contains a bank of computers, has been improved as a resource area to support pupils’ learning. The school engages, part-time, a resource area/library manager, who, in conjunction with teachers, has taught a number of Year 6 pupils how to use the school’s library computer system, and keep the well stocked and organised library, tidy. All pupils have a weekly library time, together with set times that groups of pupils may use the library for research. During the inspection, pupils were observed using the library independently, all fully acquainted with the Dewey categorisation system. A review of pupils’ work shows that in order to support the development of research skills, pupils are taught higher order reading skills of skimming and scanning, together with note taking, from Years 3 and 4.

83. Following an analysis of the statutory end of Year 2 and 6 assessments in 2002 and as part of an ongoing focus on writing since April 2001, high priority was given to improving the overall quality of writing, and to increasing the proportion of pupils at Year 2 who reach the higher level. The strategies have been effective in that the overall quality of writing at Year 2 is above average, with every indication that an above average proportion are on course to achieve the higher level. However, although gains have been made for pupils at Year 6, and notwithstanding that they write for a good range of purposes and audiences, and have appropriate opportunities to draft and improve their work, the proportion working at the expected level for their age is below average. Across the school, the teaching of spelling, grammar and punctuation is developed systematically within the structure of the National Literacy Strategy. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have good opportunities to write down their own thoughts, and to extend simple sentences into complex sentences using a range of connectives. Pupils use their developing writing skills, along with ‘story planning frameworks’, to compose simple stories such as, ‘The child who always ate chocolate cake’; in which pupils consider how to develop and portray character. Stories are well punctuated and have a range of interesting openings. Instructional writing such as ‘How to get ready for PE’, or ‘How to change a library book’, consolidates pupils’ ability to sequence events logically before writing. Pupils successfully retell well known stories. For example, they retell the tale of ‘The Three Billy Goats Gruff’ in a letter written by the troll to his mother. Many examples of pupils’ writing make good use of paragraphs and speech marks. Appropriate use is made of word banks and dictionaries to support writing.

84. Between Years 3 and 6, pupils write reviews of books, undertake work on play scripts and retell stories from another character’s point of view. In general writing most pupils make satisfactory use of paragraphs and use correctly a wide range of punctuation. When writing stories, including ‘My mischievous pet’ and ‘The door opens’, the majority of pupils commence with a clear introduction, followed by paragraphs containing a range of connectives. Many pupils use adjectives and adverbs to enliven the text. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to construct a balanced argument, as demonstrated in the writing of Years 3 and 4 who considered the reasons for and against a school ‘tuck shop’. Similarly, members of Years 5 and 6 produced good examples of persuasive writing as they wrote letters to the headteacher in which they stated the case for the reintroduction of an afternoon playtime for Years 3 to 6. Following initial drafts, the final letters were correctly set out with paragraphs that contained well ordered points that led to a considered conclusion. Punctuation is good, and pupils use an appropriate degree of formality and breadth of vocabulary.

85. The introduction of a new handwriting scheme has made a positive impact on standards. Whilst attainment is satisfactory, in each class there are instances where the quality of handwriting exceeds the levels expected for their age. However, the use of word processing programs to enable pupils to write, draft and edit directly to screen, or to enhance the presentation of completed work, has yet to be developed fully.

86. All English lessons observed were satisfactory or better. Three-quarters were good, including a quarter very good; one lesson was excellent. All pupils are taught literacy in classes that are organised according to pupils' levels of attainment. This enables teachers to focus the content of their lessons on the needs of pupils with a narrower range of ability. However, within each class, pupils are even then at different stages of learning, and teachers use the structure of the National Literacy Strategy well to plan tasks that are suitably matched to pupils' needs. At the start of nearly all lessons, teachers clearly explain lesson objectives and how they will be developed within the session. Teachers have good subject knowledge that is used well to stimulate pupils' imagination and enthusiasm. Further effective features of lessons include teachers' expressive reading and leading of stories and poems, together with their skilled questioning to ensure pupils understand the content and structure of texts. However, whilst nearly all lessons are well planned, a small number of lessons failed to have precise learning objectives. Instead, they listed general activities or posed general questions, as for example, 'What do you know about poetry?' Teaching of groups of pupils with special educational needs, and those supported by nationally funded support groups, was good overall. This, together with the effective work of well briefed support assistants enables pupils to make good progress in terms of prior attainment, and, where applicable, against the targets in their individual education plans. Support for pupils with English as an additional language is very effective.

87. The leadership of the subject is good, with a clear direction for continued improvement. Effective monitoring of teaching and learning takes place, and information from end of year and other assessments is used well to monitor and modify curriculum provision, track pupil performance, and set targets to raise attainment. Resources for teaching, including library provision, are managed and used well. Curriculum provision is enhanced by regular book fairs, visiting storytellers and theatre groups.

## **MATHEMATICS**

88. Standards achieved in mathematics by the end of Year 2 are well above average. By the end of Year 6 standards achieved are broadly in line with the national average. In the current Year 6 there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Whilst these pupils are making good progress their attainment remains below expected levels. This represents a fall in standards from those reported in the previous report.

89. In all lessons pupils leave their class group and work in ability sets for mathematics. In Years 1 and 2 teaching and learning in mathematics is very good. Lessons frequently have stimulating and challenging warm up activities, engendering good pace. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and high expectations of pupils. Explanations and instructions are clear facilitating pupils' knowledge and understanding. Good reviews of learning objectives take place in the plenary sessions. Through Years 3 to 6 teaching and learning remain satisfactory, with some very good teaching being observed. The most effective teaching for these pupils is characterised by good use of mathematical language by both pupils and teachers and very good class management with high expectations. Pupils are encouraged to use a variety of strategies which they articulate well. However, they do not demonstrate the same breadth of understanding in written work. Work is well planned to meet the differing needs of pupils. In Years 3 to 6 however in some lessons the pace is slow and some pupils take too long to complete routine tasks.

90. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress over time (including those with special educational needs). The vast majority of pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to make satisfactory progress. A broad mathematics curriculum is provided. By the end of Year 6 most pupils can use numbers with confidence to 1000 and have worked with money, time and shape. Some elementary data handling was seen with simple bar graphs and interpretation. Pupils' mental work is good with almost all pupils able to recall speedily number facts appropriately. Pupils

were adept at doubling, halving, counting on and back in twos and fives. Many could discuss strategies used for applying mathematical skills.

91. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 continue to make progress especially in the areas of number, shape, space and measurement. Little use and interpretation of data was noticed except for the use of tally sheets. The school is currently focusing on discussion, open ended challenge and using and applying mathematics as a result of analysis of standard assessment task results. By Year 6 all pupils have experienced appropriate types of number work, including work on fractions, proportion, ratio and decimals. Many have covered areas of triangles and characteristics of shape. All strands of the National Curriculum are covered. However, opportunities for handling data are too limited. One noticeable exception to this was a very good lesson observed with pupils trying to learn about mean, mode and median. Data had been prepared on rainfall and temperatures and pupils made very good hypotheses on reasons for the data being as it was. They were able to use the Internet effectively to obtain and use further data.

92. The work of pupils in mathematics in groups is systematically assessed to inform future learning and planning. However, the assessment of individual pupils and tracking of their progress is less clearly defined and is epitomised by ineffective and inconsistent marking in some classes. Some work is unmarked and despite many books showing the importance teachers place on seeing pupils' working out to aid their teaching points, many pupils persist in writing answers only. A systematic marking policy, setting targets for future learning (as part of a staff handbook), clearly understood and followed by pupils and staff, especially in Years 3 to 6, would heighten pupils' achievement.

93. The majority of pupils respond in a satisfactory manner to mathematics teaching throughout the school, showing an appropriate level of interest and discussion. Some pupils however struggle with concepts and skills and lack motivation to achieve. This was especially noticeable with some pupils in the current booster groups, but it is evident in some class lessons.

94. The subject is well led and managed by a skilful, knowledgeable and enthusiastic manager. She has been instrumental in imposing a structure to ensure progression in the subject with some success. The National Numeracy Strategy has been complemented by a commercial scheme, which is being successfully implemented. The manager visualises that as teachers, through greater use of assessment and effective planning, can have confidence in delivery of lessons throughout the school, standards will improve. She is committed to this and has already effected important improvements in planning and assessment of pupils' achievements.

95. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress within the subject though their attainment remains below national expectations. The subject makes good use of ICT to support pupils' work in some classes. This appears to be the result of teacher interest and expertise rather than school policy. Again this results in inconsistencies in practice. Similarly good examples of the subject's use in other areas of the curriculum may be found but appear incidental rather than planned.

96. Resources for the subject are good, well stored and easily accessible. All required elements of the mathematics curriculum are supported with appropriate resources. Magnetic whiteboards and overhead projectors aid teaching and learning in the classroom in an effective manner.

## **SCIENCE**

97. It was not possible to observe any science lessons in Years 1 and 2 because the subject is taught in blocks of time which did not coincide with the inspection. However, from

talking to pupils and a scrutiny of their work, it is possible to judge that standards at the end of Year 2 are average. This is a similar judgement to the last inspection. Within this, there are strengths in some pupils' factual knowledge about living things, materials and electricity, but weaknesses in their understanding of the purpose of testing, making observations, and of making comparisons. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are below average. Once again, their factual knowledge is better than their skills in scientific enquiry, the latter being one of the reasons for the below average judgement, the other being the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. This is a decline in standards since the last inspection, and shows some underachievement by these pupils when compared with their performance at the end of Year 2. It has been caused by the turbulence in staffing over the past few years, and the lack of a structured curriculum with an appropriate emphasis on scientific enquiry. However, pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and learning support assistants, and make good progress for their ability.

98. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge of what is, and what is not, a healthy meal. They record this by drawing pictures and labelling, some with single words, and some with sentences, thus helping to develop literacy skills. Pupils have a basic understanding of sight, sound, touch, smell and taste. Most pupils have a good understanding of the uses of electricity in the home, and that you need a complete circuit to light a bulb with battery and wires. Some pupils understand that certain materials act as conductors whilst others are insulators, with a few using the correct scientific language. They have investigated forces, with cars running down a ramp, and with pupils blowing sails to make them move. Many pupils have an awareness of fair testing, but are not always sure what conclusions to draw from their tests.

99. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have a sound understanding of digestion and the importance for health of a balanced and healthy diet. Good links were made with literacy when pupils wrote, 'My amazing digestion journey', tracing the route of food from the mouth through the digestive system. They know the importance of exercise to keep the heart healthy, and the effect of exercise on the pulse rate. Most pupils understand the basic structure of the body and that the skeleton and muscles support, protect and assist movement. They know what conditions plants need to grow, and the role of leaves and roots. Pupils have tested to find that some solids will dissolve to produce a solution, whilst others will not. Most understand how to separate solids from liquids, whether they have or have not dissolved, and most pupils have a sound understanding of a fair test, working carefully on their experiments. However, they have not had enough practice in this area, with limited experience of posing open questions to scientific investigation and deciding how answers can be found. They rely too heavily on teacher input in deciding the evidence they need, the type of equipment and materials required, and the method of recording their observations.

100. The observed teaching in science was all in Years 3 to 6, and was never less than satisfactory, with half the lessons being good or very good. Strengths observed included:

- Thorough planning with clear lesson objectives made known to pupils;
- Good relationships, with pupils well motivated, producing a good working atmosphere;
- A brisk pace throughout the lesson;
- Effective questioning, challenging all abilities;
- Good variety and progression of activities;
- All pupils being fully included in the lessons.

Where these aspects were evident, pupils worked hard and made good progress.

101. Scrutiny of pupils' books and observations in lessons indicate some areas where improvement is needed. Some of them were the opposites of the strengths already mentioned, and limited the progress pupils made. They included:

- Inadequate lesson plans with unclear lesson objectives;
- Too much sitting and listening by pupils and not enough 'doing' with the pace of lessons too slow;
- Insufficient attention to marking to help pupils improve.

102. The school has quite rightly placed emphasis on work in English and mathematics. However, this, together with the absence of the subject manager for a year, has meant that science has not been to the fore in the school's development programme. Development of the subject and pupils' standards have suffered accordingly. The manager is developing an action plan, and is well aware of subject's needs. These include:

- Publishing a policy (which is in draft form at present);
- Developing a structured curriculum throughout the school to ensure that all topics are covered in sufficient depth, and that skills are built on each year;
- Improving the format of short term plans to make lesson objectives clearer;
- Developing assessment procedures and identifying assessment opportunities for each unit of work;
- Increasing the emphasis on scientific enquiry;
- Increasing the use of information and communication technology to support learning in science;
- Analysing test results and using the information to inform planning;
- Developing outdoor areas to support learning in life processes and living things;
- Developing the role of the subject manager to include scrutiny of books and lesson observations to monitor the quality of teaching and learning;
- Developing, and monitoring the use of, a marking policy.

103. Activities such as Science Week and the visit of a theatre group with science based topics, have helped to raise the profile of science, but there is still a long way to go. There is a good quantity of resources, which are well arranged and easily accessible. Sex education forms part of the science curriculum and is introduced as life cycles in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 and 4, pupils develop an understanding of how their bodies grow, and in Years 5 and 6, pupils are helped to prepare for the physical and emotional changes associated with adolescence.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

104. The last report judged standards in art to be as expected for pupils' ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is still the case for those aged seven in Year 2, but because not all required elements are covered in sufficient depth between Years 3 and 6, pupils' attainment is below expectations when they leave the school. Standards of work actually completed are satisfactory.

105. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 build effectively on children's creative experiences in Year R: for example using print and a variety of materials. They know how to mix colours and show a sound appreciation of proportion, line and tone in observational drawings. There are some good examples of self portraits completed by Years 1 and 2 pupils as well as printing to create individual place mats.

106. Two-dimensional work completed by Years 3 to 6 pupils is of satisfactory quality with higher attainers doing better than this: for example in observational drawings of bananas. There are good links with other subjects, with strengths for example in illustrating Years 3 and 4 work on Egyptians, and Years 5 and 6 Aboriginal paintings. Years 3 and 4 religious education work in designing and making Paschal candles is very effectively supported with drawing and making techniques.

107. Good examples of Years 3 and 4 art are in the use of watercolours to match sky and seascapes; and in Years 5 and 6 diagrams and drawings of the water cycle linked to science and geography. However, standards at the end of Year 6 are negatively affected by the lack of opportunities to work in three-dimensions, to make choices of materials and techniques, and to appreciate, evaluate and emulate styles of famous artists. There is little evidence of pupils regularly using sketch books to experiment with techniques.

108. In the few art lessons it was possible to observe pupils of all abilities were fully included and worked with a will. They followed instructions well, were well behaved and worked well in groups. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' social development. Pupils enjoy painting and respond positively to their work being well displayed by staff.

109. The quality of art teaching cannot be generalised from the few lessons seen, but it is clear that relationships and pupil management are strengths. Weaknesses evident from work produced, planning and records, are in some teachers' knowledge of the subject, insufficiently clear learning objectives and the absence of assessment procedures.

110. The inexperienced and recently appointed subject manager is enthusiastic about art and has audited resources and begun to manage a budget appropriately. However, she has not yet monitored standards, teaching or the effects of inadequacies of planning. Consequently, pupils in Years 3 to 6 fall short of what is expected of them nationally in art, because they have not covered all elements of the curriculum in sufficient depth. As in a variety of subjects the school knows that strengthening the management role of the manager and introducing an effective system to assess what pupils know, understand and can do, are urgent priorities.

111. There are sufficient resources to teach art and design but there is a need to develop examples of the works of artists. There are growing links with ICT through 'paint' programs and the use of a digital camera to record some pupils' art, but this is another area for further improvement.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

112. By the age of seven and by the age of eleven pupils' attainment in design and technology is in line with national expectations. This is a similar judgement to that of the last inspection. As no direct teaching or learning was observable at the time of this inspection the judgement was made after consideration of displays of work, discussion with pupils, analysing photographic records, the subject manager's work samples and pupils' draft planning.

113. There are examples of good work in the subject which occur as a result of some good teaching and learning. In Years 1 and 2 pupils had made models of playground equipment and their finished models reflected their design plans. In Years 5 and 6 the theme on making slippers reflected good practice in the subject. Pupils were able to make plans, select materials, make prototypes, evaluate and refine; and the resulting work was of a good standard. The display of work in Years 3 and 4 relating to Egyptian death masks and mummies exhibited similar effective practice in design and technology techniques. An analysis of pupils' work in constructing torches reveals sound understanding of materials and components including the use of simple switches. An aspect of this subject, which remains weak, as mentioned in the last report, is the lack of a planned programme to ensure progression in food technology.

114. Pupils have been taught to generate ideas, evaluate products and have knowledge of components but not in a systematic or planned manner leading to progression in skills with tools and equipment. The manager realises this and is now in a position to consider a skills policy, which builds progressively on previous learning. Whilst the subject is secure in the

curriculum it lacks as overall policy to deliver requirements in a progressive manner with pupils' outcomes assessed to inform future planning and to determine achievement.

115. The manager has recently been given this subject and has had no opportunity, as yet, to exercise her management responsibilities. She has not been trained in the requirements of design and technology but has very recently undertaken training to define the role of the subject manager. At present she has had little opportunity to monitor teaching of the subject although she does see work plans and examples of good work are sent to her. The subject has no systematic plan to ensure progression and no forms of assessment of pupils' achievements. Whilst some good work is produced, planning for it is inconsistent. The manager fully understands this and is now better placed to lead the subject and ensure that a scheme is provided to guarantee progression and that pupils' progress is assessed.

116. The subject is well resourced with a wide range of materials and tools available for pupils. Resources are well stored and easily accessible and the inclusion of safety goggles indicates proper attention to safety considerations in the use of tools. Pupils appear to respond well to the subject and some parents view its provision very positively.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

117. Although no lessons were taking place during the inspection week and most geography topics are taught during the summer term, there was sufficient evidence from the study of pupils' work in folders and on display, planning and discussions with staff, to indicate that standards are consistent with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and are satisfactory overall. This however marks a deterioration since the last inspection when standards at the end of Year 6 were judged to exceed national expectations.

118. Planning documentation shows that the geography curriculum is well planned throughout the school and meets National Curriculum requirements. Links with literacy, numeracy and ICT are clearly identified but there is no indication of how work on 'In the News' is to be covered. In Years 1 and 2 pupils learn about the features of the local area. In Years 3 and 4 this is extended to comparing the local area with a contrasting seaside locality. Visits planned for the summer term will enable pupils to undertake fieldwork investigations outside the classroom. In Years 5 and 6 pupils study St Lucia as a locality in a less economically developed country. The work sampled demonstrates that pupils can make geographical comparisons between St Lucia and their own locality and can use maps and secondary sources to gain information. However, some of the tasks completed were insufficiently challenging to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding.

119. In contrast, work on rivers completed by Years 5 and 6 shows a greater level of geographical understanding. Written work is well presented and standards are as expected for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. The accounts of the journey of a river show that pupils can describe some of the physical processes of a river and then apply this knowledge when comparing the river systems of the Severn and Orinoco. More able pupils took this work further by studying ox bow lakes and the formation of gorges. Pupils learnt about the water cycle and gave considered responses to questions about how they would use water if it were in short supply.

120. Very good links are made with other subjects in planning this topic. Pupils use their skills in persuasive writing to present arguments for and against building houses on Brown's Pond and apply their knowledge of graphs to present data about the lengths of rivers. Opportunities for pupils to listen to music linked to the theme of rivers resulted in thoughtful and perceptive reflections. Work in pupils' folders is marked but teachers' comments rarely refer to the geography learning objectives for lessons thus limiting opportunities for pupils to improve their work.

121. Geography is not at present a key priority for development within the school. Discussions with the subject manager confirm that the policy is being implemented. The policy includes clear development priorities with manageable timescales. These focus on ensuring that teachers have a clear understanding of the learning focus for each unit of work, and developing more rigorous assessment procedures which will help to raise standards.

122. The subject manager has carried out an audit of resources for geography. He has provided staff training on the use of ICT in the subject and teachers are involved in selecting appropriate software to support their teaching. Resources are well organised into topic boxes. The units of work studied in Year 5 and Year 6 are well supported by a good range of maps, videos, CD-Rom and books, but provision for Years 1 and 2, and Years 3 and 4 is inadequate and needs to be improved as a matter of urgency.

## **HISTORY**

123. At the time of the last inspection pupils were considered to be achieving the standards nationally expected for their ages at seven and eleven in history. These standards have been maintained and are judged to be satisfactory overall.

124. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past by studying Victorian schools. In all lessons observed pupils were able to identify different ways of finding out about the past; books, television, diaries, letters, and artefacts. In two lessons observed teachers made effective use of role play to focus pupils' attention on a range of Victorian schoolroom artefacts. Skilful questioning highlighted differences between Victorian schools and schools today. Pupils are keen to answer questions, apply themselves with enthusiasm to the well planned tasks relating to the artefacts, and therefore make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities. They are well supported by learning support assistants.

125. To further improve learning teachers need to ensure that the activities planned for more able pupils offer sufficient challenge to extend their understanding, and that adequate time is allocated for a plenary session at the end of lessons to consolidate pupils' learning.

126. Although no history lessons took place for Years 3 to 6 during the inspection there was sufficient evidence obtained from studying work in pupils' folders and on display, and discussions with staff to indicate that overall standards are in line with national expectations, although there is some inconsistency in coverage and in the quality of work produced.

127. Work on Ancient Greece completed by pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 provides evidence that pupils can describe important features of life in Ancient Greece and compare life in the city states of Athens and Sparta. However, standards of presentation were variable and some tasks were not sufficiently challenging to deepen pupils' understanding. Some pupils' own evaluation of the topic stated that they had not found this topic as interesting as others they had studied.

128. In contrast, the work displayed around the school from the Years 3 and 4 study of Ancient Egypt illustrates pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment. The photographs and written reports of the visit to Highclere Castle communicate the sense of wonder experienced by pupils when handling artefacts and wearing Egyptian costumes. Three-dimensional models of Egyptian artefacts completed by pupils and their parents displayed around the school were of a high standard. Pupils had made burial masks, mummy cases, canopic jars and mummified cats either as part of the work in school or as part of an extended homework project. However, the standard of written work in folders needs to be improved. Teachers should ensure that pupils of the same age in different classes cover similar work. For example only one class appears to have completed work on Howard Carter's suitcase.

129. Marking is satisfactory but teachers' comments do not refer to the learning objectives of the lesson thus limiting the potential for pupils to improve their work.

130. The subject manager is very new in post although has had a 'caretaker' role for the subject for several months. She has prepared a comprehensive history policy in draft form. She is aware of the need to develop her management roles, confirming specific links with literacy and ICT. The lack of a system of assessment and recording of pupils' progress in history does not support the school's intention to raise standards. As this subject is taught in blocks of time careful monitoring is required to ensure that pupils are able to carry forward skills and knowledge from one block to the next. The recent status of the manager means that this is not yet the case.

131. The school has sufficient resources to support the teaching of history and makes very good use of services provided by libraries and Hampshire 'wardrobe' loans. Pupils visit places of historical interest in the local area to support learning and teachers plan for special theme days. For example Years 5 and 6 visit Hampton Court when studying the Tudors, and Years 1 and 2 will participate in a Victorian day. The storage area for the resources needs to be better organised to make resources more easily accessible to staff.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

132. Pupils' attainment is satisfactory at the end of Year 2 in ICT, being in line with national expectations. At the end of Year 6 attainment is satisfactory for work undertaken. However, partly due to the newness of some requirements and partly as a result of much staff change, Year 6 pupils have not covered all elements in sufficient depth. By omission this can be said to be unsatisfactory. The school is aware of this and is in the process of catching up. Consequently standards are below those reported for information technology in the last report.

133. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have experience of building on skills introduced in Year R. They are able to load and control programs using both keyboard and mouse and most are capable of printing and saving their work. By the time they enter Year 3 pupils meet expectations of entering, saving and retrieving information. They have a good awareness of the uses of ICT in everyday life and are able to word process their own writing, sometimes composing directly onto the screen. Pupils are able to change size of font and its style, with more able, higher attaining pupils making use of the spell check and thesaurus.

134. Skills of controlling tape recorders and programmable robots are sound and pupils have been introduced to the digital camera as a way of instantly recording non written work. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are able to import pictures to illustrate their work in preparation for more advanced study in Years 3 to 6.

135. By the end of Year 6 pupils have learnt how to enter and manipulate data, begun to access suitably protected sites of the Internet and make use of laptops both for word processing and research. Good word processing work is evident in displays of pupils' writing about Ancient Egypt in Years 3 and 4, and Ancient Greece in Years 5 and 6. However, pupils in Year 6 have had too little opportunity to record and interrogate data before interpreting their findings and are not sufficiently skilled at using ICT: for example in using sensors to record in science nor in producing multimedia presentations.

136. Pupils' attitudes to ICT are good. Pupils in all year groups are keen to use computers and equipment generally and take very good care with apparatus. They work well in groups even if they do not chose who they have to work with, and are prepared to share and take turns. Pupils of all ages appear ready to take advice and those in Years 3 and 4 for example were seen to try to sort out problems between themselves before asking the teacher or

learning support assistant. Years 5 and 6 pupils were seen acting very responsibly whilst using the Internet. They look forward to the opportunity of sending and receiving e-mail.

137. The quality of teaching observed in the few lessons which could be observed was satisfactory and this included the work of learning support assistants as well as teachers. There were strengths in relationships and pupil management and weaknesses in having insufficient space and resources to work with. For example eight pupils in Years 1 and 2 sat on the floor around one computer in the classroom whilst the support assistant explained the program to be used. It was very difficult for them to see the screen.

138. Staff continue to receive training and support as part of the school's drive to develop the subject and this is improving their confidence, knowledge and understanding. However, as most ICT teaching forms part of other subjects where skills are the vehicle for learning, this does not necessarily ensure that skills build systematically on those previously learnt. It does not allow pupils to work in sufficient depth or with regular enough contact with ICT to learn about it as a subject in its own right. The head, as ICT manager, is aware of the situation and the negative effect of the lack of a sizeable suite. Plans are being considered by governors to extend the building and improve resources to overcome this. In the short term, the previous manager produced a list of skills relevant to the school's various topics and encouraged staff to work towards them. This list is being trialled as the basis of assessment procedures to measure standards and pupils' progress, but this is at present not effective in tracking either what pupils have covered, or how well they have done. Short term lesson plans do not always identify learning objectives for ICT and this too frequently means that pupils' are unaware of the point of their learning.

## **MUSIC**

139. The only music observed in Years 1 and 2 was singing. Pupils' performance in this was good, which was directly attributable to the very good teaching by a specialist teacher who is employed for that purpose. Pupils sing simple songs with a good sense of pitch, following the contour of the melody going up and down. They learn new songs quickly, and put in hand actions and noises where necessary.

140. At the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment meets expectations for pupils of their age. They can repeat rhythms clapped by the teacher and know how to create long and short sounds by controlling the vibrations. Many pupils can find ways to record their sounds by using graphic notation. Any judgements about attainment at the end of Year 6 would be insecure as no lessons were observed for pupils of this age. However, from talking to pupils, it is apparent that they have a sound understanding of composition, through their work on composing 'river' music, which links well with their work in science and geography. They were less confident and competent in describing, comparing and evaluating different kinds of music. Their singing in assembly, whilst in tune, lacked commitment and enthusiasm.

141. Evidence suggests that the teaching of music by class teachers is satisfactory, but there are some areas where teachers' knowledge and understanding needs improving as identified in last year's music action plan, and these have yet to be addressed. Teachers prepare well for lessons, with all necessary instruments easily available. Pupils are well managed and well motivated, causing them to be eager to learn. Very good relationships are established, with all pupils, including those with special educational needs, being fully included in the lessons. Good contributions are made to pupils' cultural and social development. However, on occasions, the pace of lessons drops when pupils are expected to return to the carpet to discuss what they are doing, or when pupils take it in turns to play an instrument whilst sitting in a circle.

142. The subject manager only took over music in September, so as yet, has had little time to move the subject forward. There is good liaison with the peripatetic instrumental teachers,

and the large number of pupils learning to play instruments is an asset to the school. However, the pupils' expertise could be used more with further opportunities to perform to others, such as at assembly times. There are always more pupils wanting to play instruments than there are places available. Parents are not kept fully informed of the ways in which selection of pupils is made, which understandably leads to some resentment. Whilst the selection of pupils by the peripatetic teachers themselves is not at fault, the communication between home and school as to the processes involved could be improved. There are valuable extracurricular opportunities for choir and recorders, but there is no orchestra or instrumental group at the moment. Resources for teaching music are good, and the ethnic instruments add to the school's provision for multicultural education. At the moment, the subject lacks an up to date policy (although one is draft form) and a scheme of work to ensure that pupils build on their skills progressively. Together with this, there is a need for clear objectives which can be used for assessment purposes. There is insufficient use of ICT within music. The subject manager monitors the subject through informal discussions. However, with no monitoring of lessons, she is unable to determine the quality of teaching and learning, or the standard of pupils' attainment.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

143. Standards in physical education at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 meet national expectations, although in Years 1 and 2 there is a strength in gymnastics, and in Years 5 and 6 there is a strength in games skills, particularly rugby. In the last inspection, standards were described as above expectations. The reason for this apparent decline may be the arrangements for physical education and swimming, including the use of available time, and the lack of a structured curriculum to enable pupils to progressively build on skills. By the time pupils leave the school, about 90 per cent are able to swim 25 metres.

144. By the end of Year 2, pupils demonstrate good awareness of space and control of their bodies when performing gymnastics. They find some very inventive ways of moving and holding a variety of shapes, and show very good co-operation in safely getting out and putting away apparatus. In dance, pupils show appropriate control of their movements when creating characters for the Beauty and the Beast story. In Year 3, pupils have appropriate throwing and catching skills for their age, and are developing an understanding of tactics, particularly in defence. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are developing their rugby skills well, with a significant number showing good skills and good understanding of tag rugby.

145. Teaching is satisfactory overall, although it does range from unsatisfactory to very good. The strongest elements in all lessons are the management and motivation of pupils. Pupils respond well to this and work with real enthusiasm. When there are plenty of opportunities for them to practise their skills, they make good progress, such as Years 5 and 6 when playing rugby. On occasions, there is too much teacher talking and too little pupil activity, which then has a negative effect on pupils' progress. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are given good encouragement and are included in all lessons. Swimming is very well organised, with good use being made of parents for additional supervision, and friends of the school for help with instruction.

146. The arrangements in Years 3 and 4 give some cause for concern in that time is not well used. Year 4 go swimming on two consecutive days each week, which means they get no other physical education whilst this happens. Year 3 play benchball and follow a health related programme leading to a greater understanding of a healthy lifestyle. The benchball activity is great fun, but is hardly the best way to develop team tactics, and certainly need not be played week after week. The healthy lifestyle work is very valuable and is justifiably part of the physical education programme, but the amount of time spent on it compared with the amount of physical activity pupils get is not well balanced.

147. The subject manager took over the management of the subject in September and is 'caretaking' the subject for a year. He is beginning to adjust long term plans to ensure appropriate coverage throughout the school. Medium and short term plans need to have clearer lesson objectives and more clearly defined activities that are to achieve those objectives. The quality of present plans varies a good deal. There are no formal assessment procedures. A good contribution is made to pupils' moral and social development when they take part in competitions against other schools. They often perform well in these competitions, especially in rugby, although it is a pity that football has a low profile, with no school-run after school club. Occasional, but nevertheless valuable, coaching is given by outside football and cricket clubs. The manager has used his budget well and has made good use of outside organisations to provide a good selection of resources.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

148. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, in particular some of its symbolism, is good. Teaching within the subject promotes pupils' moral and spiritual development effectively. All pupils are fully included in religious education lessons and participate well.

149. By the end of Year 2 pupils discuss in a mature manner their feelings as a result of hearing stories read to them. They use stillness to reflect in a particularly effective manner. Whilst written work is not well developed in quality or quantity, evidence of pupils' knowledge of the Christmas and Easter stories was seen in written work. Pupils' ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of this orally in lessons reveals satisfactory progress is being made, including pupils with special educational needs.

150. In Years 3 and 4 pupils extend their knowledge about key features of religion by studying Divali, the Easter Story, Diva and the Paschal candle. Some effective comparative work is undertaken, for example work on comparing Sikh, Hindu and Christian practices at baptism. Work on feelings, experiences and the significance of symbolism continues to be a strength of the subject: for example all pupils in Years 3 and 4 experienced entering a darkened room with the Paschal candle lit – they appreciated the wonder which this generated in silence and had very good ideas for their own designs later in the lessons.

151. In Years 5 and 6 pupils increase their knowledge of Islam and Christian festivals and have undertaken interesting comparative work on differences in the reporting of Christian gospel writers, namely Matthew and Luke.

152. Teaching of religious education is good throughout the school and pupils learn well as a result. Pupils have good knowledge of religions and can identify key features of those studied. Teaching is particularly effective in encouraging pupils to reflect on experiences and respond to religious symbolism. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 could reflect upon death and explain happy memories in a mature and responsible manner. Their learning was enhanced by sensitive and thoughtful teaching. This aspect of teaching encouraged pupils' creativity in Years 3 and 4 whilst designing their own Paschal candles. Pupils' ideas included: hearts to symbolise friendship and love, handshaking for friendship, and flowers to represent all the beautiful things in the world.

153. All pupils are fully included in religious education and respond very well to the opportunities they are given. Their attitudes towards the subject are very good in Years 1 and 2 and continue to be good through Years 3 to 6.

154. The subject manager has recently taken the over role and it is clear that she has not had time to develop its management aspects fully. She is appropriately qualified and

experienced (though her experience is not recent) to influence the further development of the subject.

155. The locally agreed syllabus is followed appropriately and ensures all aspects of the subject are taught. Work is planned well in teaching teams but a structured overview, linking planning to assessment and further planning is lacking. Recent training has not been organised for the subject manager or staff and whilst the manager sees teaching plans she has not, as yet collected work samples or monitored teaching to determine standards of pupils' work.

156. Teachers have access to support material to assist in teaching the subject. However, resources for pupils are not satisfactory to support learning effectively. More artefacts are required to support pupils' views of Christianity and other religions whilst the school has all classes working on the same theme at the same time. More books with spiritual themes and giving pupils stories from a variety of religions are needed in the library. Class Bibles and simple Bible stories would assist the learning of, and about, the Christian religion.