

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **LORD SCUDAMORE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hereford

LEA area: Herefordshire

Unique reference number: 116683

Headteacher: Mr Peter Box

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Nicholson  
25406

Dates of inspection: 24-27 February 2003

Inspection number: 247665

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 with a nursery class

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Friar Street  
Hereford

Postcode: HR4 0AS

Telephone number: 01432 273951

Fax number: 01432 274168

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Prebendary Rob North

Date of previous inspection: November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25406 Paul Nicholson Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements What should the school do to improve further?
16472 Cathy Stormonth Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils?
20010 John Sangster Team inspector	History Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?
26945 Sylvia Gatehouse Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
31801 Yvonne Bacchetta Team inspector	Science Design and technology	How well are pupils taught?
32142 Beryl Richmond Team inspector	Mathematics Geography	
10068 Angela Wilkinson-Tilbrook Team inspector	English Art and design Special educational needs English as an additional language Inclusion	
02866 Bob Battey Team inspector	Learning Support Centre	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Lord Scudamore Primary School is a very large primary school situated in the centre of Hereford. It serves a large area with a mixture of social and economic backgrounds. Currently, there are 567 pupils on roll (284 boys and 283 girls) aged from 4 to 11 years, plus 56 children who attend the nursery part-time. Nine per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Less than 1 per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language, none is at an early stage of acquiring the English language. Less than 3 per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority groups. The school has identified 12 per cent of pupils as having special educational needs, which is similar to the national average. Six pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. The school has a Learning Support Centre for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. When children enter the school, their attainment varies widely, but overall it is currently slightly below that expected for their age.

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

This is a good school with some very good features where overall standards by the age of 11 are above average. Pupils develop very positive attitudes to work and make good progress because of the good quality of teaching. The school is well led and managed. It provides good value for money.

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

- By the age of 11, pupils achieve good standards in mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, history and music.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and he is well supported by a committed staff team.
- The quality of teaching is good and so pupils make good progress in their learning.
- The school is a very caring community that fosters very positive attitudes and, consequently, pupils are very well motivated, their behaviour is very good and they form very positive relationships with other pupils and staff.
- There are very good levels of support for pupils with special educational needs.

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

- The standards pupils achieve in writing through more opportunities to use their writing skills.
- Activities in mathematics so as to provide more challenge for more able pupils.
- Pupils' standards in religious education.
- The promotion of pupils' understanding of the richness and variety of other cultures found within Britain's multiethnic and multicultural society.

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

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

The school has made very good progress since its previous inspection in November 1997. It has very successfully addressed the issues raised at that time by improving its procedures for strategic planning, the monitoring of teaching and assessment. There has been a great improvement in the provision for pupils with special educational needs. Consequently, the quality of teaching has much improved, the school is better managed and overall standards have risen. The school successfully gained Beacon School status in September 2001.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	D	D	E
Mathematics	B	B	C	D
Science	B	A	B	B

**Key**

well above average    A  
 above average        B  
 average                C  
 below average        D  
 well below average   E

Overall, children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and because of good teaching they achieve the expected early learning goals for their age by the end of reception. They make particularly good progress in their early literacy and mathematical development and many exceed the expected goals in these areas of learning. Pupils make sound progress in the infants and by the age of 7 they achieve above average standards in English and average standards in mathematics and science. In geography, history, information and communication technology and physical education pupils' standards match those expected for their age. Pupils' attainment is better than that expected in art and design, design and technology and music.

Pupils build on this sound start and by the age of 11 they gain good levels of personal achievement. This is confirmed by the school's performance in national tests over recent years, which has been improving in line with the national trend despite a slight dip in 2002. Currently, standards by Year 6 in the core subjects of mathematics and science are above average. Standards in English are below average because pupils have not sufficiently developed their writing skills. In art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, history and music, pupils' standards are higher than those expected as they show good levels of knowledge. Pupils' standards in geography and physical education match those expected for their age.

Throughout the school standards in religious education are below those expected. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard in national tests at the ages of both 7 and 11 is lower than is normally found.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They are very enthusiastic and show good levels of interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are very well behaved in lessons and around the school. They are polite and friendly.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good and their relationships with each other and with staff are very positive.
Attendance	The pupils' attendance rate is in line with the national average.

The pupils' enthusiasm for school, very good behaviour and very positive relationships are important strengths of the school and contribute greatly to their good levels of progress and the positive ethos of the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good and as a result pupils make good progress in their learning. In the lessons observed almost a third of the teaching was satisfactory, a third was good and a third was very good. There were examples of excellent teaching and one unsatisfactory lesson. There were examples of good and very good teaching in each section of the school.

In the main, teachers meet the needs of all their pupils and they provide activities at the correct level for each pupil. The teaching of the basic skills in the Foundation Stage is good and so children make good progress towards their early learning goals. The teaching of literacy is good in the infants and satisfactory in the juniors. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors. In some numeracy lessons, teachers do not provide more challenging work for higher-attaining pupils so as to extend their learning further. Strengths in the teaching include the very good management of pupils and well-planned lessons. Consequently, pupils develop very good levels of interest and independence and they put much effort into their work.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides pupils with a good range of learning opportunities, which in most subjects provide a wide-ranging, well-balanced curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for these pupils, including those who attend the Learning Support Centre, is very good. Consequently, they make good progress towards their individual targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	None of this very small number of pupils is at an early stage of acquiring English and so the school makes no specific provision for them. They make similar progress to that of their classmates.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision for pupils' personal development is good. Provision is very good for their moral and social development, and good for their spiritual development. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory – it does not sufficiently develop pupils' awareness of the richness and diversity of cultures within British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a very caring school. There are excellent procedures in place for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school has very good links with parents who in turn make a very positive contribution to the work of the school.

Strengths in the school's provision include a very good range of extra-curricular activities and excellent procedures for promoting good behaviour. The school successfully promotes the inclusion of all its pupils. The school has correctly identified the need to improve writing skills, develop further the mathematical skills of higher-attaining pupils and to improve multicultural education.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership. He is well supported by the senior management team. Together, all members of staff make an effective team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very supportive of the school. Governors carry out their various duties well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its own performance well and identifies appropriate areas for future development.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its staff and resources and it supports its development through good use of its finances.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	There is an adequate number of staff, who are suitably qualified and well matched to the needs of the pupils. The school's buildings provide a satisfactory level of accommodation. Overall, learning resources are good, except in the Foundation Stage where they are unsatisfactory.

Leadership and management, particularly that of the headteacher, are a strength of the school and have a very positive impact on the good progress pupils make. Between governors, headteacher and staff there is a shared commitment to continual improvement. The school effectively applies the principles of best value in its management and use of resources.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Nineteen parents attended a meeting with inspectors and 243 (39 per cent) completed questionnaires.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school</li> <li>• The teaching is good and children make good progress.</li> <li>• The school has high expectations and it helps children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed and the staff are approachable.</li> <li>• Behaviour in school is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information they receive about children's progress.</li> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• The school working more closely with parents.</li> </ul>

The inspection findings support the very positive views of the parents. The quality of information on pupils' progress was found to be good overall. The homework arrangements are satisfactory overall but older pupils do not get sufficient homework on a regular basis. The range of activities outside lessons is very good but most clubs are for older pupils. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. At the time of the last inspection (November 1997), overall standards by the ages of 7 and 11 were average. In most subjects, pupils attained the expected standard for their age, and in some subjects they exceeded it, for example in music in the infants and mathematics in the juniors. Overall, pupils made sound progress, except those who attended the special educational needs centre whose progress was unsatisfactory. Since then standards have declined in a small number of subjects, have been maintained in others and have improved in many. Currently, overall standards are average by the age of 7 and above average by 11, but there are some specific areas where standards are not high enough. Overall, standards have improved significantly since the last inspection as a result of improvements to the quality both of teaching and the learning opportunities provided.
2. Children's individual levels of attainment on entry to the nursery vary considerably and overall attainment varies greatly from year to year. Currently, it is slightly below that normally found because of the number of children requiring considerable care and support from staff. In recent years it has been closer to that normally expected of this age though in some year groups it has been below. Children make sound progress while they attend the nursery part-time and good, and often very good, progress in reception. By the end of the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup>, children have made good progress overall and very good progress in their early literacy skills. Most children meet the early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They exceed the early learning goals in their literacy, mathematical, creative and physical development. This overall good level of achievement is the result of good teaching in the Foundation Stage.
3. Over recent years (2000-02), the school's results in National Curriculum tests for 7-year-olds have been consistently above average in reading and writing, more variable but average overall in mathematics. Inspection findings show a similar pattern in the current Year 2. Pupils build on the good start made in the Foundation Stage and continue to make good progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Standards in English by the age of 7 are above average and compare favourably with those in similar schools<sup>2</sup>. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics and overall they achieve average standards in this subject. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard, Level 3, is lower than normally found as higher-attaining pupils are not given sufficient challenge to ensure they make the best possible progress. Consequently, pupils' performance in mathematics is below that found in similar schools. Pupils in Year 2 achieve the expected standard for their age in science, geography, history, information and communication technology and physical education. In art and design, design and technology, and music, pupils make good progress and standards are above national expectations because of very effective teaching in these subjects.
4. The school's overall results in English, mathematics and science in national tests for 11-year-olds have been improving broadly in line with the national trend. When compared with similar schools the school's performance in 2002 was well below average in English, below average in mathematics and above average in science. However, the school's results compare more favourably in comparison with schools that achieved similar results when the

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and finishes at the end of the reception class year. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

<sup>2</sup> National benchmark information bands together 'similar schools' based on the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

pupils were in Year 2. This would indicate that pupils have made satisfactory progress in English through Years 3 to 6, and good progress in mathematics and science. Allowing for slight differences between individual year groups, the school's results over recent years show a similar pattern to that found during the inspection. Overall standards in English are below average. For example, in national tests in 2002 the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard, Level 4, was similar to that found nationally but the proportion who went on to achieve the higher standard, Level 5, was well below average. Pupils' standards in speaking and listening by Year 6 are above those expected for their age and their standards in reading are similar to those expected. However, as recognised by the school, standards in writing are below average. The disparity between the results in Year 2 and Year 6 are due a variety reasons. These include differences between the year groups with more pupils with additional learning needs entering the year group during Years 3 to 6 and recent initiatives put into place by the school have not had time to have an effect on the standards of the older pupils. Pupils are also given insufficient time to develop their writing skills in longer pieces of writing.

5. Currently, overall standards by age 11 in mathematics and science are above average and this reflects an improvement on the results of national tests in 2002, particularly in mathematics. However, in both subjects there are areas for development. In mathematics the above average result is due to the high proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard, Level 4. Average and lower-attaining pupils are challenged well and make good progress. The proportion that goes on to achieve the higher standard, Level 5, is below that normally found as higher-attaining pupils are not given sufficient challenge. In science the proportions of pupils who achieve Level 4 and Level 5 are above that normally found. However, inspection evidence found that pupils' science enquiry skills are not as high as they might be for higher-attaining pupils. By Year 6, pupils achieve higher than the expected standard in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, history and music. Pupils achieve the expected standard for their age in geography and physical education.
6. Standards in religious education at the age of both 7 and 11 have declined since the last inspection. This is because the school does not allocate sufficient time to the subject. Consequently, the pupils' progress in religious education is unsatisfactory and standards are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for the subject in both Years 2 and 6.
7. There has been considerable improvement in the progress of pupils with special educational needs since the last inspection. Pupils in the mainstream classes now make good progress in all classes. This is due in part to the way that class teachers plan work specifically to meet the pupils' particular needs. It is also as a result of the work of the special educational needs co-ordinator. Pupils in the school's Learning Support Centre make very good progress. From very low standards of attainment in English and mathematics, they achieve very well as a result of the very good provision now made for them. The progress of the small number of pupils from ethnic minority groups is similar to that of their classmates. There are only three pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language. They have all made good progress and are competent English speakers. They do not require additional support for learning. They make the same progress in lessons as their peers and achieve well with their language work in all lessons across the curriculum. There is no significant difference in the standards achieved by these pupils. Similarly, there are no significant differences between the standards achieved by girls and boys.
8. Higher-attaining pupils make at least sound progress and in many subjects they make good progress. A common feature in both recent test results and in inspection evidence is the smaller proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard. For example, the proportion of 7-year-olds achieving the higher standard, Level 3, in mathematics and the proportions of

11-year-olds achieving Level 5 in writing and mathematics. The school has correctly identified the need to further develop the learning opportunities it provides for its higher-attaining pupils in these subjects so as to ensure they make the best possible progress. In many other subjects, including information and communication technology, history and music, higher-attaining pupils achieve appropriately high standards.

9. The use of reading and writing skills in subjects other than English satisfactorily supports the development of pupils' literacy skills. For example, pupils produce extensive accounts in history and evaluations in design and technology. They make satisfactory use of their numeracy and measuring skills in science and design and technology. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects has improved greatly since the last inspection and is now good, particularly for the older pupils whose teachers have access to the interactive whiteboards during lessons. Pupils, for example, research topics in history using the Internet and use data handling and control programs in design and technology.
10. The school has set realistic targets for pupils to achieve in literacy and numeracy. It has successfully raised pupils' overall standards. Despite the weakness in writing, pupils reach good levels of personal achievement as a result of good teaching and an improved curriculum. There is a very strong commitment amongst the staff to raise standards further.

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

11. Attitudes and behaviour are very good and are significant factors in the good progress that pupils make and the quality of school life. This is an inclusive, vibrant and supportive community where the ethos is very positive and relationships are very good. Pupils enjoy school and all the intellectual, practical and physical challenges on offer.
12. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning especially when the teaching inspires very good work and expectations are high. Pupils settle to work quickly and are keen to learn, have good concentration levels and answer questions eagerly. They maintain interest even when they spend long sessions on the carpet at the starts of some lessons. They follow instructions well, work hard and respond well to praise and encouragement. Pupils relish challenge and this was seen in an excellent Year 2 art lesson when the teacher's enthusiasm for the work of the artist Paul Klee captivated pupils and inspired them to emulate his painting style and produce high quality work. Pupils feel that their lessons are fun and are usually interesting. They are keen to discuss their work and take pride in its presentation.
13. Behaviour in the classroom and around the school is very good. Indoor behaviour is calm and orderly as pupils walk on the left of corridors and stairways as they move around the school. Lunchtimes are pleasant sociable times held in classrooms. Behaviour in the playground is very good and pupils amuse themselves well with skipping, practising dance routines and enjoying the various apparatus available. Some boys are occasionally boisterous but it is good-natured and pupils have fun during playtimes. Pupils show reverence during assemblies especially during time for reflection and prayer and they sing joyfully. Pupils confirmed strongly that bullying seldom occurs and when reported is dealt with very effectively and is simply not tolerated. There were three fixed-term exclusions last year and a more recent permanent exclusion. These were for persistent and unsafe behaviour and were fully justified.
14. Relationships throughout the school are very good and are based on mutual respect for all in a caring school community. Teachers speak positively to pupils and all talents are valued. This builds confidence and self-esteem and helps pupils tackle new learning and to do their best. Boys and girls and the small number of pupils from ethnic minority groups mix freely and happily. Pupils have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions

on others and have the utmost respect for each other's feelings and values. They are aware of the benefits of goodness and kindness and feel that the moral guidance they receive fosters this effectively. They work well together, sharing equipment and taking turns. They also support each other in small group and paired work.

15. The personal development of pupils is very good. Pupils are well mannered, helpful, and welcoming to visitors by opening doors and their friendly greetings. Pupils are keen to be involved in daily routines and jobs that help the smooth running of the school day. Prefects in particular, carry out their duties very well. Pupils take their pupil council responsibilities seriously and feel pleased that they have a 'voice' in the school. They really enjoy and appreciate the huge range of extra-curricular activities on offer and the school trips they take. The residential trip to the Black Mountains gives pupils a range of new and exciting learning experiences away from school and home. Initiative is shown when pupils nominate a charity to support in assembly and then devise ways of raising funds for the chosen charity. A notice board of certificates and thank-you notes from charities is testimony to this good pupil-centred work. Pupils are becoming independent learners especially when they assess their own work against the learning objectives set by the teachers. They carry out research and use their 'mind mapping'<sup>3</sup> and thinking skills to plan and explore their work in depth. They can also choose resources and activities in some lessons like design and technology and art and design.
16. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils' attendance rate is similar to the national level, though it was higher at the last inspection. Authorised absence is mainly attributable to genuine illness and holiday taking. Unauthorised absence levels are below the national average and reflect the school's effective following up of absences. Punctuality on arrival at school is generally good. Time keeping elsewhere however is less than satisfactory. When the whistle for the start of school is late, some lessons start later than planned and some activities, like assembly, over run the allotted time.

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

17. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching has much improved since the previous inspection. This is due to improved monitoring of the work of all teachers and to the commitment of all teachers to improve. In the lessons observed during the inspection almost a third of the teaching was satisfactory, a third was good and a third was very good. There were examples of excellent teaching and there was one unsatisfactory lesson. Overall, teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and in the juniors are good, and in the infants they are satisfactory. However, they vary in quality between classes and subjects.
18. The proportion of good and very good teaching has increased since the previous inspection. This is mainly as a result of a rigorous monitoring programme to improve teaching. Senior teachers and advanced skills teachers observe lessons and provide feedback and support to teachers. Enthusiastic staff are constantly learning and willing to try new ideas to create active learners. The school takes a research-based approach in the development of pupils' thinking skills and the use of tools such as mind mapping and accelerated learning. This has contributed to resolving weaknesses, seen at the last inspection, in the range of teaching strategies and in the use of individual educational plans to fully include pupils with a special educational need in all lessons. Inconsistencies in marking, identified at the last inspection, still remain in some classes and marking does not always inform pupils about areas for development or indicate the next steps in learning. Strengths in class management have been maintained but the use of homework is now too haphazard to help parents contribute to children's learning at home.

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<sup>3</sup> Mind mapping is a technique used to organise ideas about a subject. It helps pupils to plan their work more logically and identifies what they know and what they need to learn next.

19. Teaching for pupils by the age of 7 is good in English, art, design and technology and music and for pupils by the age of 11 in mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, history and music. Teaching in other subjects is satisfactory with a weakness in not setting high enough targets for higher-attaining pupils particularly in mathematics and science. There are examples in the school where teachers subject knowledge slows pupils' progress such as in how to combine enquiry skills in science with knowledge and understanding. In some classes teachers are less confident in the teaching of music and religious education.
20. The quality of teaching literacy in the youngest classes is good and overall in the oldest classes it is satisfactory. There is a lack of a high enough expectation or planning for pupils to develop extended writing skills. Too much of their written work is left unfinished or not marked well enough to include comments that correct or improve the work. In the one unsatisfactory lesson teaching was not specific enough and pupils were uncertain of the task. In satisfactory lessons teaching provided insufficient support for all pupils to fully understand significant ideas and vocabulary. In very good literacy lessons the teacher's voice aroused pupils' sense of expectation and used good subject knowledge, which inspired pupils to explain and use different language structures in their speaking and writing. Good and very good teaching selects topics of interest and ensures that boys as well as girls and pupils of all abilities are fully engaged in their learning.
21. The quality of teaching and learning numeracy in the youngest classes is limited by an insufficient allocation of curriculum time and they have a less than expected number of lessons relevant to their needs each week. Occasionally too much information at the beginning of lesson restricts the time for pupils to investigate for themselves. In older classes the quality of teaching numeracy is good. Appropriate methods support pupils' confidence with effective use of resources and assessment of pupils learning. Teaching expectations could be raised for higher-attaining pupils with an improvement in the use of marking and homework.
22. The teaching of information and communication technology is good by the end of the school where it effectively enhances learning, for example, in science by using programs that simulate events that pupils may not otherwise fully understand. It is combined well with science and design and technology for pupils to control what happens in their models. In other subjects, teachers make growing use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. For example, teachers provide pupils with opportunities to use computers to communicate their ideas using different ways of presenting their text. Pupils use CD-ROMs and the Internet to research topics and teachers use digital cameras to record examples of pupils' work in subjects such as physical education.
23. Pupils' learning is overall good. Children in the nursery are welcomed into a happy atmosphere and dynamic teaching in reception creates lively activities that interest them. Planning is very good for all aspects of children's development so children of all abilities make good progress by the end of reception. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are supported well by classroom assistants so that they are fully involved in learning and integrated socially. In all year groups sensitive and thorough questioning at the beginning of lessons encourages pupils to think about what they already know. However they are not always suitably expected to give reasons for their ideas, for example, in science to suggest how they might use their ideas for further enquiry. Very good and excellent teaching made learning exciting and used excellent subject knowledge to challenge pupils' ideas. Learning that was very well managed, progressed at a rapid pace and was supported well by information and communication technology. For example, music was used well to build up a spiritual atmosphere that created imagery and stimulated pupils to use powerful language during a Year 6 literacy lesson. Again in a Year 2 art and design lesson, music was well chosen to inspire pupils' work.

24. The quality of relationships within most lessons is very good and because teaching captures pupils' interest they concentrate well and work in pairs or groups with a high level of independence. Pupils make a very good effort to tackle demanding tasks creatively, such as those involving a range of mechanisms in design and technology. This was well illustrated in an exceptional lesson using very good visual resources with a clear demonstration and explanation. Pupils benefit from the amount of time allocated to practical activities that are suitably challenging. Most pupils are aware of how well they are progressing towards class or their own academic and personal targets and by Year 6 are involved in monitoring their achievement in lessons and consequently are knowledgeable about their own learning. Teachers know their pupils well and generally pupils receive very good educational support and guidance. However, inconsistency in the quality of marking to inform all pupils about how to raise standards and the acceptance of below expected standards in writing has had a negative impact upon pupils' quality of writing by the end of the school.
25. Support staff and volunteers from the community work hard during group activities and they provide valuable support especially to pupils with special educational needs so that they make good progress in lessons. In some lessons the deployment of support staff could be better used at the beginning and end of lessons either to offer support to other classes or to intervene to support pupils who find difficulty in understanding what is being taught. Pupils with special educational needs including those with a statement are well integrated into the life of the school. There has been an improvement in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs since the last inspection. Teachers make effective use of the well-written and comprehensive individual education plans and are closely involved in regularly monitoring targets. In lessons teachers actively involve these pupils and, for example, in science they are encouraged to tell the class of their achievements. This ensures that they feel valued and have high self-esteem. Where pupils are withdrawn for additional support in literacy and numeracy teaching is very good. Planning is fully in line with pupils' class work with excellent sequences of activities, well prepared tasks and very good follow up activities that include good use of information and communication technology to support learning. Very good questioning of these pupils challenges their thinking and enables them to make good progress.

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

26. The school provides a good curriculum that is appropriately broad and relevant for all pupils. A particularly strong feature is the very wide range of extra activities such as clubs and visits that greatly enrich the curriculum. All statutory requirements are met and the school has embraced the principles of educational inclusion: all pupils have access to all subjects and activities. The school's overall provision for pupils' personal development is good and has improved since the last inspection. There is, however, a weakness in the provision for multicultural education and minor issues relating to the balance of the curriculum and the time allocated to teaching.
27. Since the last inspection, the school has improved its provision for information and communication technology and standards have risen in this subject. Standards have also risen in many other areas of the curriculum, such as science, history, art and design, and music. Learning opportunities for pupils with special educational needs have improved significantly and are now very good. These improvements to the learning opportunities provided by the school represent a considerable achievement since the time of the last inspection: there is a shared commitment amongst all staff to improvement and considerable capacity to succeed.
28. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. It follows the stepping stones that lead to the nationally recognised early learning goals, providing children with a firm base for their future learning. Children with special educational needs in the nursery

receive good extra support from a specially trained teaching assistant but this is limited to two or three mornings a week.

29. The school's curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is suitably broad. All subjects of the National Curriculum are offered including religious education. The balance between subjects is sometimes affected by the school's present practice in blocking certain subject areas for the sake of coherence. The practice of linking art with music is very effective and brings meaning and relevance to pupils' learning. However, the time allocated to religious education is reduced due to the inclusion of personal and social education. Consequently the curriculum for religious education is not being fully covered. Although the school complies with the recommended minimum times for the number of teaching hours, there is some inefficiency in the way time is managed within the school day which reduces the amount of teaching time available throughout the school.
30. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are now fully embedded and in the main are having a positive effect on the quality of teaching and standards except for writing in the juniors, and provision for higher-attaining pupils in mathematics. The school has made very effective use of the national 'catch up' programmes such as Additional Literacy Support to accelerate the progress of pupils having difficulties in English and mathematics. When pupils are taken out of a lesson to receive extra help, this is done sensitively and is well planned to meet their particular needs. For example, in Year 3 several pupils are withdrawn for additional literacy support but the teacher takes care to include them in the final discussion about their work when they return.
31. The school makes very good use of teachers' special curricular skills such as in information and communication technology. Similarly, the school's provision for instrumental music is of a very high standard because of specialist teaching. Over 50 pupils learn to play musical instruments such as the recorder, violin, flute, clarinet and guitar. The school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Many teachers generously contribute their special skills and time to provide very rich learning opportunities for pupils through a wide range of flourishing extra activities including recorder clubs, country dancing, netball, football, gymnastics, street dancing and French. Breakfast club, lunchtime homework clubs and after-school clubs occur every day. The many and varied clubs greatly enhance the curriculum and are well attended. Visits out of school to enrich subjects such as history and geography range from local venues such as historic houses and the cathedral in Hereford to residential study trips in the Black Mountains. These visits also provide valuable opportunities for the development of pupils' personal, social and health education as well as their spiritual, moral and cultural development. Visitors to school such as artists, writers and musicians make special contributions to pupils' learning opportunities and spiritual development, making lasting impressions on the pupils involved. For example, a pupil was amazed by the number of notes a visiting flautist played in a short extract from Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Flight of the Bumble Bee*. He wrote, 'I guessed 50 notes. In fact it was 162 notes. I thought it was brilliant'.
32. Overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. As a result of changes in the way that pupils are withdrawn for additional support there have been considerable improvements in access to the National Curriculum. All pupils with special educational needs now have full access to all subjects within a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum with work targeted to meet their specific needs. Pupils receive very good support in class as well as in groups withdrawn for help and guidance. Teachers plan lessons carefully to ensure pupils receive work that suits their particular needs. They and their support staff work alongside pupils in lessons such as mathematics to give a short time of extra support.
33. The school has good links with the local community, its features and amenities such as Hereford Cathedral and a local football club. For example, the school choir regularly sings



to entertain senior citizens, and raises funds for charities by singing to customers in local supermarkets. The school visits local cultural events such as art exhibitions. There are very good links with the local church for annual ceremonies such as Harvest Festival and the Carol Service at Christmas. The vicar who is also the Chair of Governors attends school assemblies making a special contribution to pupils' understanding of belonging to a community and of feeling valued. In its prestigious role as a Beacon School, the school makes many very good links with partner schools and other institutions. There are close links with the Cathedral School and the Sixth Form College, and with colleges of further education such as Worcester College. The school welcomes students and offers very good opportunities to support their training. These links enrich the curriculum and contribute greatly to pupils' learning.

34. The school's overall provision for pupils' personal development is good. Within this provision, moral and social development are very good and spiritual development is good. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall but is weak in the development of pupils' understanding of traditions from Britain's multi-ethnic and multicultural society.
35. Spiritual development is good. Assemblies comply with the requirements for collective worship. There is usually a strong moral message delivered in range of different ways to interest and involve pupils. The theme during the inspection week was about the importance of kindness. The spiritual dimensions are developed when pupils are given time to think and reflect about the assembly content. The local vicar is a frequent visitor leading some spiritually uplifting assemblies. Spiritual development elsewhere is good especially when pupils are encouraged to explore and reflect on beliefs and values and to understand feelings and emotions. Pupils are given some good opportunities to express these elements in religious education and in personal and social education. 'Mind mapping' also encourages pupils to think deeply about the learning focus and write from the heart. This was seen in an outstanding Year 6 English lesson when pupils imagined the horror of being in the trenches during the First World War.
36. Moral development is very good and there is a well-developed ethos of respect and kindness within which pupils' efforts and achievements are valued. Through the very fine examples set by the headteacher and other adults in the school, pupils learn the principles of right and wrong and what high standards of behaviour and care for others are expected. Staff constantly remind pupils about this and it permeates all aspects of school life. As well as assemblies, personal and social education also promotes moral development when pupils consider themselves and they explore issues such as anger, jealousy, loneliness and ultimately 'How can I make myself a better person?'
37. Social development is also very good. The skills and the personal qualities required to become more mature and take on greater responsibility as pupils get older are promoted very well. The personal and social education programme teaches pupils some important life skills such as adopting a healthy lifestyle, first aid and 'Crucial Crew'<sup>4</sup> crisis training, general safety at home and on the road, personal safety and some early good citizenship skills. The pupil council enables pupils to raise issues effectively. The house system encourages good work, extra good effort and good behaviour and pupils value house points. Pupils elect to raise money for various charities and the fundraising drives extend social awareness and help pupils appreciate the plight of others. Other experiences including taking part in assemblies, school productions, concerts and sporting events and clubs also extend social development very well.
38. Cultural development is satisfactory overall with strengths and weaknesses. There is good use of classic literature and stories, a range of music and artwork to inspire work. Good opportunities are taken to invite visitors and to go on visits to enrich learning. Year 6 pupils

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<sup>4</sup> Crucial Crew – this is a series of problem solving activities often organised by the local emergency services that help pupils understand what to do if approached by strangers or in an emergency. It often includes simple first-aid training.

are planning to go to a Shakespeare workshop shortly when the focus is on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Most pupils have the chance to meet a children's author or a poet and they recently heard a local orchestra play. The school successfully promotes the cultural traditions of its own area especially the rich history and geography of the locality. During the inspection, Year 4 pupils visited the 'Old House' as part of their history studies. In religious education, pupils gain knowledge of the major world religions. There are, however, fewer opportunities to develop pupils' appreciation of the richness and diversity of other cultures, particularly those found in Britain and these are not specifically planned for across the curriculum. This aspect is the weaker element and pupils' understanding of other cultures is underdeveloped. Staff visits to other countries have encouraged some shared knowledge of those countries, including making e-mail pals with pupils from the United States and Uganda when pupils have been contrasting life there with life in Hereford.

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

39. The school continues to take great care of pupils and this helps to improve the effectiveness of the teaching and learning. Staff know their pupils well and pupils are very confident in their approaches to their teachers and other adults in the school and this helps pupils to feel happy, safe and secure. The school gives a high priority to a very good range of procedures to encourage attendance, good behaviour and work habits and to safeguard pupils' welfare.
40. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. Registers are consistently maintained and absences are rigorously followed up to encourage good attendance and minimise unauthorised absence. Holiday taking is actively discouraged to reduce the disruption this causes to learning. Despite the school's good efforts, some parents do not heed the school's pleas to give education the greater priority.
41. The procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are outstanding. They are consistently applied and there is an effective positive approach that is constantly reinforced throughout the school day. Pupils are familiar with their own class rules, school and playground rules and high expectations for behaviour and they usually behave very well. Rewards and sanctions are used very well to encourage better behaviour and effort. An entry into the 'Golden' book and headteacher's stickers, presented weekly at the assembly of excellence are highly prized accolades. The procedures for eliminating any oppressive behaviour are also excellent. Bullying is not tolerated and the one recorded racist incident last year was treated very seriously to promote racial equality in an inclusive school community.
42. The arrangements for child protection are excellent and fully meet all the requirements. The school is vigilant and carefully monitors any suspicious circumstances. Pupils in foster care are also monitored very well and supported very sensitively. When pupils are sick or injured they receive a very high level of care and attention and all pupils' medical conditions and other disabilities are catered for very well. The school has some thorough systems for carrying out all the routine health and safety checking and risk assessments and the record keeping is very good. School security, including Internet security is also very good.
43. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is very well promoted by teachers who keep detailed records about personal development in their 'red file' system, the on-going and thorough personal development records sheets and through pupils' personal target tracking. Teachers show a high level of support and commitment to pupils and are able to give them good advice for improving attitudes, social skills and encourage a good work ethic. More vulnerable pupils are supported well by trained counsellors who mentor and give pupils help and advice for coping with their difficulties. The induction arrangements for new pupils are very good and enable them to settle and feel part of the school community quickly.

44. The school has developed a range of good procedures for observing, measuring and recording what pupils know, understand and can do, and is using the information collected well. These procedures were not so effective at the time of the last inspection. There are now good procedures in place for all subjects. The school reviews and monitors these systems well on a regular basis to ensure that they are effective. Teachers have a useful bank of information gathered from statutory and other test results and assessment tasks. In addition, there is a moderation day in the summer term when all co-ordinators assess work for their subject. As a result of this, each co-ordinator contributes to a report that is given to all staff on good practice and gives suggestions for improvement. The school has put into place an effective target setting system. Pupils' targets are usually displayed well in classrooms so they are part of pupils' everyday experience. The teachers work well with pupils to agree the wording of their targets to ensure that they are always meaningful to the pupils.
45. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is usually good. This means that teachers usually plan work well for pupils as their prior learning has been assessed and taken into account. However, although gifted and talented pupils are identified, the school does not fully ensure that their needs are met through a programme of enrichment and extension. Teachers plan extra support for pupils identified as needing it. Statistical information is provided to the school on National Curriculum test results and consequently the school is aware of those areas that it needs to focus on in order to improve attainment. This enables subject co-ordinators, especially in English and mathematics, to review and make the necessary adjustments in planning and to organise in-service training where needed. For instance, this year the school has targeted improving pupils' writing. However, this is an area that needs further development so that the curricular targets that are set not only identify areas for development, but also describe the strategies that will be used to address those areas.
46. There is a good record keeping system that records pupils' progress through the school. This system is in place for all subjects of the curriculum. Assessment data is kept up to date and analysed regularly. The school encourages pupils to become involved in self-assessment. Pupils reflect on how much they have learnt and understood regularly at the end of lessons and report back to the teacher in a variety of ways, for instance, by a thumbs up thumbs down system. Alternatively they may use a traffic lights system by colour coding their work in their books. Teachers' marking is usually regular and supportive but the quality of marking is not consistent throughout the school. In order to develop further pupils' involvement in their learning, the school is presently assessing a new system of marking.

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

47. The school has a stronger partnership with parents than at the last inspection. Parents are very supportive and are very satisfied with the education provided and other aspects of the school. Parents particularly like the guarantee the school offers to address any concerns as soon as possible. They also appreciate the approachability of staff and the welcoming and caring environment in the school.
48. Parents had some minor misgivings about the quality of information particularly about progress, extra-curricular activities, the homework arrangements and home-school links. The inspection team investigated these and found the quality of information is good overall. The homework arrangements are satisfactory overall but older pupils do not get sufficient homework on a regular basis. The range of activities outside lessons is very good but most clubs are for older pupils. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good. The family induction arrangements are very good and children are able to settle quickly when they start school. Parents are welcome in school and have good working

relationships with staff in joint approaches to improve standards and to ensure pupils' happiness.

49. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. Parent governors are easy to access to raise issues and make suggestions, which are welcomed. Parents' views are regularly gauged in surveys as an important part of continuous improvement. Many parents regularly volunteer to help each week in the classroom to effectively support learning and whenever other needs arise. The Friends of Lord Scudamore School is an active and enthusiastic group raising funds and providing the school with a busy social life. Parents visit whenever they are invited especially when they are supporting their children in church services, school concerts and productions, sports activities and the various meetings about learning. The latest workshops about the new special education needs code of practice and the 'mind mapping' techniques the school employs are very useful ways to keep parents up to date.
50. The quality of information provided for parents is good overall. The regular friendly school and parents' association letters and newsletters keep parents in touch with news and information, dates for the diary and details about any special activities and trips. The early autumn year group meetings and booklets are very useful for letting parents know what to expect and offer a chance to meet teachers. Large notice boards contain detailed information about the schemes of work and what children will be learning for the term ahead across all subjects. The information parents receive about their children's progress is generally good. Staff make themselves available each day to informally discuss any issues with parents and many do. The main formal consultation however, to discuss their children's work and share new targets for learning is not until March. Some parents expressed a wish to have more information about progress earlier to enable them to support their children more effectively. The quality of information in the full annual school reports is good. Parents are provided with good information about their children's performance over the past year especially for core subjects. The reporting of other subjects is more inconsistent however and contains much about coverage and enjoyment rather than specific progress. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are full and well written and meet all the requirements well. The home-school books are used very well to record reading and for dialogue with parents of younger pupils. The planners and homework diaries for older pupils showed how little homework they receive and how irregularly it is given and some pupils and parents are concerned about this.

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

51. At the time of the last inspection the school was soundly led and managed but the overall management and efficiency of the school required some improvement. There were weaknesses in the school's strategic planning, including the school's development plan and its financial planning. Since then the school has worked very hard to improve its management structure and currently it is well led and managed. The school has made very good progress since its last inspection and it now gives good value for money. This is clearly reflected in its success in achieving Investors in People status and in becoming a Beacon School.
52. The headteacher provides very good leadership. He has a clear vision of the school as a learning community, and this is shared well with other staff, parents and governors. He demonstrates his commitment by continuing to teach as a class teacher, which means that he shares in any new initiatives in which other teachers are asked to participate. It is because of his strong leadership that the school has made very good progress since the last inspection, both in the standards achieved across subjects, the teaching and curriculum provided and in the attitudes and behaviour of pupils. Because of the very good team spirit that he has created, as well as the expertise and commitment of its staff, the school is well placed to improve further.

53. The headteacher is supported well by the senior management team. He works closely with the deputy head, who also shares a class with him, both within the school and in their work as a Beacon School, providing training opportunities for other schools. The school's administrative officer also plays an important part in the senior management team. With the very efficient office staff, she takes much of the administrative load from the headteacher and deputy. Decisions of the senior management team are communicated to other staff well through full staff or key stage meetings.
54. The governing body meets all its legal obligations. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are frequent visitors to the school and many help on a regular basis, which aids them in their understanding of the school. They are also able to ask questions about its performance through the analysis of test results and other reports. The governing body has a full committee structure, with individual committees reporting back to the full governing body. It exercises its role well.
55. Subject co-ordinators manage their subjects effectively. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, their management is satisfactory, although there has been limited feedback from the monitoring of science and the English co-ordinators have not recently undertaken direct monitoring of teaching and learning. The management of the early years' provision is very good. The management of information and communication technology, where standards have improved since the last inspection, is good. Art and design, design and technology, history and geography are also managed well; in other subjects the management is satisfactory, but the co-ordinators' opportunities have been limited because their subjects have not been identified as priorities. However, all co-ordinators prepare detailed development plans and they also monitor pupils' work on a regular basis.
56. The leadership of the special educational needs co-ordinator has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now excellent. The co-ordinator has put into place excellent systems of management. She involves parents, pupils, outside agencies and teachers in the school very well to inform and meet pupils' specific needs. She provides highly effective in-service courses for teachers in identification and assessment, writing individual education plans and developing appropriate programmes for pupils with difficulties in learning. She has established a very good range of diagnostic and attainment testing and the rigorous monitoring of special needs pupils has ensured that there has been considerable improvement in the quality of teaching. There have been significant changes in the management of special educational needs across the school. Reviews are now regularly held with parents of every identified pupil invited. The special educational needs register is thorough, detailed and fully in line with the new Code of Practice<sup>5</sup>. All files are efficiently maintained. Statements of special educational needs are very well reviewed.
57. There have been improvements in the governing body's role in relation to special educational needs since the last inspection, which stated that governors were not sufficiently involved in maintaining an overview of the school's provision. The governor for this area is now fully involved in the school's provision. She regularly attends training sessions to up date her role and reports regularly to the governing body. She works closely with the special educational needs co-ordinator and frequently tracks the progress of pupils with special educational needs.
58. The school has good procedures in place for monitoring the effectiveness of its work. The headteacher and deputy head observe lessons, as do other senior members of staff. Subject co-ordinators also have the opportunity to do this when their subject is a focus in

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<sup>5</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.

the school development plan. This is an improvement on the last inspection, when there was no systematic monitoring of teaching or standards. However, these procedures have not yet been fully effective in highlighting what can be improved and taking effective action, for instance to improve standards in writing. The school has achieved Investors in People accreditation for its attention to staff training and development. It has very good systems in place for the performance management of teaching staff. Appraisal is also carried out for non-teaching staff but not on an individual basis.

59. The school development plan is a detailed document, to which all staff and governors contribute. It is broken down into targets for each term and has clear success criteria, as well as detailing the resources required. This is an improvement on the last inspection, when it was a key issue to improve the school development plan. However, it would still benefit from having a clearer statement of the priorities within the plan.
60. The school uses the finance available to it well. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when it was a key issue to improve the quality of strategic financial planning. All the money available is being used for the benefit of pupils in the school. For instance, by improving the facilities for information and communication technology, pupils' standards in this subject have improved. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is supplemented well from the school's own budget, to maintain the very good provision for these pupils. The funding available to the school as a Beacon School is used well to enable it to fulfil this role, which also gives good value to the school in the knowledge that it brings of other schools. Spending is monitored on a regular basis by the school's administrative staff and the governing body. A recent audit by the local authority found only minor matters to be addressed. The school follows the principles of best value well, comparing its performance with that of other schools as well as consulting with others, including parents. It makes very good use of new technology, both in its administration, in keeping records of pupils' progress, and in the classroom, where it is used well to promote learning.
61. The school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. Over the last two years, eight teachers have left the school and six teachers have joined the permanent teaching staff. During the time of the inspection, a temporary member of staff was teaching one class. All members of staff work together very well as an effective team. The professional development of staff is securely managed and the school's systems for performance management are effective. Training opportunities for staff address personal priorities and are linked well to the overall needs of the school. As a result, most staff are well trained. There are good strategies for inducting new staff into the school and it makes a valuable contribution to the training of student teachers. It has other good links with local schools and colleges for placements for their students that are greatly appreciated by them.
62. There are eight qualified nursery assistants and trained classroom assistants and one trained special educational needs support assistant with a good balance of experience between them. They play an important part in enhancing pupils' learning. Mid-day supervisors work hard to ensure that mid-day runs smoothly. The school administrator and three other members of the administration team provide very effective support to the school. The caretaker and cleaners take pride in their work and consequently this provides a welcoming environment where pupils feel valued and safe.
63. The school places a high priority on providing a good learning environment for pupils and staff. The buildings provide suitable accommodation for the age and number of pupils on roll. Playground space is adequate but the outdoor-games area is limited. Learning resources are good overall. Library resources have been improved well. In all subjects resources are at least good and used well except the resources for the Foundation Stage where the resources are old and lack variety and in music where the resources are satisfactory but the pianos are very poor. In physical education and personal social and health education the resources are satisfactory. In religious education only satisfactory use

is made of good resources. Outdoor-play equipment for the nursery class children is unsatisfactory. Overall there has been a good improvement in resources.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. To build on its many strengths and to raise standards further, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

(1) raise standards in English by the age of 11, particularly in writing by

- more carefully monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress and the impact of recently introduced initiatives aimed at helping pupils to improve the planning of their writing to help identify further areas for development;
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in writing in a wide range of contexts and styles and in writing extended stories over a period of time;
- (Paragraphs: 4, 80, 84)

(2) raise levels of achievement further, particularly for higher-attaining pupils in mathematics by

- developing the planning for these pupils in numeracy so that what they are to learn is more closely identified, taught and assessed;
  - matching activities more carefully to the needs of these more able pupils by providing more challenging open-ended activities in which pupils apply their knowledge and develop their understanding;
  - raising teachers' and pupils' expectations of what can be achieved;
- (Paragraphs: 5, 8, 94)

(3) raise the overall standards of attainment in religious education so as to meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for the subject by:

- ensuring sufficient time is allocated to the teaching of the subject so that all aspects are taught in sufficient depth;
  - ensuring pupils gain appropriate knowledge and understanding for their age of both Christianity and the other world religions as outlined in the syllabus;
- (Paragraphs: 6, 154-158)

(4) further develop pupils' awareness of the diversity and richness of other cultures by:

- enriching the school's curriculum, through the inclusion of opportunities in all subjects for pupils to explore examples of the rich variety of cultures found in Britain.
- (Paragraphs: 37, 158)

In addition to the key issues above, the following minor issues should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan. They are indicated by the following paragraphs:

Area for development	Paragraphs
The overall time given to teaching and the more effective use of time.	21, 29, 89
Homework, so as to ensure a more regular pattern of work is given, particularly to older pupils.	18, 21, 50, 86, 98, 105
Marking: to ensure that the good practice seen in some lessons is more consistently used throughout the school.	18, 21, 86, 97, 105
Investigative and enquiry skills in science	5, 23, 99, 104
Resources for the Foundation Stage	63, 78



## OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

### The Special Education Centre

65. At the time of inspection the centre provides for a total of 12 pupils. This includes five pupils with learning difficulties that have statements defining their special educational needs. These pupils do not live within the usual catchment area of the school. This is part of the local education authority's provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs. Another eight pupils who live within the catchment area of the school attend the centre for help with their literacy and numeracy. At present it very effectively supports pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 and intends to extend this provision to younger pupils in future. All the pupils benefit greatly from suitably modified programmes of work for all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. They are taught these alongside their fellow pupils in mainstream classes when they are not attending the centre.
66. Overall, the provision is very good. There has been an excellent improvement since the last inspection where the provision was said to be poor. Pupils, from very low standards of attainment in English and mathematics, achieve very well, make very good progress and show very good attitudes to their tasks. For example, in a literacy lesson, supported by very good teaching with some excellent features, the pupils were accurately learning spellings matched to their respective levels of attainment, reading simple texts fluently with good levels of understanding and writing instructions for the growing of tomato plants. Standards were further supported by the very good use of the pupils' better-developed speaking and listening skills applying these to aid their writing skills. The excellent levels of support the pupils received as the lesson proceeded from the teacher and the two teaching assistants aided their very good achievements and progress. Samples of work show that very good attention is given to accuracy and presentation. The pupils are encouraged to re-draft and to present a final text accurately written and punctuated. The very good marking of the pupils' work and the sharing of targets with them, supports their very good understanding of what they are doing and how to improve. Pupils' learning in numeracy is similarly effective. Work and resources are very well prepared, matched to their individual assessed needs. Their learning is very good and they show high levels of motivation and enthusiasm.
67. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace; expectations and the level of challenge are high. Lesson planning and assessment are very good. There is a most effective deployment of very skilled and aware teaching assistants. In a numeracy lesson, aided by the very good planning and assessment the pupils were able to clearly explain their thinking when solving simple money problems. They showed a growing recognition of the value of the coins and how other coins could be used to give the same value.
68. The management of the learning centre by the teacher in charge, who is also the school's special educational needs co-ordinator, is excellent. She has put into place very good systems and resources to meet very well the needs of all the pupils that attend the centre and to support their work in mainstream classes across the school. In conjunction with the teaching assistants who help in the centre she has put into place an excellent learning environment for the pupils. Relationships are excellent and they respond in a most positive manner. The accommodation is very good.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	85
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	4	27	29	24	1	0	0
Percentage	5	32	34	28	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.

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	28 fte	567
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	50

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	60

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	59
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	37

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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	39	41	80

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	36	36
	Girls	37	41	37
	Total	71	77	73
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (92)	96 (99)	91 (99)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	37	38
	Girls	40	37	39
	Total	76	74	77
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (97)	93 (97)	96 (97)
	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	43	44	87

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	33	41
	Girls	36	37	43
	Total	64	70	84
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (78)	80 (83)	97 (99)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	37	39
	Girls	34	39	42
	Total	57	76	81
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (70)	87 (76)	93 (85)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
257	3	1
0	0	0
3	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
229	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)	22
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	27

### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	228

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28 fte
Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	42
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2
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)	1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	1,234,851
Total expenditure	1,262,086
Expenditure per pupil	1,972
Balance brought forward from previous year	54,927
Balance carried forward to next year	27,692

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 39.4%

Number of questionnaires sent out	616
Number of questionnaires returned	243

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	32	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	41	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	50	1	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	47	11	3	2
The teaching is good.	63	33	2	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	45	16	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	36	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	37	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	41	46	10	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	53	43	1	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	42	2	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	49	12	2	11

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**

69. The Foundation Stage is fast emerging as a strength of the school. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection and is now good and at times very good. Some teaching is excellent, particularly in communication, language and literacy. There have recently been many staffing changes but there is a growing spirit of teamwork emerging between staff. For example, the close liaison amongst all the staff in the reception classes is exemplary. The governor with a special interest in this age group is in close contact on a regular basis. The quality of assessment and planning is very high so the areas of learning are made exciting and interesting, completely in tune with the needs of children of this age. Staff make sure that the environment is bright and stimulating, featuring the children's own work in very colourful displays.
70. Children begin in the nursery, attending on a part-time basis mornings or afternoons from the September before their fourth birthday. The following year they attend full-time, transferring to one of three reception classes for a year. Children's levels of attainment on entry to the nursery vary considerably: for instance, several children have special educational needs requiring considerable care and support from staff. Overall, it is currently slightly below that normally found. However, because of the high quality of teaching, most children make good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage across most areas of learning. The more able children in reception classes make very good progress. Assessment records are very well maintained, recording every child's achievements each term, and including targets for the following weeks, special to each child. Staff welcome daily informal contact and exchange information with parents at the start and end of the day, but there are also formal occasions when parents and teachers meet to discuss children's progress and achievements. Staff are mindful of every child's entitlement to all areas of learning in accordance with the school's strong stance on equal opportunities and educational inclusion.

**Personal social and emotional development**

71. Teachers regard this area of development as a priority because several children begin nursery with levels of attainment that are below those expected for their age. They therefore provide many opportunities for children to behave courteously towards each other. They talk frequently to children about their behaviour so that they learn to get along together harmoniously as members of a group. They encourage children to work together in pairs or in small groups. For instance, in the nursery two children worked side by side at the computer: one used the mouse very efficiently while the other showed him what she wanted changing on the screen, asking him politely 'Can you change this now, please?' Although many children in the nursery are working and playing happily alongside each other, they are not yet collaborating. For instance, few discuss what they are doing or help one another and some find it difficult to take turns in a group discussion.
72. In the reception classes, children are making good progress in this area of learning: many eagerly discuss their activities with each other, take turns in discussions and work together in pairs or threes. They are beginning to use the conventions of conversation such as 'please' and 'thank you' as a matter of course. For example, 'Can you pass me the stapler, please?' They work together well in twos and threes realising that there is a need to take turns. They co-operate very well as when taking turns at passing a beanbag to each other, showing patience and consideration. Teachers make many opportunities to encourage children to recognise the difference between right and wrong. For instance, in a story about an animal who pushes others, a teacher comments, 'That's not a kind way to behave, is it?' – to which the children chorus emphatically, 'NO!' The majority of children are well on course to reach the early learning goals for this area of learning by the time they move into

Year 1 because of good teaching. However the children with special educational needs in the nursery are making only limited progress in view of the sporadic additional support and guidance they receive from a specially trained member of staff.

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

73. The majority of children begin the nursery with levels of attainment in this area of their learning that are below those expected for their age. Because of very good and at times excellent teaching in the reception classes, they make very good progress, so by the time they transfer to Year 1 many are on course to exceed the expected goals and are ready for the first stage of the National Literacy Strategy. This is a considerable achievement. Teachers and staff provide many very good opportunities for speaking and listening during the day. For example, they use their very good questioning skills to draw children into class or small group discussions, and devise games that are fun so that children take part confidently. All children including those with special educational needs enjoy a range of activities to encourage their emerging reading and writing skills in imaginative and stimulating ways. For instance, children enjoyed listening to a story about animals choosing their favourite fruits, and then recalled these in the right order. They were confident in their decisions, and were quick to correct the teacher when she muddled up oranges and apples. Children enjoy story-time and listen hard as teachers tell stories with expression, showing them the pictures to sustain concentration and reinforce meaning. Children are encouraged to take books home and many parents complete the home-school diaries that pass to-and-fro. The more able children are developing good reading skills, are fluent and read with expression. All are keen to read their books. Some children are beginning to develop their writing skills, copying words from labels on food cartons or writing their own words and sentences. Most children write their own names and recognise letters that are in their names, and some distinguish between capital and lower case letters. Children with special educational needs make good progress, especially when they receive additional individual support.

### **Mathematical development**

74. Teachers and staff pay considerable attention to this aspect of children's learning, taking every opportunity to raise children's awareness of numbers in the world around them. For instance, at registration times, teachers encourage children to count the number of children in the ring, and calculate how many are absent. Most children recognise the days of the week, and know what yesterday was and what tomorrow will be. They enjoy counting-songs and games, such as *Goldilocks and the three bears*. Children used their fingers to show *one, two, three* in time to the words. More able children used calculators to show a given number up to 20, and calculated *one-more-than*, or *one-less-than* in their heads. Then they made a matching set of 'sweets' using coloured modelling dough. Teachers devise stimulating activities using real items such as bananas, apples and pears to capture children's interest. For instance, some played a game counting fruit that 'appeared' from a classroom assistant's shopping basket, correctly writing the numbers such as 2 or 5 on their white boards. Some children are beginning to understand words such as *heavy, heavier, light and lighter* as they compare the weight of a tin of sweet corn and a large bag of cotton wool using a balance. Teachers use many opportunities to link mathematics meaningfully with other subjects. For instance, in a physical education lesson, children counted up to five while balancing on one leg and up to 10 when throwing a beanbag to a partner. Because of good teaching, including these imaginative and well-structured activities, most children are securely on course to exceed the early learning goals by the time they reach Year 1. Children with special educational needs receive good support and consequently make good progress.

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

75. Children make good progress in this area of learning because teachers provide good opportunities for them to gain knowledge and understanding of the world around them. For instance, children in the nursery handled a bundle of real sheep's wool, passing it around



their circle with awe and wonder as they felt its softness and realised that their jumpers might be made of it. 'How does it get different colours?' asked one child, listening carefully as the teacher explained. They enjoyed searching through a large quantity of hay to find farm animals such as cows and sheep hidden inside. Using wool, papers and material, children made a large collage of farmland showing the different types of fields and hedges, and then made three-dimensional farm buildings, including a two-storey house with bunk beds for pigs. Children use computers with considerable skill, and enjoy using the mouse to reveal what is hiding underneath someone's hat. In the reception classes they are beginning to understand about the world beyond school as they think about people who help them such as doctors, policemen and firemen, and about events long ago such as when Jesus was born in Bethlehem. They use calculators and computers with increasing skill, and are learning how to save their work, and how to print it out using the correct icon. In assemblies, they have opportunities to reflect upon the importance of water and listen to the story of Noah's Ark. Because of the quality of the teaching, most children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Most children are on course to reach the early learning goals by the time they transfer to Year 1.

### **Creative development**

76. Children enjoy a rich and varied programme of activities in this area of learning, which includes music, art and drama. They learn a wide range of nursery and other songs, and enjoy singing along with their teachers to such songs as *Wind the Bobbin Up*, putting actions to the words in the right places. They closely follow clapping, tapping and clicking rhythms and enjoy moving in time to music. Children record their responses to the world around them in a range of ways – paint, crayon, modelling material and pencil. Nursery children used cotton wool and drinking straws to make delightful collage pictures of sheep, comparing the feel of the cotton wool with the pieces of real sheep's wool. Teachers seize opportunities to 'exploit the moment'. For example, they encouraged children to record their feelings and observations about a snowy day, using white paint on dark blue paper. Good links with other areas of learning are a very good feature of teachers' planning: for instance, during their studies of traditional stories children used dough to make gingerbread men with currant buttons and eyes. Children are beginning to explore what happens when they mix different colours of paint together, and enjoy watching their teacher use a glove puppet, Boris the Bat, who is learning how to write letters such as 'm' correctly. Teachers and their support staff provide very good imaginative and creative opportunities for children, making this area of their learning exciting and stimulating. For example, reception children enjoy making shopping bags exploring different ways of joining the sides together. Most children are therefore well on course to exceed the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

### **Physical development**

77. Children in the nursery have many opportunities to practise their fine motor control in the sand and water trays as they pour water and sand accurately from one container to another. In the reception classes, children use a wide range of tools and apparatus such as scissors, cutters, hole punchers and staplers with increasing skill. They use their pencils with accuracy when writing and drawing, and most are beginning to control the computer mouse with increasing precision. They are mastering the technique of using felt-tipped pens on the slippery surface of white boards. They handle books with care, turning pages properly, and use musical instruments to good effect, such as pairs of cymbals or triangles and beaters. On the playground they run, stop, turn and jump with due care and regard for others, and bend or twist as they evade capture in a game of tag. In the hall, children are becoming used to handling large apparatus such as benches with skill and care. They balance well, jump accurately from heights, and roll on landing mats with control. They use beanbags with accuracy in a throwing and catching activity, and have mastered the skill of passing large balls to each other using the side of their feet, or dribbling around a series of obstacles using their feet to stop and control the ball properly. Most children are well on course to exceed the early learning goals by the end of this year.

78. Resources in the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory. They are worn out, and there is not enough variety, so that children use the same equipment time after time. There are not enough Big Books to support reading effectively. The outdoor play area is secure but it is dull and featureless. There are not enough large wheeled toys, and no climbing apparatus. There is no shade and no area where children can retire for quiet reflection. Carpets and furniture are very tired. The level of staffing is adequate but the group of nursery children with special educational needs is presently receiving only limited support.
79. The co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage is very experienced, dynamic and energetic. She has established very good planning and assessment systems, which are ensuring equal opportunities for all children. She is committed, and determined to 'fly the flag' for this age group which she and her colleagues rightly regard as crucial for children's future achievement as they move through the school.

## ENGLISH

80. Inspection evidence and results of national tests show that by the age of 7 pupils' standards are above average but by age 11 they are below average because of standards in writing. The considerable difference between test results and standards of work seen between Year 2 and Year 6 is due to the following reasons. Firstly, there are differences in the groups of pupils with a considerable number of pupils with additional learning needs entering junior classes during the course of each school year. Secondly, although the school has put into place a number of initiatives to improve attainment in English, these strategies have not had time to have an effect on the standards of the older pupils.
81. Standards in speaking and listening throughout the school are above average. Attainment in speaking has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make good progress across the school. They enter Year 1 with average speaking and listening skills and by the end of the Year 2 they listen attentively to the teacher and to each other. They talk confidently about their work and contribute to and lead class discussions. Standards remain high and in Year 6 pupils demonstrate their ability to vary their expression and vocabulary as they engage in dramatic presentations. In other subjects in the curriculum, for example, history and religious education, they readily take part in role-play and speak with clear articulation and confidence. The shared reading activities where pupils from each infant class pairs with pupils from a junior class provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills as well as practise their reading.
82. Standards in reading by the age of seven are above average and all pupils make good progress. The school has put into place a structured programme for the teaching of letter sounds and this, together with new resources for literacy including those in the library, is helping to maintain standards across the infant classes. When reading aloud in literacy lessons pupils read with increasing fluency and expression and show clear understanding of punctuation. Pupils are able to explain what a glossary is and how the contents and index in a book are essential for finding information. By Year 6 attainment in reading is average and pupils make satisfactory progress. They read a considerable range of books with increasing skill and understanding and talk about their favourite authors showing that they both value and enjoy reading. They use a dictionary and thesaurus with confidence and easily locate information for research topics. Guided reading takes place in each class and books are well organised according to reading levels. However, time in these sessions is not always well used and there are occasions when all pupils, including the most able pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given low level handwriting exercises to complete.
83. By the age of seven standards in writing are above average. Very good teaching in some Year 1 and Year 2 classes enables pupils to learn through a range of interesting and

exciting activities. A good range of teaching strategies includes a new structured phonic approach, games, puppets and interesting topics to help pupils to develop their early writing skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 produced a six page booklet on snakes, including a contents page, writing in sentences with appropriate punctuation and using interesting and varied vocabulary. Pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make good progress. They use a newly introduced programme for the teaching of letter sounds to support their spelling skills and spell common words correctly. Handwriting is accurately formed and more able pupils write well with legible and joined writing. Parents contribute well to pupils' learning in literacy lessons. For example, in a Year 1 lesson parents provided very effective support as they worked with small groups, including pupils at the computer. This helped them to become aware of rhythm and also to experiment with language using interesting combinations of words to create their own poem.

84. Standards in writing by the age of 11 have declined since the last inspection and are below the national average despite the school identifying improvement in writing as a priority target. A number of initiatives have been put into place. For example, developing thinking skills and 'mind mapping', a method of brainstorming different ideas, has been successful in helping pupils to plan their writing. Overall pupils make satisfactory progress over time and are competent in completing comprehension tasks and grammatical exercises. The quality of handwriting and spelling improves as pupils progress through the school so that by the end of Year 6 pupils have developed a well formed and legible script and their spelling is usually accurate. There is an appropriate emphasis placed on the techniques and skills of writing but there are limited examples of pupils' writing that are varied and interesting, for example persuasive text, creative and imaginative stories with settings, plots and intriguing endings. There is a lack of drafting and redrafting of pupils' writing with too much work in pupils' books that is left unfinished. Despite putting pupils into ability groups for English lessons there is some evidence of underachievement in Year 6 with most able pupils failing to reach the standards in writing of which they are capable. Not enough emphasis has been placed on writing extended stories over a period of time on a theme, or writing at length using different styles. For example, there are effective exercises to demonstrate the difference between biographical and autobiographical writing but this has not been extended to pupils completing their own biographies.
85. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall; they are good in the infants and satisfactory in the juniors. In lessons seen during the inspection, teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to excellent with the majority of lessons at a good or very good standard. In the majority of lessons teachers use very good strategies to involve all pupils. They share the target with the pupils and encourage pupils to use a 'mind map' to help them to plan their writing. For example, pupils in Year 3 compared the traditional version of *Cinderella* with a new modern version of *Cinderboy* looking at the importance and variety of story openings. Teachers read with expression and humour and shared their enthusiasm for the task. They introduced a range of interesting and exciting vocabulary when teaching about similes and this enabled all pupils to make good progress in writing. Where teaching is excellent the teacher engaged pupils in a dramatic presentation of a poem by Siegfried Sassoon as a stimulus to writing. Both the pictures on the interactive white board and themed music were used highly effectively to set the scene of soldiers in the trenches during the First World War. The teacher skilfully drew on the pupils' imagination and feelings, encouraging them to use powerful vocabulary in their writing. As a result pupils made excellent progress in developing their writing skills. In the unsatisfactory lesson the introduction went on far too long with pupils becoming very restless and noisy. This left very little time for pupils to engage in the writing activity
86. Overall teachers assess pupils work regularly and target work well to meet the needs of all pupils including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. However more able pupils do not always produce written work at an

appropriately high standard. Marking in the infants helps pupils to learn what they need to do to improve. In the juniors, although there is some marking that is constructive with pupils consistently being set targets for improvement, there is not enough follow up to unfinished work and spellings that are left uncorrected. There are also missed opportunities for teachers to set homework so that pupils complete work and undertake research independently.

87. The co-ordination of English is satisfactory. The two subject co-ordinators have a clearly defined role and are working hard to establish high standards across the school. They are both aware of the need to raise attainment in Year 6. The initiatives in place in the infants have been successful with good systems to check on the quality of teaching and learning. The junior co-ordinator has not recently monitored the teaching and learning of English although monitoring is ongoing by senior staff. The tracking of pupils' progress across the school is in place and the regular target setting that is shared by all pupils and teachers is starting to add a positive focus for pupils to improve their written work.

## **MATHEMATICS**

88. Inspection evidence and the results in national tests over recent years indicate that standards in mathematics are average by age seven and above average by age eleven. This is a similar situation to that found at the last inspection. A similar proportion of pupils to that found nationally achieves the expected standard, Level 2, at seven. A better than average proportion achieves the expected standard, Level 4, by Year 6. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards by Year 2 and Year 6, Level 3 and Level 5 respectively, is lower than normally found.
89. The National Numeracy Strategy is firmly embedded in the work of the school. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are set by ability for their daily mathematics lesson. In Year 1, pupils are taught daily in their own classes. In Year 2, pupils have one lesson each week with their class teacher and three other mathematics lessons where they are set according to their prior attainment. Although these lessons are often slightly longer than the recommended 45 minutes lesson for infants, the pupils are only having four mathematics lessons a week instead of the recommended five. Progress in the infant classes is satisfactory overall but could be better if the school organised the timetable to ensure pupils in Year 2 have a mathematics lesson every day. Progress in the junior classes is good overall. Pupils with special educational needs are usually well included in all classroom activities. Teachers successfully target specific questions to pupils according to their ability. They provide easier and more difficult work, give extra adult support to pupils or provide extra resources, such as number lines or vocabulary cards, to help pupils complete their work. They make similar progress to their classmates. Higher-attaining pupils do not always have hard enough work to do and this results in them not achieving their full potential.
90. Relationships are very good and so pupils' behaviour and attitudes in mathematics lessons are always at least satisfactory and are usually very good. Most pupils are attentive and keen to learn. Pupils enjoy their lessons. There is a positive and purposeful atmosphere in most lessons. Teachers plan good opportunities to make pupils more independent. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, pupils were making decisions about which resource best helped them when calculating. They could choose from several resources including a hundred square or an empty number line. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils agreed with their teacher the amount of time they would need to complete a task.
91. Teachers plan work well to enable pupils to apply their literacy skills when working in mathematics. For example, there is a good emphasis on using the correct mathematical vocabulary. However, the good classroom practice of displaying such words in the classroom or writing them on the board for the lesson needs to be adopted by all teachers. Pupils apply their mathematical skills well in other subjects. For instance, in history they

create time lines, in science and geography, they record information in tables and in graphs and in English they put a series of events in the right order. In lessons teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to word problems. In some cases this was part of the summing-up part of the lesson, but in others it was built into the main part of the lesson.

92. Standards in investigations and problem solving are satisfactory across the school. Teachers plan regular opportunities for pupils to do this work. Teachers make good use of opportunities in lessons to set the mathematics in a word problem context or to give pupils the opportunity to investigate. In number work, pupils' standards are appropriate for their age. For example, in Year 2, pupils sequence numbers to 100, add multiples of 10 and use a range of different strategies for addition. For instance, they can add 9 by adding on 10 and subtracting 1 and they know to put the larger number first to make an addition sum easier to do. They know odd and even numbers and some multiplication facts. By Year 6, pupils confidently use the four rules of mathematics and use an appropriate method for calculating. They can work out percentages and know the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages.
93. Pupils in Year 2 have a satisfactory understanding of shape, space and measures. They know the names of common two- and three-dimensional shapes. They measure accurately in centimetres and metres and know what a right angle is. Pupils make good progress in this aspect and by Year 6 they have a very good knowledge of the properties of shapes and measure angles accurately using a protractor. They can find the area and perimeter of compound shapes. Progress in handling data is satisfactory. In Year 2, pupils record data on a block graph and interpret the data and in Year 6 pupils record and interpret data on different types of graph. They successfully work out the mean, mode and median of a set of data.
94. The teaching of mathematics ranges from satisfactory to very good. It is good overall. In Years 4, 5 and 6, all the teaching of mathematics is at least good; some teaching is very good. Most teachers have a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and, consequently plan work well together to ensure at least satisfactory progress. Joint planning across year groups is good but there needs to be more challenge planned for the higher-attaining pupils. Teachers usually plan well for mathematics with specific targets for each lesson. However, in some lessons, learning objectives are too broad and need to be more clearly defined. In all classes, pupils record the target for their lesson in their books. Teachers make clear what they want pupils to learn by sharing it with the pupils at the start of the lesson and checking their understanding. In the better lessons, teachers give pupils time limits for the tasks they set. The first part of the lesson is usually used well to practise counting, mental calculation skills and to get the lesson off to a good start at a brisk pace. Sometimes this part of the lesson is too brief and consequently pupils do not have enough time to keep skills sharp on a daily basis. Teachers make good use of the summing up at the end of the lesson to find out what pupils have learnt and understood. In most classes pupils were asked to evaluate their own work by indicating by thumbs up and thumbs down whether they had achieved the target for the lesson. In some classes, pupils use a good traffic light system to indicate to the teacher how much they have learnt in the lesson.
95. Teachers highlight mathematical vocabulary well for the pupils, model its use well and encourage the pupils to use the correct words. They usually question pupils well, using a range of questions. For example, it could be a question needing a quick response to a mental calculation or a question that asks pupils for an explanation of how to do something. Sometimes, however, teachers do not use pupils' mistakes enough to get them to work out why they have a problem. Teachers do not always ask sufficient open questions in order to give higher-attaining pupils the opportunity to explain and reason, and so to further develop their understanding.

96. Teachers plan well to enable pupils to respond in a variety of ways. For instance, pupils answer questions orally, by writing an answer on a white board, by using number fans or by demonstrating to the rest of the class on the main board of the classroom. Teachers use a good range of mathematical resources, such as number lines for counting work, hundred squares for number pattern work and digit cards to enable pupils to put numbers in order. The support given to pupils by other adults in the classrooms is usually good. In some classes, teachers plan well for the use of information and communication technology. In Year 6 a teacher and pupils used the interactive white board well. In a Year 5 lesson some pupils were able to practice placing a protractor carefully to measure angles using a computer program. The use of this computer program was good because the work linked directly to the learning objectives of the lesson.
97. There are, however, some weaknesses in teaching. Pupils do not record their own mathematics in a variety of ways often enough, particularly in the infant classes, and there is an over-reliance on worksheet completion in some year groups. Whilst there is some evidence of the use of jottings and the empty number line to support mental calculation, this needs to be developed. It is also important to give pupils the choice of how to work out a calculation by presenting it to them written horizontally. Marking is usually regular and positive but this is not consistent in all classes. For instance, in some cases poor work was praised and there was not enough indication to pupils about how they could improve.
98. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. There are two experienced co-ordinators and one is a leading mathematics teacher. They have both been involved in monitoring lessons and support planning regularly. However, they need to work together to ensure that learning objectives for lessons are always specific enough and that the vocabulary for the lesson is clearly identified on the planning. There is a good policy for mathematics and an ongoing action plan for the subject, which is regularly evaluated. The subject leaders have identified the use of information and communication technology as an area for development as its use is limited at the present time. The subject co-ordinators disseminate information from their own training to all staff as appropriate, through year group meetings, handouts and staff meetings. There is a good tracking system to record how pupils progress in mathematics currently in use. The school analyses the results of the National Curriculum tests for Years 2 and 6 but recognises that more work needs to be done in order to set specific curricular targets for mathematics. Pupils' have agreed individual targets for mathematics when required that are shared with their parents. The subject co-ordinators scrutinise pupils' work in order to have a clear idea of standards in all year groups on an annual basis and give feedback to all staff on good practice and points for improvement. The further use of homework to improve attainment needs to be developed.

## **SCIENCE**

99. Standards by the age of 7 are average and by age 11 are above average overall, because pupils' knowledge and understanding is better than might be expected for their age. These good standards have been maintained since the 1997 inspection. By the ages of 7 and 11 pupils' science enquiry skills are average because of over directed teaching which limits time for pupils to follow their own lines of enquiry. Expectations in teaching are not firmly based upon the assessment of pupils' previous achievement and attainment in all year groups to plan for pupils' development year on year. By the age of seven pupils' achievement is satisfactory, but by the by the end of the school pupils achieve well because of the better use of assessment to inform teaching and learning in Years 3, 5 and 6.
100. By the age of seven pupils graph information they collect about favourite meals and show a good understanding of the importance of exercise for keeping healthy. They reinforce their understanding of which foods are best for health by using a computer program to sort foods into different groups. Pupils in Year 1 have a good understanding of how to strengthen

materials by folding, use specific vocabulary to describe how materials are chosen for a purpose and record results from sorting, for example, with a magnet. By Year 2 they extend their knowledge of materials by predicting and testing which ones will 'carry electricity' in a circuit and sort them into groups. In one class higher-ability pupils appropriately recorded more detail about different kinds of components they included in a circuit. Pupils suggest what might happen when cars travel down ramps of different heights and correctly say that they should all start in the same place but teaching does not expect more able pupils to collect enough measurements to help them look for patterns.

101. By the age of 11 pupils make sound use of data logging to look for patterns of change, for example, in their pulse rate. Generally pupils make insufficient use of graphs to point out and offer explanations that relate to their knowledge and understanding of ideas in science. Their ability to investigate and to suggest what might happen to help them decide what evidence to collect is adequate, as when they considered materials that dissolve and produce a gas. From their own research on the Internet and use of CD-ROMs they have good factual knowledge about processes that involve major body organs. Pupils correctly explain food chains and how different plants and animals are grouped. They test and sort metals that might conduct electricity and compare the brightness of a bulb when the length of wire is changed but fail to use scientific language to offer explanations in their writing.
102. The overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject. Very good teaching was seen when expectations were appropriate to the pupils' stage of development. Activities in lessons contained a good balance between pupils' gaining knowledge with planned support from teachers and obtaining evidence for themselves.
103. In satisfactory lessons the planned learning objectives relating to pupils' science inquiry skills did not extend pupils enough. When lessons were too long the pace of learning was slow. For example, pupils in Year 2 spent too much time in sorting and recording materials into hoops as they do in Year 1. Good well-paced teaching observed in Year 1 that used a very good variety of activities helped pupils of all abilities to progress quickly in their understanding of different sounds. This lesson provided time for pupils to talk about, explore and record ways of making musical sounds. A pupil with a statement of special educational needs was inspired to explain to the class how well he had achieved.
104. Pupils learning activities are well managed and pupils are enthusiastically taught so pupils in all year groups enjoy their learning. A good feature in most lessons is the quality of discussion about the knowledge that pupils have and acquire during the lesson. Effective use of information and communication technology reinforces learning and enhances pupils' understanding of difficult ideas. For example, pupils made good progress when using the computer to observe what happens to lungs when they take in and expel air. Meaningful group investigations interest them and the very good relationships and support for pupils with special educational needs promotes pupils' co-operation. Opportunities for pupils to choose questions to investigate or identify patterns in measurement appropriate to their abilities are insufficiently planned.
105. There is a difference in teachers' expectations for pupils to measure and write as well as they can in different classes. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 write their own ideas and higher-attaining pupils in Year 3 record good detailed explanations. Too often in other year groups pupils of all abilities write short factual sentences, which are often the same. When teaching does not expect pupils to provide their own reasons which show their understanding of the work, opportunities are missed to assess pupils' learning, such as, similarities between human and plant lifecycles. Teachers and support assistants diligently note pupils' oral responses to monitor their understanding of their learning. All teachers carefully note how well pupils achieve in lessons and by the end of a unit of work. In the marking of pupils' work many teachers note useful comments that help pupils to extend their ideas or informs them about what they have achieved. This good developmental

marking is done inconsistently and fails to explore pupils' incorrect use of vocabulary. Homework encourages research but it is too spasmodic to enlist parental support for pupils learning.

106. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Insufficient whole school analysis takes place of pupils' progress against clear enough achievement criteria to track individual pupils' progress as they move through the school. The school has correctly identified this as an area for improvement. From monitoring lessons the co-ordinator has identified how well her guidance for the use of information and communication technology is implemented but not how well enquiry skills are planned to modify teaching and learning. Some refinement in the curriculum is needed to plan the use of measurement in conjunction with pupils' developing knowledge and understanding. Too much detail about living things is irrelevant. More effective use could be made of plants and animals available in the locality to help pupils identify how animals and plants respond to living in different places and for pupils to construct their own identification keys. Currently other resources are very well organised and used.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

107. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils' attainment in art and design is above national expectations. This is an improvement on the previous inspection where standards were average. Across the school pupils demonstrate a good range of skills, knowledge and understanding. They use a wide range of materials and techniques and develop interesting and often exciting ideas when creating their artwork.
108. In Year 1 pupils learn about Matisse and produced their own version of *The Snail* as well as other pictures in the style of the artist. They cut and stick coloured paper with skill to create different patterns and make rubbings of the school environment. They confidently discuss shapes and colours and make charcoal pictures in the style of Lowry. In Year 2 pupils explored and developed their ideas showing good understanding of colour, pattern and tone, using a very good range of materials to create 'Batik' butterflies.
109. Pupils continue to make good progress building on their artistic skills and knowledge as they move through the junior classes. They study the work of famous artists. In Year 3 they focus on the work of Robert Delauney and investigate how to make several new shapes from an original. They produced 'exploding' shapes of colour of a very high quality. They study art from different cultures, for example, pupils in Year 5 made high quality clay plaques painted in relevant colours depicting scenes or figures from Egyptian art. Pupils show their skills in working on three-dimensional models as they use wire armatures and modelling material to create attractive figures in the style of Giacometti and Henry Moore. The work on Tudor portraits begun in Year 2 is continued in Year 6 as pupils develop and refine their skills through studying the shapes of pupils' faces. They practise shading and texture techniques and produce their own portraits and caricatures to a very high standard. By the end of Year 6, pupils have acquired the ability to make thoughtful and comprehensive evaluations of their work. Together with their teachers they have created a very attractive and informative learning environment around the school and have increased their knowledge of the art of their own and other cultures.
110. Across the school pupils use information and communication technology well to support their learning in art and design. They use a range of different programs well to emphasise the effectiveness of computers in producing their artwork. They also research into the lives of famous artists competently
111. The quality of teaching overall is good across the school. Teachers provide pupils, including those with special educational needs, with very good opportunities to work with different media including paint, charcoal, crayons, wire, clay, and other modelling materials.



Sketchbooks are used very effectively to develop pupils' artistic and creative skills; each piece of pupils' work is annotated with supportive and developmental comments. This ensures that all pupils including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make good progress. In the only lesson seen in the infants, the teacher gave an excellent introduction to the work of Paul Klee. She demonstrated very good subject knowledge and shared her excitement and enthusiasm with all the pupils. She gave a full picture of the artist's life to which pupils listened enthralled. As a result they confidently asked questions about his musical and artistic talents. Very good use was made of resources to develop the pupils' creative ideas.

112. The co-ordinator is highly knowledgeable and very enthusiastic about art and design. Her role has developed since the last inspection as previously she only monitored the quality of display. This has now extended to the regular monitoring of teaching and learning across the school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

113. Pupils' standards by the ages of 7 and 11 are above those expected nationally and pupils, including those with special educational need make good progress in their learning. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when pupils' achievement was in line with national expectations. This is because of good teaching and the enthusiastic leadership and management of the subject, as well as the quality of the purposeful products the pupils make.
114. In the infant classes, pupils considered a variety of existing wheeled vehicles before designing their own imaginative one, for example, a camper van. Their planning included exploded sections of the proposed construction and they used correct technical terms to label the mechanism. On their recorded stages of making, pupils note changes they made and how in pairs they solved problems. A recent topic culminated in celebrating the product of a beautiful child sized 'Joseph's coat of many colours'. Over time pupils made and used a paper pattern to guide the cutting of fabric, which they artistically decorated and joined in different ways. They used different media such as fabric pens and the computer to decide upon a repeating pattern for their own coat. Pupils in Year 1 used their knowledge of materials to design adventure playground models selecting their own resources from a suitable range provided by the teacher. Teaching assistants provide pupils with special educational needs with extra support and they make good progress because this practical subject captures their interest. Pupils in both infant year groups write several sentences to explain why they made changes and to describe what they like and dislike and how they could improve the finished work.
115. In the junior classes, teaching provides good learning opportunities for pupils to use knowledge skills from several subject areas of the curriculum to develop their creativity. Pupils in Year 5 made effective use of information and communication technology to record evidence of the content of different biscuits. They also used computers to construct a series of actions to control a burglar alarm in their own models. In Year 6, pupils used their knowledge of how to join clay when realising their trinket box designs. They detailed the dimensions on their plans and successfully planned ahead but did not modify these plans when they made changes as work progressed. Pupils in Year 4 sketched a historical Tudor House in the locality to help them plan their own models. Pupils in Year 3 used what they discovered from researching books preferred by younger children and worked closely to their original specifications to produce well-finished exciting 'pop-up books' using word processing to write the text.
116. Lessons are mostly well managed and structured. In an excellent lesson in Year 3 it was evident that teaching is knowledgeable and secure in methods that inspired pupils to acquire new knowledge and skills before tackling their own designs. Pupils co-operated well in pairs, sharing in making decisions about how to create their own cams to create

different rates of movement. By the end of this lesson most pupils confidently used correct key words when speaking to the class. Effective use was made of an Internet site to extend pupils' ideas and was fun for them to watch. Their previous work indicates a very good understanding of the importance of different pulleys. Pupils, for example, used step by step planning with notes when they solved problems and modified their ideas as they constructed a model ski-lift. In a satisfactory lesson the purpose of the activity was not made clear to the pupils and higher-attaining pupils lost interest because of this. The marking of work is good in most classes helping pupils reflect on their work and recognising pupils' progress. Resources are very good for all aspects and good attention is given to the safe use of tools and to hygiene when handling food.

117. The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator, who monitors carefully how well guidance provided for the process of designing and making is followed. The co-ordinator works closely with the information and communication technology co-ordinator and has formed good links with a local secondary school for his professional development. His increased knowledge is shared with colleagues and used very effectively to raise pupils' standards particularly in their understanding of mechanisms. Inspection evidence agrees with the co-ordinator that some models are not so well finished because of the lack of time in the curriculum. However the blocking of time for the subject has been effective in raising pupils' achievement because the lessons are longer.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

118. An analysis of pupils' work shows that by the ages of 7 and 11 standards are in line with national expectations. At the time of the previous inspection standards were similar. Geography is taught as blocked work in units which alternate with history. Pupils' attitudes in geography lessons are very good. Relationships are very good and pupils work together well and enjoy the tasks set for them. They contribute well in the supportive and purposeful atmospheres that characterise their classrooms. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and are well included in the work of their class.
119. Teachers cater for pupils of all abilities by targeting questions, providing adult or resource support where necessary and altering the task to make it appropriate for the pupil. However, in the lessons observed there was more evidence of tasks being altered to take account of pupils' prior attainment than was evident in an analysis of previous work. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make similar satisfactory progress. Teachers encourage pupils to investigate and research information for themselves. Teachers plan good opportunities for field trips to enrich this subject. For instance, Year 6 go on a gorge walk to look at landscape features and have a residential visit to an outdoor learning centre. Pupils in Year 4 make local visits into Hereford and this links in well with their history topic. Infant pupils use the school grounds and their home environment to support the geography topics they are studying.
120. In Year 1, pupils satisfactorily use simple co-ordinates to identify given features on a grid. Most of their geographical work this year has focused on developing map skills and there is not a wide range of coverage. In Year 2, pupils have been further developing their map work skills, learning about a plan view and the need for keys on maps. They have compared the buildings and transport used in Hereford with those in Struay and satisfactorily expressed their opinions about life on Struay. They have developed sound research skills by using an atlas to find out about oceans and rivers. Teachers have planned for a good link with English by asking the pupils to write a letter to Barnaby Bear about their holidays. In Year 3, most of the pupils' work has focussed on the development of map work skills. Pupils have good knowledge of how co-ordinates work and draw their own grid or label a prepared grid in an appropriate way. Pupils satisfactorily develop their knowledge when comparing the climate in London with that in Bombay in Year 4 and when learning about the use of land in Luxor and Hereford in Year 5. They produce 'mind maps'

to organise their thinking but not enough emphasis is placed on asking them to explain why the two places have different uses of land. In Year 6, pupils have been drawing a comparative graph to find out about weather in the mountain environment. They were able to demonstrate that they could interpret the graph well. In this lesson they were also developing their knowledge of places, in particular India, Tibet, Mount Everest, Nepal and Pakistan and were able to identify them on a map displayed on the interactive white board. The teacher set homework well so that the pupils could prepare for a visitor from an outdoor centre.

121. The standard of work seen in pupils' written work shows that the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the small number of lessons observed during the inspection teaching was at least good and in two lessons it was very good. This was because teachers made good use of questions to challenge pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding. Consequently pupils are able to explain well and are keen to contribute to lessons. Teachers had planned work to take account of all pupils' prior attainment and the lessons moved on at a brisk pace. Learning support assistants gave good support to pupils who needed some extra help by questioning them well and giving them some extra guidance. As a result all pupils were fully included in the lessons and made good progress. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and well in a supportive way. They have good subject knowledge and high expectations about the presentation of work and consequently the pupils' work is usually neat and well presented. Year groups plan together and in most year groups there is evidence of a range of work that includes both development of geographical skills and enquiry, knowledge and understanding of places, patterns, processes, environmental change and sustainable development. Teachers manage behaviour well and there is an insistence on quality in the work that the pupils produce.
122. Leadership and management of this subject are good. Teachers' planning for geography is good and is regularly reviewed and pupils' work is scrutinised in order to ensure that they are making sufficient progress. The co-ordinator has had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning and a written report is given to all staff annually highlighting good practice. Each teacher keeps detailed records of pupils' progress. The school has a good supply of geographical resources and an up to date policy for geography. In order to ensure that work is planned appropriately, the co-ordinator works well with other teachers to help them with their planning and all teachers look for opportunities to make links with other subjects. The use of information and communication technology is well developed in this subject. There has been a satisfactory improvement in this subject since the last inspection.

## **HISTORY**

123. An analysis of pupils' written work and interviews with staff and pupils show that by age 7 pupils achieve the standards expected for their age and by age 11 they exceed the expected standards. This is an improvement on the last inspection, when standards were broadly as expected in Year 6, with a weakness in enquiry skills. This has now been rectified.
124. In Year 1 pupils develop a sound sense of chronology by arranging teddy bears in the order of their age and by looking at cleaning, lighting and washing in homes during 'granny's time'. They have learned about famous people, such as Guy Fawkes and Dr Barnardo, and important events, such as the Fire of London. However, they have had limited opportunity so far to develop their skills in evaluating different sorts of evidence. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
125. In Year 6 pupils have developed good skills in looking at and evaluating evidence from a range of sources in their projects on the Victorians, on topics such as 'Amazing Victorian inventions' or 'All you need to know about Victorian transport'. They know the difference

between primary and secondary evidence and also evaluate their own work at the end of each unit. The subject has contributed satisfactorily to the development of pupils' literacy skills as they write quite extensively about their chosen topics. They also give an oral presentation of their project to the class, which helps the development of speaking and listening. Some pupils have used information and communication technology effectively both in research and in the presentation of their work. Pupils of all levels of ability make good progress.

126. Earlier work in the juniors has covered the full range of topics, from the Romans to the Tudors and the Ancient Egyptians. Good links have also been made with art and design, when pupils have painted Henry VIII in the style of Hans Holbein or created plaques based on Egyptian tomb drawings. Pupils work well together, for instance on their project work, because of the school's good provision for pupils' personal development. They develop a good understanding of their own cultural heritage.
127. Although it was possible to observe only one lesson during the inspection, from the evidence of pupils' work and displays teaching is satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors. In the lesson observed in Year 2 the teacher used questions well to check on pupils' understanding of the difference between past, present and future. She also used a good range of resources, including books of various ages as well as teddy bears, to develop pupils' sense of the past. However, the opportunity for pupils to record their findings at a level matched to their ability is sometimes limited by the worksheets used. In the juniors teachers use a wide range of resources, including a Victorian day in which both pupils and staff dressed in Victorian costume, to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the topic being studied. The school also uses visits to places of interest, such as a local castle, a Roman settlement and a Tudor commandery, well to enrich pupils' experience.
128. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the subject and has monitored well what is happening throughout the school; this has had a positive impact on the standards being achieved, particularly in the juniors. She has established good links with the local secondary school and has clear ideas about the development of the subject. The school has a good range of resources, which are used well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

129. At the time of the last inspection standards matched the national expectations for the subject at both 7 and 11 years. The school has worked hard at improving the quality of teaching and learning, and in improving the range of activities and resources available. Consequently, standards overall have improved; by the age of 7 standards are similar to those expected at this age and by 11 they are better than those normally found. Pupils make good use of their information and communication technology skills to support their learning in other subjects.
130. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 successfully build on their early experiences of using the computer in the Foundation Stage. They receive a good range of experiences that ensure they make purposeful use of information and communication technology and achieve appropriate standards for their age. Pupils understand the differences between hand-written and typed texts and some of the advantages of using a computer. They satisfactorily present their work using a suitable variety of forms including text and images. For example, pupils carefully typed in text for a poster on their class rules, adding capital letters and full stops as required. With support, they changed the size and font of the text, and more able pupils also changed the colour. They used an art program to produce images, such as colourful firework pictures, and satisfactorily gave instructions to move a robot around the screen.

131. In the juniors, pupils make good progress in developing their information and communication technology skills because of very effective learning opportunities and good teaching. Pupils make good use of computers to find out information. For example, pupils in Year 4 use the Internet to research the Tudors as part of their history work and in Year 5 pupils use CD-ROMs to research Sikhism in religious education. Pupils successfully learn how to use computers to classify, sort and present information. Pupils in Year 4, for example, used a data-handling program to create a questionnaire to record and sort information on pupils' hair colour. In Year 5, pupils created and used spreadsheets, as when analysing the contents of biscuits as part of a design and technology project. Pupils test and refine sequences of instructions well, for example, when planning the order of instructions needed to make a traffic light work or a clown's lights to flash. They further developed these skills when testing the burglar alarms they had built as part of a design and technology project in Year 5. As a result pupils have a good understanding of how to control events and how devices with sensors can be used to monitor external events.
132. A particular strength in pupils' learning is their development of communication skills. Pupils in Year 3 send and receive e-mails. They successfully add attachments, such as pictures of local landmarks taken from a folder of photographs. In Year 5, pupils send e-mails to their 'keypals' in an American school, exchanging information on school activities, the weather and topical items. Their messages include attachments of photographs and musical items recorded at school. Pupils in all year groups use word processing programs well and combine text and pictures. By Year 6, pupils successfully use their skills to structure, refine and present information in different forms and styles. They produce multimedia presentations, as when producing a slide show about Hereford. Pupils scan pictures and use a digital camera to create a bank of photographs for use in a variety of contexts. For example, pupils enlarged pictures of different materials used to show different textures and used them as a background. They successfully added text and their own photographs to create a professional-looking magazine cover. They refined their initial designs by changing the layout and fonts and by using a variety of operations such as creating a swirl-effect on the background design.
133. Since the last inspection the school has improved the monitoring of teaching and has provided more support for teachers. The overall quality of teaching has improved and is now good and at times very good. Consequently, the quality of learning is good and pupils gain good levels of achievement by Year 6. Strengths in the teaching include clear planning, which builds on pupils' previous learning. Teachers, in the main, have good subject knowledge and high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They often make very effective use of the resources available. In particular the use of the interactive whiteboards helps teachers to provide clear instructions when demonstrating new programs to the pupils. The use of prompt cards to remind pupils of the key steps are highly effective, though at times they are too detailed and therefore become difficult to follow. The very good relationships within lessons ensure that pupils' attitudes are positive, behaviour is very good and that pupils enjoy the subject. For example, the teacher's enthusiasm for trying different effects when producing a magazine cover resulted in a very good pace and pupils making great strides forward in developing their understanding and skills. They were eager to experiment for themselves and very keen to complete the tasks set for them. They took great pride in what they had produced. Pupils are encouraged to work together in pairs, which they do successfully, and this has a positive impact on their personal development. Teachers and support staff provide suitable individual support to pupils with special educational needs so that they make good progress within lessons.
134. Opportunities to use computers to support pupils' learning in other subjects are good. Activities in the weekly lessons in the information and communications technology suite, when new skills are taught, are well linked to learning in other subjects, such as design and technology and geography. For example, pupils used the nutritional information on packets of biscuits being investigated in design and technology to provide relevant data for entry

into a spreadsheet. Teachers also make good use of their classroom computers. For example, computers are used to help pupils in Year 2 sort old and new toys in history, pupils in Year 4 develop their understanding of adjectives and adverbs in literacy and pupils in Year 6 put their conclusions into a spreadsheet in science. Lessons in the Year 5 and Year 6 classrooms with interactive whiteboards benefit greatly when these are used to support teaching. Excellent use of information and communication technology was made to produce an audio-visual stimulus during a Year 6 lesson based on a poem by Siegfried Sassoon about life in the trenches during the First World War. This resulted in an excellent response from pupils, which contributed greatly to their personal development through the awe and wonder it created.

135. The subject is very well managed by two co-ordinators who share responsibility for the subject. They have ensured that effective planning is in place to support teachers, monitor teaching and learning, and provide very good support to their colleagues. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress including a range of self-assessment sheets used by the pupils together with individual assessments by the teacher at the end of each unit of work. The school has made good use of grants to improve the resources available, which are good. Extra-curricular computer clubs support pupils' learning well by giving pupils who attend further opportunities to use computers.

## MUSIC

136. Standards in music have risen since the time of the last inspection when they were judged to be above national expectations by Year 2 but in line with national expectations by Year 6. Standards have improved now, so that by Year 6 they are also above national expectations. This improvement is because of good and at times very good teaching, the high quality of specialist teaching, and the thorough coverage of the whole curriculum for music especially in the aspects of composition and appraisal. In line with the school's strong stance on educational inclusion, all pupils including those with special educational needs have full access to every aspect of music.
137. Pupils throughout the school sing with great enthusiasm, confidence and appropriate control in assemblies and lessons. They sing in tune and with good attack at the beginning of lines and verses. They sing choruses with suitable dynamics and verve, but retain control very well. For instance, pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing the refrain *Noah! Noah!* enthusiastically but accurately. Their singing is strong but never raucous. They are beginning to realise that posture matters, and, when invited to, will sit up straight and be *'ready to sing'* as one teacher says. Pupils in the junior classes sing in assemblies with appropriate feeling and sensitivity, retaining good attack, clarity and rhythm. In performances, pupils in Year 6 show unusually mature attitudes when singing a range of popular songs.
138. Pupils have many very good opportunities to learn to play a wide variety of musical instruments, tuned and untuned. Over 50 pupils learn to play a wide range of instruments including the descant or tenor recorder, flute, clarinet, violin and guitar. They perform short recitals regularly in assemblies for other pupils and willingly practise to improve their playing. In class music lessons, pupils have many opportunities to explore how various instruments are played, what they are made of, and how they make their best sound. They enjoy combining movement with music so that they gain a true understanding of 'pulse', for instance marching in strict time around the room. Their understanding of the nature of pulse is reinforced when they listen to fast and slow music, beating the pulse on their fingers or knees. By Year 2, pupils work in small groups playing glockenspiels and recording the pitch of their short compositions by drawing notes and lines on a simple but effective 'score'.

139. Throughout the school pupils study the elements of music such as pulse, rhythm, tempo, duration and dynamics. Teachers encourage them to write about the music they hear and compose, and to use their drawing skills to show which instruments they have heard. Pupils study structure in music such as a rondo, and by Year 6 are confidently using standard notation such as minims, crotchets, and quavers, recording their compositions using the musical conventions of stave, barlines and time signatures. This is work of a high standard not commonly found in primary schools. Appraisal or evaluation of music runs side by side with their knowledge and use of notation. Pupils also show secure knowledge of other elements of music such as dynamics and tempo: 'We sang the nursery rhyme *Oranges and Lemons* and listened for changes in pitch, dynamics, tempo and duration'. Pupils listen to each other's compositions and write appreciative comments, such as 'I liked the way it got louder and we heard the ghost clanking up the stairs'.
140. The overall quality of teaching in class lessons is good, ranging from satisfactory to very good. Where teaching is very good, as for instance in the reception classes and Year 1, teachers maintain the momentum of the activity extremely well, generating a very strong sense of purpose. Teachers research the material for their lessons with great care, making what it is pupils are to learn explicit and building challenge into their lessons in layers one on top of another so that pupils' learning is moved forward steadily but step by step. For example, in Year 6, teachers make sure pupils know what notation means before they are required to use their knowledge to compose a six bar piece in 4/4 time. The quality of individual instrumental tuition is very high because of teachers' specialist knowledge. Pupils' progress is very good where specialist teachers make swift use of ongoing assessment, and because their own deep knowledge of the subject enables them to move pupils on to the next step in their learning confidently, without pause.
141. Pupils enjoy music. They sing with enthusiasm in class and in assemblies, and when given the chance they listen carefully to music such as Handel's *Water Music* or Saint-Saëns' *Carnival of the Animals*. Staff, who provide good models playing with sensitivity and skill on the piano or guitar, accompany their singing. Pupils sing in a contrasting range of styles. For instance, pupils enjoy singing *He's got the whole world in His hands* clapping the pulse with gusto, and sing *Kumbaya, my Lord* thoughtfully, with understanding. They have positive attitudes to their playing, arriving punctually for lessons, and practising in between lessons. They concentrate hard when recording their compositions and listen intently to each other's efforts showing respect and courtesy for other pupils' feelings.
142. Very good links with other areas of the pupils' learning are made through music. For instance, pupils' personal and social development is promoted through working together in the choir, in small recorder groups and in class activities. Listening to music by composers from other times, traditions and countries such as Grieg, Dvorák or Prokofiev enhances pupils' cultural development. Very good links with literacy are promoted when pupils write their evaluations of music they have composed, and with art as they illustrate their work, or draw musical instruments using close observational skills. For example, after composing music to represent windmills, a pupil drew a magnificent windmill and wrote 'I reckon it was the best lesson. When the wind was strong the music was loud, and we rotated our arms really fast'. Visiting musicians and outings to hear live music result in some very good drawings and writing.
143. Teachers make very good use of information and communication technology in music, recording pupils' work on tape, disc and videotapes. The use of computers by pupils for composition is at present limited but they use the technology efficiently to research and find information about instruments of the world. Excellent use is made of digital photography. For instance, pupils in Year 1 use digital photographs of percussion instruments to make an information book for the reception children. The quality of their written descriptions is very high.

144. Resources for music are adequate although there are not enough musical instruments to support multicultural education effectively. The quality of the pianos in the school is unacceptable. In spite of being renovated and regularly tuned, neither promotes high quality sound for these discerning pupils. The co-ordinators are enthusiastic and use their considerable expertise to promote music in and beyond school at events such as the Summer Garden Party, fund-raising events at local supermarkets, and the traditional festivals of Harvest and Christmas in the local church. They would like to draw together the various instrumentalists to establish a school orchestra but their time is limited. However, at the end of the year, the co-ordinators help Year 6 pupils prepare and perform a final show complete with stage, lights and props. Special scripts are written to maximise pupils' skills and talents. For example, a version of *This is Your Life* enabled many pupils to take part in speaking, dancing, playing and singing roles. The festivals and performances are very successful, and are of a very high standard.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

145. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils achieve the expected standards for their age. The school has maintained these average standards since the last inspection. There is no difference in the standards between girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs are given sufficient help in lessons to enable them to make satisfactory progress.

146. Throughout the school, pupils understand that exercise is good for them. They know that it makes their heart beat faster because all teachers highlights this during appropriate warm-up exercises that involve stretching, curling and quick movements. Pupils in the infants work enthusiastically. They are well behaved in lessons because of the very good relations between pupils and staff and the teachers' high expectations of behaviour. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge and skills. For example, in gymnastics pupils in Year 1 develop satisfactory control and co-ordination as they learn to balance using different parts of their bodies. In dance, pupils in Year 2 explored simple actions as when moving to music. They jumped into strong shapes to represent 'thunder' and used expressive movements to 'catch raindrops'.

147. Pupils continue to make sound progress in the junior classes. In gymnastics, pupils demonstrate satisfactory co-ordination as they join a range of movements into short sequences. For example, pupils in Year 3 demonstrated appropriate skills for their age as they combined different ways of moving on their hands and feet, sliding movements and simple bridge shapes. By Year 5, pupils have added neat starts and finish to their sequences of balances and have a suitable awareness of counter-balances and how to use an overbalance to initiate their next movement. Pupils create and perform dances using an appropriate range of stimuli. In Year 4, for example, pupils learn traditional Scottish dances such as the *Dashing White Sergeant* through the effective use of taped programmes. Pupils also learn more modern dances, for example, in Year 5 they perform their *Wizard* dance. They successfully remembered a sequence of movements, which they carried out to the beat of the music, that represent a wizard reading his book of spells before casting one that turns everyone into a statue. Many pupils produce performances of a good standard that include a good sense of timing and expressive movements. Pupils satisfactorily develop their skills in games. In activities that include football, hockey and basketball, they practise appropriate skills for their age that develop their control of a ball as well as their attacking and defending skills. They work well together as they organise and play in small-sided games.

148. The school operates an adequate programme for swimming. Pupils attend a local swimming pool for a series of weekly lessons for one term each year during Years 3 to 5. They enjoy the lessons, develop their confidence in water and learn to swim on their front and back. The school's records show that by the end of the programme over three-quarters of the pupils reach the expected standard for an 11-year-old by swimming 25 metres



unaided and using a range of recognised strokes and personal survival skills. Pupils in Year 6 are given the opportunity to take part in an annual residential course in Wales that includes an appropriate range of outdoor and adventurous activities including walking, abseiling and problem solving tasks. Currently, the school does not provide more regular opportunities to develop these types of activities though it intends to introduce orienteering into its curriculum within the near future.

149. Overall, the quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory, and at times it is good and very good. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and they manage them very well. Consequently, pupils are well behaved and show interest in their lessons. When available, teachers make good use of support staff to ensure those pupils with special educational needs maintain their concentration throughout the lesson and understand the instructions. Pupils from the school's Learning Support Centre are well integrated into lessons and make similar progress to other pupils.
150. Teachers have at least a satisfactory understanding of the subject and some have a good knowledge. They make good use of the school's detailed scheme of work that ensures all aspects of the subject are taught. They begin lessons with an appropriate warm-up, have a good awareness of safety and finish lessons with a cool down. Teachers make good use of praise. They use pupils to demonstrate movements but do not always highlight what was good about them or then give pupils opportunities to use these new ideas to develop their own performance. Teachers make very good use of information and communication technology to support pupils learning. For example, teachers use video recordings of the pupils' sequences and performances to highlight ways to compare ideas and quality. The use of a video excerpt from an ice-dance to stimulate pupils' interest and to demonstrate how dancers synchronise their movements helped develop pupils' understanding.
151. In lessons that are good or better, the pace of the lesson is brisk and little time is wasted in long explanations and queuing for activities is kept to a minimum. The teachers' good subject knowledge and high expectations result in a clear focus on what pupils need to do to improve based on the objectives for the lesson. For example, many younger pupils successfully refined their balances because the teacher correctly highlighted the need for pupils to keep their eyes, head and shoulders still. A teacher's insistence on clear movements and neat finishes resulted in older pupils making better progress.
152. In lessons that are satisfactory, pupils are managed well and are kept physically active but not enough attention is given to how pupils can develop their performance through developing basic skills. Teachers do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to develop their own ideas and movements. The pace, particularly in longer lessons or when queuing for activities occurs, is at times slow.
153. Pupils' personal and social development is promoted well through the subject. Teachers successfully encourage pupils to work co-operatively in pairs or in small teams. The very good range of extra-curricular activities that take place makes a positive contribution to pupils' social development. The subject is soundly managed and the co-ordinator has had a positive impact on raising the standard of teaching through observing lessons throughout the school. Resources are adequate and of a satisfactory quality. Indoor accommodation is adequate but outdoor facilities, particularly the grassed area are limited.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

154. The standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 do not meet the expectations of the local authority's agreed syllabus for religious education. This is principally because the school does not allocate sufficient time to the subject, but also because it often combines religious education with personal, social and health education, without any specific link being made with the viewpoints of religious faiths. As a result the progress made by pupils

of all levels of ability is unsatisfactory. There has been a drop in standards since the last inspection, when pupils were judged to be meeting the expectations of the agreed syllabus in both Years 2 and 6.

155. In Year 2 pupils know some stories from the Old Testament, such as the Creation or the story of Joseph, which also links well to their work in design and technology, where they design a multi-coloured coat. They know about the celebration of Harvest festival and something of the significance of Shabbat in a Jewish family. They have reflected on some of the special people in their life. However, their knowledge of other stories from the Jewish and Christian traditions is limited and they have not yet understood that there are some questions in life that are difficult to answer, as expected by the agreed syllabus.
156. Pupils in Year 6 know stories from the Old Testament, such as those about Noah and Jonah, but they do not have a clear understanding of the significance of these to a follower of the Jewish or Christian faiths, for instance the message of compassion in the story of Jonah. They have an understanding of the broad outline of the life of Jesus, but do not all know when and where he lived. They can recall some details about Sikh religious practices. Their knowledge of Hinduism is more sketchy, although they know some features of the festival of Diwali, having made diya lamps themselves in Year 4. They do not identify Judaism as a separate religious tradition, and do not have a secure understanding of what following a religious faith means.
157. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, but its impact is weakened by the school's failure to give the subject the minimum time recommended by the agreed syllabus. Teachers deal sensitively with issues raised, as when a pupil talks about his grandmother who has died when they are discussing 'special people'. Sometimes, however, in the infants the lesson is too short for pupils to consolidate what they have learned, for instance the message of a parable, or to deal with a question raised by a pupil. The way the school plans its coverage means that in some terms a class may not be taught religious education at all, and this makes it difficult to build upon what pupils already know. Sometimes also teachers' knowledge of the subject is not secure, as when they confuse a story about Jesus with a parable, or in explaining the meaning of the term 'gospel'. Sometimes also opportunities are missed to make links between different religious traditions, as when the story of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt is not linked to the Jewish festival of Pesach.
158. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development by raising their awareness of the range of religious beliefs. In some lessons good opportunities are given to reflect, for instance as pupils listen to the story of the exodus from Egypt or the Feeding of the Five Thousand. Sometimes in the infants the lesson ends in a prayer in which pupils can join, and pupils have also written their own prayers for peace in Year 2. Although pupils learn about faiths other than Christianity, particularly in the juniors, they do not always link these to the society in which they live, and this is not helped by, for instance, Sikhism and Hinduism being studied in the context of the geography of India.
159. Because of the limited amount of time devoted to the subject, there are few opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills. There are, however, good opportunities for them to develop their speaking and listening, for instance when they acted out the parable of the Good Samaritan in Year 1 or the Feeding of the Five Thousand in Year 5.
160. Since the last inspection the school has improved its stock of religious artefacts to help pupils understand the significance of religious practices. Pupils visit the local church in Year 1 to look at some of the features of a religious building, but they do not have the opportunity to visit places of worship of other faiths or to listen to visitors from those faiths. Some use is made of information and communication technology, for instance in Year 5, where pupils use CD-ROMs to find out about Sikhism, but in some lessons where it features in teachers' planning it is not used because of the lack of time.

161. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject, but her opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom have been limited, as the subject has not been a priority in the school's development plan.