

INSPECTION REPORT

MOONS MOAT FIRST SCHOOL

Redditch

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116765

Headteacher: Mrs C Shearwood

Reporting inspector: Mr C R Phillips
15941

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th February 2003

Inspection number: 247686

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Cleeve Close Redditch Worcs
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Hudson
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15941	Mr C R Phillips	Registered inspector	Science History Geography	Information about the school How high are standards? What should the school do to improve further? How well is the school led and managed?
9092	Mr R Elam	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
10611	Mr M James	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education Music English as additional language Educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
12116	Mrs C Morgan	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Religious education Special educational needs	
18340	Mrs M Phillips	Team inspector	English Foundation Stage	How well are pupils taught?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a larger than average size community school for boys and girls aged three to nine. It draws pupils from an area of mainly rented housing and has 278 pupils currently on roll. At the time of the inspection, there were 100 children in the Nursery and Reception classes, of whom 78 were below the age of five and 51 attended the Nursery on a half-time basis. Although there are considerable variations between year groups, the children's overall levels of attainment on entry to the school are usually well below average, particularly in their language and social skills. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals (21.1 per cent) is broadly in line with the national average. At present, three pupils have statements of special educational need and the overall proportion of pupils currently identified as having special educational needs (21.2 per cent) is broadly in line with the national average. These pupils have a range of learning, physical and behavioural needs. The school has 13 pupils from minority ethnic groups. There are seven pupils whose mother tongue is not English, but only one of these is in the early stages of language acquisition.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that is continuing to improve. Standards are rising throughout the school, because it provides very well for the needs of all pupils. It is very well managed and the quality of teaching and learning is very good. It provides very good value for money and is clearly a self-evaluating and self-improving school.

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science at the age of seven are now in line with national averages.
- The quality of teaching is very good overall and the classroom assistants help teachers very effectively, so pupils learn well and make good progress throughout the school.
- The pupils respond very well to the expectations the school has for them; their behaviour and the attitudes they show to all aspects of school life are very good.
- There is a rich and stimulating curriculum, the school ensures that all pupils have equal access to all aspects of its life and very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- Provision for the pupils' moral and social development is very good; they develop well personally, take responsibility readily and the quality of relationships throughout the school is very good.
- The school cares well for all its pupils and its arrangements for tracking their progress are very good.
- The school is very well managed; the headteacher gives very good leadership and is supported very well by the deputy headteacher and the whole staff team.
- There is a strong commitment to improvement, which is shared by governors and all adults working in the school.

What could be improved

- Outdoor provision for the Nursery and Reception classes.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was inspected in January 1998, it received a positive report, although several key issues for action were identified. These have been tackled very well and the school has continued to improve significantly, particularly since the appointment of the present headteacher. The results achieved by pupils in the most recent national tests at the age of seven and the findings of this

inspection indicate an upward trend, to a point where they are currently in line with national expectations for pupils of this age. The school reviews all aspects of its life regularly and it has the personnel and procedures to ensure that it should continue to improve. The quality of teaching continues to be one of the strongest features of the school.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	D	E	C	B
writing	C	E	C	A
mathematics	E	E	C	B

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

The results for 2002 were very pleasing, especially when they are compared with those achieved in schools with a similar intake and point to an improving picture overall in the school. Results of the teachers' assessments in science were also broadly in line with those expected nationally. The disappointing results in the 2001 tests reflected the particular profile of the year group concerned and were not typical of the overall upward trend. Evidence from this inspection confirms that standards in English, mathematics and science for pupils currently in Year 2 are again broadly in line with those expected nationally, as they are in several other subjects. In information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, design and technology, music and physical education they are above the level expected at this age. The standards achieved by the time pupils leave the school have also been rising. However, pupils in Year 4 at present are likely to be below the level expected for pupils of this age in English, mathematics and science, particularly because of limitations in their language skills. They still show significant improvement on the levels they achieved at the end of Year 2 and on those at which they entered the school. In almost all other subjects, they are broadly in line with the levels expected and in music and physical education they are above that level. Pupils of all attainment levels make good progress overall through the school and many are making very good progress, when the standards they achieve are compared with their levels on entry. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress overall and are in line with the levels expected at the start of Year 1 in several areas of learning, although their language and mathematical development are still below that level, because of the amount of ground they have had to make up.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils are enthusiastic and show very good attitudes in all aspects of school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Their behaviour is very good and pupils of all ages usually get on well together, both in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils' personal development is good and relationships throughout the school are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. A few parents do not get their children to

	school on time.
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The personal development of the pupils and their attitudes to all areas of school life are strengths of the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery & Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching in all subjects, including English and mathematics, is good overall and is often very good. Nine out of ten of the lessons observed were judged to be good or better and a third were very good or excellent. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. These are impressive figures that, when compared with those for other schools, clearly justify the judgement that the overall standard of teaching and learning in this school is very good. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well. Very good provision is made in each of the classes for the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the higher attainers. The teachers' classroom management is usually very good and they have very high expectations for all pupils. They provide a good range of interesting and often stimulating learning activities, based on very good planning, that develop the pupils' basic skills, as well as their imagination and creativity. The teachers use assessment well, enabling them to give valuable feedback to pupils about the progress they are making. All teachers know their pupils very well and the pupils respond very well to the experiences offered. They are becoming confident and independent in their learning and are developing a good understanding of how well they are getting on and what they need to do to improve. Pupils of all attainment levels are keen to do well and are given every encouragement to do so.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, relevant and lively and the school provides a wide range of opportunities to enrich the pupils' learning through visits and extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, their needs are identified and met, they are fully involved in the life of the school and the progress they make is good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	As part of the school's overall provision for all pupils, these pupils are supported well and make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	The school makes very good provision overall for the pupils' personal development, particularly for their moral and social development. There are many opportunities for them to reflect and they are encouraged to be responsible, to care and to be aware of cultural diversity.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. It has good arrangements for the identification and monitoring of the progress made by pupils in all aspects of their learning and development. It ensures that all pupils have equality of opportunity, regardless of gender, background or ethnic group.

The school works hard to maintain a good partnership with its parents, who agree the school is doing a very good job in encouraging their children to do well and to develop well, both personally and socially. They feel they are well informed about the work their children are doing and about the progress they are making. The school offers a broad range of learning experiences for all pupils, within and beyond the school. All pupils are known and cared for well. Throughout the school, they are treated with respect and respond very well to being valued, becoming mature and responsible members of the school community.

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, with the full support of the deputy headteacher and other managers. The staff team makes an important contribution to the continuing development of the school and to its management.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors provide good support for the school, are thoroughly committed to and involved in its continuing development and have a good awareness of its needs.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher, governors and staff review the school's performance continuously and always look for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	All resources are used efficiently for the benefit of the pupils in the school.

Under the leadership of the headteacher, the school has a very clear educational direction and is continuing to improve. The school is well staffed. The teachers are very well supported by the classroom assistants and other helpers and all adults working in the school make an important contribution to the quality of pupils' experience. The buildings and grounds are very well kept and provide a very pleasant environment for learning. The provision of learning resources is good, although outdoor provision for the youngest children needs further development. The governors, headteacher and staff review all development priorities regularly, evaluating all spending decisions against clear criteria and apply the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school encourages parents to play an active part in its life, handles complaints well and is approachable. The school gives a clear understanding of what is taught and parents feel they are well informed about their children's progress. Their children enjoy going to school and are able to achieve a good standard of work. The school encourages the children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons and almost all parents are satisfied with the homework given. The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children and it achieves high standards of behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant concerns were raised.

The parents clearly have a high opinion of the school and the opportunities it provides for their children. This view is shared fully by the inspection team.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests in reading, writing and mathematics for seven-year-old pupils were in line with the national average. When compared with figures for schools with a broadly similar intake, results in reading and mathematics were above average and those for writing were well above average. The proportion attaining the higher grade of Level 3 was in line with the national average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, the proportion of pupils at this level was above average in reading and writing and in line with the average in mathematics. In the teacher assessments in science, the proportion of pupils attaining Level 2 and above was broadly in line with the average when compared with national figures and with those in similar schools. The proportion attaining Level 3 was above the national average and was well above the average for similar schools.
2. The standards achieved in reading and writing were similar to those attained after the last inspection, but they have been lower in the years in between, with the lowest point evident in the results seen in 2001. However, it is clear that there are considerable variations in the ability profile of the different year groups and that the 1998 results were achieved by a year group with higher levels of attainment on entry than was the normal pattern. As such, their results were not typical of previous or subsequent year groups. It is also clear that the results achieved by the 2002 cohort were particularly commendable, since this year group entered the school with levels of attainment that were significantly below average. The pattern of improvement this represents is reinforced by the picture in the other subjects, where results at the time of the last inspection were below average in mathematics and well below average in science, so there has been considerable improvement over the years to the present level. There is no evidence of significant difference between the results of girls and boys.
3. Standards achieved by the time pupils leave the school have also reflected an improving picture, with overall levels that have risen steadily over the last three years in writing and have done so significantly in reading and mathematics. The most recent leavers were well above the level expected in mathematics, in line with expectations in reading, but below that level in writing.
4. The evidence of the present inspection indicates that current Year 2 pupils are in line with the levels expected in English, mathematics and science. The present Year 4 pupils, whose results at the age of seven were well below average, are achieving levels that, although below the overall levels expected of pupils of this age, still show marked improvement.
5. When children enter the school at the age of three, their standards of attainment are usually well below the average seen nationally, although year groups vary considerably. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes (the Foundation Stage), make good progress overall and most of the children currently at this stage of education are likely to be in line with national expectations by the time they enter Year 1 in terms of many of the goals for early learning. The exceptions will be in their language and mathematical skills, where, in spite of the progress made, they will still be below the level expected for children of this age. By the time they leave the school at the age of nine, inspection findings indicate that the number of pupils attaining the levels expected nationally has been broadly in line with the levels expected in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, although the present year group are unlikely to reach that level. This indicates that all pupils, including the higher attainers, make at least good progress through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards achieving the targets set for them, because of the quality of the support they receive.
6. The emphasis the school has put on the development of pupils' skills in English is proving effective as pupils go through the school. There has been considerable improvement in, for example, the quality of pupils' writing throughout the school and, although many older pupils still

have difficulty in expressing their ideas clearly in discussion and in writing and some are still not fluent readers, pupils in other year groups are now acquiring these skills well. This reflects the overall standards of literacy that are now developing across all curriculum areas throughout the school. In mathematics, pupils are developing useful skills during mental mathematics sessions and are becoming more confident in other aspects of the subject. They use and apply their skills in other areas of the curriculum, such as their science investigations, although the progress of older pupils is sometimes inhibited by their language skills. In science, standards are also improving considerably, with pupils usually showing satisfactory knowledge of the various aspects of the subject by the time they leave the school. The pupils' understanding of scientific method is good throughout the school, but older pupils currently have difficulty in discussing their findings and recording them precisely.

7. Standards of attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) are presently above the level expected nationally by the time pupils are seven and about that level at the age of nine. In religious education, standards by the time pupils reach those same ages are broadly in line with the levels expected by the locally agreed syllabus. In art and design, design and technology, music and physical education, standards by the end of Year 2 are above the levels expected. In music and physical education, they are also above those levels by the end of Year 4. Standards in geography, history and physical education are in line with expectations for both age groups. In all subjects, standards have been at least maintained, when compared with those at the time of the previous inspection.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets set for them. They are provided with very good levels of support, their targets are evaluated and reviewed regularly and new targets are set appropriately to aid progress, when necessary. Those pupils for whom English is an additional language soon acquire the necessary fluency and make good progress through the school. Similarly, the higher attainers also do well, as indicated by the proportions of pupils usually achieving higher grades in the National Curriculum tests and assessments in English, mathematics and science and the evidence of this inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour and the relationships they have with each other and adults are strengths of the school and make a very good contribution towards promoting their attainment and progress. Their personal development is good. This conclusion reflects the widespread views of parents and shows an improvement since the previous inspection. Parents state that their children enjoy school. The attendance of the pupils is satisfactory.
10. Throughout the school, the pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good. They usually concentrate well and show interest in what they are doing, as was seen particularly in a literacy lesson when pupils in a Year 3/4 class were using interesting words when writing a story. They have the confidence to try to work out answers in front of their classmates, as seen during mental mathematics sessions in various numeracy lessons. They enjoy lessons and Year 1 pupils were very excited when launching the parachutes they made during a science lesson. In most classes, pupils settle quickly to group work in lessons and maintain their interest even when not being directly supported by adults in the classroom. This includes pupils with special educational needs who, for example, worked conscientiously when writing about myths and legends. Any lapses in concentration are noticed quickly by the teachers, who bring the pupils back on task. Children in the Foundation Stage work well together, sharing resources and taking turns well. They enjoy the opportunities they are given to learn.
11. The pupils' social and moral development are very good. They behave very well in the classroom and at play and lunchtimes. They are open, well-mannered, courteous and welcoming to visitors. They are polite to adults and to each other, holding doors open for each other and saying "thank you" when adults hold the door for them. They generally move around the school in an orderly way, even when not supervised. They wait patiently for other classes when going to and from their rooms for assemblies. They show respect for property, as when using the computers, and take care collecting and putting away instruments during music lessons. Pupils state that there are

odd instances of name-calling, which are dealt with appropriately and usually effectively by the staff. There were no exclusions in the last school year.

12. Relationships between pupils and with adults are also very good and contribute to the quality of work in lessons. Pupils get on well with each other when playing games at break and lunchtimes. In the classroom, the youngest respect each other's space when sitting close together on the carpet and follow the rules of their circle discussion. Good co-operation was seen when reception class pupils worked in pairs on the computers, willingly letting their partners take turns and giving guidance to others. Year 1 pupils, making a 'pizza' puppet during a design and technology lesson, helped each other, which helped to give them the confidence to develop their own ideas. The pupils' very good relationships with adults were highlighted in many lessons, with pupils making good progress because of their willingness to accept guidance. Boys and girls and pupils from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds work together very well when doing group work in the classroom and when playing at break and lunchtimes.
13. The pupils' personal development is good. Their good spiritual development was demonstrated when younger pupils showed, during a religious education lesson, their ability to understand the feelings of blind people when discussing Jesus' power of healing. Other pupils showed a degree of maturity when discussing playground equipment in a personal, social and health education lesson prior to a school council meeting. Scrutiny of the pupils' work, especially in science, showed that they are starting to use their initiative by producing original writing rather than copying from worksheets or books. Pupils with special educational needs are also learning independence and do not simply rely upon the support staff. Pupils respond well to the various opportunities to take on responsibility. They have many tasks within the classroom and around the school. These include the school council and, for the older pupils, such activities as running their own book sale and helping to clear up the hall after lunchtime.
14. As at the time of the previous inspection, attendance is satisfactory overall. It was over 94 per cent in the last school year and this level has been maintained into the current year. Absences are usually due to the inevitable childhood illnesses, although a number of parents insist on taking their children on holiday in term time. Unauthorised absence is lower than in many schools, reflecting the efforts made by the school to obtain explanations from parents. Pupils are generally keen to come to school and punctuality is enhanced for most pupils by the way the school allows them into the building before the official start of the day. Nevertheless, there are usually a few arriving late each morning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. Of the lessons observed during the inspection, a third were very good or excellent, more than half were good and all were at least satisfactory. The teaching of English in Years 1 and 2 is very good and for mathematics and science is good. In Years 3 and 4, teaching for each of these core subjects is good. In many other subjects, there are examples of very good teaching and in all subjects the overall standard is good. In the Foundation Stage, the standard of teaching is consistently very good and the teaching and support team work well together, providing learning opportunities that are of high quality for all pupils. Teachers throughout the school bring particular strengths to their work and all have high expectations. Classroom assistants throughout the school provide very good support, helping to ensure that all pupils participate in a stimulating and varied range of experiences. There has been improvement in the overall quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection and there remain no lessons that are unsatisfactory.
16. Teachers throughout the school show good knowledge and understanding of the various subjects. The teaching of mental mathematics is good, as is the use of investigative and experimental work in science. In English, because of the school's particular emphasis on their improvement, the pupils' speaking and listening skills are developing well and those of handwriting and presentation are now strong. The ability of pupils to build their words when reading is becoming much stronger. Across the school, pupils write regularly in all subjects and the school has ensured that music, art and dance are well represented in the curriculum. The emphasis on developing the pupils'

thinking skills, sometimes by working in pairs, is beginning to have a positive impact on their learning. The literacy and numeracy strategies are very effective.

17. Learning in the Foundation Stage is planned very well and all adults in the staff team provide a secure learning environment for young children, teaching the necessary skills very well. The personal and social development of the children and their communication, language and literacy skills are at the heart of learning. The assessment of learning is very good and is effective in monitoring closely the progress the children make. All of the adults understand how young children learn and provide a wealth of interesting and quality experiences for them.
18. As a staff team, the teachers share much subject expertise and experience and are generally confident. The quality of planning for subjects is very good and takes account of the needs of individuals in each class, in order that pupils of all attainment levels, including those with special educational needs and the higher attaining pupils, are challenged by the work provided and progress well. The teachers understand how children learn, know their pupils well and are clear about what they want them to learn, sharing this with them. All use a range of perceptive questioning skills and reinforce learning well when they review work. They teach with an effective pace, in steps that the pupils can manage, so that they gain skills and knowledge. Materials used reflect gender, ethnicity and social background appropriately. Throughout the school, a good range of approaches to classroom organisation is used. From their entry to the Nursery, the children are guided and encouraged to show independence in their learning. There are many very good examples of helpful marking and self-assessment throughout the school. The teachers have the skills, classroom organisation and management to deliver lessons that motivate and engage pupils. They have high expectations for work and behaviour and usually communicate these clearly to the pupils, ensuring that they work hard and develop the good working habits that are evident in the quality of work and standard of presentation. Pupils show attention to detail and complete their work carefully. All the teachers are determined that the pupils will do well, praise them for their efforts, work well with them and monitor their progress effectively.
19. In the best lessons, which were seen mainly in literacy, numeracy, science and the Foundation Stage, with examples in other subjects, teaching is very good. Teachers are confident, very good subject knowledge is evident and very effective use is made of time. Learning is questioned, stimulated and checked, using a wide variety of planned strategies. Language is reinforced carefully and the teaching of skills is of high quality. Teachers know when to intervene and their questioning is particularly effective in clarifying learning for the pupils and in assessing what is necessary for them to learn further. The pupils' responses are handled very well. In some excellent lessons in the Foundation Stage and in literacy there is precision to the teaching and impressive interaction with the pupils. The lessons are exceptionally challenging throughout and this is reflected in the progress pupils make and in their attitudes. The support of individuals and the regular checking of their understanding are crucial.
20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, ensuring that pupils have work that is well matched to their needs and that they make good progress. Their self-esteem is high. They pay close attention to adults, making good progress in relation to the targets set for them and persevering well with their tasks. Individual education plans are of very good quality and have clear targets, which are shared with pupils and reviewed each term with parents. The teachers and classroom assistants have a clear understanding of the needs of the pupils. They work closely together and use a range of activities skilfully to consolidate knowledge. Positive relationships are established and an atmosphere of confidence created and support provided, in order that the pupils can work independently wherever possible. Teaching is focused well on improving literacy and numeracy skills. The support provided for pupils with statements of special educational need is very effective and ensures their continued progress.
21. The school stresses the importance of involving parents in their children's work and this is understood from the Foundation Stage onwards. Homework is set regularly and parents are satisfied with the provision. All pupils take home reading books on a regular basis and many parents share books with their children. From Year 2 onwards, all have spellings and some mathematical tables to learn. Pupils are also given other work to do linked with their work in other

subjects, such as occasional research tasks. They receive high quality feedback, which has a positive impact on standards and on their progress and motivation.

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

22. The quality and range of opportunities for learning provided by the school are very good for children in the Nursery and Reception classes and also very good for pupils in Years 1 to 4. Suitable improvements have been made since the time of the previous inspection, when the curricular provision was reported to be good. All statutory requirements are met.
23. The Foundation Stage curriculum, based on six areas of learning, provides a lively and stimulating experience for all children in the Nursery and Reception classes. The organisation of learning is very good and is based throughout on first-hand experiences, making full use of the children's natural curiosity and eagerness.
24. The curriculum in Years 1 to 4 is very appropriate, being both broad and balanced and very suitable provision is made for all subjects. The provision for some subjects and aspects of subjects, now goes beyond that expected. For example, the provision for the speaking and listening and writing aspects of English and for scientific enquiry, is particularly extensive and this is contributing to the good progress that pupils are now making. The school's provision is also particularly rich and stimulating in relation to the creative arts, such as art and design, music and dance. The overall provision for these subjects, in terms of teaching and resources, has meant that higher than expected standards are often being achieved. Information and communication technology (ICT) is making a suitable contribution to most subjects of the curriculum. A strength of the curriculum is the way that cross-curricular links are made whenever possible. For example, history and geography complement each other well and art and design is used particularly successfully to support the work in subjects such as mathematics, science and religious education. The time allocations for individual subjects are satisfactory and the length of the school day is also adequate.
25. Appropriate and relevant policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and they contain detailed and extensive information to provide for the full coverage of the subjects. The plans ensure a steady and progressive development of each subject through the school. The school has adopted the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy with very good effect. Numeracy has been very effectively implemented, with, for example, an appropriate use of mental activities in lessons and a ready use of mathematics in other subjects of the curriculum, such as science and design and technology. In literacy, many opportunities are provided for pupils to develop the full range of skills, both within English itself and, especially, across the range of curriculum subjects, such as geography and history. The successful implementation of these strategies is contributing significantly to the progress that pupils are making currently.
26. Teachers produce an extensive range of very good quality curriculum planning that helps to ensure the steady and effective development of pupils' knowledge and skills. Planning makes very suitable allowance for the various needs of pupils, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school makes very good provision for the equality of pupils' access to the whole curriculum, with the staff making sure that all pupils are involved, as far as possible, in a full range of activities. In making suitable efforts to include pupils in all appropriate activities, the school allows them to achieve as much as they can. Good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education, with aspects of sex education and drugs education fully covered within lessons when appropriate. Pupils are also made fully aware of other aspects of healthy living, such as the contents of a healthy diet.
27. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. The majority of support is provided for pupils in class; this ensures that they have full access to all subjects of the curriculum. Teachers are conscientious in matching work to the individual needs of pupils. The school is flexible in meeting the specific learning needs of all pupils, including those with statements of

educational need. For example, it allows pupils to work in classes other than those for their age group when this is appropriate to their development. Those pupils entitled to full-time support are also provided with opportunities for independent learning.

28. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities, including football, hockey, table-tennis, computer, recorders, dance and Share clubs. These are particularly well supported by pupils, as well as by teachers and classroom assistants. The school welcomes many visitors, including the police, members of the medical profession, fire-officers, local clergy, members of other faiths and artists. This is in addition to a full range of musical and theatre groups. A variety of educational visits is arranged to places such as Bishop's Wood, Stratford Butterfly Farm, Dunfield House and local churches and farms. These activities make a significant contribution to pupils' personal and social development, as well as to their learning in different subjects.
29. The school has good links with the local community. The school is very much part of that community and it makes use of the area around the school regularly, in subjects such as history and geography. The school has close links with local businesses, supermarkets and sports clubs and these provide active support for some of the school events, such as the annual residential trip and for school teams. Local residents are invited regularly to events in the school and the school's musical groups often provide entertainment at nearby residential homes. Good links have also been established with other schools, especially those in the local 'pyramid'. Aspects of the curriculum are discussed regularly by staff and care is taken to ensure the appropriate continuity in pupils' education as they move from one school to another. Pupils join with those from other schools for various sporting and musical activities during the year.
30. The school now makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good. Overall provision is very good. Significant improvements have been made, particularly in the provision for spiritual development, since the time of the previous inspection.
31. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Assemblies are well planned and are delivered very thoughtfully, with pupils often making a suitable contribution themselves. Pupils are helped to gain knowledge and insight into their own and other people's, values and beliefs and in particular they are encouraged to respect and value the opinions of others. Moments of quietness are provided for pupils to reflect on what they have heard and to consider how they should respond themselves. Opportunities are also planned for pupils' spiritual development in the subjects of the curriculum, as when pupils are provided with interesting and thought-provoking experiences in science, when they produce various images on the screen in information and communication technology and when children in the Nursery and Reception classes taste a wide variety of different foods.
32. Provision for moral development is very good. The headteacher and staff, as well as providing good role models themselves, remind pupils regularly of the correct forms of behaviour. Discussions often take place in lessons and rules of conduct are emphasised when necessary. All staff have high expectations of pupils and they are praised and rewarded regularly for maintaining these high standards. They are encouraged to develop a clear understanding of right and wrong and to treat staff, visitors and other pupils with courtesy and respect. Most pupils also have a high degree of self-discipline and they show concern should any other pupils not maintain the expected standards.
33. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. Pupils are encouraged to form good relationships with each other, their teachers and other adults. As they progress through the school, pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively, to take turns and to share resources, as when taking part in experimental work in science, or in working together on computers. Older pupils are particularly caring of younger ones and they relate well to them whenever a need should arise. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to take on responsibilities within their own classrooms and they carry them out very conscientiously. Older pupils carry out their particular tasks, such as distributing milk and fruit, arranging the hall for assemblies, acting as librarians and assisting at lunchtime, with great care and efficiency. The social development of pupils is

further enhanced by the quality of the school's community links, its extra-curricular activities, the involvement of the school in fund-raising and the opportunity for pupils to engage in decision-making through the school council.

34. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. They learn about aspects of British culture in subjects such as English, art and design and history. A very appropriate emphasis is laid on their knowledge and understanding of other cultures during assemblies and during lessons in subjects such as geography, dance, music and religious education. Artefacts from other faiths are on display in the school and the library has a suitable range of books to inform pupils further. The Internet is used successfully to allow pupils to make contact with children in other countries. The school also makes suitable provision for making pupils aware of the multicultural society in which they live. They consider different forms of worship, art, ritual and life-style and celebrate important festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. Staff show good concern for the needs of the pupils and provide good role models to encourage their development. Parents are pleased with the level of support in the school, seeing it as a caring community where staff are always approachable. The procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are good and for providing educational and personal support and guidance are very good.
36. Overall, the school has good procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of the pupils. The designated person for child protection ensures that all the staff know how to deal with any situations that may arise and know who to report to in the school if necessary. The provision for first aid is good, with several trained staff, records kept of any treatment and letters home to parents as appropriate. The school has a good health and safety policy and has recently undertaken a whole school risk assessment. The governors are involved actively in touring the school to identify any potential hazards. Outside contractors check the fire extinguishers, electrical items and physical education equipment regularly. The teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons such as science, physical education and design and technology. The necessary care is shown in the use of the Internet.
37. The monitoring and support of pupils' personal development is good, though informal. It relies mainly on the teachers' knowledge of the individual pupils. Their personal qualities are discussed with parents at the consultation meetings and are reported in the annual progress reports. Their personal development is enhanced by the various tasks they have around the school. The school encourages pupils to recognise the value of good work during the celebration assemblies and with the various opportunities to gain stickers and certificates. Circle time helps pupils to learn to listen to others and to be tolerant of other points of view.
38. The procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour and for preventing any oppressive behaviour are very good. The behaviour policy recognises the needs of the pupils and reflects the philosophy of the school. It sets out clearly the expectations of good behaviour, emphasising praise and encouragement. The lessons seen during the inspection showed that the staff follow this positive approach consistently. The discussion and setting of class rules at the beginning of the school year help pupils to understand what is expected of them. Overall, the high quality of the teaching provides pupils with work at the right level so that they are fully engaged and behaviour is not an issue for the great majority. Although any bullying or name-calling is rare, the school takes rapid and appropriate action if any occurs. The pupils who show any sustained difficulty with behaviour are monitored well through the school's special needs system. Pupils of all ethnic groups are encouraged to relate well to each other.
39. The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good and make an appropriate contribution to the attainment and progress of all pupils. The school reminds parents of the need for regular attendance and the importance of arriving on time. The headteacher and secretary monitor the registers each week and contact parents as necessary. Pupils with very good

attendance receive certificates. The school has set a realistic target for improvement. The education welfare officer is involved appropriately. However, in spite of the school's efforts, some parents still do not appreciate fully the need to avoid taking their children out of school in term time.

40. The school has impressive systems for tracking and monitoring the overall progress of pupils, which is a significant improvement since the previous inspection and undertakes the regular analysis of considerable amounts of data to assess where pupils are in their learning and whether they are achieving at the appropriate level. Governors are informed about and have some involvement in this analysis. The pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science is monitored very carefully by the senior management team, co-ordinators of these subjects, class teachers and the classroom assistants, who form an effective part of the assessment process in all classes.
41. The school has developed the use of targets in English and mathematics very well, for year groups in relation to national tests and for groups within classes. Individual targets for writing, which have been introduced recently, are having a positive impact on the pupils' progress. Targets for individual lessons are used well and encourage pupils to concentrate on the intentions for learning within lessons, often with the positive support of the characters WALT and WILF ('We are learning to...' and 'What I'm looking for...'). The use of very high quality marking and of targets enables pupils to be provided with positive feedback, which raises their self-esteem. It tells the pupils precisely what they have to do next in order to make progress. The school has high expectations, which are shared with the pupils and a good range of strategies is used to ensure that areas of possible misunderstanding are clarified. In most lessons in English, mathematics and science, teachers use activities well to check understanding, as in the pupils' use of white boards in lessons on phonics and brisk introductory mental mathematics sessions. The school is working towards continuity in record keeping with the receiving middle school. Procedures are in place for recording assessments in geography, history, ICT, music and physical education and the school is continuing to develop procedures for art and design, design and technology and religious education. In these three subjects, some useful assessment already takes place, mostly informally, but there is limited recording of the progress made by individual pupils, particularly in terms of their development of skills.
42. Pupils with special educational needs are assessed regularly and a wide variety of information is recorded to help identify their current attainment. The information gained is used effectively to provide new work. Similarly, the needs of those pupils who are potentially higher attainers are identified and supported well. The school buildings are fully accessible to pupils with physical disabilities.
43. Procedures for the assessment and recording of progress in the Nursery and Reception classes of the school are very good. They are used diligently by all adults in these classes, providing records that build systematically upon the knowledge and skills children have when they enter the school. The team of teachers, nursery nurses and other helpers observe the children closely as they learn, building on the knowledge gained to develop, for instance, the children's communication, language and literacy skills. The staff analyse their regular and detailed recordings of progress in all areas of learning and use the knowledge gained to provide meaningful and creative opportunities that will lead to further progress for each child.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. In their responses to the questionnaire and at the meeting with the inspectors parents showed that they are pleased with all that the school does. The inspection team supports their positive comments. Parents say that the school is well led and the teaching is good. Their children like coming to school, behave well and make progress because of the level of support they receive. The school expects them to work hard, helps them to become mature and responsible and provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. Almost all parents consider their children receive the right amount of homework to do at home. The school works closely with

parents and they feel comfortable approaching the school with any questions; they are kept well informed about how their child is getting on. These reactions are similar to the comments made at the time of the previous inspection.

45. The school supplies a very good range of information to parents, helping to maintain effective links with them. Newsletters that outline the various activities the pupils are involved in, as well as providing general administrative information, are published several times each term. They include each half term a summary of the topics that will be covered in each class. Other letters refer to more specific matters. Additional information is provided by means of an attractive brochure, leaflets on how parents can help at home and a notice board for parents. Every afternoon provides a good opportunity for parents to see the teachers. They are in the playground or at their classroom door at the end of the day when parents are collecting their children. Informal conversations take place then and it is clear that parents feel welcome to come into the school. Almost all parents come to the formal meetings with teachers in the autumn and spring terms to find out what their children will be doing and to discuss their progress. An open afternoon each year provides an opportunity for all the family to attend and for children to explain their work to their parents. The parents of reception children are welcomed each Friday afternoon to reading sessions. The annual report on progress is sent home in the summer term. The report provides a good summary for each subject on what the pupils know and can do. It also includes targets for improvement, though these are not always as helpful as they might be, sometimes containing generalised statements. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved appropriately in the setting and review of their individual education plans.
46. Parents' involvement with the school makes a satisfactory contribution to its work and to the attainment of the pupils. The school works very hard to encourage the parents to help in the school and to support their children at home. Reading books go home every day and some of the reading records were seen to include useful comments by parents. Some of the parents respond to the questionnaires sent out to help the school decide on, for example, the homework policy and how the school can improve. Parents are willing to come to events involving their children, such as the consultation evening with teachers, coffee days and open afternoons. Nevertheless, they are reluctant to come to curriculum sessions even though they are run at different times of day and the school had great difficulty persuading sufficient parents to enrol in a family literacy course. There is a friends of the school group, but its meetings are poorly supported and many fund raising events have to be organised by the staff. Few parents come to help in the classroom on a regular basis, though many more are willing to help on visits.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The school has a clear sense of educational direction and is very well managed. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and all staff, teaching and non-teaching. Several of the subject co-ordinators are new to their posts, but all have clear ideas about the continuing development of their subject and all co-ordinators support their colleagues well. Their role has continued to grow since the last inspection and they play an important and effective part in the school's management and planning processes. The development plans in place for each subject and area provide a good programme for improvement. Classroom practice has been monitored in detail for English, mathematics and several other subjects and, as the remaining subjects and areas move up in the order of priorities identified in the school development plan, this monitoring will be extended to them. This programme is proving to be effective in raising standards throughout the school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher also undertake valuable monitoring of teaching and learning as part of the arrangements for performance management. The senior management team and the subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science monitor the school's performance thoroughly against national and other statistics and the outcomes of this monitoring are presented to the governing body. The school clearly has the personnel, systems and whole staff commitment to ensure that it will continue to improve in line with its aims.

48. All members of the governing body are firmly committed to the support and development of the school. They are well informed about the relevant aspects of school life, the standards being achieved and the progress made by pupils. They discharge their duties effectively through a system of committees, although the committee for teaching and learning has only recently been established. All meetings of the full governing body are minuted properly, but the notes of committee meetings do not provide an adequate record of the business conducted. Responsibility for monitoring and supporting the provision for pupils with special educational needs, literacy, numeracy and other aspects of the school has been allocated appropriately to individual governors, each of whom provides a useful link with developments in these areas, helping to ensure that the governing body has a good awareness of the school's needs. Several governors have regular contact with the daily life of the school. Statutory requirements for the National Curriculum, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and other aspects of school life are met.
49. The quality of financial planning is good. The school manages its budget efficiently and spending is related clearly to the raising of educational standards. Careful records of expenditure are maintained. The minor issues raised at the time of the last audit have been addressed satisfactorily. The governors and headteacher monitor the school's financial position carefully and are supported well by the school secretary. They are well aware of the need to ensure best value and to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of spending decisions. For instance, a larger than usual surplus had built up in the accounts in previous years, which, through good housekeeping, has enabled the school to maintain good staffing levels, reducing the surplus considerably but in a planned way. This situation is being monitored carefully. All specific grants given to the school, including those for the support and training of teachers and for the raising of standards, are identified appropriately. The headteacher is successful in gaining further support from a range of sources and good use is made of the various elements of special funding the school has attracted.
50. The school's development plan is a practical document, which is focused clearly on the raising of standards. It provides useful detail about the agreed priorities, with indications of costing and of broad criteria by which success can be measured. It is proving effective in helping the school to meet its goals. Responsibility for the approval of the plan lies clearly with the governing body and governors and staff are involved well in monitoring its progress and in its subsequent evaluation. There is an appropriate system of consultation during the preparation of the plan.
51. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides good leadership and support for colleagues. Although class teachers write pupils' individual education plans and are responsible for ensuring that targets are addressed, the co-ordinator provides advice and support and ensures that targets are specific and measurable. She has overseen the successful implementation of the new Code of Practice and liaises closely with outside agencies. The governor for special educational needs links closely with the co-ordinator and visits regularly for specific purposes, such as checking that the new Code of Practice is working effectively. Support staff are skilled and well trained. Resources for special needs are good. They are stored centrally and easily accessible to all staff.
52. All members of staff form a dedicated, enthusiastic and hard-working team. Teaching staff are more than adequate in number to meet the demands of the curriculum and they are well supported by a very good number of classroom assistants. Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced in the full range of curriculum subjects. There are very good procedures in place for supporting newly qualified teachers and all staff new to the school are properly briefed and supported. Teachers are appraised regularly and this, together with the priorities of the school's development plan, is used very well as a basis for planning their training. Classroom assistants work closely with the teachers; they are well equipped to fulfil their roles and their support is appreciated and effective. The school has extended performance management procedures to all members of staff. The administration of the school runs smoothly and unobtrusively. Correspondence is dealt with promptly and systems and practices are effective in ensuring that the school's day-to-day life is well-ordered, providing a calm and pleasant atmosphere in which pupils can learn. Administrative, lunchtime and cleaning staff work well together with the teachers

and classroom assistants as a supportive team for the pupils and all carry out their duties conscientiously and efficiently.

53. The accommodation is good overall and contributes significantly to the quality of education being provided. The school site is very attractive, with pleasant play areas provided for the benefit of the pupils. The classrooms are bright and airy, with plenty of room for pupils to carry out a range of activities, both within the classrooms themselves and in the communal areas. The library, the music room and the computer suite are pleasant places in which pupils can work. The open-plan nature of the school means that noise being generated by work activities in one area can often be heard in other areas. In the same way, to get to many classes it is necessary to go through other class areas. However, staff and pupils cope admirably with this and indeed rarely seem to notice! In fact, the design of the building contributes significantly towards the warm, community feel to the school and does not appear in any way to detract from the learning that is taking place. The quality of the working environment is further enhanced by the colourful and thoughtful displays of pupils' work. The school does not have a medical room. The current facilities for outdoor play for children in the Nursery and Reception classes are limited in size. Further, only one class has direct access to this area. This limits the opportunity for pupils to develop their physical skills further.
54. The overall provision of learning resources is good, with some of the resources available being very good. They are generally of very good quality, suitable and relevant to the needs of the pupils and neatly and carefully stored. Resources are accessible to staff and, where appropriate, pupils and they are put to good use. They enhance all aspects of the curriculum successfully.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to raise standards further, the governors and headteacher should:
- Ensure that all children in the Nursery and Reception classes have full access to the outdoor provision required for the Foundation Stage.

(Paragraphs 53, 61, 62)

Other issues that should be considered by the school for possible inclusion in the action plan:

- The continuing development of formal assessment arrangements for art and design, design and technology and religious education.

(Paragraphs 41, 89, 95, 120)

Both the key issue and the minor issue are already identified in the school's development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	4	15	34	6	0	0	0
Percentage	7	25	58	10	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	227
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	48

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	14	44

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	27	21	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	24	26
	Girls	18	19	20
	Total	41	43	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (76)	90 (65)	96 (81)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	25	25
	Girls	19	19	18
	Total	43	44	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (78)	92 (73)	90 (86)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	164	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	8	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.9
Average class size	25.3

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	196

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	530,548
Total expenditure	497,793
Expenditure per pupil	2,127
Balance brought forward from previous year	31,965
Balance carried forward to next year	65,481

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	274
Number of questionnaires returned	87

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	23	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	32	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	41	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	38	10	1	5
The teaching is good.	76	24	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	47	6	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	29	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	34	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	41	9	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	46	48	2	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	32	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	23	8	0	11

Other issues raised by parents

All issues raised related to the items above.

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

56. The Foundation Stage, which includes the Nursery class and two Reception classes, is a strong feature of the school and provides a lively and stimulating environment in which the children discover that learning is fun. It is co-ordinated very well and works well as a unit, although one Reception class is located a little away from the other classes. The adults working in each class form a very strong team to support learning and harness the children's natural curiosity and eagerness. The organisation of all learning opportunities and the teaching and learning in each area are very good, as are the attitudes of the children, who show constant enthusiasm and enjoyment. Learning is based on first-hand experiences, with emphasis placed on developing the children's communication and language skills, in particular and all adults have high expectations for work and behaviour. There is a joy in teaching and a delight in learning. The consequent progress made by the children is usually very good and their attitudes are of a consistently high quality. The planning and assessment of learning are very strong. The teachers make very good provision overall for children in the Nursery and Reception classes, but provision for physical development outdoors is limited by the outdoor accommodation and access to it for two classes. There is significant improvement even on the positive judgements of the previous inspection. Almost all children entering the Reception class have experience of pre-school education, the majority in the school's own Nursery. The transition from home to school is made effectively and the school works very hard to involve parents in their children's learning at every opportunity and with some success. The children's levels of attainment are assessed soon after entry to the Nursery and again in the Reception Year. They vary from year to year and, although a few children show average skills in all areas of learning, the levels of most are often well below what is expected nationally on entry to the Nursery, particularly in competency and confidence in communication, language and literacy skills and also mathematical and physical skills and those related to personal and social development. The children develop their skills significantly and make very good gains in learning in all areas. By the time the present Reception Year children enter Year 1, they are likely to achieve the desirable learning outcomes in almost all areas, except in some important elements related to communication, language and literacy and mathematics. A few will be above that level. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, as do those for whom English is not the first language.

Personal, social and emotional development

57. Almost all children make very good progress and most meet the early learning goals by the time they are five, although a few find it difficult to initiate new ideas. The team of adults in the Nursery and Reception classes create a happy and ordered environment and provision is very good. The staff provide good role models and listen to and value each child, giving regular praise and encouragement. They build up secure and trusting relationships between the children, their parents and themselves. Because of careful reinforcement, the children learn and understand the routines and what is expected of them and respond well to the consistent expectations; they soon learn to share equipment and to take turns. Half way through the year, the children are working with significant independence at their activities, such as using and wiping clear their white boards, completing and tidying jigsaws. The high quality interaction between children and adults encourages the children to listen, participate eagerly and benefit from all activities. In the Nursery, the children sit in small groups, with an adult, to share fruit and enjoyable conversation and so develop their social, communication and language skills. In each class, they are now sustaining interest for lengthy periods, as they did in the Reception class when they responded to the challenge to make a chair to fit a bear from boxes and tubes, or when filling containers with sand in the Nursery. They move around the nursery to use the activities with confidence and show independence when using resources. In the Reception year, they use planned opportunities to work at an activity of their choice very responsibly, crayoning the picture of their chosen activity on a sheet. A system for planning similar opportunities in the Nursery is being developed.

Behaviour is very good, with the children developing a clear understanding of right and wrong and showing respect for their environment and for other people's ideas.

Communication, language and literacy

58. When the children start school, a few have satisfactory speaking and listening skills, but most need support. There are very well planned and stimulating opportunities for children to talk and to listen in all classes and a strong emphasis is placed on the acquisition of these skills. The adults share closely in the children's learning in groups, listening to them, questioning carefully and extending their language. They monitor the developing skills and work sensitively to build up confidence. In the Nursery, most children talk to adults using words or short phrases and a few talk confidently in sentences. Most, with encouragement, listen carefully and are able to follow simple instructions. By the time they are five, it is likely that most children will be confident to talk about interesting experiences, but many will not be able to do so clearly. The ability of many to organise and clarify their thinking will still be limited. A few can explain their thinking clearly, such as saying *'I'm filling up all the gaps, so that Goldilocks won't get in'*, when discussing their plans of houses, but only a few ask questions confidently. All respond well to stories read expressively to them. When children in the Nursery share books with adults or with one another, most point to the pictures and use some words or phrases, but some do not. A few can tell the story from the pictures, laugh at the funny parts, recognise a familiar word and use the sounds of several letters. A few children in the Reception classes read above the expected level, with fluency and use their knowledge of sounds to help with unfamiliar words. They show both understanding and humour and their skills are increasing rapidly. More than half the reception-aged children this year are in line to reach or exceed the learning goals in reading and all are making very good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. The introduction of a new system to encourage the learning of phonics is having a considerable impact on progress.
59. In the Nursery, a few children look at photographs of their teddy bear's picnic, draw a detailed picture and tell an adult a simple phrase or sentence to describe it. Working independently in the writing corner, a few draw themselves and use one letter of their name. Most are making marks with some emerging shapes. Some children use words such as 'cold', 'messy' or 'sticky' to describe their cornflour mixture as they trickle it through their fingers and all listen and look attentively to spot which items, emerging from Mrs Bear's bag, begin with the letter 'b'. A few children explain why others do not begin with that letter. In the Reception classes, a few children use capitals and full stops in their writing and their knowledge of phonics to try words successfully. They write several sentences in stories about a visit to a hospital or going swimming. Most are listening to sounds carefully and using them and a few familiar words in their emerging writing. The very well set up writing corners in all classes, are very popular with the children, who use them regularly to write weather forecasts, letters to the teacher and lists. They are linked usefully to role-play activities and ensure a clear purpose and strong motivation for writing. For instance, reception-aged children write invitations to a teddy bear's picnic. The provision made for the children to develop their language skills is very good and a wide range of interesting and attractive books and other resources is used well.

Mathematical development

60. Although less than half of the children will have achieved the early learning goals by the time they are five, most are making good and often very good progress in their mathematical development. Provision is very good and children are challenged and enjoy learning. However, most enter the Nursery without the necessary language of number and, although adults in all classes work hard to ensure that all understand the necessary concepts and develop the language needed, there are still significant areas where many children find difficulty. In the Reception classes, children are expected and encouraged to explain their mathematical thinking clearly. For instance, they each tell the class what they are going to do before actually moving their numbered washing on the washing line, in order to sequence numbers to ten or, for some children, to 20. A few children are very speedy at identifying missing numbers on a number snake. Most do so with a little support and show their growing knowledge of 'one more than' and some a knowledge of 'less'. Although more than half of the reception children are likely to understand the process of addition by the age of five, when answering simple problems, only some will grasp the concept of 'taking away'. There

are stimulating opportunities for children to use their prediction and problem-solving skills, to, for instance, decide which of the three bears' bowls holds the most porridge. In spite of this, many children find difficulty with the language and in developing their ideas to solve practical problems. Planned and incidental opportunities are used well and usually matched carefully to the children's needs in order to develop their mathematical skills and concepts. In the Nursery, all the children, with support, sit each of three differently-sized bears on appropriate chairs and give them the correct bowl and colander. Mathematical skills are taught carefully, using imaginative and creative methods and are consolidated very well. ICT is used well, as when, in the Reception classes, a programmable toy enables pupils to understand counting on. Good resources are used well and pupils consolidate their learning well when sorting, matching and threading beads or singing rhymes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. The children in all classes learn very well and make very good progress, are challenged and show curiosity and wonder at the world around them. Almost all reach the early learning goals in each aspect, with many achieving higher than that in ICT skills. In spite of encouragement, some find it difficult to ask questions about why things happen or how things work. In the Nursery, they understand about habitats from their realistic underwater classroom and discover which animals live in the rain forest as they make pictures of crocodiles and monkeys. They notice carefully the differences in the seasons and between rough and smooth and show curiosity to find out which items are attracted to a magnet. They have regular opportunities to cut, stick, design and make in a range of ways. The older children build three-dimensional plans of the three bears' cottage using wooden blocks. A few are confident in their problem-solving techniques and check that the door is wide enough for their model bear to go through and others, in answering a challenge to make a chair for baby bear, look at several chairs and decide to put arms on theirs. They explore and select materials and attach their chosen boxes with tape, having tried a variety of ways of joining. They use scissors effectively to cut boxes and tubes. When they seat baby bear, the children show delight that the chairs stay upright. They enjoy using the computer independently and most children in the Reception class show a good degree of control in their use of the mouse. They place a wall around a field and put Spot the dog and his friends in different places and move items to make an underwater scene. All control a programmable toy to go on a bear hunt and to reach a cave, some with support. A few move it both forwards and backwards and are able to make it turn. Work on festivals and celebrations, such as Chinese New Year, the Jewish festival of tree planting and the Jubilee helps the children in each class to gain a good knowledge of their own culture and beliefs and those of others. The staff use the possibilities of the outdoor environment regularly and children observe and explore on windy days, follow prescribed routes and dig and plant. Provision is very good overall, even with the constraints of the outdoor accommodation, which lacks a suitable covered area and direct access for all classes.

Physical development

62. The children's physical skills are generally good and the children attain at the level expected by the age of five and above that for a few, with very good progress overall. There are ample opportunities to develop skills. Commercial construction kits and jigsaws of increasing difficulty are used with confidence and tools, such as scissors, pencils and painting brushes, are soon handled well in a range of interesting cutting and sticking activities in each class. The children move with confidence and good awareness of space in the familiar environment of the Nursery. In the Reception classes, most develop the imagination to match their movements to music or to stories. They show curiosity as they open the door carefully and peep inside the house of the three bears. The children show good control and co-ordination in their movements on apparatus in the hall. They put both feet together, as taught, to jump through hoops or on and off benches, sometimes using hands to assist the movement. Most show good and safe technique for landing. Most of the nursery children enjoy going outside and use the space well and safely, riding tricycles and steering cars with control and enjoying using bats and balls. Some of the children enjoy the swing boat and co-operate well, with others happy to sit in the flying saucer toy and be moved from side to side by the teacher. Access to outside areas is possible for all classes, but is direct for only one Reception class and is difficult for the others. The nearest area for one

Reception class is the large playground. There is no covered area outside. There are suitable resources for crawling and climbing outdoors, with very good opportunities indoors. Although most provision is very good, overall provision is only good, because of the nature of and access to, the outside accommodation. This has been identified in the school's development plan.

Creative development

63. Attainment in creative skills is at the level expected nationally by the end of the Foundation Stage. Since many children lack both imagination and the necessary language for play when they enter school, this indicates very good progress. There are stimulating learning experiences and time for the children to develop their use of language alongside their skills of imagination as they, for instance, take part in play in role in each class. A group of nursery children showed independence and initiative in acting out the three bears buying a cottage that is for sale. In the Reception class, they make posters for their magic forest which say 'Beware of the Three Bears'. They write to the bear and read his replies eagerly. They re-enact the story and all take their roles confidently. There are some excellent resources, which involve the children fully in their play and the adults know when to intervene and when not to do so. The children express their feelings and ideas well through experiences in art, craft and music. In the Nursery, the children enjoy singing nursery rhymes, songs and action rhymes and use finger and hand prints to make spiders, grass and snakes as part of their realistic three-dimensional forest of the three bears. The older children explore the sounds various items make when shaken, brushed or dropped. They listen well and remember that brushes can sometimes make a swishing noise and rain sticks can sound like grass moving. They sing and play 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star' tunefully and with rhythm. Many are beginning to appreciate the work of famous painters such as Kandinsky as they make their own paintings of circles.

ENGLISH

64. The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 showed that the pupils were in line with the average nationally in this subject, which indicates that they progressed well from their low level on entry. The proportion of these pupils attaining the higher level was above the national average and this has increased over recent years. When compared with figures for schools with a similar intake, results in reading were above average and those for writing were well above the average. Standards in the present Year 2 are broadly in line with the levels expected for pupils of this age. The overall standards in English for pupils in the present Year 4 are currently still below the level expected nationally, although the levels achieved by pupils of this age have been improving over recent years. The pupils who left the school last year were in line with expectations in reading, although still below that level in writing. This year, particularly because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group, this pattern of improvement will not be maintained. Even so, there are clear indications that most are currently making better progress than they have in the past.
65. The progress currently being made by pupils throughout the school, including the higher attaining pupils, is good overall. There are many examples in lessons and in the sample of work where progress is currently very good and progress in Year 2 is rapid. Pupils with special educational needs make consistently good progress towards the targets in their individual action plans and receive very good support from their learning support teacher and all classroom assistants. The high quality of teaching and learning has been maintained since the last inspection, as has the progress pupils make and their attitudes to learning. There have also been substantial improvements in the teaching of reading, writing and speaking and listening and in higher expectations for all pupils, including those who are potentially higher attainers. The expertise of the support staff is used very well and is an important factor in the progress pupils make. There is a shared commitment by all staff, with a determination that all pupils will learn. However, a large number of the oldest pupils and pupils in each class, continue to find many aspects of English difficult and are not always able to communicate their ideas sufficiently clearly. Year 4 pupils, in particular, have found the skills of correct spelling, use of punctuation and interesting vocabulary difficult to acquire. There is no regular pattern to a difference in performance between boys and girls overall.
66. The pupils' attainment in communication, language and literacy has often been well below average when they enter the Nursery and their speaking skills and sometimes their listening skills, still below average when they enter Year 1. More than half of some classes have some difficulty in this aspect of their work. Many pupils in Year 2 speak confidently and are able to include relevant

details in their conversation. Although developing confidence, only half are able to explain their ideas clearly and with sufficient detail. A few only respond when encouraged to do so. All teachers work hard to raise levels in both speaking and listening and, over the last two years, have introduced many effective ideas. For instance, Year 2 pupils talk in a circle about good and bad bargains and happy, sad and exciting times. Pupils in Year 4 take it in turns to be in the 'hot seat' to answer questions posed by the remainder of the class. In Year 4, many still have limited language skills and find it difficult to develop and convey their ideas with clarity, but usually concentrate and listen well and are eager to talk about their experiences. A few pupils in each class are able to develop ideas thoughtfully and are more confident in conveying their opinions clearly. The pupils are making good progress because of perceptive questioning and the sensitive handling of their responses.

67. Standards in reading for the pupils currently in Year 2 are broadly in line with those expected. In Year 4, they are lower than those expected for pupils of this age, which reflects the low starting levels of many of this particular group of pupils and some uneven progress in the past. Most pupils in each class enjoy and appreciate the many books available and read a range of well-matched texts accurately. Almost all Year 2 pupils read with expression, as taught, as do a few in Year 1, who are also beginning to take note of punctuation. Many pupils in Years 3 and 4 lack expression, are hesitant in their reading and less confident. Many of the younger pupils tend to correct themselves when reading, where necessary and show developing fluency. They use their phonic skills well to tackle difficult words and are becoming confident readers. The older pupils try hard to put expression into their reading, even though they have to concentrate on the text. However, most do not use their phonic skills easily, although these are clearly improving. Most pupils develop a good knowledge of how books and libraries work and how they can be used, but some pupils in Years 3 and 4 have limited understanding of how to use an index or contents list. Many pupils in Year 3 understand the main points of a story and talk easily about the characters and setting. About a third of Year 4 pupils are confident and capable readers who are using the text increasingly to support their view and to explain how the author makes characters and stories come alive. Lower attaining pupils, although halting in their fluency, are heard regularly and are beginning to read a little more accurately. They receive very good support from their teachers and classroom assistants.
68. Pupils make good use of their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills in other subjects. For example, the Year 1 pupils gathered information from the Internet for their work about Louis Braille and pupils in Years 3 and 4 wrote lists of instructions for a Viking shelter. The necessary vocabulary is reinforced and proper language used by pupils. Work is explained well in mathematics. In science, the way pupils write up their investigations, entirely in their own words, is very good. The pupils label and plan designs and make regular written evaluations for design and technology. In geography, history and religious education, there is much reflective writing and appreciation of other cultures and times. Poetry and prose show thought and feeling and emphasise the cultural element. The pupils write regularly, at length, in most subjects and the sample of work showed how very well each subject contributes to literacy in a planned way. The school encourages parents to be involved in their children's reading homework and, where parents do so, it has a positive effect on progress and on the pupils' desire to learn. However, this is not consistent for all pupils and depends very much on how important it seems to parents. The teaching of reading, including that in guided and shared reading sessions and the current progress of pupils overall is good. There is evidence of some very good teaching of the younger pupils, leading to better progress.
69. Standards in writing, by the end of Year 2, both from evidence of the tests last year and in work seen during the inspection, are broadly in line with those expected nationally and significant numbers of pupils are likely to be above that level. Pupils throughout the school are now making good progress overall. However, standards for pupils at the end of Year 4 are likely to be below that expected, because of the particular group of pupils and progress in the past. A few of this group, however, are attaining above the level expected. In spite of work to boost standards and additional support from classroom assistants and others, many remain below. All of these pupils try hard with their spellings but a significant number tend to spell as they speak. Some are still learning the key words needed, but all are benefiting from the phonics programme in place to help

them spell accurately. Most pupils in Years 1 and 2 use capitals and full stops correctly and some Year 2 pupils are developing the use of other punctuation. A quarter of pupils in Year 4 use a range of punctuation, but many, though now writing at length, write in sentences using only simple punctuation. The sample of pupils' work seen during the inspection was impressive in its volume and in the handwriting and presentation in most classes and reflects the high expectations of teachers. Much attention has been given to handwriting in Years 1 and 2. As a result, pupils in most of these classes use a neatly formed and increasingly fluent written style and very good presentation in all their work, often at a level above that expected. Although most pupils in the school are currently making good progress in handwriting, present their work well and take pride in it, some pupils in Years 3 and 4 find that legibility in their new joined style is not always easy.

70. A quarter of a Year 2 class write about 'Yeh Shen and the Magic Fish' with a good structure, interesting words and linking words such as 'unfortunately'. They are developing a style that makes the reader want to read on, as in, for instance, a letter to Dear Wolf which includes '*We accept your apology, but will give you another chance*'. Many retell stories with a beginning, middle and end and are beginning to use linking words well in their sentences. Although less than half of the present pupils in Year 4 are likely to achieve the level expected nationally, all are trying hard. Many have good ideas, but have lacked variety in the words they use, as when describing characters. This use of interesting words and phrases is only just beginning to develop, as they describe hot doughnuts as 'juicy and sugary' and refer expressively to 'boiling lava like tomato sauce'. All pupils are now more motivated to write at length and extend their ideas more logically but their work sometimes loses meaning. A few pupils are using words such as 'because' to link sentences and using interesting detail in descriptive phrases such as '*I spotted the blood-sucking vampire bat as black as night*' in their writing, but rarely use punctuation within sentences.
71. The quality of teaching and generally of learning throughout the school is good overall, with some very good teaching of the older pupils and much for the younger pupils that is very good and, in Year 2, often excellent. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are reflected in a similar way. Most of the lessons seen during the inspection were of high quality and all were at least satisfactory. Each teacher plans very well for pupils of differing abilities, is very clear about what is to be taught and has at least good subject knowledge and understanding to teach the required basic skills well and with confidence. Teachers' expectations for both work and behaviour are consistently high and their use of questioning is often a major reason for success in learning. In most lessons, such as a very good one with Year 3 and 4 pupils, time is used effectively and skilled teaching addresses the needs of all pupils very well. The pupils are totally involved and are given constant feedback throughout the lesson about their learning of traditional story writing. The interaction between teacher and pupils, in this and many other lessons, encourages the development of the pupils' thinking skills and maximum effort at all times. The National Strategy for Literacy is taught very well throughout the school, with clarity and with a variety of effective teaching methods that motivate the pupils; as a result most pupils are interested and want to work. Teachers generally provide useful ways for pupils to remember what they learn and learning is broken down into manageable steps, with which the pupils can cope and on which they can build successfully. In each class, teachers use large and colourful texts very well. In two excellent lessons in Year 2, pupils give their total attention to studying a traditional story or in comparing two similar stories from different cultures. Confidence and enjoyment of teaching are reflected in each pupil's clear love of learning, appreciation of literacy and empathetic approach. The strategies for pupils to develop their punctuation, spelling and other writing skills, while developing their structure for story writing, are impressive and excellent work habits are developed and acknowledged constantly. In developing their thinking skills, speaking and listening are important throughout and each pupil responds to the very high expectations set in the challenging lessons. The pupils' behaviour, application to work and response are usually very good. They generally listen and concentrate very well and their work is completed with considerable care. Many pupils, in each year group, do not find it easy to improve their English skills, but their confidence is growing and most respond well to the high expectations of their teachers, put much effort into their work and are motivated and eager. Occasionally, a few of the older pupils find it difficult to keep on track and lack concentration at times, in spite of well conducted lessons, but good work habits, such as the pupils' own checking of their work, are now developing throughout the school.

72. The marking of work and the use of individual and group targets are of high quality and provide the pupils with ways in which they can improve their work and achieve the high expectations set. The use of classroom assistants, who work closely with the teachers to develop pupils' skills and to assess the learning of groups of pupils, is also very good. Their contribution has a positive impact on standards.
73. The leadership and management of English are very good. The shared commitment of all staff to improving pupils' skills and attitudes is absolutely clear. The significant improvements in teaching and learning and in the progress currently being made by pupils, are due to careful monitoring of all aspects of the subject, detailed analysis of work and results and effective assessment. Many procedures are now in place securely to improve the tracking of pupils' progress and teachers are supported very well in their work, with consistency across year groups, because of very good planning and moderation of all work. The school is to review its present guidelines to include the new and effective procedures and is also to make further links with the middle school. The use of ICT is developing well, particularly for word-processing. The supply and quality of books and other materials are good overall, with a very good supply of materials teachers can use for studying text in literacy sessions. The organisation of resources for the subject throughout the school is impressive, making it easy for teachers to find and use them for lessons. The school works hard to encourage parents to be more involved in their children's learning and homework is helping to improve standards and motivation.

MATHEMATICS

74. Standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with the national average and at the end of Year 4 they are below average. However, based on their prior attainment, these older pupils are making good progress. In the national tests in 2002, standards at the end of Year 2 were broadly average, which was a significant improvement on the previous year. This improvement has been maintained. In the national tests at the time of the school's previous inspection, standards at the end of Year 2 were found to be below average. Standards are therefore better than they were at that time. In the last report, standards at the end of Year 4 were said to be broadly as expected. Current standards for pupils of that age reflect a group of pupils that contains a considerable number with special educational needs, affecting the overall standard. However, there has clearly been significant improvement in the subject over recent years for pupils of all ages.
75. At the end of Year 2, pupils undertake an appropriate range of practical and problem solving activities, although a small number of pupils have difficulty in finding the correct language to explain their work clearly. Most pupils can count to 20 and beyond and many can identify odd and even numbers confidently. Pupils are able to find the correct amount of objects to match a particular number. Most pupils write their numbers correctly, although a small number of pupils occasionally reverse their digits. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of addition and subtraction, but some are less certain in tackling exercises involving multiplication. Most show a sound understanding of such things as halves, money, in the context, for example, of simple shopping bills and time on the hour and half-hour. Most pupils can name a range of two- and three-dimensional shapes correctly and identify various properties such as number of sides and corners. In measuring activities, most pupils are able to explain and use non-standard units of measure, as well as using expressions such as 'heavier' and 'lighter'. However, a small number of pupils are currently less certain in using the various standard measures. Pupils collect data, on, for example, their favourite food and different ways of getting to school and they produce simple graphs confidently to display their findings.
76. At the end of Year 4, pupils undertake appropriate practical activities and they are also provided with opportunities to tackle problems. However, a good number of pupils have difficulties in tackling these problem solving activities because of limitations in their understanding of mathematical language. This is having a significant overall effect on the current standards being achieved by pupils in this year group. Most pupils are confident in undertaking work in addition and subtraction and many have a clear knowledge of place value to five figures and beyond. However, some pupils lack confidence in repeating tables and this has an adverse effect on their

ability to undertake tasks in multiplication and division successfully. Most pupils can explain decimals to two places and many are able to use them accurately in the context of measurement and money. Many pupils have an appropriate understanding of fractions and they can identify equivalent fractions and fractions of a whole number. Whilst many pupils are able to calculate the areas and perimeters of simple shapes, a significant number find this exercise difficult, especially when the questions are in written form. Pupils collect data on a variety of issues, such as about their favourite sports teams and they produce a range of suitable graphs to illustrate their findings successfully. However, some pupils are less confident in interpreting data presented to them in graphical form.

77. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Examples of very good teaching and learning were also observed. Lessons are carefully planned, based on the pattern of the National Numeracy Strategy framework. In particular, teachers make careful allowance for the provision of problem solving activities, recognising this appropriately as an area for particular development in pupils' work. Teachers also plan for the provision of work to suit pupils' particular needs and this helps them to proceed at a pace and level that are suited to them. Most teachers make good use of mental activities at the beginning of lessons and they are also very aware of the need to extend pupils' mathematical vocabulary. However, whilst teachers themselves make good use of suitable terminology, they do not always provide pupils with enough opportunities to express their own thoughts and ideas at length in order to develop this aspect of pupils' work further. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they generally provide clear instructions and give much well directed support. As a result, pupils of all attainment levels, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their knowledge and understanding. Gifted and talented pupils are also challenged to do well. Where teaching is very good and where, for example, subject knowledge is particularly good, the lesson is especially brisk in pace, pupils are provided with stimulating activities that suit their individual needs and expectations are high and pupils make very good progress in their mathematical knowledge during the lesson. Most pupils enjoy their work, the mental activities in particular and this has a significant effect on their learning. They settle to their written and practical tasks with interest and enthusiasm, work well with other pupils and make every effort to accomplish their tasks. Pupils are well behaved and concentrate well on their work, which contributes towards their progress. Teachers hold very useful summary sessions at the end of lessons, to check pupils' understanding and review some of the work done. In the light of this, teachers often provide pupils at the start of the next lesson with the opportunity to 'go-over' work that they have not understood. This helps to ensure that pupils know how to proceed in that lesson. Pupils are usually very careful with the presentation of their work and most take a pride in its appearance. Teachers mark pupils' work promptly and detailed and helpful comments of advice and praise are usually added. Very good use is also made of homework to enhance pupils' learning.
78. The school uses the National Numeracy Strategy document as its scheme of work, and very good plans are produced for the different classes, especially where mixed year groups are involved. The strategy itself has been implemented most effectively. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable, as well as a very good practitioner and she supports her colleagues well. Opportunities for her to see work being undertaken in the classrooms, to see for herself the standards being achieved, are being planned. She is already fully aware of the main weaknesses that remain in pupils' performance, such as those relating to problem solving and strategies are in place to tackle them. Assessment procedures are very good and they are being used very effectively to identify pupils' current attainment, as well as the progress they are making. As a result, pupils are provided with very suitable new work. Information and communication technology is used effectively to help develop pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding further. Mathematics is also used well in other subjects of the curriculum, such as science, design and technology and geography, to undertake measuring and counting activities that enhance pupils' numeracy skills further. The subject is well resourced.

SCIENCE

79. The teachers' assessments of the number of pupils aged seven attaining Level 2 in 2002 were broadly in line with national figures and in line with the average when compared with similar schools. The number of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 was above the national average and well

above that for similar schools. Since assessments at the time of the previous inspection indicated standards that were well below average, the most recent figures point to significant improvement in the subject. The present inspection confirms this improvement, with standards in Year 2 that are in line with national expectations. Standards by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4 are continuing to rise. Those evident in the present year group are below the level expected, but this still reflects improvement on the standards achieved by this year group in their assessments at the end of Year 2. There is no significant difference in the results of girls and boys.

80. By the time they leave the school, it is clear that pupils usually have a sound understanding of the various elements of the science curriculum and that they are making good progress in the investigative element of the subject. The attainment of older pupils was typified by a lesson in which pupils in Years 3 and 4 planned an investigation to establish which was the strongest of a group of magnets of different types and sizes. Most pupils showed a good grasp of how they were going to ensure their test was fair and a reasonable understanding of the appropriate vocabulary and ideas, such as 'force', 'attract', 'poles' and 'prediction'. Other pupils in the same year groups were less sure and found particular difficulty in expressing their ideas and in the co-operative working necessary to carry out the investigation they had planned. Pupils in Year 2, continuing their work on forces, showed the ability to make reasonable predictions, observe carefully and record their findings well as they investigated the effect of different types of surface on the speed of a model car. Similarly, Year 1 pupils were observing and recording usefully how their parachutes performed. From an early age, pupils are encouraged to explore the world around them and to ask questions about how it is made and how it affects them. Since pupils of all ages approach the subject through investigation, they regard this as the normal way of working in science and, by the time they leave the school, are able to make realistic predictions about the likely outcomes of their investigations, showing sound knowledge of the necessary vocabulary and recording their observations with care. Most already show a good understanding of how to conduct a scientific investigation and ensure that their testing is fair. However, because of the low levels of language skills with which they entered the school, many of the older pupils continue to have difficulty with some aspects of their work. For instance, although they generally enjoy discussing their findings with others and drawing conclusions based on the evidence they have gathered, many find it difficult to describe precisely what they have observed or what their conclusions are.
81. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. It is based firmly on scientific investigation, to which the pupils respond well and through which they learn effectively. Above all, the teachers make science exciting. They plan interesting and relevant learning activities, in which the objectives are always clear and shared with the pupils. There is a good match between the activities provided and the various levels of ability within each class. The teachers' subject knowledge is good and often very good. They make good use of questioning to challenge the pupils to think. They usually check their pupils' existing understanding before moving further into a topic and make good use of summary sessions to reinforce learning. In the best lessons, such as the planning of an investigation in Years 3 and 4 and the demonstration of the effects of friction in Year 2, learning is very well structured and all pupils are challenged to learn at an appropriate level. As a result, the pupils are totally absorbed in the completion of their work and make clear gains in their learning.
82. Since the teachers make science an interesting and often challenging activity, the pupils' attitudes to their work are good and often very good. Pupils throughout the school enjoy the investigative and practical aspects, which bring the subject alive for them. They show considerable interest in what they are doing and are well motivated. Consequently, pupils of all attainment levels, including those with special educational needs and the higher attainers, make good progress in their learning. They usually work well together and share resources sensibly, although some of the older pupils, in particular, find it difficult to co-operate and communicate effectively in group activities. Pupils record work in a variety of ways. At present, some use is made of information and communication technology to aid this, as well as to gather information, but the school has identified the need for making more use of ICT to support learning in science. All pupils are encouraged to develop useful questioning and thinking skills, which are a basis for

good investigative work. They make good gains in their observational skills and are encouraged throughout the school to become familiar with and use the appropriate vocabulary. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development as they explore the world and delight in discovery. The development of the pupils' skills in literacy is supported by the regular opportunities provided for the recording of investigations and the quality of written work is a strong feature in science throughout the school. The subject also contributes well to the development of pupils' skills in numeracy through the recording, analysis and presentation of information.

83. The co-ordinator is new to the role, but has clear ideas about how the subject will continue to develop. It is currently a priority in the school development plan and the monitoring of classroom practice is due to take place. The scheme of work ensures very satisfactory coverage of the National Curriculum and is used well by all teachers as they plan thoroughly in their year groups. Arrangements for the assessment of the progress pupils make are very clear and all work is marked very well, with much guidance about how pupils might improve, as well as prompts to encourage further learning. The subject is well resourced and good use is made of the school grounds and the locality. Health and safety issues are addressed well.

ART AND DESIGN

84. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in art was in line with national expectations across the school. Evidence from the current inspection indicates that attainment in art and design is above national expectations by the age of seven but remains in line for pupils in Year 4, as their attainment was significantly lower on entry to the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Higher attaining pupils are challenged suitably and those with special educational needs are supported well. The subject has continued to improve since the last inspection and standards by the end of Year 2 are higher than at that time.
85. The school provides a broad curriculum that includes opportunities for observational drawing, textile work, painting and three-dimensional work. The curriculum strikes an effective balance between the development of pupils' basic knowledge and skills and links with other curriculum areas. For example, work on simple mosaics in Years 3 and 4 involves pupils in cutting and gluing skills and refers back to previous work on shades of colour. As a stimulus for their work, pupils use books on the Romans from their history topic. Various computer art programs are used to add interest to learning as well as to develop further skills. Good use is made of sketchbooks to allow pupils to experiment and draft first versions of work. Pupils cover a variety of topics in some depth and explore them from a variety of perspectives. For example, when looking at pattern, pupils look carefully at Celtic patterns, Christmas wrapping paper design and fabric designs from a variety of cultures. Their work in art and design makes a strong contribution to the school's provision for pupils' cultural development. Pupils in Year 2, for instance, have used their careful consideration of the work of William Morris as a stimulus for polystyrene tile printing. Higher attaining pupils have overprinted using a second colour. Pupils handle a good range of materials well and display a good sense of design in their collage and printing work.
86. Good use is made of visiting artists and craftspeople to broaden the range of pupils' experiences. An artist has, for instance, worked with pupils in using a range of resist techniques with gold paint and sequin appliqué to create a decorative hanging in the style of Gujarati textiles. A demonstration of willow sculpture was replicated effectively in rolled paper by the pupils. The school hall is enlivened by a large painted mural based on a symmetrical geometric design, also as a result of work with an artist.
87. The pupils show good attitudes to their work. They are enthusiastic about the opportunities the school provides, both in lessons and in the art club. They listen well to instructions and show interest in the wide range of styles to which they are introduced. They take care with the completion of what they are doing and are proud of their work displayed around the school.
88. There were limited opportunities to observe lessons during the inspection, but the evidence available from other sources, such as teachers' planning, previously completed work and informal discussion with pupils, confirms that the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is

consistently good. Teachers ensure that pupils understand clearly the tasks they are set. Pupils are then given opportunities to use their own ideas and to choose their own materials, which they do thoughtfully. Activities are set in a clear context of previous work and skills are built on progressively as pupils move through the school. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and use praise effectively to encourage pupils and give them confidence. Pupils' work is displayed attractively in classrooms and around the school and contributes to a highly interactive and stimulating learning environment.

89. The present co-ordinator has only recently taken over leadership of the subject but a useful policy and scheme of work are in place and the teaching of the subject has been monitored usefully. The previous co-ordinator did much to develop staff confidence through team teaching and in-service training for colleagues. Resources are very good and used to good effect. There are no formal assessment procedures in place, but planning is adapted regularly in the light of the teachers' ongoing assessment of the progress pupils are making.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

90. At the time of the last report, attainment in design and technology was in line with national expectations across the school. Evidence from the current inspection indicates that pupils' attainment by the age of seven is now above that expected nationally, although attainment in Year 4 remains in line with national expectations. All pupils make good progress, although many pupils in Year 4 came into the school with significantly lower basic skills. The planned curriculum is based on a modified version of national guidelines and covers all the elements of designing, making and evaluating.
91. From the time they enter the school, pupils receive a good training in the basic techniques of cutting, measuring, folding and joining and these skills are built on progressively as they move through the school. Good links are established between design and technology and other curriculum areas. For example, links with science enable pupils to use their understanding of forces when designing and operating their puppets. Measuring skills are integrated clearly into activities and links with other curriculum areas are built explicitly into teachers' planning. For example, the puppets made in design and technology lessons are then used in puppet shows where pupils retell stories studied in literacy sessions. This provides excellent opportunities for pupils to use their speaking and listening skills. Information and communication technology is used occasionally to support learning. For example, following a visit to Coventry Motor Museum, the pupils accessed their website on the Internet and projects are recorded using a digital camera. However, this remains an area for development.
92. Having mastered basic techniques, pupils are confident in designing, evaluating and modifying their work according to basic design criteria. For example, when making a string puppet, they know that the different parts should move independently and that the pieces must not come apart. They understand the difference between a drawing and a design and know the importance of making a 'mock-up' version to iron out problems before embarking on the final version. Pupils also have a broad experience of food technology. Pupils in Year 2, for example, design and make a fruit salad. Similarly, pupils in Years 3 and 4 taste different kinds of bread and then use their preferred bread type as the basis for designing and making healthy sandwiches. These activities give good opportunities for pupils to write descriptively and critically and to present their writing in a range of different forms.
93. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to design and technology, working independently and collaboratively as required. Routines are understood and operated without fuss, even when pupils are not directly supervised. Pupils clearly enjoy the subject and take pleasure in the careful completion of their work.
94. Although it was only possible during the inspection to observe lessons for younger pupils, the quality of teaching and learning observed was consistently good. This is confirmed by the evidence of work completed throughout the school. Teachers strike an effective balance between the structured teaching of basic skills and opportunities for pupils to work independently and

experimentally. Pupils are clear about what they are expected to achieve and can set tasks in the context of previous learning. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and to work independently, solving problems for themselves rather than always asking for adult help. All pupils make good progress. Additional challenge is provided for higher attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are given additional adult support as appropriate, particularly with recording tasks, but are still expected to work as independently as possible. Co-operative and collaborative working is encouraged and the subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal and social development.

95. The co-ordinator for design and technology is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and able to give good support for colleagues. She has observed teaching of the subject across the school and ensures that best practice is shared. Monitoring of the curriculum results in a constant refinement of already good practice. Resources are very good and used effectively. There are no formal assessment procedures in place at present, although teachers regularly modify their planning in the light of ongoing assessment and good opportunities are provided for the pupils to evaluate their work.

GEOGRAPHY

96. Levels of attainment by the time pupils are seven and nine are broadly in line with those expected nationally. This indicates that standards in the subject have been at least maintained since the time of the last inspection. Although it was only possible in the present inspection to observe two lessons, for older pupils, it is clear from planning, work already completed and informal discussion that pupils of all attainment levels, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress in their learning. Pupils who are potentially higher attainers are generally challenged to do well. By the time they are nine, the pupils have a sound understanding of their own locality, of other localities in this country and in other parts of the world, such as India. They are acquiring an appreciation of the significance of key physical features, such as islands and their map work and enquiry skills at this age are developing well. At the age of seven, the pupils are already gaining a sound awareness of the area in which they live and are beginning to identify some of the similarities and differences between it and other areas, such as the village of Tanworth in Arden. They are familiar with simple maps and plans.
97. The regular emphasis throughout the school on the use of the correct geographical vocabulary means that most pupils develop a satisfactory awareness of the language needed to describe different localities. From their early years in the school, all pupils become familiar with basic ideas about maps. In Years 1 and 2, they begin to identify particular physical features of the locality, as they undertake their study of the local area and are introduced to simple mapping skills by, for instance, drawing maps of their routes to school. They also begin to find out about a different area as they follow Barnaby Bear's visit to the mountains of Wales. During Years 3 and 4, pupils continue to develop their familiarity with maps and develop an awareness of the physical and human features of differing regions. The topics covered throughout the school help to build up the pupils' knowledge of their own surroundings and of other areas, countries and cultures, as well as providing opportunities for them to practise their skills. Older pupils are currently gaining useful understanding of the conditions that might affect the location of an early settlement, while also learning about features of maps, such as contours and a key. Past work on India has helped them to appreciate the similarities and differences between where they live and the village of Chembakolli. Good use is made of the school's own locality and clear progress is seen across the year groups in the pupils' awareness of the world around them and of how aspects of it might be improved, as when younger pupils considered carefully how to make the local area safe.
98. The standard of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. The teachers' subject knowledge throughout the school is good. The teachers use questioning well and encourage pupils to use the correct language in their work. Lessons are very well planned and the pupils respond well to the opportunities provided, showing a lively interest in what they are doing. They work well together and show good attitudes. The teachers' classroom management is good and they make good use of the time available. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills through the opportunities it provides for research and for different sorts of writing. The development of the pupils' numeracy is supported by activities in geography, such as the traffic survey undertaken by younger pupils. Some use is made of information and communication technology, in, for instance, research activities. Planning for the subject across year groups is thorough, with good arrangements for the full capability range in each class.
99. The scheme of work provides a clear programme for the subject and ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. The pupils' progress is assessed at the end of each unit of work and all work is marked thoroughly and well. The co-ordinator for the subject is experienced and provides valuable specialist support to colleagues. The work going on in the school is monitored carefully and, when the subject becomes a school priority next year, classroom practice will also be monitored. The topics studied are resourced well and good use is also made of loan services. Very good use is made of the locality and of visits further afield, such as the residential visit that takes place each year for older pupils.

HISTORY

100. Levels of achievement are broadly in line with national expectations by the time pupils leave the school and at the age of seven. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection, but there is ample evidence from these observations, as well as from planning and work already completed that, as pupils go through the school, they make good progress overall in the development of historical skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils throughout the school enjoy history, with many indications in work on, for example, the Vikings, that they are making satisfactory gains in knowledge of the periods being studied. They begin to develop a useful understanding of the key people and significant events that have shaped history. In the topics they study, they learn to identify similarities and differences between their life now and life in past times and they enjoy the opportunity to explore many of their own ideas and values. The work produced by older pupils shows sound levels of knowledge overall and satisfactory development of historical skills. Pupils throughout the school are introduced carefully to a range of historical sources and are encouraged to ask questions about the evidence they provide and about its reliability. They are also given the opportunity to experience things at first hand whenever possible. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 gained a good awareness of how familiar things have changed over time as they were introduced to household artefacts from war-time Britain. Pupils in Year 1, for instance, are already familiar with the detective work that goes into the study of history and have been introduced to some of the appropriate vocabulary for the subject. Their ideas of 'now' and 'then' and of how things change over time are stimulated by the work they do as they compare toys from the past with their own favourites. As they go through the school, pupils of all attainment levels, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they become used to dealing with a variety of historical sources. Higher attaining pupils respond well to the challenge to learn about the past by posing and researching their own questions. All of the historical topics the pupils study are carefully linked to a clear timeline for the period and the pupils show a developing sense of chronology.
101. Throughout the school, work in history is linked well to other areas of the curriculum. Work on the Vikings, for instance, stimulates the study of settlements in geography. It also provides a useful reinforcement of skills in literacy and in design and technology as pupils write instructions for building a Viking shelter. The work produced by pupils as a result of their studies is well displayed, helping to create an interesting and stimulating learning environment and celebrating good work. The subject also makes a good contribution to the development of literacy through, for instance, opportunities for empathetic and extended writing. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to engage in independent study or research activities of the kind that will extend learning, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. They enjoy gathering information from the books available, or through their access to CD-ROMs and the Internet. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to develop their familiarity with the appropriate vocabulary for historical study and the subject also makes a good contribution to their social and cultural awareness.
102. It is clear from all the evidence available that the quality of teaching is good. Consequently, the quality of learning throughout the school is also good. The teachers' subject knowledge is good and often very good and they convey well to pupils their own enthusiasm for the topics being studied. The pupils respond well, gaining considerable pleasure in the work they do and enjoying the things they learn about the past. Good use is made of questioning and of the time available. Younger pupils, in particular, enjoy the opportunity to learn about significant people from the past, such as Florence Nightingale and Louis Braille and are learning how to find out about them from their use of the computer. The teachers' classroom management is good and the learning experiences provided are very well planned. The use and adaptation of the national scheme of work is supported by the school's own policy. The assessment of pupils' progress takes place at the end of each unit studied and work is marked regularly and thoroughly. The co-ordinator provides useful support and will monitor classroom practice in accordance with the school's overall plan. The subject is resourced well and good use is made of loan services. Particularly good use is made of the locality and of visits to places of historical interest, such as the Avoncroft Museum, where older pupils learn effectively about how buildings have developed. They had recently learned a great deal about invaders and settlers during enjoyable visits to the Bishop's Wood centre, although, as one said, they "*didn't meet any real Vikings*". Good use is also made of visitors to the school, such as the governor who provided a first-hand account of life in Redditch

during war-time. The subject has continued to develop appropriately since the previous inspection and standards by the time pupils leave the school have been at least maintained.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

103. Standards by the end of Year 2 are above the national expectations and by the end of Year 4 they are in line with those expectations. Based on their prior attainment, pupils are now making good progress. At the time of the school's previous inspection, standards were reported to be in line with those expected in both Year 2 and Year 4. Significant improvements have been made in Years 1 and 2 since that time.
104. By the end of Year 2, pupils name confidently items of computer equipment, such as screen, mouse and keyboard. They show higher than expected skills in using all forms of equipment. Pupils use a keyboard successfully to type text, including poems and reports about, for example, Red Riding Hood and the Sorcerer's Apprentice. They place gaps readily between words using the space bar and most pupils are able to introduce capital letters and full stops into their writing. They correct mistakes confidently using the back-space key. Using an appropriate paint package, pupils produce an interesting range of patterns and pictures, such as those of houses and themselves. Pupils access the menu to print or save their finished work confidently and independently. They give instructions readily to a floor turtle to produce straight-line and turning movements over varying distances. They also undertake simple modelling activities with confidence, exploring aspects of real and imaginary situations presented on the screen.
105. By the end of Year 4, most pupils show sound skills in word processing, showing confidence in changing the font, colour and size of their work. Pupils, for example, have produced detailed writing about the Vikings, as well as producing newspaper reports. They can use the mouse accurately to help access and produce various forms of illustration and they merge this work successfully into their writing, as when they produced detailed posters on healthy eating and when studying invaders and settlers in relation to their history topic. Pupils develop their control skills successfully when using an on-screen turtle to produce various patterns and shapes. They recognise patterns and relationships in, for example, adventure games and they predict the outcome of different decisions confidently. Most pupils are showing increasing confidence in sending electronic mail and they are in regular contact with pupils in other schools, both in this country and abroad. Pupils develop their skills in data handling successfully when producing graphs to illustrate information about themselves, such as their height or how many brothers and sisters they have.
106. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers throughout the school are enthusiastic about ICT and they provide regular opportunities for pupils to use computers, both in the computer suite and in classrooms. The teachers are increasingly confident in the subject and, through careful preparation of lessons, are providing pupils with very appropriate and often challenging, learning experiences. They provide clear and careful instructions on how to use various items of hardware, as well as various word processing and art packages and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good gains in their computer skills. Pupils respond by showing good attitudes to the subject, behaving well and often very well. They listen carefully and settle well to all tasks, with good levels of concentration and often high levels of skill, especially in Years 1 and 2. Pupils clearly enjoy the subject and they work well, both alone and with a partner when necessary. Relationships are good and pupils ask adults for help when required. They share computers amicably and are careful in their use of all forms of equipment. Teachers and classroom assistants provide very appropriate help and advice throughout, enabling their pupils to make significant progress.
107. The school has a very good scheme of work, based partly on national guidelines, but with additional plans that ensure its effective implementation in the school. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and, although she has not had the responsibility for long, has worked hard to enhance the overall provision. Her leadership is good and she has contributed significantly to the improvements being made. Assessment procedures are in place and suitable information is being collected to enable staff to identify pupils' current understanding and then to plan for the future. The work being undertaken in word-processing is making a very useful contribution towards enhancing pupils' literacy skills. Through the collection of data and its presentation, for example in the form of graphs, as well as its use in lessons, ICT is having a

significant effect on the development of numeracy skills. ICT is also contributing well to the majority of other subjects and is enhancing further pupils' overall knowledge and understanding. Pupils find the use of computers exciting and the excitement generated, as when they produce various images on the screen, helps enhance pupils' spiritual development. Very good provision is made for extra-curricular activities in ICT and the computer club is well supported by pupils.

MUSIC

108. Standards by the end of both Year 2 and Year 4 are higher than those expected nationally. Pupils make good progress. Overall standards have improved since the time of the school's previous inspection.
109. By the end of Year 2, pupils sing a variety of songs and hymns readily, showing good control over rhythm and pitch. They put much expression into their singing and they perform well together. Pupils sing their songs from memory and are very careful to sing the words clearly. They explore sounds, using an appropriate range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and they are able to follow a simple score successfully. Pupils in Year 1 compose confidently a short musical sequence, based on the Sorcerer's Apprentice, which they rehearse and then play to other members of their class. Some pupils show enough confidence to act as the conductor whilst others are playing. Pupils recognise a variety of musical instruments and many are able to describe the sounds they make, using the correct terminology carefully. By the end of Year 4, pupils sing a range of songs, sometimes in two parts, showing good control over both breathing and wording. When singing in two parts, pupils maintain their own parts confidently and they finish together successfully. Pupils perform their work happily from memory. They produce their own musical compositions, based, for example, on their work on the Vikings and they vary both the texture and dynamics of their work successfully. They perform for each other and then suggest ways in which their performance might be improved. Pupils listen readily to a range of recorded music. They have developed a wide musical vocabulary and the majority of pupils are confident in using this to discuss the quality of the works they hear.
110. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, with very good examples also seen during the inspection. Lessons are well planned and brisk in pace, with a very suitable range of resources being provided for pupils to use. Pupils are kept busy and this clearly benefits the learning they make. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, with clear instruction and demonstration being provided. This effective involvement of teachers enables pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good gains in their musical knowledge, understanding and skills. As well as joining in themselves, teachers also make particularly effective use of pupils to demonstrate different aspects of work to other members of the class and this encourages all pupils to maintain their interest. Pupils join in the activities with enthusiasm and commitment, showing appropriate creative effort where required. Overall, their attitudes are very good. They enjoy their music, singing well, playing instruments confidently and working happily with other pupils. They are keen to listen to music and most are confident in offering opinions about what they hear. Pupils are particularly appreciative of the work of other pupils and they applaud their performances readily. Where teaching is very good, the teachers' subject knowledge is especially secure, they provide a wide variety of stimulating learning experiences, expectations are high and pupils make very good progress during the lesson.
111. The school has an appropriate scheme of work and, through careful planning, all areas of work are covered very successfully. The co-ordinator also draws up an overall school plan to ensure this coverage. The co-ordinator, who is well qualified, enthusiastic and a very good practitioner, sees plans of the work to be covered by her colleagues and also takes all singing sessions, to see for herself the standards being achieved. She provides much support to colleagues. Satisfactory procedures are in place for assessing the work of pupils and these are helpful in identifying particular strengths and weaknesses in the performance of individual pupils. The school is beginning to make use of information and communication technology to enhance provision in the subject. The hearing of music from different countries helps to extend pupils' cultural development and the school now has a good array of appropriate musical instruments from other cultures. The

school makes very good provision for extra-curricular music activities for pupils and there are many opportunities for pupils to perform.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112. Standards by the end of both Year 2 and Year 4 are higher than those expected nationally. Pupils are making good progress. Standards have improved significantly since the time of the school's previous inspection.
113. By the end of Year 2, pupils control their dance movements successfully, showing very appropriate changes in speed, direction and level. They introduce gesture and stillness confidently into their movements, especially when responding imaginatively to music and performing routines from the Sorcerer's Apprentice. In gymnastics, pupils move confidently around the hall, showing clear awareness of space and of other pupils. They use both floor and apparatus to climb, jump and roll and they introduce a very varied range of shapes into their movements. They show good levels of control and co-ordination in their work, especially when producing a sequence of movements. Pupils understand the need to warm up for and recover from, exercise. By the end of Year 4, they develop their skills confidently in performing a range of dances, including Irish dances. Pupils are light on their feet, perform the steps correctly and introduce suitable poise into their movements. They perform particularly well with other pupils and they complement each other successfully in the finished work. Pupils perform a range of gymnastic movements successfully, and are careful to introduce quality and fluency into the routines they develop. Many pupils show particular skill in introducing cartwheels into their work. Pupils recognise some of the effects that exercise has on their bodies. They attend swimming lessons during the year and all develop their confidence in the water successfully. By the time they complete these sessions in Year 4, at least 80 percent of the pupils swim 25 metres unaided. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 develop their outdoor skills during a residential visit to Dunfield House and a day visit to Malvern Outdoor Centre.
114. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The teachers provide good planning, clear instructions and enthusiasm, together with a good and varied range of resources, allowing all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, to make good gains in their physical skills. The teachers change appropriately for lessons and they join in and demonstrate for pupils, which helps them identify areas where they might improve themselves. The teachers' subject knowledge is good and they have high expectations of the pupils' performance. In all lessons, pupils join in appropriately, enjoying themselves, making good physical and creative effort and taking pleasure in the quality of their performance. This helps them to achieve well. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, with very good control and management skills evident. The teachers always take the opportunity to use pupils to demonstrate good practice, but opportunities are not always provided for the pupils to discuss the quality of the work seen, to identify the good features. The teachers and classroom assistants provide help and support to pupils in all aspects of their work and, in particular, they emphasise the need for safety. In turn, pupils show very good attitudes, behave very well, work well alone and with a partner or group and carry equipment carefully and safely.
115. The school has a very appropriate range of planning that ensures all aspects of work are covered well. The co-ordinator is a newly qualified teacher, who will take over full responsibility for the subject next year. He is keen and enthusiastic, is aware of the work that is taking place in the school and is very involved in the school's extra-curricular provision. Satisfactory procedures are in place for recording pupils' work and suitable information is being recorded about individual pupils to identify their current attainment and the progress they are making. Activities involving counting and measuring, in various aspects of physical education, give appropriate support to the school's initiative in numeracy. The advice provided to pupils about the importance of honesty and fair-play in their sporting activities supports their moral development well. The performing of dance routines from various backgrounds, such as those involving Irish or Indian dance, help enhance pupils' knowledge of other cultures. The school makes very good provision for extra-curricular sporting activities and this develops the pupils' physical and social skills further.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

116. Pupils' attainment by the time they are seven and nine remains broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, as it was at the time of the last

inspection. However, much development has taken place since then. The scheme of work clearly meets the requirements of this syllabus and it is reviewed regularly in order to ensure, for instance, that provision is made for pupils to reflect on what they learn. Considerable emphasis is put on providing pupils with a good understanding of Christianity and on the importance of religion for many people in establishing correct ways to behave.

117. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are introduced to a range of biblical stories, learning, for instance, about things Jesus did that made him special. Pupils begin to make connections gradually between their own lives and the stories they are learning, as they are encouraged to see the relevance of the stories in everyday life and to make a thoughtful response to them. For example, after listening to the story of Jesus healing a blind beggar, pupils are encouraged to think of things they could not experience if they were blind. After listening to the story of Joseph's coat, pupils detail instances of when they felt jealous. By Year 4, pupils are beginning to understand how the Old and New Testaments differ, the differing types of literature they include and why the Bible is important to Christians. Pupils receive an effective introduction to some of the beliefs and practices of Judaism in Years 1 and 2 and to those of Hinduism in Years 3 and 4. Good connections are also made between these religions and Christianity so that pupils begin to develop an understanding of similarities between different faiths. For example, links are made between the Christian harvest festival and the Jewish festival of Succoth and between Hannukah and Christmas as festivals of light.
118. The subject makes a very good contribution to the development of pupils' writing skills. Pupils are expected to write their responses to stories and many, particularly in Year 2, write fluently and at length. Pupils are frequently reflective and the subject makes a good contribution to their spiritual development. A Year 4 pupil, asked to write about a special place, wrote *'It is relaxing and peaceful and there I can look back on what I have done and see how I could have made it better'*. Pupils show positive attitudes to the subject, enjoying opportunities to discuss issues sensibly and respond appropriately to the ideas and practices they are learning about. The subject makes a substantial contribution to their social and moral development.
119. The teaching of religious education is good throughout the school and pupils learn well. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' ability to record their ideas and some of the questioning challenges pupils' thinking very well. Lessons are presented in interesting ways and set in a context of previous learning. Consistently good opportunities are provided for pupils to express their ideas in discussion. Very good relationships and the positive atmosphere created in all classes through the sensitive management of pupils encourage them to talk with confidence. Pupils of all attainment levels make good progress and pupils with special educational needs are supported well in writing tasks and have full access to the curriculum.
120. The co-ordination of the subject is good and teachers are very well supported. The co-ordinator has had limited opportunities for monitoring teaching but looks at teachers' planning. Good links have been established with local churches and assemblies are taken occasionally by the local vicar. There are no formal assessment procedures in place but the school development plan identifies religious education as an area for review this year and these are to be tackled when that review takes place. There is little evidence of the use of ICT, but resources are very good and are updated constantly.