

INSPECTION REPORT

WESTACRE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Droitwich Spa

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116778

Headteacher: Roger Derwas

Reporting inspector: Brenda Iles
12000

Dates of inspection: 2rd to 5th December 2002

Inspection number: 247691

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle (deemed Primary)

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 9-12

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ombersley Way
Droitwich Spa
Worcestershire
Postcode: WR9 0AA

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Judith Aldridge

Date of previous inspection: 24/11/1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
12000	Brenda Iles	Registered inspector	English	What should the school do to improve further The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents
20891	Sean O'Toole	Team inspector	English as an additional language Mathematics Information and communication technology(ICT)	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
17857	David Walters	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Art and design Design and technology	
2818	Graham Warner	Team inspector	Educational inclusion Geography History Music Religious education	
17454	Brian Aldridge	Team inspector	Modern languages	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Westacre Middle School is of average size, situated in the western area of Droitwich Spa. Three hundred and forty five pupils (161 boys and 184 girls) aged from nine to twelve attend the school from the nearby estates of rented accommodation and privately owned housing. A small number travel from surrounding villages. The school admits pupils from other schools who have special educational needs or who have been excluded. A higher than average proportion of families regularly move in and out of the area so the proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school at times other than the usual admission times, 16 per cent, is well above the national average. Eighteen per cent of pupils have free school lunches, which is above average, but a higher proportion of pupils is entitled to this provision. The number of pupils with special educational needs is 68 (17 per cent), nine of whom have a statement of special educational needs. A very small number of pupils are of Asian or Caribbean origin and speak English fluently. Attainment at the start of Year 5 is very low in literacy and numeracy and much lower than that described in the last report. The school is part of a local initiative to raise the achievements of boys.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Westacre is a very good school. Leadership is very effective and priorities for improvement are identified accurately. Pupils are very well cared for and arrangements to ensure all pupils are included in activities are very good. Good and very good teaching enables all pupils to make good progress in English, mathematics and science in relation to low levels of performance on entry. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is very well led and managed
- Teaching is at least good in Years 5 and 6 and very good in Year 7
- Pupils make good progress in literacy and numeracy
- Pupils make very good progress and reach above average standards in physical education, religious education, art and design, and design and technology by Year 7
- Provision for personal development and the care and welfare of pupils is very good.
- The school promotes positive values, attitudes to learning are good and relationships are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing and ICT are not high enough.
- Pupils' personal targets for improvement are not precise enough and the quality of written marking is inconsistent
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to make independent decisions about their learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in November 1997 there have been many changes in the nature of the intake and in staffing. The school has successfully adapted to these changes and addressed the key issues for improvement alongside local and national priorities. The performance of boys has improved in mathematics and science and attitudes to reading are now positive. Arrangements for reviewing teachers' professional needs and the induction of new staff are effective and training is linked carefully to professional development and school priorities. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements are

systematic and identify areas for improvement. There has been improvement and there is now greater consistency in the quality of teaching. Action taken to support social changes that have affected the school has provided very good support for pupils and maintained a positive ethos for learning. The school has worked hard to improve the rate of attendance, which is now broadly average. The school has made very good improvement and has the capacity to improve further.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The test results for Year 6 pupils suggest a downward trend in performance. Similar schools comparisons do not reflect the social circumstances of the school or the well above average number of pupils who have attended several schools during their primary education and experienced interruptions to their learning. Inspection evidence and school evaluations show that pupils make good progress at Westacre in relation to their prior attainment as a consequence of good and very good teaching. In the current Year 6, while literacy and numeracy skills are well below average, standards are improving, particularly in reading and speaking. Standards seen in science are broadly average. By Year 7 standards are below average but more pupils are achieving the expectations of their age range than end of year test results suggest. Pupils make good gains in their learning compared to the school's assessment of standards at the start of Year 5 but weaknesses in writing inhibit pupils' performance in tests. In the subjects outside the core of English, mathematics and science, standards are at least average in all areas except information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 6 and 7. Pupils exceed expected standards in physical education and art and design in Years 6 and 7 and in religious education and design and technology in Year 7.

The very small number of pupils who are bi-lingual, those with special educational needs and more able pupils make good progress because they receive good support. The school did not meet its targets in 2002 but has high expectations that the challenging targets set for 2003 can be achieved. It should be remembered that target predictions are made for specific groups of pupils, some of whom no longer attend the school at the time of the tests.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes to school and to learning are good
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Arrangements to support pupils' personal development are also very good.

Attendance	Attendance is average
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Staff ensure pupils' needs are met well and provide very good role models. The school encourages prompt and regular attendance and all absences are followed up promptly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 5-6	Year 7
Quality of teaching	Good	Very 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.

Very good or excellent teaching was seen in all year groups. Strong relationships between staff and pupils and the positive and effective management of behaviour are significant strengths. Lessons are well organised and resources are used effectively to support learning. Teachers ask questions that ensure all pupils take part in discussions. The understanding of pupils' individual needs is very good. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented well in Years 5 and 6 and the principles are built upon effectively in Year 7. Pupils with special educational needs and bi-lingual pupils make good progress because the quality of provision is good and tasks are well matched to pupils' understanding to ensure their success. Examples of excellent teaching were seen in religious education, physical education and mathematics. Very good teaching was also observed in literacy, numeracy, science and other subjects. Subject leaders have very good subject knowledge and expertise, staff reinforce specific vocabulary very well and the pace of lessons is brisk. The ends of lessons are used effectively to reinforce learning and indicate how the next lessons will extend pupils' understanding. Teachers and teaching assistants raise pupils' self esteem by praise, encouragement and appropriate levels of challenge and support. The main areas to address are the variations in the quality of written marking and setting of precise learning targets to encourage faster rates of progress for individual pupils. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills independently to their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is of good quality and provides many practical opportunities to extend learning. A very good range of activities and clubs enhance learning. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented effectively.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is good
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is very good. Staff promote well pupils' personal qualities, self confidence and the care of others. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to celebrate other cultures and to debate social and moral issues. The values of right and wrong are promoted strongly.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well cared for and this is a strength of the school. Procedures for monitoring behaviour and attendance are very good.

Staff project positive role models and help pupils to become mature and responsible citizens. Relationships with parents are good.

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 and receives very good support from the senior management team. There is a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors give very good support and carry out their duties responsibly.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a very good knowledge of its achievements and areas to improve. The information gained from monitoring is used effectively to plan and guide development priorities.
The strategic use of resources	Funds are used effectively and the principles of best value are applied very well.

The headteacher's clear vision and very good pastoral care are significant strengths. Teamwork and staff commitment to improve standards are also very good. Arrangements for professional development are good. Day-to-day management is very good and routines are very effective. Governors monitor the school's finances effectively and are fully involved in decisions. Specialist teaching and resources support teaching and learning 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"> • Their children are expected to work hard • Progress in learning is good • Children like school and behave well • The ease with which they can talk to staff • The values, attitudes and care the school promotes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with parents • Consistency in the amount of homework • Some parents would like more information about their children's progress

Most parents have very positive views of the school. Inspection evidence supports parents' views about the school's strengths. Homework has been given consistently during this term and the range is broad. Partnership with parents is good and the information provided for parents about their children's progress is very good. However, the school takes seriously the concerns raised in the questionnaire responses and is seeking ways to further strengthen links with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Standards achieved in Years 6 and 7.

1. The 2002 test results and trends over time suggest a decline in standards since the last report. When compared to similar schools the tests show attainment in Year 6 is well below average in English and science and below average in mathematics. The test results do not take into account the well above average proportion of pupils who have attended several schools and experienced interruptions to their learning and the very low levels of attainment of many pupils when they join the school. In addition, between five and seven pupils were absent for each of the tests. A higher proportion of pupils than usual in Year 6 had special education needs. Comparisons with schools with similar proportions of free school meals do not take these factors into account.
2. The comparison of pupils' progress based on their performance in tests in Years 2 and 6 should also be treated cautiously because they do not reflect the good progress made during Years 5 and 6. The school assesses pupils' learning in the basic skills at the start of Year 5 and strives hard to address the significant deficits that are identified in the basic skills. Pupils make good progress in Years 5 and 6 and in Year 7 it is very good. Very good teaching accelerates the pace of learning and pupils approach their work with greater maturity. The school monitors progress carefully but is hampered by the lack of information it receives of the prior attainment of many pupils who join the school. The school also admits additional pupils with special educational needs and those excluded from other schools.
3. Great importance is attached to fostering positive attitudes to learning through very good induction procedures. These support learning well. Pupils settle quickly, individual needs are identified and supported at an early stage and parents are encouraged to support their children. These features promote self-esteem and confidence. The consistently positive approach of staff to pupils, especially those who find learning hard, is a strength and underpins the good progress seen. Assessment, tracking procedures and the monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress and achievements enable all groups of pupils to be challenged successfully. Expectations are high. The targets set in English, mathematics and science for 2003 are challenging but thought to be achievable. The most recent targets for 2002 were not met due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, absence and pupil movement. While individual pupil targets are set in literacy and numeracy they are not sufficiently specific or time related to accelerate progress even faster. The school has already identified the refinement of this practice as an area for further improvement.

Standards in the work seen in English, mathematics and science.

- Standards are well below average in speaking, reading and writing and mathematics in Year 6. Knowledge and understanding in science is average.
- Improvement in Year 7 compared to the 2002 test results is good: speaking and reading and science are about average and writing and mathematics are below average.

4. All groups of pupils make good progress during their time at Westacre because teaching is often of very good quality. However, the weakness in writing inhibits pupils' achievements in other subjects. Written work frequently does not reflect accurately pupils' depth of knowledge and understanding. This issue is being addressed systematically but remains a key issue to address. The very good leadership of senior staff and subject leaders is supporting well the determination of staff to raise standards higher.

Summary of standards achieved in non-core subjects:		
Subjects	Year 6	Year 7
Art and design	Above average	Above average
Design and technology	Average	Above average
Geography	Average	Average
History	Average	Average
Music	Average	Average
Physical education	Above average	Above average
ICT	Below average	Below average
Religious education	Average	Above average
French	Average	Average

5. Achievements in subjects such as art and design, design and technology, physical education and religious education are strengths and reflect the ability of pupils to express their knowledge and understanding in practical ways that do not rely on writing skills. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to develop their skills in ICT and apply them to learning across the curriculum. This key issue for the school to address is already identified in the school plan.

Variations in the achievement of boys and girls:
The work undertaken by the school to address the underachievement of boys, a key issue in the last report, has been successful in the focus areas of mathematics and science. Gender differences are no longer significant in these subjects. Action taken to improve attitudes to reading is also showing good results. There remains room for improvement in writing for all pupils; the performance of boys continues to be lower than that of girls in this aspect.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. The pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are good. Their personal development, especially the very good relationships throughout the school, is good. The standards have improved on those reported at the time of the previous inspection.

Positive aspects of pupils' attitudes and values	Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils in Year 5 settle quickly, work well and are confident and secure with all the staff who teach them • They respond positively to their teachers' enthusiasm, for example, in games where talent and expert advice enabled excellent development of ball skills and tactical awareness in rugby 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils rely heavily on adults to help them with their work. They need more opportunities to work independently and use their research skills • A small but significant minority of pupils display

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils' self-esteem and maturity increases as they move through the school. By Year 7 they are keen learners • Pupils and parents say their children enjoy school and are keen to participate in a wide range of extra curricular activities and sporting events • Pupils generally work hard in lessons and are enthusiastic. Year 6 pupils say they enjoy reading and in Year 7 they express a love of science describing their lessons as "really good" • Pupils show a mature attitude when expressing their feelings. This was demonstrated very well in a Year 7 science lesson when pupils discussed the feelings of people affected by burns in a very sensitive manner • Pupils are aware of the needs of others and value the views of others. • Pupils appreciate a range of religious beliefs and customs. In a Year 6 religious education lesson, pupils were absorbed when watching a Christian communion; their depth of interest was reflected in the high quality of the follow up discussion • Pupils behave well in lessons and most respond well to the consistent approach to behaviour management adopted by all staff • Behaviour in assemblies is especially good 	<p>challenging and sometimes aggressive behaviour, especially in the playground. Pupils say issues are dealt with promptly and effectively. There are no concerns about bullying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of temporary exclusions is high but justified given the behavioural and social problems of some pupils
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<p>Strengths of the provision for personal development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All pupils undertake a range of responsibilities keenly and responsibly. These include being active members of the school council, House Captains and librarians • Pupils' appreciation of being good citizens is developing well • Pupils are friendly and helpful to each other and to adults • Pupils take pride in their own and each other's achievements, for example, high quality art work in Year 6 • Pupils co-operate well together in lessons and especially in team sports • Very good relationships with all members of staff have a very positive impact on learning, especially in developing pupils' confidence, maturity and keenness to learn • Pupils develop a good understanding of right and wrong

7. Attendance is satisfactory. There has been a steady increase in the overall attendance levels since the previous inspection and the current level is about average for a middle school. The amount of holidays taken in term time has a significant impact on the overall level and limits learning for those pupils affected. A significant number of pupils miss their tests which affects the school's capacity to meet its targets. Unauthorized absences are below average. Pupils are mostly punctual and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT

8. **Teaching is good in Years 5 and 6 and very good in Year 7.** One lesson in ten was excellent during the inspection and just over a third of lessons were very good. A further third of lessons were good and the remainder were satisfactory. In the only unsatisfactory lesson the teacher was not familiar with the subject material being taught and the pace of the lesson was too slow. This picture reflects the very good progress made since the last report. The quality of teaching is higher and more consistent. The range of teaching styles used to meet the needs of the changing intake shows very good awareness of how to motivate and interest pupils. Literacy and numeracy are mainly taught effectively and science is taught very well. Six excellent lessons were observed, in mathematics, physical education (PE) and religious education (RE). The example set by the senior management team and subject leaders is very good. They provide very good role models for staff.

Strengths of teaching:	Features of effective learning: Pupils -
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject leaders have high levels of subject knowledge and expertise, for example in literacy, numeracy, science, PE and RE • Staff place significant priority on fostering positive attitudes to learning when pupils join the school • Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and staff have very good knowledge of pupils' individual needs and provide very good care • The organisation of groups and appropriately challenging work promote their success • Staff consistently manage pupils' behaviour very well, especially the challenging behaviour of a small but significant proportion of pupils • Staff use subject specific vocabulary effectively and reinforce the use of language well. They model sentences clearly and expect pupils to use the language they have been taught • A range of strategies are used to make lessons interesting and engage pupils, for example the use of small video clips, practical tasks, poetry and opportunities to work with partners, groups, individually and as a class • Objectives are defined clearly at the start of lessons • Praise is used very effectively and at 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pace of pupils' learning is accelerated and their depth of knowledge and understanding improves • Pupils' self esteem and confidence is raised, they trust their teachers, contribute to lessons and enjoy their learning • Pupils value the care shown to them, respect staff and try hard to meet their expectations • Pupils make good progress because they are able to succeed in their work and recognise the progress they have made • Pupils behave well in lessons and understand the school rules. They appreciate the rewards received for good behaviour and participation • Pupils' range of vocabulary is extended, for example, in science in Year 7; pupils confidently talked about photosynthesis and chloroplasts • Pupils maintain high levels of interest and motivation and are enthusiastic, particularly in practical tasks which do not rely on written responses • Pupils have a clear knowledge of the expectations of staff and persevere to achieve them • Pupils know when they have

<p>the end of lessons teachers evaluate with pupils the extent to which learning objectives have been met. They also describe how the work will be built upon next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good use is made of support staff to work with groups of pupils to reinforce their learning • Questioning techniques are effective and require pupils to reason and contribute to discussions. Very good examples were seen in English, mathematics and science • The pace and timing of most lessons is good and the balance of interaction and independent work is structured well 	<p>succeeded and understand how their learning will be extended and developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils are fully included in lessons and progress well through the additional adult support they receive • All pupils are included in discussions. All ability groups give reasons for their opinions and ideas • Pupils sustain their interest and motivation and demonstrate their learning through a range of practical and recorded responses
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Areas to develop	How this affects learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teaching of ICT is unsatisfactory overall because there is insufficient progression in planning across year groups and too few opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in lessons • Individual targets set in literacy and numeracy are too broad and are not time related. Written marking does not consistently tell pupils how well they have succeeded or what they need to do next to improve • Opportunities for pupils to choose their preferred style of writing and to independently apply their literacy and numeracy skills to their work • Expectations of presentation in draft books are not always high enough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils do not make enough progress in ICT • Pupils are not sure what they need to do next to improve and do not have specific timescales to achieve their learning targets. • Pupils frequently write reluctantly and do not apply their literacy skills independently to their work • Pupils' handwriting is not well formed and the presentation of drafted work is sometimes too untidy

9. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good and pupils make good progress.

Strengths	The impact on learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils who have specific needs are identified within the first few weeks of joining the school through assessment • Staff have a clear understanding of the needs of pupils and organise appropriate groupings to offer targeted support • Resources are used effectively and teaching assistants give very good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils' are supported from the start of middle school and the support they receive helps them to settle quickly • Pupils benefit from working with different groups in different subjects. The support enables them to succeed and develop self-esteem • Pupils develop strong relationships with staff and are confident they will be supported to succeed

<p>support to pupils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual education plans indicate exactly the focus for learning. These plans are shared with parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents praise highly the progress their children make and the way information is shared with them. Where parents support their children progress is more rapid
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HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS

10. The curriculum is of good quality and successfully meets the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities. The school has made good headway since the previous inspection in improving the curriculum and in providing relevant and interesting activities for the pupils. All subjects are taught and the influence of subject leaders in monitoring the subjects and developing new initiatives is successfully promoting effective learning. Teachers forge effective links between subjects and often include opportunities for the pupils to practise and improve their literacy and numeracy skills in subjects such as religious education, design and technology, science, geography and history. The implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies has supported the teaching of basic skills well. However, the curriculum for ICT is unsatisfactory and results in pupils making inconsistent and slow progress.

The main strengths	The impact on teaching and learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The curriculum meets statutory requirements and covers all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education The school day is very well organised and little time is wasted Skills, knowledge and understanding are developed consistently in almost all subjects and year groups; there are helpful policies and schemes of work which support teaching and learning well The school has successfully implemented most aspects of the literacy and numeracy strategies; the arrangements for setting and grouping pupils by ability works effectively Specialist teaching in several subjects impacts well on standards Effective planning meets the needs of different groups of pupils; more able pupils are set sufficiently demanding work All boys and girls have equal access to the same learning opportunities; a particular success is the way in which the teachers take account of the differing needs of boys and girls when planning lessons; many lessons include particular tasks suited to boys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All pupils receive a broad, interesting and balanced education which prepares them well for the next school Teachers keep to time and pupils work productively in lessons The staff are well informed about what is to be taught and guidance from subject leaders keeps their colleagues up-to-date on new initiatives There is a good emphasis on the teaching of basic skills and of applying them in other subjects; pupils benefit from working alongside others of similar ability Pupils achieve well in art, design and technology and PE More able and gifted and talented pupils make very good progress because they rise to the challenge to do their best Boys' attainment in national tests in mathematics and science is now at a similar level to that achieved by girls and the gap in performance in English is closing; in mathematics problem solving is often linked to boys' interests such as football

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff work hard to provide a very good range of extra-curricular activities in sport, drama and music; pupils in Years 6 and 7 also benefit from the residential visits • The school draws on the support of visitors and the wider community to enhance the curriculum, for example, in the pupils' studies of the Victorians and through the support of local soccer and rugby clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils are enthusiastic about these additional opportunities which contribute to the good standards in physical education and enjoyment of singing in the choir • Teachers draw on the expertise of visitors from local churches to share their beliefs and lifestyle with the pupils; pupils are successful in competitive sport against other schools
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11. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they are fully included in all the school's activities. They make good progress.

<p>Strengths of the provision for pupils with special educational needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many of the pupils with special needs take up the chances to become fully involved in clubs • Activities are planned and supported by both class teachers and support staff to ensure pupils successfully achieve the targets in their individual education plans • The regular review of the targets and adjustments to the curriculum support the pupils to achieve their best • Working in small groups is carefully balanced with class work and helps pupils acquire the skills in reading, writing and number that they need to use in other subjects • 'Booster' classes have a positive effect on improvements in attainment • Some teachers use more able pupils to support SEN pupils in practical sessions, such as science investigations
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12. The provision for pupils' personal, social, health and emotional development and the way in which the staff promote citizenship are very good and strengths of the school. The school also makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development and good provision for spiritual and cultural development. These factors contribute much to make the school a pleasant, orderly and purposeful community in which all are valued.

Strengths of the provision for personal, social and emotional development	The impact on pupils' attitudes and learning skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are regular lessons to debate and discuss issues • There are very good opportunities to discuss personal matters with form tutors and visiting specialists • The school provides good sex education and drugs awareness and the teaching of citizenship is often very good • Pupils are expected to take responsibility for homework, care of themselves and of the school's resources • There are very good links with the high school and good links with the feeder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils listen sensitively to other's views and opinions • They are confident that they will be listened to and that any issues will be resolved sensitively • Pupils develop mature and sensible attitudes and understand their responsibilities within a community • Most pupils complete homework on time and take pride in the school and their own and other's achievements • Pupils quickly settle into the school's routines and are prepared very well for the next stage in their education • Pupils feel they have a voice in

<p>schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff respect and respond to the opinions of school council members and encourage pupils to take part in all aspects of school life • Lessons in citizenship in Year 7 promote pupils' understanding of their role in society and also encourage self esteem 	<p>school improvement and this prepares them well for participating in decision making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils are encouraged to recognise their own strengths and to overcome what they might see as weaknesses
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Strengths of the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- The very good relationships between staff and pupils ensure that individuals of whatever background are valued
- Art and design, music and RE contribute much to pupils' awareness of the wonder of the world around them and appreciation of humankind's achievements and people's beliefs and traditions
- Assemblies comply with requirements and pupils have suitable opportunities to reflect
- The moral code of the school is understood well by all pupils and promoted consistently by all staff; pupils are given opportunities to make choices about how they will behave and to understand the consequences of their decisions
- The staff's very good use of an effective reward system is much valued by the pupils and contributes to their good behaviour; the staff are rigorous and effective in dealing with any rough play or bullying
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to work in groups of different sizes and to learn to collaborate effectively through discussions and debates in subjects such as RE and art and design
- The contribution of the school council to decision-making enables pupils to feel a valued part of the school
- Extra-curricular activities are well attended and used effectively to develop teamwork and social awareness and skills
- The in-depth work in music from around the world is a strong feature of the school's work and promotes pupils' enthusiasm and interest in other cultures
- Staff prepare pupils well for life in a culturally diverse society through art and design and dance, providing very good opportunities for pupils to study the work of Munch and Paula Rego; the Venetian costumes designed by the pupils are of high quality
- Teachers encourage pupils to produce subtle and creative work that reflects the beauty and diversity of nature imaginatively

Areas for improvement in the curriculum

- Extending opportunities for pupils to use computers to support their work across subjects to enrich their learning and broaden the scope of their independent research skills
- The topics taught in ICT are the same for each year group, the curriculum is too narrow and some aspects of the subject, most markedly control technology, receive too little attention.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS

13. The school provides very good care for its pupils. All staff work very hard to provide a safe and positive environment which successfully helps pupils feel confident, secure and

valued. The school has improved upon the good levels reported at the previous inspection.

The school's successes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child protection procedures are very good. Issues are dealt with in a sensitive, thorough manner ▪ Health and safety procedures are very good. All risks are assessed and recorded very thoroughly ▪ Security and arrangements for first aid are very good. ▪ Very good monitoring and promotion of attendance enables absences to be followed up very quickly with parents. This has resulted in a steady and significant increase in the overall level of attendance and the elimination of truancy. ▪ Staff know pupils and their backgrounds very well and are very supportive. Pupils' personal development is monitored very well ▪ Very good pastoral support ▪ The management of behaviour is firm, fair, positive and consistently applied ▪ Pupils respond very positively to the "Choose to behave" reward system ▪ Parents and pupils say potential bullying incidents are dealt with very quickly and effectively. ▪ The challenging behaviour of a small minority of pupils is dealt with very effectively with the minimum disruption of lessons

14. **The school has very good procedures for assessment.** This aspect of the school's work has improved much since the last inspection. The recently appointed assessment co-ordinator has a very clear understanding of the need to analyse and use data to sharpen teaching and learning strategies. The staff are now using the information from assessment and test results to target improvement.

Strengths in assessment and its use	Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy and guidance for staff on the procedures for assessment are of good quality • Careful analysis has been made of results so that a complete data base can be built up • Tracking systems are effective • The assessment of added value has supported the measurement of pupils' progress • A new marking policy has been agreed and introduced • Initiatives such as 'writing week' support teachers to assess accurately the structure and format of writing • End of unit tests have been introduced so that strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning are identified as part of an on-going process • Pupils with SEN benefit from thorough and well-focused assessment. Staff keep a regular check on their progress and use the information to write good individual education plans • The high level of awareness of the co- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More clarity and precision in the targets set for individual pupils • On-going formative assessments to better inform planning so that the next steps in the pupils learning are clearer

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

15. Partnership with parents is good and this supports pupils' learning. The school has made good progress and built successfully on the sound level reported in the previous inspection. Parents think very highly of the school.

The school successfully promotes partnership with parents in the following ways:

- Good quality information is provided in newsletters
- Liaison with parents is good – the school is very sensitive to pupils' home circumstances and backgrounds
- Open access of staff to parents promotes regular communication; parents praise highly the school secretarial staff in this respect
- Parents receive good encouragement to become involved in their children's education and where there is support children's learning improves
- Involving parents in drawing up their child's individual education plan and achieving one hundred per cent attendance at review meetings
- Homework diaries are used effectively by the school to help parents
- Parents are encouraged to support the school for example helping with visits, co-operating with school policies and discussing ideas and problems
- The Friends' Association provides valuable resources
- Annual reports provide very good information for parents about their children's achievements and set clear targets for development

Areas for improvement

- Some parents do not recognise the importance of their children attending school on the days of national tests
- Guidelines to show parents how they can help their children who have learning difficulties

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED

16. The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership. Governors also provide very good support. There is a shared vision for school improvement between staff and governors and many successful staffing appointments have been made. This has resulted in very good partnership, planning and a clear direction for improvement. The enthusiasm of staff and commitment to adapt practice to meet the changing needs of the pupils on entry to the school have enabled the school to sustain its strengths and ensure that pupils make good progress during their three years at Westacre. The school is very well managed. The school secretarial staff are very efficient and manage their roles and responsibilities very effectively. This enables the headteacher and governors to concentrate on school priorities. Induction procedures for staff and pupils joining the school offer a warm welcome, support and care. Tracking procedures, used by the headteacher and senior staff, measure the annual progress of individual pupils and groups and support the evaluation of teaching and learning well.

Strengths in leadership and management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The headteacher and senior teachers set very good examples for staff through their collegiate approach to decision making, very good teaching, subject knowledge and keen enthusiasm to create excitement in learning • Staff training and development opportunities have raised the quality of teaching and ensured greater consistency in the range of strategies used since the last report • Monitoring of teaching and the identification of areas for improvement have contributed to raising the quality of teaching • Subject leaders have good expertise and knowledge • Subject plans outline clearly features for improvement so the drive to raise standards is constant • Staff and governors agree priorities for the school plan together and understand the contributions they need to make to move the school forward and meet the school's aims • Governors know the school's strengths and areas for development very well, they regularly spend time in school and fulfil their statutory duties responsibly • Governors give good support to special educational needs and fulfil their statutory duties by having a designated governor and report procedure and successes • The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) provides good leadership • Communication between staff and governors is very good. Governors are linked to subject areas, meet with coordinators and have a very good overview of the strengths and weaknesses in the provision • Governors provide appropriate levels of challenge and support to the school and carry out this aspect of their work very well • The leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good

17. Financial planning, monitoring and administration are very good.

Strengths in the leadership and management of resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward plans are very clear and take very good account of projected pupil numbers and estimated income levels • Budget plans take full account of known commitments • Allocations are made in line with developmental priorities • Day-to-day administration is very good • The school secretary and clerical staff are very efficient • Accurate and up to date accounting enables the headteacher and governors to check figures regularly • Finances for special educational needs provision is used correctly and resources are ample • The school checks very well to ensure it gets good value for its expenditure • Extra funds, for example for pupils with special educational needs, are used effectively

Minor weakness
The use of the deputy headteacher's time in maintaining school fund accounts

18. Accommodation is of good quality and is well maintained. The caretaker and his staff work hard to ensure the school is clean and attractive. The care shown to the building, including the celebration of pupils' best work in attractive displays, ensures the learning environment is inviting. Subject specialist areas, for example, science laboratories and

art and design and design and technology rooms and the school library, are used well and support learning very effectively. Not enough use is made of the ICT suite. Plans to adapt the premises to provide a music suite and access to the facilities to support community use are exciting. Funds have been set aside to support this initiative.

19. Very good progress has been made in addressing the issues raised in the last report. Although attainment is below average in the basic skills in Year 7, pupils achieve well in relation to their very low attainment when they join the school. The school provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

The headteacher, staff and governors should:

1. *Raise standards in writing by:

- developing greater accuracy in spelling, neatness in handwriting and use of descriptive and subject specific vocabulary across subjects
- encouraging pupils, particularly boys, to choose styles of writing to record work

2. *Raise standards in ICT by:

- providing more opportunities for pupils to use ICT facilities to present their work
- improving the quality and coverage of the curriculum
- developing pupils' knowledge and skills in the use and application of ICT across subjects.
- increasing access to computers to support learning

3. Set precise personal targets for individual pupils and consistently use written marking to indicate the strengths and weaknesses in learning so pupils understand clearly what they need to do to improve.

4. Provide more opportunities for pupils to make independent decisions about their learning.

* Denotes that the school has already begun to address the issue in its school development plan

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	65
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	6	22	24	12	1	0	0
Percentage	9%	34%	37%	18%	2%	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	Y5-Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	345
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	43
Special educational needs	Y5-Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	68
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	23

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	N/A

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	N/A

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 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	59	65	124

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	31	35	40
	Girls	41	37	47
	Total	72	72	87
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (56)	58 (47)	70 (76)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	30	36	37
	Girls	43	37	41
	Total	73	74	79
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (53)	60 (63)	64 (61)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	325	43	1
White – Irish	2		
White – any other White background	6		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4		
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian	2		
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British - Indian	3		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1		
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese			
Parent/pupil preferred not to say	1		
No ethnic group recorded	1		

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: Y5-y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.8
Average class size	28.8

Education support staff: Y5-y7

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	142

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	822318
Total expenditure	821534
Expenditure per pupil	2288
Balance brought forward from previous year	19814
Balance carried forward to next year	20598

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	345
Number of questionnaires returned	156

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	47	4	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	45	49	3	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	54	4	2	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	54	15	4	3
The teaching is good.	32	63	2	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	49	15	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	38	4	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	40	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	22	54	15	6	3
The school is well led and managed.	37	52	4	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	52	4	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	42	10	2	7

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

20. Standards in English are very low in reading and writing at the start of Year 5. By Year 6 standards are not as high as those reported at the time of the last inspection and are well below the average for the age range in writing, and below average in reading. Pupils do, however, make good progress because they are well taught. The picture improves further by Year 7. By this stage standards in reading are broadly average and, while writing remains below average, pupils' work shows greater accuracy, confidence and maturity. Speaking skills are below average at the start of Year 5 but good modelling of language supports good progress and by Year 7 standards are broadly appropriate for the age of the pupils. Pupils of all abilities become confident learners. This feature reflects the commitment of staff to enabling all pupils to achieve their best.
21. At the start of Year 5 almost six in ten pupils have reading ages that are well below those expected. Many pupils, particularly boys, struggle to write effectively. Spelling is weak and many pupils lack the strategies to spell independently. Frequently the spelling of words reflects patterns of speech and this leads to errors. Handwriting is often poorly formed and, because of these difficulties, pupils do not enjoy writing. While pupils listen well, their speaking skills are not well developed and they lack the range of descriptive language needed to express their depth of knowledge and understanding. Teachers model language clearly and correct errors sensitively and by Year 6 pupils have a broader range of vocabulary than their written work suggests. Pupils are taught basic writing conventions, the use of appropriate grammar and punctuation and gradually gain confidence to write in a range of ways. By Year 6, while writing is still not the favourite task, attitudes have improved. Pupils enjoy opportunities to collaborate and apply the skills they have learned well. By Year 7 there is greater maturity and pupils understand the relationship between reading and writing and use the words and ideas discussed in lessons well. While standards in writing are still not as high as those often seen for the age range, pupils' attitudes are positive. They make appropriate use of a range of writing styles and are making great strides in their achievements.

Strengths of the provision	The impact on teaching and learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject leadership is very good • The national strategies for literacy are implemented effectively • The analysis and use of data supports well the identification of development priorities • All pupils have equal opportunities to take part in activities. Staff pay good attention to the needs of boys and use a variety of texts and teaching strategies to maintain their interest • Teaching is of good quality in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The national literacy strategies are successfully supporting the development of reading and writing. Good use is made of a broad range of teaching strategies to encourage reading and writing • Data analysis shows pupils make consistently good progress and achieve well in relation to their low levels of knowledge on entry • Boys become enthusiastic readers by the age of twelve and enjoy poetry and non-fiction text best. Girls continue to outperform boys, especially in writing. This is often because they develop more mature attitudes to learning at an earlier

<p>Years 5 and 6 and very good in Year 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans enable staff and parents to support pupils effectively • Staff are very good at inducting new pupils, helping them to develop positive attitudes to learning and literacy • Teachers introduce pupils to a range of poetry, fiction and non-fiction texts to encourage an interest in reading • Library skills are taught effectively • More able pupils are challenged appropriately in all year groups 	<p>stage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils make good progress and it is particularly good in Year 7 • Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and meet the specific targets set out in their individual education plans • Pupils new to the school settle quickly and receive the support they need to develop their speaking, reading and writing • Pupils make good progress in reading. By Year 6 they describe novels and poems they enjoy, read accurately and give reasons for their opinions. Older pupils in Year 7 are enthusiastic readers • Pupils know how to access books and information and good use is made of the library to research topics • By Year 7 more able pupils are competent readers and write in a range of styles with reasonable accuracy. Work is presented neatly and with pride
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22. Teaching is good in Years 5 and 6 and very good in Year 7. Pupils make good progress overall.

Strengths in teaching	The impact on learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers have good subject knowledge and planning has clear objectives and structure. Specific subject vocabulary is modelled well. Lessons have good pace and challenge pupils • Teachers make good use of questioning to encourage pupils to express their ideas and opinions. They expect pupils to give reasons for their views • Teachers draw on a variety of strategies to maintain interest and motivation, for example sharing the planning of writing, using role play to develop oral skills and introducing text which is meaningful to pupils • Staff manage the pupils' behaviour well and challenging behaviour does not disrupt the learning of others. Very good use is made of praise, encouragement and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils understand the purpose of their work and the expectations for achievement in each lesson. They develop increasing skill in using specific vocabulary introduced in lessons as they move through the school • Pupils learn to present their ideas giving reasons for their opinions. They also take account of the views of others and show respect for differences • Pupils' co-operate well with each other in pairs and in groups. In all year groups behaviour is good and pupils listen attentively. The majority enjoy their lessons and show good levels of perseverance even when they find work hard • Pupils show respect for staff, behaviour is very good in lessons and they understand well the school's sanctions and rewards. Pupils' confidence and self esteem improves and this supports good progress

rewards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers make good use of text in other subjects to interest pupils and promote reading skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils develop an understanding of how reading supports learning. By the end of Year 7 pupils have studied <i>Macbeth</i> and the life of Shakespeare and understand how ballads describe events in the past and present. Pupils extend their reading skills through the reading and discussion of passages of text used in subjects such as science
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<p>Areas for improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards in writing The development of use of computers to aid drafting and editing skills Expectations for presentation and handwriting to be consistently neat The quality of marking and preciseness of target setting to guide pupils to know how to improve More opportunities for pupils to choose the style of writing to record their work

23. The very good direction of the subject leader gives clear vision for the future development of literacy. Monitoring procedures are effective, communication between staff is good and the subject action plan indicates action to be taken to increase further the pace of learning. The school analyses test results and rates of progress. The information is used to set challenging targets to be achieved in national tests. The capacity to succeed and improve is very good.

MATHEMATICS

24. On admission to the school, the majority of pupils are at least 18 months below the levels expected for their age. Pupils achieve well and often respond enthusiastically in lessons. Inspection evidence shows that pupils attain standards that are well below average at the end of Year 6 and below average at the end of Year 7. There has been a similar pattern to pupils’ performance in national tests since the previous inspection and standards have been consistently well below average at the end of Year 6. Standards in the national tests at the end of 2002 were well below average and below those of schools with similar intakes. Given the pupils’ very low attainment on admission to the school most pupils make good progress and the rate of progress accelerates in Years 6 and 7 due to very effective teaching. Standards are not as high as those reported at the time of the previous inspection but there has been good recent improvement.

25. Pupils make good progress because their work is well matched to their stages of learning and levels of understanding. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as their individual education plans are well focused and they receive effective support in lessons from teaching assistants who are very skilful in asking well focused questions and in providing the right level of intervention. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Progress is at its fastest in Years 6 and 7 as teachers successfully build on what has already been taught. The most successful areas in mathematics are in shape, space and measures as pupils have good opportunities to carry out practical tasks. They

are less successful in mental arithmetic and calculating as, until recently, these aspects have had insufficient focus in the lessons. Pupils have appropriate skills in data handling.

Strengths of the provision	The impact on teaching and learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school uses most aspects of the National Numeracy Strategy effectively • Setting pupils by ability works particularly well for pupils with special educational needs, the more able and gifted and talented; support staff are given good guidance when working with pupils with SEN • The subject leader has brought enthusiasm and a sharper focus to the teaching of mathematics and provides good guidance for her colleagues • Monitoring of the pupils' performance in tests has improved, and challenging but achievable targets for performance in national tests have been set • Good links are made with some subjects, notably design and technology and art and design • The subject leader has made good improvements to the resources; the staff have sufficient mathematical apparatus to support the teaching • The results of half termly tests are used well to modify the curriculum so that it meets the needs of different groups of pupils and particular care is taken to assess new entrants to the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils' mathematical skills are developed consistently • Teachers plan work for these pupils well and make good use of support staff to help pupils with SEN; there is sufficiently challenging work for brighter pupils • Staff are now clear about what is to be taught and make good use of national guidelines when planning work • All staff are committed to raising standards and monitoring pupils' progress; the school is on course to meet its targets • Pupils understand the relevance of mathematics in other subjects and make good gains in understanding pattern and shape • Teachers make good use of apparatus in lessons to help the pupils understand new ideas through practical work • Teachers know when pupils are making good progress and when there are reasons for concern. This enables staff to provide intervention to support and guide pupils' learning

26. Teaching is good overall and very good in Years 6 and 7. Pupils with SEN benefit from very good support.

Strengths in teaching	Impact on learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teachers have good subject knowledge and most make full use of guidance from the National Numeracy Strategy including a balance of teacher directed activities and opportunities for the pupils to investigate • Teachers and staff are consistent in promoting good behaviour and attitudes; there is a good reward system to encourage pupils to listen attentively and work hard • Homework is used well to extend the pupils' learning • In the best lessons the pace is very brisk and pupils are taught different ways of calculating quickly and accurately • Planning is good, particularly for the more able and pupils with special educational needs, as the staff take account of what has been learned previously • In good lessons the teachers focus well on improving the pupils' knowledge of mathematical signs, symbols and vocabulary • Relationships with pupils are very good and the teachers show good concern for individuals • Assessments provide good information about the performance of boys and girls and are used well to identify weaknesses in boys' attainment • Staff insist on good presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils enjoy mathematics and join in with enthusiasm; they respond well to opportunities to explain their answers and the most able have a good grasp of different strategies for solving problems and explaining their answers using correct mathematical vocabulary • Pupils are productive and hard-working; they enjoy the challenges set; most pupils enjoy mathematics and show much respect for their teachers by responding to questions and listening attentively • Most pupils complete their homework on time and say that it helps them to learn • Pupils in Years 6 and 7 work quickly and effectively; they keenly apply their mental arithmetic skills in solving problems such as by doubling and halving numbers • The pupils successfully build on prior knowledge and those with SEN benefit much from a wide variety of approaches including the use of apparatus • Older pupils are making good gains in learning how to use mathematical formulae and vocabulary to good effect • Pupils know that if they do not understand a question the teachers and other staff will help them • Many lessons include specific tasks which interest boys; as a result boys' attainment is now in line with that achieved by girls and most boys enjoy the subject • Pupils take pride in working neatly

Aspects of the school's provision and teaching that require improvement	The impact on pupils' learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some lessons the pace is too slow and not enough is expected of pupils • Some lessons do not have sufficient time and emphasis on mental arithmetic • In mixed ability classes the work is not matched well enough to the needs of pupils • Marking of pupils' work and target setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few pupils, mainly boys, lose interest and work slowly • Pupils have insufficiently quick and accurate recall of number facts • The more able in these lessons are not challenged sufficiently as the work set is too easy • Pupils are not always sure what is expected of them and of how they might improve

27. Subject leadership is now very good. The recently appointed co-ordinator for mathematics is already making an impact on raising standards. She is bringing consistency to the teaching and learning through re-organising resources, supporting colleagues through monitoring planning and lessons and making good use of assessment and analysis of test results to guide staff on what to do to accelerate pupils' progress.

SCIENCE

28. Pupils achieve standards that are in line with the expectations of pupils in Years 6 and 7 and higher than the test results suggest. Taking into account the low attainment on entry this represents very good progress over their three years in the school. More pupils enter the school with lower literacy and numeracy levels than usual. Writing skills are weak and many pupils have difficulty expressing themselves in the tests. The results do not reflect the depth of many pupils' knowledge and understanding or the above average proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs. Due to good and very good teaching all pupils make good progress, each year developing their skills and knowledge. Despite this good provision, fewer pupils than average achieve the higher level in national tests. Action taken since the previous inspection to improve the attainment of boys has been successful. The last test results show the difference in the performance of boys and girls to be marginal.

Strengths of the provision	The impact on teaching and learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and national documents provide good guidance for staff • Regular, good opportunities for practical investigative work • Links with other subjects such as design and technology, physical education and numeracy • The use of the local environment • Good analysis of test results to show weaknesses in curriculum provision • Regular homework, often used in lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff planning is effective and progression in learning is planned for different groups of pupils • Learning is interesting and based on first hand experiences which excites and interests pupils • Opportunities are planned for pupils to apply the skills and knowledge learned in other subjects to science, for example when observing how heart rates change with exercise, recording data and measuring and calculating • Homework activities are set to reinforce language and scientific principles, especially pertinent to boys

29. Teaching is good overall, with a high proportion of very good lessons observed. Support assistants have a good impact on the progress and achievements of pupils in their care.

Strengths in teaching	Impact on learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan investigations which bring excitement to learning • Scientific language is used well • Teachers encourage pupils to work as scientists • Relationships with pupils are very good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils enjoy the practical aspects of their lessons and are excited by their discoveries and observations e.g. Year 5 testing the insulation properties of a range of materials • Pupils understand scientific terms such as pitch, photosynthesis and irreversible change • Pupils recognise the importance of research and linking knowledge to make and test out hypotheses

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and safety are promoted strongly • Teachers draw good attention to the impact of scientific discovery on helping people e.g. medical techniques • The principles of fair testing are taught effectively • Planning is thorough and links are made whenever possible to learning in other subjects • Time is usually used effectively to support the structure of investigative work and recording • Constructive criticism is promoted to evaluate the outcomes of investigations • Pupils with SEN are fully included e.g. a more able pupil paired with someone who needs supporting during an investigation • Teachers provide good role models for presentation of work by providing good quality home made equipment and word processed documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils are keen to learn and always try hard. • Pupils observe rules, treat materials and equipment with respect, and do not put others at risk • Pupils recognise the positive and negative impact of drugs and medicines on everyday life • They understand how exercise improves the functions of body organs and enjoy the sporting activities the school offers • Pupils apply their numeracy skills to their recording of information, using graphs and tables • Lessons maintain a good pace and pupils have the right balance of time allocated to investigating and recording their work • Pupils understand the importance of listening to others and learning through mistakes • Pupils work alongside their friends and share decision-making tasks. Practical opportunities which do not rely on written recording help to raise self esteem and confidence
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Areas for improvement

- Assessment information is not shared enough with pupils to help them to know how to improve
- Marking gives insufficient detail about pupils' successes and areas to improve.
- Personal targets are too vague
- More use of ICT to present work and data, as well as research

30. The coordinator provides good leadership. The current action plan accurately identifies areas for improvement, which include wider use of ICT and 'booster' classes on the study of materials. This is an area where pupils did not do well in previous national tests. There is a good card index system for tracking pupils' progress waiting to be computerised. Analysis of results from the pupils' work in previous schools is used as the basis for target setting. These need to be more sharply focused to a particular skill or knowledge. The 'Friends of the School' are planning to restore the pond and garden to its former condition so that it can be used as a teaching resource again.

ART AND DESIGN

31. **Pupils achieve standards that are above average at the end of both Year 6 and Year 7.** Pupils enjoy the range of creative opportunities they are given. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Progress in the knowledge and understanding of art and the range of skills and techniques to create different effects is good at the end of both Year 6 and Year 7.

Strengths of the provision	The impact on teaching and learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a well equipped specialist art room • Resources are of good quality and used effectively • A good quality scheme of work informs good practice • Teaching is effective because staff have good subject knowledge and the range of work stimulates pupils' interest • Art is used thoughtfully to support cultural development and learning in other subjects • The study of the work of famous artists deepens pupils' understanding of skills and techniques • Good use is made of sketch books to ensure continuity and progression in the pupils work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils work imaginatively because they are enthused by their tasks • Pupils with special needs are often well supported by support staff who work with them in small groups • Continuity in learning supports good rates of progress • Staff are confident to introduce exciting techniques and encourage pupils to consider how their efforts could improve • The work of artists supports pupils in understanding how to improve their skills • Making use of the work of artists from other cultures is effectively supporting pupils' cultural development • Sketch books help to ensure continuity and progression in their learning

32. Teaching is good throughout the school and on occasion it is better.

Strengths in teaching.	Impact on learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff have secure subject knowledge • Relationships with pupils are very good • Teachers are very imaginative in the way that they present tasks to pupils • Lessons are carefully planned and build thoughtfully upon previous learning and knowledge • Support staff give very effective support to pupils with special needs • Specific subject language is used extensively and so literacy skills are being well supported • Resources are prepared carefully and used well • Teachers give pupils appropriate opportunities to be creative, praise to work and encourage self evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils work with imagination • They use the resources with great skill • They make positive responses to their tasks • They put their current learning into the context of previous learning and build upon skills very effectively • The pupils appreciate the thoughtful support that they are given by teachers and support staff • Pupils use subject specific language with confidence • Pupils enjoy their work and make art through the process of interrogating famous artists work as well as using their own ideas • Pupils are confident to evaluate their work and learn from their mistakes

Areas for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is too little use of ICT in the pupils work • There is too little work in two and three dimensions • Sketch books are not used consistently enough to support effective target setting

in the pupils work

33. **The recently appointed co-ordinator provides good leadership.** A thorough audit of the school's provision and standards and a thoughtful action plan support the development of the subject. The co-ordinator is keen and enthusiastic and knowledgeable. The school gives high status to the subject. Good quality displays throughout the school place value on pupils' work. This is a particular strength in the specialist art room where presentation is very good. Further status is given to the subject by the successful art club, which is well supported by pupils who are keen to extend their skills in making art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

34. There is good provision for work in design and technology. Standards are average at the end of Year 6 and above average at the end of Year 7. Progress is good. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils say they enjoy the designing and making processes and work with a good range of materials.

Strengths of the provision	The impact on teaching and learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The practical nature of the carefully thought out activities • The opportunity for all pupils to successfully make products from original designs • The good level of continuity so pupils continually make good progress in their learning • The increasing detail of pupils' designs in Years 6 and 7 • The accurate identification of resources to meet needs effectively • The careful recording of the processes of designing and making • The growing measure of challenge in the tasks • The constructive feedback teachers give to pupils • The assessment of previous learning to ascertain pupils previous experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The positive way in which pupils tackle their tasks • The growing detail evident in pupils' sketches before the design brief is drawn up • The care which teachers take in providing interesting, relevant tasks • The effective use of feedback to give immediate support to pupils • The continuity and progression in the pupils work • The thoughtful way in which resources are prepared to ensure tasks are completed successfully • The confidence of pupils to celebrate their skills and accomplishments

35. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school.

Strengths in teaching.	Impact on learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The secure subject knowledge of teachers • The high level of skilled support given by well deployed support staff • The effective work of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The positive responses made by the pupils • The care and accuracy with which the pupils draw up their initial sketches • The effective design briefs that are compiled by the pupils

<p>technician supporting the pupils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careful planning that reviews progression in pupils' learning • The constructive and supportive advice that is continually given • The care with which safety aspects of learning are stressed • Good cross-curricular links and accurate use of subject language to support development of literacy skills • The clear setting of learning objectives that are evaluated at the end of lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The enthusiasm with which support is given to one another as the practical work develops • The skill with which accuracy in measurement of materials develops • The success in which the growth in the complexity of the tasks is tackled • The good level of interaction between pupils and all adults supporting them • Good use of specialist vocabulary in discussion • The success of pupils with special needs in responding to the practical nature of the work
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Areas for improvement

- Making more use of ICT within the designing process
- Careful monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject
- Adding to the present system of assessment to measure progress more regularly

36. **The subject leader provides good leadership.** She is well informed and enthusiastic and has been responsible for the subject since the beginning of the school year. A careful audit of the provision and changes in the programme of work has identified strengths and areas for development and improved the balance and range of work. An effective action plan is in place, guiding the pace of progress over the school year, improving learning and raising standards further.

GEOGRAPHY

37. Standards in geography are in line with the expectations for pupils in Years 6 and 7. Discussions with Year 7 pupils and analyses of their work show that pupils of all levels of ability are making at least satisfactory, and mostly good progress in developing geographical skills. There has been good improvement in provision since the previous inspection. Pupils enter the school with a narrow understanding and knowledge of the wider world around them and they make good progress over three years.

Strengths of the provision	The impact on teaching and learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The full range of study units are taught, using a variety of teaching methods • Good use is made of Droitwich for town studies and visits to Weston-super-Mare as a contrasting region • Good links are made with science, French and history • Strong skills in map work are enhanced through the interpretation of aerial photographs • Current events brought into lessons e.g. Dudley earthquake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils develop enthusiastic attitudes to the subjects because teachers make learning interesting and relevant to current events and pupils experience • Pupils learn about people and places and compare similarities and differences between different locations. • Pupils understand how their town has changed over time • Pupils are developing a secure understanding of how human activity can enhance or destroy natural features e.g. harmful substances destroying river life • Lessons and assemblies raise pupils awareness of world events • Pupils make good progress, learning to use

	evidence to justify their answers
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38. **Teaching is good.** Pupils in Year 6 make good progress, working together in small groups to produce answers that will be used in feedback sessions. This is due to very good relationships and interest in their task. Pupils use their numeracy skills, for example interpreting graphs, and have frequent opportunities to speak during lessons. A good feature of teaching is the consistency with which teachers expect correct vocabulary to be used in written and spoken answers.

Strengths in teaching.	Impact on learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff have good subject knowledge and introduce pupils to a range of evidence to help them to learn • Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and expect them to work hard • Teachers bring the subject to life through careful planning and the very good use of resources • Teachers motivate pupils using imaginative strategies to promote curiosity and have good class management skills • Geographical language is given a high profile and reinforced well • Questions are posed to ensure pupils of different abilities and those with special educational needs take part in discussions • Teachers set a good example of standards of presentation by word processing their own material • Teachers consistently share lesson objectives with the pupils • Homework tasks set and the results used in lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils show great interest in the subject and understand the need to have good sources of evidence and field observations • Discussions in lessons are informative and pupils respect others by listening carefully and making their contributions • Attitudes to the subject are very positive • Pupils are enthusiastic to take part in practical tasks, for example interpreting photographs • Pupils develop a broader range of language in writing and speech • All pupils feel valued and know they will have the opportunity to contribute to lessons • Pupils develop a broader understanding of the way people live and how they feel when they change locations • All pupils are fully involved in the lessons and make good progress • Pupils see the importance of work done outside the school day
Areas for improvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The marking of pupils' written work does not consistently give information about how pupils can improve • Wider use of ICT to support teaching and learning • Regular opportunities for pupils to choose how to write their own work 	

39. **The subject leader provides good leadership.** Weaknesses in curriculum provision or standards are highlighted through regular monitoring of pupils' work. The assessment scheme is useful for checking progress, but is not regularly levelled against national standards. Through the residential visit to an outdoor pursuits centre in the Malvern Hills, pupils have good experience of orienteering and fieldwork. This has a good impact on pupils' social and cultural development. The current subject plan identifies the need for a weather station and wider use of ICT in lessons as weaknesses in provision.

HISTORY

40. Standards have remained the same as reported previously and by the end of Year 6 they are in line with the expectations. Pupils make good progress, improving their vocabulary and using evidence to provide reasons for their answers. In Year 7 pupils reach the expected standards for their age. They have a good knowledge of the periods studied and their vocabulary improves significantly. Good teaching in the skills and techniques of researching and assessing evidence has a positive impact on the way pupils work. Considering the low level of understanding and skills when they enter the school, their achievement represents very good progress over three years. Provision has been maintained since the previous inspection

Strengths of the provision	The impact on teaching and learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The full range of study units are taught, using a variety of teaching methods • A high proportion of teaching time is given to the development of skills e.g. interpreting pictures of times past • Good use is made of artefacts for pupils to hold and assess • Good links are established with other subjects such as dance, geography and RE • Teachers give a high profile to the use of subject vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils develop good attitudes to the subject because teachers involve them in lessons regularly and quickly, showing their ideas are valued • Pupils learn about people and places, comparing similarities and differences between different historical times • Pupils understand how their town and family life have changed over time • Literacy is improved through reading aloud in lessons and learning to use new vocabulary to describe their knowledge

41. Teaching is good overall. The classroom support assistants give effective support, helping pupils to take part in lessons.

Strengths in teaching	Impact on learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff have good subject knowledge and introduce pupils to a range of evidence to help them to learn about history • Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and expect them to work hard • Teachers plan lessons carefully and use good resources e.g. video • Teachers motivate pupils using imaginative strategies to promote curiosity • Historical language is introduced and reinforced well • Questions are posed to ensure pupils of different abilities and those with special educational needs take part in discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils show great interest in the subject when using artefacts, and sources of evidence • Attitudes to the subject are very positive because pupils are involved in discussions with other pupils and their teacher • Pupils are enthusiastic to take part in practical tasks, for example researching information and reading aloud their findings • All pupils feel valued and included and know they will have the opportunity to contribute to lessons • Pupils listen carefully and show respect for the opinions and ideas of others in their class
Areas for improvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The marking of pupils' written work to provide information about how pupils can improve 	

- Neater presentation of work
- More use of ICT to support research
- Consistency in the pace of lessons which are satisfactory, so that pupils interest is maintained throughout

42. The subject leader provides satisfactory leadership. There has been inconsistency of staffing recently and changes in the curriculum offered by feeder schools, with a consequent loss of direction. Action has been taken to address this by introducing an assessment scheme which checks progress. More use of ICT has been identified as an area for improvement in the subject development plan.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

43. The school's curriculum for ICT is unsatisfactory and results in pupils making inconsistent and slow progress. By the end of Years 6 and 7, standards in ICT are below average and this represents a decline on those reported at the time of the previous inspection. The school has improved the number and quality of computers and there is a good action plan for further development but much remains to be done to accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards in the subject. The most pressing needs are to make better use of computers to support pupils' work in a range of subjects and to ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding are developed consistently between classes and year groups. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make insufficient progress in most aspects of their work.

Pupils' successes	Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils throughout the school have satisfactory basic skills in word processing and in using spreadsheets • They control the mouse well and have appropriate skills of accessing a variety of programs, logging on to the Internet and using search engines to help them to find information • Pupils of all abilities change fonts, the colour and size of text and most import pictures competently from a variety of sources • Pupils in Year 7 select information from a variety of sources and create a simple slide presentation combining text and graphics • Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers and benefit from some additional support in lessons • Some pupils access the Internet for research and the school has a good policy and practice to ensure that this activity is safe • Pupils in Year 7 make good use of computers in geography to research topics such as the 3 Gorges Dam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The topics taught are the same for each year group and this hampers the consistent development of skills • The curriculum is too narrow and there are insufficient opportunities for the pupils to apply what they learn in the computer suite to their work in most other subjects • Some aspects of the subject, most markedly control technology, receive little attention and pupils have very limited skills in using computers to control events • Pupils have little knowledge of sensors and computer-aided design • Although pupils' skills in creating spreadsheets are adequate, they have too few opportunities to apply what they have been taught; as a result these skills are re-taught each year • Pupils have limited understanding of how ICT might be used to support their work in other subjects

<p>and use the information well in debating issues; this work linked very well with their literacy tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make good use of a new program to help them to compose their own music 	
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44. The teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory with some good examples but over time the teaching of ICT has been unsatisfactory as too little emphasis has been given to using computers in learning across subjects.

Strengths in teaching and learning	Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All teachers have had appropriate training and are secure in their basic subject knowledge • The school has improved its resources and the new ICT suite is helping to make the teaching of basic skills more consistent and effective • The school makes use of national and local guidance for the subject • Support staff work well with pupils with SEN and provide helpful advice and encouragement so that the pupils tackle new programs willingly • Lessons are planned thoroughly • Teachers have good control of the pupils and make effective use of the school's reward system to encourage hard work and good behaviour • Most pupils enjoy using computers and successfully compare technology with manual ways of completing a task • Most pupils work hard in their lessons. • In PE lessons the staff make very good use of photography to record pupils' skills and then use the information to show pupils how they might refine and improve their techniques and skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing pupils with greater opportunities to use ICT in other subjects and to develop their skills in control technology • Ensuring that what has been learned previously is not repeated unnecessarily in following years • Making better use of assessment to identify what the pupils already know and using the information to plan challenging work • Ensuring that the more able are challenged sufficiently and given more opportunities to experiment and explore different ways of working • Teachers tend to over direct the pupils and there is little scope for experiment • Insufficient use is made of computers to enrich pupils' work in mathematics, science, history, RE, design and technology and art and design

45. The recently designated subject leader has a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve standards and there is a well-crafted development plan. Barely sufficient time is given to the teaching of ICT and the computer suite is not used sufficiently well. This means that pupils have insufficient time to practise and improve their skills and tend to forget what they have been taught in previous lessons. There is a useful system to record pupils' achievement but this is not used sufficiently to guide teachers on planning the next steps in learning.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

46. **Standards in French are close to average in reading and writing at the end of both Year 6 and Year 7.** Speaking skills are below average and some pupils have difficulty using a French accent when responding to their teachers' questions. Pupils achieve well because teaching is strong and the recently introduced scheme provides good quality learning opportunities. There are no differences between the attainment of boys and girls and pupils from minority ethnic groups are well represented in the higher attaining groups.
47. Work in pupils' books shows that they learn the names of the equipment they use in lessons and around the classroom. They know how to greet each other and ask simple questions and answer enquiries about the weather. In Year 6 pupils work is not well presented and their writing in English and French has mistakes in grammar and punctuation. This improves in Year 7 with pupils writing in sentences using the correct grammar. They write dialogues between people talking about the weather or between members of their families. Pupils understand how to construct common verbs and how to apply them to photographs of activities. Pupils use computers to help them learn.

Strengths of the provision that impact on teaching and learning	
▪ Pupils begin to learn French in Year 6 for an hour each week	→ Pupils get off to a good start, they enjoy their lessons and establish a sound working knowledge of French words and expressions by the time they move into Year 7
▪ Lessons are taken from a good quality scheme of work	→ Learning opportunities are varied and cover the requirements of the National Curriculum
▪ Teachers do not follow the scheme slavishly	→ Pupils work at tasks which are planned to match their specific needs
▪ Assessment opportunities are part of the scheme of work	→ Teachers have a good knowledge of pupils' capabilities in French and use this well to plan lessons
▪ All pupils, including those with SEN and those who learn faster than most pupils, have equal opportunities to participate in learning	→ Boys and girls, pupils from different minority ethnic groups and those who learn at different rates are supported well in lessons.
▪ The plans for pupils with SEN, including those with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties are good	→ Learning support assistants provide very good support for pupils with statements of special educational needs. This helps them to participate in lessons and achieve well
▪ The quality of teaching is at least good	→ Learning in lessons is good and pupils achieve well in the two years they learn French
▪ Teachers plan lessons so pupils work in groups	→ Pupils learn to work together to solve problems and complete tasks

48. In the three lessons seen the quality of teaching was at least good and pupils made good progress in their learning.

Strengths in teaching that result in effective learning	
▪ Teachers use a wide range of methods	→ Pupils learn effectively, by reading information, hearing French spoken and associating actions with words and phrases. For example, in a Year 6 class pupils sang numbers up to 20 and then added hand movements to reinforce the sequence
▪ Teachers plan many short,	→ The frequent changes in activities help pupils to

sharp activities	concentrate as they find new tasks challenging. For example, Year 6 pupils listened to a tape of a boy saying what was in the shop window, comparing his version to a picture. They then had to say whether he was speaking the truth, at all times using French to reply to their teacher's questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teachers plan activities which challenge all groups of pupils and are suited to their learning styles ▪ Teachers plan work which helps pupils to learn about French culture and the language ▪ The pace of lessons is brisk and teachers set time limits for pupils to complete their tasks ▪ Learning support assistants help pupils very well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → In a Year 7 lesson pupils with SEN and those new to French, played a game about telling the time while other pupils completed work on telling the time by half and quarter hours → Pupils use computers to look at routes around France and see in the displays that teachers have in classrooms, features of living in France → Pupils work hard, enjoy the challenges that their teachers set and push themselves and their groups to complete their work → Pupils with SEN are helped to learn and understand by patient, sensitive support. For example, a pupil with a statement of special educational needs in Year 6, kept up with the pace of the lesson and was able to answer in French and English the questions posed by the teacher
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teachers manage behaviour well, they treat pupils with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties fairly, firmly and consistently ▪ Teachers set interesting homework for pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Lessons continue without interruption. Pupils with personal targets have their work reviewed in a fair and very straightforward manner → Pupils' interest in the subject is maintained and parents see what their children are learning in French lessons

Areas for improvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The subject knowledge of some teachers while satisfactory lacks conviction. The subject leader is aware of this and has observed some teaching and offered advice ▪ The marking in books does not help pupils to understand what to do next to improve 	

49. The acting deputy headteacher is managing the subject during the absence of the permanent post holder. The development of the subject shows a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's provision. Monitoring and support for colleagues is good.

MUSIC

50. **The provision for music is good.** However, there is no specialist subject area at the present time. There are exciting plans for a new music suite to be developed in the near future. Standards are average at the end of both Year 6 and Year 7. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Instrumental tuition in strings, woodwind and guitar playing further enhances the achievements of some of the pupils. Many become competent performers and composers.

Strengths of the provision	The impact on teaching and learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils work well together in their music making • Pupils use their voices confidently as they sing a variety of enjoyable songs • Pupils perform for one another and evaluate with skill • They pitch voices with accuracy and apply their skills when demonstrating their understanding of rhythm as they clap to place names • Pupils benefit from good resources to develop their knowledge and understanding in music • They practise conscientiously and play instruments effectively • There is appropriate coverage of the skills of music making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers plan with care and thought • There is particularly effective work when pupils work with the co-ordinator • Pupils enjoy their work and are enthusiastic about what they are learning • Pupils make good attempts to work with accuracy • There is a good level of enjoyment in the pupils' work • Pupils pay good attention as they practise their skills and generally make good improvements in their work • Most pupils demonstrate good levels of concentration

51. Teaching is good throughout the school and particularly effective when the co-ordinator is working with the pupils.

Strengths in teaching.	Impact on learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers have secure subject knowledge • Good use is made of resources • Imaginative use is made of a variety of music such as spirituals, musicals and the work of classical composers • A good variety of musicians from different cultural backgrounds are introduced to the pupils • Teachers and support staff work in effective partnership to give support to pupils with special needs • Staff join in with singing and give good advice through pertinent open-ended questioning • Lessons efficiently build upon previous learning as a result of good planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils enjoy their music making and are enthusiastic to improve their skills • They listen with care because they are concentrating well • Their enjoyment is enhanced through the good variety of music presented to them • Pupils respond positively and build carefully upon previous learning • They make concerted efforts to improve as performers, composers and appraisers of one another's work • Appraisal of work is completed sensitively and pupils' social skills are developed effectively • Pupils develop their levels of understanding because they have clear instructions and guidance

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear instructions enable pupils to understand the focus of their learning 	
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Areas for improvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of the specialist room to enable pupils to use technological skills to make and record music in sound proof conditions • The setting of precise targets for learning so pupils know what they need to do to improve 	

52. **The subject is well led by a very enthusiastic and well informed co-ordinator.** A comprehensive amount of work has been completed and there has been good improvement since the last inspection. Instrumental tuition is provided in an effective mixture of in school and out of school time so that pupils do not miss time allocated to other subjects. The care shown by the co-ordinator has ensured music making is valued throughout the school. There is on-going analysis of the pupils' achievements that supports progression in learning well. The staff and pupils are well supported by the hard work and commitment of the co-ordinator.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

53. **Standards are above expectations for pupils in Years 6 and 7.** This significant improvement since the previous inspection is due primarily to the consistently high quality of the teaching. This has enthused pupils, generating enthusiasm for the subject and the ambition to do well. Pupils of all levels of ability achieve well. By the end of Year 6, most pupils can swim the expected 25 metres at least and all pupils have good opportunities to participate in competitive games at local and district level. As the school provides the whole range of activities expected in the National Curriculum, PE makes a significant contribution to the social and cultural development of pupils.

Strengths of the provision	The impact on teaching and learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All aspects of PE are covered and schemes of work support progression in developing skills and teamwork • Opportunities for pupils to take part in local sports events are strongly promoted • Provision to ensure all pupils have equal opportunities to take part in all aspects of PE • Provision for swimming is good • Good links have been established with local schools and sports' clubs • Good links are made to other subjects such as science and ICT • The emphasis placed on social interaction, team work and accepting advice on how to improve their performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils learn to develop their skills and abilities individually, in groups and as members of teams • Pupils develop enthusiasm and pride in representing their school • Boys and girls learn the skills and rules of games such as rugby, football and netball as well as the sensitivity and thought needed to interpret music in dance • Pupils develop a broader understanding of how they can extend their skills and interests by joining in one of the sports clubs • Pupils know the importance of regular exercise to health as they prepare for lessons with a proper warm up and a closing activity at the end of lessons. • Pupils learn the value of teamwork and to recognise the success of others with applause, contributing to their social development • Pupils learn to cooperate to achieve a goal at a residential centre for adventurous activities

from other pupils	
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54. Pupils in all three year groups are making good progress in dealing with tactics during a game. In rugby, pupils in Years 5 and 6 pass and receive a ball at speed. Both boys and girls make very good progress linking fluently their sequences of movement, while showing originality and control. The more accomplished performers in Year 7 girls' hockey are making good progress as field players or as goalkeeper. All pupils have above average skills at evaluating their performance and suggesting how to improve. Increasingly, this is done with a video camera.
55. **Teaching is good, with a high proportion of very good and some excellent teaching.** This is a major improvement since the previous inspection.

Strengths in teaching.	Impact on learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers have very good subject knowledge and provide exciting and purposeful activities • Relationships with pupils are very good, teachers show trust and give responsibility to pupils • Teachers ensure that the health and safety of pupils is maintained. • Planning is thorough and is well matched to pupils' physical development. • Teachers assess pupils' performance in lessons and encourage them to demonstrate their achievements to others • Time is used effectively to support the structure of lessons. • Pupils with SEN are fully included in all activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils enjoy their lessons and have enthusiastic attitudes to games, dance and gymnastics • Pupils respect staff and are eager to improve their physical skills and learn new strategies to increase their enjoyment of games • Pupils understand the importance of rules to ensure safe and fair play. • Pupils expect to perform to their friends and accept constructive criticism as part of learning • Pupils enjoy the good pace of lessons and maintain good levels of interest, involvement and behaviour. This was seen in dance, gymnastics and games in all year groups • Pupils benefit from practical opportunities to explore their talents and experience success. This helps to raise self esteem and confidence

Minor areas for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the skills of the non-specialist staff supporting the subject so that they know which coaching points to promote

56. **Leadership of the subject is good.** There is a very good scheme of work to follow and two experienced PE teachers advise staff who need support. This is having a good impact on the very good management and organisation of lessons. Facilities and equipment are good. Teachers make effective use of them in lessons and extra-curricular activities, which has led to an improvement in standards. Good links are made with other subjects, for example, dance in an interpretation of 'A Christmas Carol' as part of pupils' history work on the Victorian era. This is having a good influence on building confidence at performing in public alongside friends.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

57. **The school makes good provision** in line with the syllabus followed by local schools. Standards at the end of Year 6 are average and at the end of Year 7 they are above average. Progress is good in Year 6 and very good in Year 7. Standards have been improved since the last inspection.
58. The standards are confirmed by the scrutiny of a good sample of work as well as the lesson observations made during the inspection week.

Strengths of the provision	The impact on teaching and learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All aspects are covered and the school meets the requirements of the syllabus followed by the local schools • Pupils debate issues to help them to learn about the influence of religion on cultures and lifestyles • Pupils' views and beliefs are valued • Pupils with SEN are thoughtfully supported and they work alongside their classmates at an appropriate level • The leadership of the subject co-ordinator • The range of good quality resources to support learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils learn about a wide range of world religions • Special needs pupils make good progress • There is very good interaction between teachers and pupils and all views are valued • There is a growing maturity in the way that issues are debated and learning outcomes are achieved by pupils • RE makes a very good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils • Learning is enhanced through access to artefacts, books and visits which support the development of knowledge and understanding well

59. The analysis of pupils' work shows teaching is of good quality in Years 5 and 6. Some outstanding teaching was seen during the period of the inspection. Teaching is consistently very good in Year 7.

Strengths in teaching.	Impact on learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers have secure subject knowledge and receive good guidance • Teachers discuss issues at a mature level with pupils • Pertinent and open-ended questions are regularly posed in the discussions • Good use is made of the resources to make learning meaningful • Tasks are thoughtfully planned to capture pupils' interest • Teachers ensure that pupils with SEN receive the extra support they need to succeed in tasks • Support staff are well deployed and enhance pupils' learning through interaction of high quality • Teachers provide good role models and value the pupils' contributions to discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils value one another's views and show respect for differences of opinion • Pupils pay good levels of attention and make thoughtful observations in discussions • Pupils who have special needs make good progress • Pupils are enthusiastic to learn about world religions and beliefs • Pupils confidently use the correct language to describe their knowledge and understanding of religions, for example the "mezuzah" and "shema" in the Jewish religion • Pupils make successful contributions to evaluate learning in the final parts of lessons • The effective use of resources and support materials help to develop more meaningful learning

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers evaluate learning effectively at the end of lessons requiring pupils to share their learning with one another • Visits to places of worship enhance knowledge and understanding • Visitors also support the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding • Good links are made to literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils learn to understand and respect a range of views, customs and traditions
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<p>Areas for improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To link assembly themes more consistently to the scheme of work • Marking does not consistently enable pupils to know how to improve their work • Targets are not always precise enough

60. **The subject is very well led by a knowledgeable co-ordinator.** Effective guidance is given to colleagues which supports a consistent approach to the teaching of RE. The co-ordinator has a clear view of what needs to be done in order to improve the subject further. An efficient audit has led to a plan of action being drawn up. The plan has drawn on the outcomes of monitoring.