

INSPECTION REPORT

HOW WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Park Street

St Albans

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117235

Headteacher: Mrs. M. T. Willis

Reporting inspector: Mike Capper
23239

Dates of inspection: June 16th – 19th 2003

Inspection number: 247746

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Spooners Drive Park Street St. Albans Herts
Postcode:	AL2 2HU
Telephone number:	01727 768885
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. N. Grant
Date of previous inspection:	May 2001

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23239	Mike Capper	Registered inspector	English ICT RE Music Special Educational Needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9545	Kevin Greateorex	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30717	Gordon Tompsett	Team Inspector	Mathematics Geography History PE Educational Inclusion	How good are curricular opportunities?
23609	Alison Cartlidge	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art and Design Design and Technology	How well are pupils taught?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

How Wood Primary School is located in St. Albans in Hertfordshire. Pupils are admitted between the ages of 3 and 11, with most coming from the local area. There are 210 pupils on roll, including the 23 children who attend the nursery for mornings only. There are 7 classes from the reception year to Year 6, with one class for each year group. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average and pupils come from largely favourable home backgrounds. There are 28 pupils on the register of special educational needs and one pupil has a statement of special educational needs. These figures are below national averages. Test results show that pupils' attainment on entering school is average for the local education authority. The very small number of pupils who have English as an additional language do not currently require any additional support.

There has been a very high turnover of staff in recent years, with only two teachers remaining from the last inspection. However, there have been few changes in staff in the current academic year. The headteacher and deputy headteacher took up their posts in September 2002.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that provides good value for money. Pupils' attainment is good in many subjects, with any remaining areas for development reflecting the weaknesses of previous provision. Pupils' behaviour is very good. They are well motivated and keen to take responsibility. The headteacher is providing excellent leadership for the work of the school. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher, governors and subject co-ordinators.

What the school does well

- The drive, determination and enthusiasm of the headteacher and excellent procedures for monitoring the school's performance and setting targets have ensured rapid improvement over the last year.
- The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school. Fifty-six per cent of lessons are good and twenty-five per cent of lessons are very good or excellent.
- Pupils' attainment is good in mathematics and art and design by the end of Year 2 and in writing, speaking, listening, music, history, geography physical education and design and technology by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- There is a very carefully planned curriculum, which is extended very successfully by an excellent range of out of school activities.
- The school is very successful in promoting pupils' personal development, leading to pupils developing very positive attitudes towards learning.
- In the nursery and reception class (the Foundation Stage) there is a very good mix of adult led and child initiated activities, both indoors and outside.
- Children are very happy at school and are well supported by all members of staff.

What could be improved

- Opportunities for pupils to work independently and to take the initiative in their learning.
- The attainment of older pupils in religious education (RE).

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in May 2001, with progress being greatest since the appointment of the current headteacher. Pupils' attainment is rising quickly and the quality of teaching has significantly improved. Most of the key issues from the last inspection have been addressed. There is now a good curriculum and the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work is very effective. Strong teamwork and a shared sense of purpose are a significant feature of the school's work, with all members of staff having the pupils' well-being and education at the forefront of their planning.

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	C	E	C	E
mathematics	B	E	E*	E*
science	B	E	E*	E*

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

In the nursery and reception classes, children are on target to meet expectations for the end of the reception year in all areas of learning, with attainment being good in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development and creative development. There are more children with learning difficulties in the present reception year than is usually found in the school. Nevertheless all children, including the good number of higher attaining children, make consistently good progress in both the nursery and reception class.

Inspection findings show pupils' attainment in the current Year 2 to be above average in writing and mathematics and broadly average in reading and science. National Curriculum test results for 2003, for which national comparative data is not yet available, confirm inspection findings. The high number of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3) in writing continues to be a strength in overall attainment.

Test results at the end of Year 6 in 2002 do not reflect current attainment in the school. In Year 6, pupils are benefiting from good quality teaching and they are now prepared well for National Curriculum tests, with results in the 2003 tests likely to be much higher than in 2002. Inspection findings, based on work seen in books and lessons, are that pupils' attainment in the current Year 6 is above average overall in English, with writing, speaking and listening being particular strengths. Pupils' attainment is broadly average in mathematics and science. In mathematics, pupils have a good knowledge of basic mathematical concepts, but their ability to apply these skills to practical situations is less well developed, although still satisfactory overall.

By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is above average in design and technology, geography, history, music, and physical education. Standards are broadly average in information and communication technology (ICT) and art and design but are below average in religious education (RE). Pupils in Years 6 have made good progress in RE this year, with the quality of teaching effectively developing a greater awareness of different faiths. Nevertheless, there continue to be gaps in the knowledge of older pupils that are caused by previous weaknesses in provision.

The school makes good provision for pupils identified as being gifted or talented. They are identified from an early age and suitable strategies are used to give them appropriate additional support.

The school makes excellent use of assessments of pupils' work to help set statutory targets for achievement at the end of Year 6. These targets are based on a good knowledge of pupils' prior learning and are realistically challenging.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are helpful, polite and consistently behave well both in and out of the classroom.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils get on together very well. They are keen to take responsibility through worthwhile initiatives such as the school council.

Attendance	Good. Attendance rates are above average.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In the nursery and reception classes, teachers, the nursery nurse and teaching assistants have very good relationships with the children and work extremely effectively as a team. They understand the needs of young children very well. Lessons are planned very thoroughly and members of staff use a very wide range of teaching methods to make tasks interesting, so that children find it easy to concentrate very well. Members of staff provide unobtrusive support when children are working individually, enabling them to have the freedom and confidence to try out their own ideas and become independent.

Throughout the school, members of staff teach basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics well and pupils are gaining knowledge and understanding in these subjects at a good pace. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and specialists are used particularly effectively in music and design and technology. Teachers explain the purpose of lessons clearly and use a good range of methods to reinforce learning.

Where teaching is very good or excellent, work is matched extremely well to pupils' differing needs, no time is wasted and challenging questions are asked to encourage pupils to think in depth about their learning.

There are very good relationships between members of staff and the pupils. Teachers have high expectations for the quantity and quality of pupils' work and for their behaviour. Pupils respond very well to these expectations and are very interested in their work, attentive and hard working. However, in some lessons the same task is given to all abilities and there are missed opportunities for pupils to develop their independence by planning their own work, using reference sources and choosing ways of recording their findings.

The quality of teachers' marking is good overall. The best marking includes sensitive advice on how work should be improved and pupils are expected to respond to the comments made. Teachers carry out careful evaluations of lessons at the end of each week and are starting to use this information to help plan work for the following week.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum meets the needs of children well, and is enriched by an exciting range of additional activities in music, sport and the arts. There are effective literacy and numeracy strategies in place.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Provision is very well managed. Regular reviews help to ensure that progress is being made, with extra support being given where needed.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The very small number of pupils with English as an additional language are monitored by the local education authority to identify what support is needed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Assemblies, music and drama make a significant contribution to spiritual and social development. Pupils treat each other with high levels of respect and are effectively taught to know right from wrong. Pupils have good opportunities to study different cultures.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school provides good quality support and guidance, and effectively promotes the welfare, health and safety of its pupils in a caring environment. Assessment procedures are thorough.
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There are good links between home and school. Parents support the school well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall. There is a very clear, shared vision for the future of the school. The headteacher has enabled all members of staff to become involved in the management of the school, both in their roles as co-ordinators and as class teachers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is very supportive of the school's work and its recent re-organisation means that it is now taking an active role in leading the school forward.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. The headteacher has an exceptionally clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses based on very thorough and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The headteacher very successfully seeks additional funding from a range of sources and spending is carefully planned. The principles of best value are applied effectively.

The school has benefited enormously from extra support and funding received from the local education authority over the last two years. This has been a significant factor in school improvement.

The school is staffed with a good number of teachers and members of support staff. Specialist teachers in subjects such as music make a very good contribution to learning. Teaching assistants are especially effective when working with pupils with special educational needs. A very friendly and welcoming school secretary gives very good support to the headteacher.

The school is well resourced and the quality of accommodation is very good. It has been much improved over the last year, with developments such as the ICT suite and the decision to house the nursery and reception classes together helping to improve school effectiveness. However, there is inadequate car parking for the number of staff who now work in the school. This causes difficulties at the start and end of each day.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The improvements in the school over the last year • Children like school and behave well • The school is welcoming to parents • There is good teaching and children are expected to work hard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework • Information about pupils' progress

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. Homework arrangements are satisfactory. Pupils are kept well informed about their children's progress, although there were some inconsistencies in the quality of annual reports at the end of the last academic year. The school is aware of this concern and is revising the format of reports so that they are more informative.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils' standards of attainment have risen since the last inspection. By the end of Year 6, they are higher than they were at that time in English, ICT, music, geography and history. Pupils are benefiting from better teaching, more thorough planning of the curriculum and, in ICT, improved resources. There is no evidence of the underachievement found at the time of the last inspection, with all pupils now making good progress overall.
2. When children first start school in the nursery and when they enter the reception class, assessments show that their attainment is broadly in line with the average for the local education authority. All children, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make good progress throughout the foundation stage. Most children are on target to meet the nationally recognised 'Early Learning Goals' in all areas of learning, with many children being on target to exceed them in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development and creative development. There are more children with learning difficulties in the present reception year than is usually found in the school. Nevertheless these children make consistently good progress, and standards of attainment and progress are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
3. Inspection findings show pupils' attainment in the current Year 2 to be above average in writing and mathematics and broadly average in reading and science. The current Year 2 includes a higher number of less able pupils than is normal for the school and National Curriculum test results for 2003, for which national comparative data is not yet available, confirm inspection findings. The number of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3) in writing has improved significantly over the last year, with good quality teaching having a good impact on learning. In 2002, test results at the end of Year 2 showed that pupils' attainment was above average in reading and writing when compared with all schools and average when compared with similar schools. In mathematics, pupils' attainment was average when compared with all schools but below average when compared with similar schools. In science, teacher assessments show that the number of pupils achieving the expected level (Level 2) was broadly average when compared with all schools but below average when compared with similar schools. Fewer pupils were assessed at the higher level (Level 3) in science than are found in most schools.
4. In the current Year 6, pupils were prepared well for National Curriculum tests, with results likely to be higher than standards of work seen in books and in lessons. Inspection findings are that pupils' attainment is above average overall in English, with writing, speaking and listening being particular strengths. Pupils' attainment is broadly average in mathematics and science. In mathematics, pupils have a good knowledge of basic mathematical concepts, but their ability to apply these skills to practical situations is less well developed, although still satisfactory overall. In science, pupils' investigative skills are a weakness, with pupils getting few opportunities to extend their learning by working independently to devise their own investigations or ways of recording work.
5. Test results at the end of Year 6 in 2002 do not reflect current attainment. They showed that pupils' attainment in English was average when compared with all schools but well below average when compared with similar schools. In mathematics and science, pupils' attainment was well below average when compared with all schools and in the bottom 5 per cent when compared with similar schools. A comparison of National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 shows that these pupils made poor progress over time in English and very poor progress over time in mathematics and science. The current Year 6 is achieving much higher standards, with progress especially good in writing which has been a focus of teaching this year. The school has worked hard this year to prepare pupils in Year 6 for the end of year National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science, to compensate for a previous backlog of underachievement in these subjects. Consequently, test results are likely

to be much higher than they were in 2002.

6. When given the opportunity to do so, pupils throughout the school confidently apply their literacy and numeracy skills to learning in other subjects. They measure accurately in science and write for a range of purposes.
7. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is good in music, with pupils making very good progress thanks to the very skilled teaching of a music specialist. Pupils' attainment is also above national expectations in physical education, history and geography by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and in art and design by the end of Year 2. In art and design, pupils' attainment is satisfactory by the end of Year 6, although there are examples of good work in Years 3 and 4.
8. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology has improved significantly since the last inspection when it was below national expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupil attainment is now in line with expectations overall by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There are some areas of the curriculum where standards are high. For example, older pupils are very confident about using the internet and they have good word-processing skills. Where there remain gaps in knowledge, for example in the pupils' knowledge of data handling in Years 5 and 6, it is a reflection of previous weaknesses rather than current provision, which is good.
9. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2, but is below expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Years 6 have made good progress this year, with the quality of teaching effectively developing an awareness of different faiths. Nevertheless, there continue to be gaps in the knowledge of older pupils that are caused by the weaknesses in provision found at the time of the last inspection.
10. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs receive good quality support from teaching assistants, and they make good progress overall. The school makes good provision for pupils identified as being gifted or talented. They are identified from an early age and various strategies are used to give them appropriate additional support, for example by giving them extra teaching in English or mathematics.
11. The school makes excellent use of assessments of pupils' work to help set statutory targets for achievement at the end of Year 6. These targets are based on a good knowledge of pupils' prior learning and are realistically challenging.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The pupils' very positive attitudes, high standards of behaviour and the very good relationships have been maintained and improved since the last inspection. They continue to be strengths of the school and have a positive affect on the quality of teaching and learning.
13. Virtually all pupils have very positive attitudes to the school and their work. From the earliest stages they show great enthusiasm for what they are asked to do and apply themselves very well to their activities. This was well demonstrated by reception year pupils during a music lesson in the hall. Pupils sustain good levels of concentration because teachers plan tasks that challenge and motivate them. They take great pride and enjoyment in producing good work and are keen to share their results with others. This was evident in the high quality discussions and presentations of the Year 5 pupils during their consideration of the 'ultimate question'.
14. Behaviour is consistently very good and this confirms the views of parents. During the inspection, a parent confirmed the improvement in the behaviour of her child since he had moved to this school from another school. When they come to school, in assemblies, at lunchtimes and at playtimes, all pupils behave very well. This was particularly demonstrated during assemblies where the pupils' behaviour was consistently of very high quality. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner and have a clear understanding of the standards expected of them. In lessons, behaviour is very good and almost all pupils conform to the high

expectations even when not closely supervised. There have been no recent incidents of exclusion from the school. During the inspection, there was no evidence of bullying or lack of respect for school property.

15. Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils form very constructive relationships with each other and with adults. They work and play co-operatively together, demonstrating that they will listen with interest to each other and will try to understand the other person's point of view. During break times, they are constantly involved in active physical exercise but are happy to accept the decisions of others in a friendly manner. Pupils show genuine pleasure in the achievements of others. Virtually all pupils act in a mature and responsible way. They consistently demonstrate patience, tolerance and understanding for others, as shown when queuing for lunch in the dining hall.
16. Pupils' personal development is good. The school provides a very good range of opportunities for the pupils to show initiative and take responsibility outside lessons and they demonstrate that the trust is well placed. Pupils make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development as they perform jobs within the classroom and around the school. However, pupils are given fewer opportunities to take the initiative in lessons, for example by carrying out research, devising their own investigations in science or mathematics or thinking of their own methods for recording their work. This is an area for development.
17. Members of the school council are very enthusiastic about their involvement in reviewing the work of the school. In addition, pupils are used as receptionists at times during the school day. They carry out this responsibility very well, answering the phone and taking messages very politely. All pupils are active in fund raising activities.
18. Levels of attendance at the school are above the national average and are good. There is virtually no unauthorised absence. Almost all pupils are punctual and many arrive early. They come happily to school ready to learn, enabling the school to make a prompt and efficient start to the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall throughout the school, with twenty-five per cent lessons being very good and two per cent (one lesson) being excellent. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed during the inspection. This is a significant improvement since the time of the last inspection when teaching was more variable in quality with examples of unsatisfactory and poor teaching taking place. There has been an almost complete change of teaching staff since then. Most parents are pleased with the quality of teaching and find members of staff to be approachable.
20. In the very good lessons, work is matched very well to pupils differing needs, no time is wasted and challenging questions are asked to encourage pupils to think in depth about their learning.
21. In the nursery and reception classes, teachers, the nursery nurse and teaching assistants have very good relationships with the children and work extremely effectively as a team. They understand the needs of young children very well. Lessons are planned very thoroughly and members of staff use a very wide range of teaching methods to make tasks interesting, so that the children find it easy to concentrate very well. Members of staff provide unobtrusive support when children are working individually enabling them to have the freedom and confidence to try out their own ideas and become independent. Questioning is used effectively to encourage children to think carefully, and teachers write helpful comments on their work, identifying what level of support was needed. Children persevere with difficult tasks and concentrate very well. Occasionally they are expected to sit and listen for too long and at these times they understandably become slightly restless. Effective use is made of a wide range of resources both indoors and outside. All members of staff have been appointed since the last inspection and despite several changes in staffing over this time, good quality teaching has been maintained.

22. Throughout the school, members of staff teach basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics well and pupils are gaining knowledge and understanding in these subjects at a good pace. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening across the curriculum. Teachers' lesson planning is very thorough and suitably guided by the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and recommended schemes of work in other subjects. The quality of planning has improved considerably since the time of the last inspection. In both literacy and numeracy, individual needs are met well, with learning made fun and involving pupils well. Writing is particularly well taught, with teachers 'modelling' their own writing in an effective way to help pupils improve quickly. In science, whilst pupils are enabled to develop satisfactory knowledge and understanding of scientific facts, they are not given enough opportunity to develop skills by planning their own investigations and recording their results in a variety of ways.
23. Effective links are made between subjects and this contributes towards making learning interesting. For example, pupils in Year 4 developed their knowledge of the Ancient Egyptians by making miniature mummies in design and technology and in Year 6 pupils extended their knowledge of electric circuits by constructing model fairground rides. A wide range of interesting resources is used to make learning interesting. For example, in Year 3 the attractive wildlife area was used as a stimulus for pupils' descriptive writing and in Year 2 large posters from a story were used effectively to encourage discussion.
24. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language are supported effectively in lessons. Teaching assistants give effective support to groups of pupils as they work. However, teaching assistants are not always used effectively at the start of lessons when teachers are speaking to the whole class.
25. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and specialists are used particularly effectively in music and design and technology. Teachers explain the purpose of lessons clearly and use a good range of methods to reinforce learning. The use of ICT is developing well across a range of subjects. For example, children in the reception class use the computer to draw their own pictures and to sequence the life cycles of frogs and butterflies.
26. There are very good relationships between members of staff and the pupils. Teachers have high expectations for the quantity and quality of pupils' work and for their behaviour. Pupils respond very well to these expectations and are very interested in their work, attentive and hard working. However, in some lessons the same task is given to all abilities and pupils are not encouraged to develop their independence by planning their own work, using reference sources and choosing ways of recording their findings. For example, there are very few graphs included in pupils' science work. This lack of independent learning opportunities was also apparent at the time of the last inspection.
27. At the end of lessons, teachers usually review pupils' progress and praise their achievements helping to boost self-esteem. However, in some lessons this time is rushed and opportunities are missed to reinforce the main points of the lesson or to evaluate the work of selected pupils. The quality of teachers' marking is good overall. The best marking includes sensitive advice on how work should be improved and pupils are expected to respond to the comments made. Teachers carry out careful evaluations of lessons at the end of each week and are starting to use this information to help plan work for the following week. Day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is now good and this is an improvement since the last inspection when it was found to be unsatisfactory. Some parents are unhappy with the provision for homework. Inspection findings are that there is a satisfactory range of homework to extend pupils' learning.

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

28. Overall the quality and range of learning opportunities is very good. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection, when there were several issues concerning the delivery and planning of the curriculum. The key issues from the last inspection have been addressed. All subjects now have schemes of work, with detailed and effective long and medium term planning in place. The overall curriculum is now better because of the planning and thought that has gone into its delivery. The planning for all the statutory subjects of the National Curriculum has been carefully interwoven with many opportunities to enhance the moral, cultural and social development of the pupils. These opportunities are taken and the impact of this provision can be seen in the very good behaviour, relationships and attitudes of the pupils.
29. In the nursery and reception classes, there is a very good, thoroughly planned, broad and balanced curriculum. Members of staff provide a very wide range of interesting and relevant activities linked to a shared theme. There is a very good mix of adult led and child initiated activities, with children having free access to the outdoor area for a substantial part of each day. The quality of the curriculum has improved considerably since the time of the last inspection when it was found to be satisfactory.
30. The curriculum for RE has been improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory, although there remain some inconsistencies from class to class in the overall quality of provision. The use of ICT across all subject areas is in its early stages and needs further development, although there are examples of very good practice in Year 3.
31. All subjects meet statutory requirements. There are effective strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy; they are having a good impact on teaching and learning.
32. Teachers' long and medium term planning gives a clear indication of what is being taught and how the needs of the different ability groups are being met. The whole curriculum has been very effectively mapped out to ensure continuity and progression, and good and realistic cross-curricular links are encouraged. The skills taught in literacy and numeracy are also beginning to be used effectively in other areas of the curriculum such as information technology, science, history, design and technology and geography.
33. Provision for personal, social, citizenship and health education is good. It is taught through religious education and science as well as in specific lessons and across the wider curriculum. The outcomes seen in the pupils' behaviour are very good. The school has a suitable programme for sex education and drug awareness.
34. In all aspects of school life, there is full inclusion and equality of opportunity for all pupils including those with special educational needs. Provision for these pupils is good and is managed very effectively. Individual education plans set very clear targets for what should be improved. Regular reviews help to ensure that progress is being made, with extra support being given where needed. Teaching assistants are used to good effect when working with pupils with special educational needs. Pupils identified as being gifted and talented have their needs met well in lessons and through additional support in clubs and other activities.
35. The very small number of pupils with English as an additional language do not currently require additional support. Their progress is carefully monitored and they have been assessed by the local authority to identify whether additional language support is needed.
36. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities available for pupils. These include sports, computer, traditional and modern dance, drama, art, musical and performance activities. The pupils support all of the clubs and activities very well and they have a highly positive effect on the pupils' learning and attitudes towards school.
37. The sense of community within the school is very strong. There is a strong feeling that the school is an important part of the local area. Very effective use is made of community and the contribution of the community to pupils' learning is consequently very good. There are good

links with the local primary and secondary schools. Teachers from other schools visit and observe teaching within the school, helping to improve provision. Older pupils have an opportunity to attend a residential centre for a variety of good educational, social and cultural experiences.

38. Pupils need more opportunities to work independently and take the initiative in a range of different ways. Although there has already been recent improvement, a greater emphasis is needed on the aspects of using and applying mathematical and scientific knowledge to practical activities and enquiry in science. Pupils would also benefit from being given more opportunity to carry out their own research, devise their own investigations, as well as methods of recording their work. Nevertheless, the school's provision for the whole curriculum and its delivery has been significantly improved since the last inspection.
39. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual development. All pupils have a daily act of worship, and assemblies provide an opportunity for learning about the world and moral issues. They always contain a moment for spiritual reflection. For example, in an assembly on what it is like to be deaf, the pupils were given a good insight into this condition, with many moments of spiritual reflection and thoughtful awareness.
40. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The adults in the school set a very good example to the pupils and there are clear codes of behaviour. Pupils are taught to know right from wrong through their day-to-day interaction with staff and through lessons and assemblies, which highlight examples of very good moral practices. A strong moral dimension is seen in most lessons where teachers constantly emphasise good behaviour so pupils understand what is acceptable conduct. This is reflected in the pupils' very good attitudes to school and their very good conduct and behaviour. Adults in the school also set a very good example by their courtesy, care and respect for pupils. Pupils respond well to this and, in turn, relate well to others and respect their views.
41. There is very good provision for pupils' social development. Teachers plan opportunities in many lessons for developing pupils' social skills by such means as working together, taking turns and sharing. There is a range of visits during the year that provide good opportunities for pupils to extend and develop their social relationships with each other and with their teachers and other adults. Study of the local village and environment greatly enhances the pupils' awareness of social and moral issues and responsibilities. The sense of care, purpose and harmony in the school as a community is strong. There are good planned opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in all aspects of the life of the school.
42. The provision for pupil's cultural development is good. The pupils have opportunities to study the richness of both their own and other cultures. History and geography provide links with pupils' own and other cultures and traditions, past and present. The excellent range and provision for extra-curricular visits and visitors, planned as part of the curriculum, enriches the pupils' own experience. The multi-cultural provision is also strong, with many opportunities for pupils to experience other cultures through visits, visitors and the taught curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school provides good quality support and guidance and effectively promotes the welfare, health and safety of its pupils in a caring and secure environment. This atmosphere encourages pupils to learn and develop as individuals and promotes their awareness of citizenship issues. Members of staff know their pupils well and have a very clear idea of their personal strengths and weaknesses thus enabling them to offer effective counselling and support. In addition, the learning support assistants are used effectively to support pupils with particular needs. All members of staff show great concern for the well-being of pupils and a range of measures exists to promote their development. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of the pupils and consistently monitor well their personal development and their ability to cope on a day-to-day basis.

44. There are good procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in mathematics and English where they are very good. Regular assessments are made and targets are set for the next stage in their learning. All of these assessments are recorded well and the pupils' progress can be tracked from reception onwards. The teachers know their pupils very well and can plan for their future learning. There is generally good consistency in the level of marking, with positive and constructive comments enhancing pupils' learning. This enables the pupils to know what is expected of them to improve.
45. The school continues to have effective systems to monitor and promote attendance. Registers are marked speedily, correctly and efficiently at the start of the school day and after lunch. All absences are properly noted and contact is made with parents to explain the absence on the first day. Attendance figures are properly aggregated and the recently compiled annual total confirms the consistent good attendance for the school.
46. The headteacher and staff provide very good role models in promoting high standards of good behaviour. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are in place. The school rules are clearly exhibited throughout the school and are known by all pupils. The consequences of unacceptable behaviour have been made clear and are fully accepted by all pupils. The behaviour policy is consistently applied by all members of staff who were seen to pre-empt incidents of possible misbehaviour with firm, calm intervention, maintaining good control.
47. Child protection issues are handled effectively. Members of staff understand their roles and responsibilities and are aware of the need for vigilance and the steps to take if suspicions are aroused. Health and safety is promoted effectively in the school. Site inspections are conducted at regular intervals to identify and remedy potential hazards. All equipment is regularly tested and all hazardous materials are kept securely away from the pupils. All members of staff are safety conscious and watch for the security of the children. They work hard to maintain a secure environment in which the well-being of pupils is promoted effectively.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Over 45 per cent of parents replied to the inspection questionnaire and this is a large number. A high proportion of these responses and those of the parents who attended the meeting with the inspectors are supportive of the school and confirm that it has many strong features. Almost all those responding to the questionnaire agree that their children like school. They believe that the school expects their children to work hard and that behaviour in the school is good. They would also feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem. Inspection evidence confirms these positive views of parents.
49. Some parents responding to the questionnaire expressed reservations about the range of activities provided by the school outside lessons and the amount of homework. These reservations are not supported by inspection findings. The school provides an excellent range of extra curricular activities and trips, and the amount of work to be done at home is appropriate for the age range of these children.
50. Parents and other adults are encouraged to involve themselves in the life of the school and a very high number respond positively. They help extensively in the classroom and around the school as well as on the school trips. They support the teachers and the teaching assistants very well. In addition, parents are very supportive of the work that their children are expected to do at home. The PTA continues to be very effective in organising fund raising and social events in support of the school. The school values highly the contributions made by parents to enhance their children's learning and personal development.
51. Information to parents is satisfactory overall. Parents continue to have very good access to teachers. As well as the day-to-day opportunities provided through the school's easy access policy, parents are welcome to attend curriculum information meetings and special school occasions. In addition, formal consultation meetings to discuss their children's work are

arranged regularly. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are informative and meet statutory requirements.

52. Although some of the annual reports to parents on their children's progress contain some good information, those written last year were not of a consistent quality. Most include information about what the pupils know, understand and can do. Some contain little information about progress whilst others do not include any targets to assist future development. The school has recognised this flaw and has produced an updated system to be introduced this term to address weaknesses.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The headteacher is providing excellent leadership for the work of the school. She is well supported in this role by the deputy headteacher, governors and subject co-ordinators. Parents are very happy with the quality of leadership of the current headteacher and feel that the school has improved significantly whilst she has been in post. Inspection findings support that view, with the very good recent progress largely attributable to the drive, determination and enthusiasm of the headteacher. Recent changes in the school have been managed very effectively, ensuring that there has been rapid school improvement. There is a strong, shared sense of purpose, with pupils' achievement being at the centre of the school's work. Member of staff work well together and, as a result, the school is in a very strong position to improve further.
54. There is a very clear, shared vision for the future of the school that is based on an excellent understanding of how the school could improve. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have maintained the many good aspects of the school that were evident at the time of the last inspection, and have successfully addressed most of the weaknesses identified at that time. Strategies for monitoring the work of the school are excellent. They have been significantly developed since the last inspection. Detailed records of pupils' individual test scores are kept and used very effectively to set targets for improving pupils' attainment. There are now thorough procedures for analysing test data to identify where improvement is necessary, and the headteacher ensures that action is taken to address weaknesses.
55. The role of subject co-ordinators has improved significantly since the last inspection. They have been fully encouraged by the headteacher to take responsibility for managing their subjects. As a result, they now provide a good lead in their subjects, and their work is a strong feature of the school's management. They are actively involved in monitoring teaching and learning in their subjects, and they do this well. They evaluate school effectiveness very well, with action plans showing a good awareness of where improvement is needed. Together with the headteacher they have established a climate where the monitoring and evaluation of teachers is a regular feature of school life. Performance management procedures are embedded well in to school practice and teachers are regularly observed at work in the classroom. The information gained from this is used successfully to set individual targets for improvement, to acknowledge strengths in teaching, and to identify priorities for personal and professional development. These strategies have had a very good impact on the quality of teaching throughout the school.
56. The involvement of governors has increased significantly since the last inspection and is now good. The governing body is very supportive of the school's work and its recent re-organisation means that it is now taking a good role in leading the school forward. Over the last year, they have worked hard to improve their understanding of their responsibilities. They are beginning to play a useful part in the leadership and management of the school by acting as its 'critical friend' and they have a better understanding of how they can support the school in helping it to improve further. There are several committees that meet regularly and perform useful roles. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, based on regular visits to school as well as the detailed information that is provided by the headteacher. Governors are now given detailed feedback on test results, and use this data effectively to gain an understanding of what could be improved. Individual governors also have responsibility for different curriculum areas. This is effective in helping governors to gain a wider perspective on

the school's work. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and publish a good quality and informative annual report to parents.

57. The day-to-day management of finances by the headteacher, finance committee and school secretary is good. Financial planning is very thorough, with spending clearly targeted on raising standards. For example, the number of teaching assistants has been significantly increased over the last year. This has had a good impact on learning.
58. The headteacher very successfully seeks additional funding from a range of sources, and these grants are used effectively so that they have a positive impact on learning. The school applies the principles of 'best value' to its work, for example, by ensuring that competitive bids are sought for all large purchases.
59. Parents make a significant contribution to the financial security of the school. The money they raise is spent well to improve resources or accommodation. Parental contributions recently paid for new books and equipment.
60. The school is staffed with a good number of teachers and support staff. Specialist teachers in subjects such as music make a very good contribution to learning. Teaching assistants make an especially effective when working with pupils with special educational needs.
61. The quality of accommodation is very good. It has been much improved over the last year, with developments such as the ICT suite and the decision to house the nursery and reception classes together helping to improve school effectiveness. However, there is inadequate car parking for the number of staff now employed at the school. This causes difficulties at the start and end of each day.
62. Resources are good. The school has benefited from additional funding over the last two years and this has been put to good use to improve resources. The quality of ICT resources is now good, and there is a good range of resources for other aspects of the curriculum.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. To improve the school further the governors, headteacher and staff should:
 - Give pupils more opportunities to work independently and to take the initiative in their learning by extending practical work in science and mathematics and planning more opportunities for pupils to carry out research using the new learning resource area.

(Paragraphs 4, 16, 22, 26, 38, 102, 112, 117, 122, 133)

- Improve the attainment of older pupils in religious education by maintaining the good quality of teaching in Year 6 and ensuring that there is consistent provision across the school.

(Paragraphs 9, 30, 187, 189, 191)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	13	29	9	0	0	0
Percentage	2	25	56	17	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	12	187
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	28

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	16	14	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	16
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	27	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (82)	97 (93)	100 (96)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	14
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	29	29	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (96)	97 (96)	93 (93)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	19	14	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	13	14
	Girls	9	7	10
	Total	24	20	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (64)	61 (56)	73 (68)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	15	15
	Girls	12	10	12
	Total	27	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (67)	76 (67)	82 (67)
	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	135	0	0
White – Irish	4	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	5	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.9
Average class size	26.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	159

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.1
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	49
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.2

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	2002-2003
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	£
Total income	570388
Total expenditure	528371
Expenditure per pupil	2642
Balance brought forward from previous year	12913
Balance carried forward to next year	54930

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

210

Number of questionnaires returned

94

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	44	4	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	42	44	6	3	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	41	1	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	40	18	5	5
The teaching is good.	45	38	5	0	12
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	23	51	19	3	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	40	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	47	1	2	1
The school works closely with parents.	27	58	15	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	38	51	1	2	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	52	7	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	43	12	1	7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

64. When children first start school in the nursery and when they enter the reception class, assessments show that their attainment is broadly in line with the average for the local education authority. All children, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. Most children are on target to meet the nationally recognised 'Early Learning Goals' in all areas of learning, with many children being on target to exceed them in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development and creative development. There are more children with learning difficulties in the present reception year than are usually found in the school. Nevertheless, these children make consistently good progress and standards of attainment and progress are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
65. The quality of teaching is good overall, with approximately one in four lessons being very good. In the nursery and reception classes, teachers, the nursery nurse and teaching assistants have very good relationships with the children and work extremely effectively as a team. They understand the needs of young children very well. Lessons are planned very thoroughly and members of staff use a very wide range of teaching methods to make tasks interesting, so it is easy for children to concentrate very well. Members of staff provide unobtrusive support when children are working individually so that they have the freedom and confidence to try out their own ideas and become independent. Questioning is used effectively to encourage children to think carefully, and teachers write helpful comments on children's work identifying what level of support was needed.
66. Members of staff teach basic skills well and manage behaviour successfully by being firm yet caring. Occasionally children are expected to sit and listen for too long and at these times they understandably become slightly restless. Effective links are made with children's homes by incorporating objects they have brought in into lessons and encouraging them to share books with their parents. All members of staff have been appointed since the last inspection but good quality teaching has been maintained despite several staff changes over this time.
67. Since the time of the last inspection, the nursery and reception classes have been relocated and now form a Foundation Stage unit with shared facilities. Members of staff and parents have worked very hard in their spare time to bring about this transition by redecorating and moving equipment and furniture. The space is used very effectively, with specific rooms set out for mathematical development and creative development. A newly developed outdoor area is used well as an extension of the indoor classrooms and provides a wide range of learning opportunities across the curriculum. There is a very good, thoroughly planned, broad and balanced curriculum. Members of staff provide a very wide range of interesting and relevant activities linked to a shared theme. There is a very good mix of adult led and child initiated activities, with children having free access to the outdoor area for a substantial part of each day. The quality of the curriculum has improved considerably since the time of the last inspection when it was found to be satisfactory.
68. There are good arrangements for assessing children's attainment and progress. Individual profiles show pupils' development in all areas of learning by the end of each term. Helpful observations are made when children are working on practical tasks and samples of work are kept to show progress. These are particularly detailed in the nursery class and are used to help set targets for individual children. The school has plans to develop the use of assessment information even further. There are effective arrangements to help children who are due to start school in either the nursery or reception classes, with home visits and the sharing of information.
69. The new and enthusiastic foundation stage co-ordinator gives effective support to her colleagues and provides particularly good leadership in developing the curriculum. There are regular

meetings to discuss lesson planning and members of staff are constantly monitoring each other's teaching as they work together. The co-ordinator has a clear vision and has identified appropriate areas for further development.

70. There are good educational resources for foundation stage children and the accommodation is very good. Members of staff make effective use of walkie-talkies to communicate with one another to ensure that supervision of all areas of the unit is maintained successfully.

Personal, social and emotional development

71. Children's attainment and progress are good overall. In the nursery, children understand routines well and settle to work quickly and calmly. They are very confident and help to take responsibility for finding and putting away resources. Children are keen to explain what they are doing and remain on task for a good length of time. Reception children share resources sensibly, concentrate well and work together co-operatively. For example, two children built a 'stage' from building blocks and performed an impromptu concert. Children are motivated to learn and they form good relationships with each other and members of staff. They learn to make choices by identifying what activities they would like to take part in by placing their names on an activity board and by selecting their own resources. Behaviour in the nursery and reception classes is very good and children follow the simple rules and treat each other and resources with great respect. Children are keen to try out new activities and are prepared to wait for a turn when taking part in games.
72. The quality of teaching is consistently good. Members of staff are very good role models and have high expectations for behaviour. For example, children are successfully encouraged to remember to say 'please' and 'thank you' during snack-time. Effective use is made of praise, enabling children to develop good self-esteem and confidence in a range of situations. There are good opportunities for children to learn about the way people from other cultures live and the festivals they celebrate. For example, children in the nursery took part in an assembly about the Chinese New Year and reception children learned about Diwali.

Communication, language and literacy

73. Children's attainment is satisfactory in the present reception year and good in the nursery. All pupils make good progress overall. Most children speak clearly, are confident about answering questions and share their ideas with each other. All children listen very attentively to members of staff and each other and particularly enjoy exciting stories. They develop their speaking and listening effectively when discussing questions in pairs and when playing with others. For example, reception children playing in the water tray made up an interesting story together about rescuing a baby who had fallen in the water.
74. Children in the nursery develop a love for stories and enjoy sharing them with the teacher. They recognise their own names, know the sound at the start of their names and can match letters to words printed on a card. More able children recognise some common words such as 'mum' and 'dad' and can suggest objects that begin with a certain letter. Most reception children read simple texts fluently and are starting to use the sounds different letters make to help them read unfamiliar three letter words. They enjoy retelling a favourite story and can put sentences in order with some support from the teacher. Higher attaining children use good expression when reading and can make sensible predictions about what might happen next in a story. They are confident about talking about their own experiences and how they relate to what they have read. They can explain and point out features such as speech and question marks. Some lower attaining children have a limited knowledge of letter sounds and can read few words by sight. Nevertheless, they can tell a story by discussing the pictures and know that a book is read from left to right.
75. Several children in the nursery can write their own name, although not all children form the letters correctly. Higher attaining children are starting to form words using magnetic letters and make marks to represent words when playing in the role play areas. By the end of the reception

year, children write independently with some common words being spelt correctly and unfamiliar words often being phonetically plausible. Higher attaining children write a simple sentence and know that it should begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop. Lower attaining children have weaker hand control and some find it difficult to trace accurately. They make marks to represent letters and words.

76. The quality of teaching is consistently good. Members of staff encourage children to talk about their work when taking part in independent activities by showing an interest and by asking questions. Basic skills are taught effectively, with good challenge for more able children. There are good opportunities for children to practise the skills they have learned formally and informally. The role-play area is carefully set up to reflect 'the book of the week', so that children can retell the story through drama. In the nursery, children are encouraged to take part in storytelling by discussing the illustrations, pointing to words they recognise and writing some letters on the board.
77. Nursery children have good opportunities to practise drawing letters in the sand tray and by using their fingers in paint. In the reception class, strategies for helping with reading such as looking at the illustrations, using knowledge of phonics and predicting what might happen are taught effectively. Care is taken to use the correct vocabulary such as 'characters' and 'author'. Probing questions are used to encourage children to think beyond the story. For example, when children were asked, '*Why did they walk home across the fields?*' the range of reasons included, '*The boat was too wet*', '*They were in a hurry*' and '*They don't want to fall out again*'. Occasionally, opportunities are missed for children to share their plans with others or to talk about what they have learned.
78. A local authority external advisor assesses the needs of children who have English as an additional language and the level of support required is agreed with the school: none is required at the moment. These children are supported effectively in lessons, enabling them to take a full part in all activities.
79. ICT makes a good contribution to learning and children use the keyboard to type their name and several words and letters.

Mathematical development

80. Children's attainment and progress are good overall. Approximately half the children in the nursery count to 10 reliably and can help to put numerals into the correct sequence. Most match 'heads and tails' carefully when counting out five of each to make 'tadpole' biscuits and can compare and order tails of differing length. During number rhymes, they learn to add or subtract one from a given number with some support from an adult. They make simple alternate patterns by printing shapes, with higher attaining children making repeat patterns of up to three objects. Most reception children add two numbers together and understand vocabulary such as 'greater than' and 'less than'. They know the names of geometric shapes, and higher attaining children count to twenty and can subtract a number from 10. Some lower attaining children find it difficult to count or order numerals to 10.
81. The quality of teaching is good overall with an example of very good teaching in the reception class. In the very good lesson held outside, a role-play scenario of sailors on a boat was used to make learning fun and meaningful. Children were encouraged to count the sailors on the boat and estimate how many cups would be filled by the vacuum flask. The discussion included the use of mathematical vocabulary such as 'full' and 'empty' and more than one flask was available so that size and capacity could be compared.
82. There is a good pace to all lessons and practical activities provide children with a firm understanding of basic mathematical concepts. For example, the nursery nurse worked with a group of children comparing the capacity of containers of various shape and size to help convince children that the tallest did not necessarily hold the most.

83. ICT makes a good contribution to learning and children use computer programmes to sort objects into sets and to make repeating patterns.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

84. Children's attainment is satisfactory overall by the end of the reception year. All children are supported effectively, enabling them to make good progress in increasing their knowledge and understanding. In one lesson, children in the reception class assumed that 'heavy' objects would sink and were amazed when a heavy melon floated and a lighter ball of plastic modelling material sank. Later in the week this was followed up successfully when a group of children working with a teaching assistant learned how they could make the modelling material float by altering its surface contact area with the water. Higher attaining children have a good general knowledge and know that water can have a current and that this causes stones to be pushed along. They draw on their experiences to help make simple predictions. For example, they have seen leaves floating in puddles and so know they are likely to float during a scientific investigation. Some lower attaining children have limited knowledge of the names of commonly found animals. In the nursery, children know the life cycle of the frog and use glue and sticky tape to join materials together to make boats that float. They use the 'mouse' to move icons around the computer screen. Higher attaining children can say what day of the week it is.
85. The quality of teaching is good with an example of very good teaching in the reception class. In this lesson, a discussion about the difference between rivers and ponds was further extended for higher attaining children as the teacher worked with them shaping a 'river' in the sand tray complete with hills, banks and a stony bed. The work included much interesting discussion including aspects of the water cycle. There are good opportunities for children to learn scientific concepts when exploring the free choice activities made available. For example, the nursery teacher supported children effectively as they found out how to separate the 'treasure' from the sand by using a sieve.
86. Members of staff plan a wide range of interesting, practical activities. ICT is used effectively to support learning. For example, nursery children used various shapes on a computer programme to make caterpillar pictures and reception children label parts of a flowering plant and print their own work. Knowledge and understanding of the world makes a good contribution towards the children's spiritual and cultural development. For example, children are amazed by the things they find out about tomato plants by using magnifying glasses and enjoy testing various objects to see which float. There are good opportunities for children to taste a range of different foods at snack time. For example, as part of a project about the Chinese New Year, children learned how to use chopsticks.

Physical development

87. Children's attainment is satisfactory overall with all pupils making good progress. In the nursery class, children ride 'sit and ride' vehicles quickly and safely and jump and run around with confidence. By the end of the reception year, children dress and undress independently and most have a good awareness of space when moving around a designated area on the playground. However, children are weak at throwing and catching a ball with a partner. Nursery children mould clay effectively when making leaf and caterpillar shapes and reception children use a range of tools and equipment in a controlled way.
88. The quality of teaching is good. Praise is used effectively to encourage children to try hard, and clear teaching of techniques means that children are learning strategies to help improve their hand and eye co-ordination. They are used effectively to demonstrate good skills to one another.
89. The curriculum has recently been developed to include greater opportunities for improving children's fine and gross motor skills. For example, the first part of each morning includes an activity where children need to manipulate small objects, and greater use is made of the indoor and outdoor area for work on the larger scale. Children do not yet have ready access to

climbing equipment.

Creative development

90. Children's attainment and progress are good overall. In the nursery, children have good opportunities to experiment by mixing colour and make interesting underwater scenes from paper and natural materials. In the reception class, children mix a wide range of colours when making pictures of water.
91. Children develop good musical skills. In the nursery, they enjoy moving around the hall in time with the music and join in with the words and actions of nursery rhymes and other well-known songs.
92. By the end of the reception year most children keep in tune when taking part in a 'call and response' song. They vary the dynamics of their singing and identify 'mystery' percussion instruments played behind a curtain. Higher attaining children are confident when leading a group of children and can play an instrument and sing at the same time.
93. The quality of teaching is good with an example of a very good music lesson in the reception class. In this lesson, the specialist music teacher had very high expectations and lively activities were used to maintain a very swift pace. Probing questions were used to help children to think hard and high levels of participation meant that no time was wasted. Members of staff teach effective skills for colour mixing and encourage children to experiment when working with different materials.
94. There are very good opportunities for children to learn through role-play and this is a particular strength in provision. Inside, a role-play area changes every week and provides the setting for the 'book of the week'. For example, during the inspection a boat with dressing up clothes for the characters in a story was available and the water tray also included a boat and the same characters. Outside more boats were available for children to extend their play. There are other very good opportunities for children to make use of their imaginations, for instance by hunting for buried treasure in the sand tray. Members of staff provide a wide range of resources and these are freely available for children to make pictures and models. ICT is used effectively to support learning and children use a drawing programme to make pictures and patterns by changing the colours they use and the size of 'brush'.

ENGLISH

95. Throughout the school, pupils are achieving well for their age and in relation to their attainment on entry, with standards above average, overall, in English. Standards are higher than at the time of the last inspection, with pupils now making good progress across the school. There are particular strengths in writing, speaking and listening where attainment is good by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In reading, pupils' attainment is satisfactory.
96. In 2002, test results at the end of Year 2 were above average in reading and in writing when compared with all schools and average when compared with similar schools. Test results for 2003, for which national comparative data is not yet available, confirm inspection findings with the high number of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3) in writing continuing to be a strength in overall attainment.
97. Test results at the end of Year 6 in 2002 do not reflect current attainment. They showed that pupils' attainment was average when compared with all schools but well below average when compared with similar schools. The current Year 6 is achieving much higher standards, having made good progress especially in writing. This has been a focus of teaching this year throughout the school.
98. Pupils make good progress in writing and skills are taught well. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop a good knowledge of the basic skills of writing. Their understanding of basic

punctuation rules is good, and they generally present work neatly, although not all use a joined handwriting style consistently in their everyday work. Pupils have a good vocabulary when speaking, and they use this well in their story writing.

99. In Years 3 to 6, pupils write confidently and begin to use paragraphs and more complex punctuation, showing a good awareness of the need to vary their work according to the audience. Good use is made of exciting vocabulary to bring written work alive and more able pupils begin to edit their work, looking for ways to improve it. This is an area that could be extended further, with some pupils making careless errors in their spelling. The other area of comparative weakness is in pupils' presentation of work. In Years 3 to 6, pupils do not always present their work as neatly as they should and handwriting is not always consistently formed. The school has already identified this a priority for development.
100. The school has worked hard to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills and has been successful in achieving this aim. Over the last year, a high priority has been placed on giving pupils opportunities to speak for a range of purposes. For example, good use of debates and discussions was seen across the school. Extra-curricular activities, such as a drama club, also make a very good contribution to the development of skills. As a result, throughout the school, pupils achieve good standards in speaking and listening. Younger pupils are articulate, and speaking and listening skills are effectively promoted in class and in other activities. Pupils are given good opportunities to perform in front of an audience. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have good opportunities to speak in both formal and informal situations. They respond well to these opportunities, speaking very confidently for a range of purposes.
101. Pupils develop sound reading skills. They are encouraged to use their knowledge of letter sounds to work out how to read new words, and do this confidently from an early age. Where appropriate, they are taught to use other strategies to improve their reading effectiveness. Pupils are given good opportunities during group reading sessions to share books and read to each other and to an adult. They do this confidently, using an appropriate range of strategies to read unknown words. For example, they look at the pictures and try to work out what the word is from the context of the sentence. They enjoy talking about the books they are reading. Higher attaining pupils explain clearly why they enjoy particular types of books. In Year 6, pupils explain clear preferences for authors or types of books. Pupils are able to use the library, but opportunities for them to carry out independent research are not extensive. This is an area that should be developed in order to extend further pupils' reading skills.
102. The quality of teaching is good. Throughout the school, teachers are enthusiastic when talking about the subject, which helps to motivate and inspire pupils. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations so pupils understand what is expected of them. Teachers have high expectations and consistently plan activities that will develop literacy skills, with good attention being given to improving pupils' writing. The needs of all pupils are met through careful planning and the effective use of questioning to involve and motivate them.
103. Good use is made of 'extended writing sessions' to give pupils opportunities to write for a longer time than is normally available in a literacy hour. This has been a key factor in the rapid rise in writing standards. Writing skills are introduced in an imaginative way. Teachers are good at 'modelling' their own writing during literacy and other lessons, helping pupils to understand that writing is important. This was seen to very good effect in a Year 3 lesson, where the teacher modelled changes in the use of adjectives in a piece of writing. This helped pupils to very clearly understand what was expected of them. Other strengths in this very good lesson were the very effective use of voice to engage pupils, with fun activities motivating them and ensuring that they learnt well. Similarly, in a good lesson in Year 1, the teacher wrote on a white board the pupils' own ideas of what a 'Gruffalo' might look like, helping them to improve their understanding of how to structure a sentence.
104. Good use is made of resources to stimulate pupils' imagination and to help them develop an understanding of story structure. For example, in a good lesson in Year 2, learning was planned around the use of a series of pictures taken from a famous story. In discussion, the teacher

successfully helped the pupils to sequence the story and to talk about what they thought was happening in the pictures. Pupils contributed well to this discussion. Their imagination was sparked, and when they went to their tables to write, they settled quickly to the task, producing good quality stories.

105. In a small number of lessons, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In these lessons, too much is fitted in so that pupils are not given enough time to gain a secure understanding of new concepts. In addition in these lessons, pupils are not always engaged in their learning, with some pupils sitting passively and not being encouraged sufficiently by the teacher to try and answer questions.
106. The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work is good. The school has a policy that marking should identify two strengths and an area for development. This practice is followed consistently by most teachers, with areas for development being specific and helpful. Pupils are beginning to refer to marking when completing their next piece of work, but this is not always the case. Teachers are beginning to use review sessions (the plenary) at the end of lessons to assess what has been learnt and to extend learning further. The use of this session is not yet consistent, and there are occasions when not enough time is allowed for an effective plenary to take place.
107. Pupils are given an appropriate amount of homework. They take reading books home and are regularly given other activities to do at home. These activities support learning effectively.
108. A good feature of teaching throughout the school is the support given by teaching assistants, who are extremely valuable members of the teaching team. They are well trained and well informed. They often work with pupils who have special educational needs, helping them to make good progress. However, there are occasions at the start of lessons when the good skills of teaching assistants are under-utilised.
109. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have improved since the last inspection and are now very good. The school makes very good use of a range of assessments to monitor pupils' learning from year to year and to set targets for the end of each year. Progress is tracked very carefully by the co-ordinator and headteacher, with test results and achievement being reviewed from term to term. This means that the school is in a very good position to identify and address concerns as they arise. This has helped to ensure that there has been an improvement in attainment over the last year.
110. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership in the management of the subject. There is a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses based on good quality monitoring of work throughout the school. The work of teachers has been monitored, and areas for individual improvement identified as a result. Appropriate priorities for development have been set, such as improving the presentation of work. The National Literacy Strategy is firmly embedded in the school's provision, and teachers plan work carefully using the literacy framework. This helps to ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced.
111. Resources are good. There is a well-resourced library, which has been significantly improved in the last year by being relocated into a 'learning resources area' which also includes the ICT suite. The school has identified the need to make greater use of this resource, in order to give pupils more opportunities to work independently and to show initiative in their learning.
112. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support the development of pupils' literacy skills.

MATHEMATICS

113. Inspection findings show that pupils are making good progress, in relation to their prior attainment, throughout the school. This is confirmed by the thorough and extensive assessment information provided by the school. A significant strength of attainment is the

pupils' good knowledge of number that is evident in tests, samples of completed work and in lessons.

114. Pupils' attainment is above average overall by the end of Year 2. This is higher than at the time of the last inspection. Standards have improved in the last year, with the most recent National Curriculum tests, for which there is not yet national comparative data, showing a slight improvement in the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3.
115. In Year 2, pupils can count up and down in twos and know their odd and even numbers to 100 and beyond. Most pupils are able to count in tens and fives. The pupils are starting to be able to explain the stages of thinking and working out a problem. Good work was also seen on measurement, shapes and their properties, coins, time and place value to 1000. Many of the pupils are able to add and subtract 3 digit numbers and they know simple fractions.
116. Inspection findings based on work seen in lessons and in books, show that pupils' attainment is broadly average in the current Year 6. This is similar to attainment at the end of Year 6 found at the time of the last inspection. In the period since the last inspection, standards dropped significantly, with National Curriculum test results being well below average when compared with all schools and in the bottom 5 per cent for similar schools in 2002. This was partly due to some classes having a large number of different teachers, as well as the weaknesses in provision that were identified in the last inspection report. Over the last year, pupils' attainment has improved significantly and it is now above average in Years 3 to 5. Pupils in Year 6 now have a good understanding of basic mathematical concept. Their understanding and application of mathematical knowledge to practical activities is comparatively weak though generally satisfactory. Results of National Curriculum tests in 2003 are likely to reflect the high levels of preparation undertaken in the last two to three months, with the school predicting above average results, based on previous assessments.
117. The oldest pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of shape and space with lines of symmetry, measurement using standard units and how to collect and record data on charts and graphs. They show good understanding of how to interpret information from the charts. Pupils are able to add, subtract and round up and down calculations. Most of the pupils know all of their tables up to 10, and have a sound grasp of the four rules of addition, subtraction, division and multiplication, place value and the links between fractions, decimals and percentages. Good work was also seen on ratio and proportion, angle co-ordinates and conversions between different units of measure.
118. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good, with many teachers employing a good variety of teaching techniques. All lessons observed were at least satisfactory, with three out of the seven observed good, two very good and one excellent. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection, when some unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teachers encourage pupils to use the correct mathematical language when dealing with problems in the subject. Where teaching is very good or better the mental sessions are lively, have a sense of urgency and all pupils participate fully. In the best lessons, the teachers and pupils have a clear idea of their objectives, use the correct mathematical language and set realistic, achievable and challenging targets. In these lessons, the higher attaining pupils are given good extension work that takes their learning that stage further. In the excellent lesson, the pace, levels of concentration, effort and progress made were outstanding.
119. Throughout the school, good use is made of marking and target setting to help pupils understand how they can improve their work. Targets are shared with parents and this is helping to develop home-school links and to raise standards.
120. All the pupils in the school complete a good quantity of work in lessons and the standards of presentation are good. The numeracy strategy has been well implemented and all teachers have received effective training. An appropriate amount of time is allowed for the separate elements of each numeracy lesson. Lessons start with an effective warm-up and have an appropriate plenary section at the end. All of the pupils are very aware of their own learning,

with lesson objectives being made clear at the start. Homework is set and supports learning satisfactorily. Some use is made of information technology to support pupils' learning in this subject.

121. There is a broad and balanced curriculum, with all aspects of the curriculum taught. Planning across the years is very good and the teachers have adopted an extensive system of assessment, tracking and targeting pupils' progress. Frequent assessments are used and recorded so as to develop and inform daily planning. The school has begun to give a greater emphasis to the teaching of mathematical enquiry where pupils are able to apply knowledge to practical applications. This is an area that could be developed further, so that higher attaining pupils have greater opportunity to plan their own work and to show independence in their learning.
122. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership in the management of the subject. There has been extensive subject monitoring of teaching by the local authority, the headteacher and the co-ordinator. This has helped to raise standards by identifying strengths and weaknesses, setting a clear agenda for improvement. A detailed action plan sets realistic targets for improvement, including extending pupils' practical application of their mathematical knowledge.
123. There is a good range of modern resources that are well used and this has had a good impact on teaching and learning.

SCIENCE

124. Pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the national averages by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards of attainment are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Whilst pupils in Year 6 have made insufficient progress over time, the school has started to develop the subject so that the progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is now never less than satisfactory.
125. In 2002, teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 showed that the number of pupils attaining the expected level (Level 2) was in line with the national average but the number attaining the higher level (Level 3) was below the national average. When compared with schools in a similar context, attainment was below average at the expected level and well below average at the higher level.
126. Test results at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were well below average at the expected level (Level 4) and at the higher level (Level 5) compared with all schools and in the bottom 5 per cent compared with similar schools. The school has worked hard this year to prepare pupils in Year 6 for the National Curriculum tests to compensate for a previous backlog of underachievement in the subject.
127. By the end of Year 2, pupils record their observations of flowering plants seen in the school grounds and have a wide knowledge of the names of different plants and animals. They know that there are different types of physical force and understand that heat can change some materials. During whole class practical activities, pupils make simple predictions about what might happen during an investigation. Higher attaining pupils make generalisations such as 'the more bricks the faster it goes' when describing a car travelling down slopes of differing height. Their work is neatly presented and carefully mounted by the teacher. Pupils in Year 1 sort objects according to the material from which they are made and use their five senses to gather information when walking in the school grounds. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy science lessons and concentrate well on the practical tasks they have been given. They are developing a good knowledge of scientific terms such as 'plants reproduce' and 'magnets attract'.
128. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of scientific concepts, but their ability to apply these skills to practical situations is less well developed, making them prone to forget what they have learned. Pupils understand what is meant by a 'fair test', they make simple predictions about what might happen during an investigation and can summarise their

observations. For example, during a test to find out about dissolving, a higher attaining pupil could state that 'the hotter the water the greater the amount of sugar that dissolved'. However, they do not use their scientific knowledge enough to explain what they have observed. Pupils do not always take care with their recorded work. For example, circuit diagrams are sometimes drawn without complete circuits. Sometimes, lower attaining pupils have not grasped simple concepts, such as when egg is cooked it cannot be changed back to its original state. Pupils do not always show sufficient interest in discussions at the start of lessons and very few offer answers to the questions they are asked. This means that the pace of learning is slow at times. In contrast, most pupils become more animated when engaged in practical tasks such as testing the most effective alarm triggered by a pressure switch.

129. Pupils in Year 5 understand concepts such as the relative density of some materials and pupils in Year 4 make some good observations when studying various types of rock. For example, a higher attaining pupil noted *'My rock is mainly red with white particles and some crystals'*. Pupils in Year 3 are developing a good understanding about how some materials are more suitable for a given task. They decide which of a range of materials would make the best school jumper, taking into account factors such as durability and comfort.
130. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good and very good teaching. In the very good lesson seen in Year 3, pupils of differing ability were challenged effectively by the very skilful use of probing questions and the depth of explanations they were expected to provide. As a result, a group of higher attaining pupils became aware that discrepancies in their findings might be down to human error and that repeating the test might provide them with a fairer result.
131. Throughout the school, lessons are carefully planned and teachers take care to revise previous learning with pupils and to share the purpose of work. They promote the correct scientific vocabulary in most lessons and explain tasks clearly. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and this means that in most lessons pupils are very attentive. There are examples of interesting homework being set. For example, pupils in Year 1 found out about the various materials used in their homes. Teachers often draw pupils' attention to how science is used in everyday life. For example, as part of a topic on physical force, pupils in Year 4 were asked to identify where they might find springs in use in their homes.
132. The school provides a satisfactory science curriculum. The time allocated for the subject is appropriate and the curriculum includes the necessary factual information pupils need to cover. The school is in the process of changing from one scheme of work to another. This transition is carefully planned to avoid unnecessary repetition of work. However, throughout the school, pupils are given insufficient opportunities to carry out investigations and to use their scientific knowledge to explain what they have found out. There is little written work and methods of recording findings are generally the same, whatever the ability of the pupil. Opportunities are missed for extending the learning of more able pupils by encouraging them to choose their own equipment or devise their own tests.
133. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to use their numeracy skills in science lessons when taking measurements. In Year 3, ICT was used effectively by the teacher to add pupils' findings to a database to see if a pattern in the results emerged. However, in other classes, limited use is made of ICT or graphs to record findings and pupils have insufficient opportunity to interpret their own graphs.
134. There are satisfactory systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers regularly mark work. This is most useful when teachers add written comments that help to identify what the pupil needs to do to improve. At the moment, this practice is not consistent across the school and the quality of pupils' written work is variable. In some classes, pupils write the purpose of each piece of work at the top and this makes it clear what they were expected to learn in that lesson. Some teachers carry out simple assessments at the start of a new topic to see what pupils already know and all teachers assess what pupils have learned by the end of a topic. The school is devising a method of tracking pupils' progress in developing

investigative skills.

135. Management of the subject is good. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a good knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and realistic expectations about how to further improve provision. There is a detailed action plan, which sets out clear and appropriate areas for improvement. Leadership and management have improved considerably from the time of the last inspection when they were judged to be poor.
136. Effective use is made of the very attractive school grounds for environmental work, and other resources are satisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

137. Art and design is taught in blocks of work and during the inspection few lessons were on the timetable. Judgements on pupils' attainment and progress have been made by scrutinising samples of pupils' work and photographs.
138. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in most year groups. Progress in Year 6 has been satisfactory this year because art and design has not been a particular area of focus. Standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection.
139. By the end of Year 6, pupils make careful sketches of natural objects such as shells and leaves, showing some awareness of the use of shading. They are beginning to use perspective in their paintings of a street of houses. In Year 5, pupils make good clay pots in the style of the Greeks and detailed drawings of artefacts from the time of the Aztecs. In Year 4, pupils make attractive pictures depicting 'journeys', using a wide range of techniques and materials such as collage, printing and painting. They make effective use of their sketchbooks to try out various types of patterning and textured effects. Pupils in Year 3 make careful drawings of packaging and draw good action pictures of figures.
140. By the end of Year 2, pupils make good observational drawings of buildings and show careful detail in their printing. They make interesting clay plaques from their observations of activities seen around the school and imitate the style of Rousseau and Van Gogh effectively when making pastel pictures based on famous paintings. In Year 1, pupils tear, curl and weave materials to create interesting effects and make fun mobiles and sculptures from clay, card and wire. Their sculptures from natural objects, such as fruits, flowers, leaves, stones and feathers, are inventive and attractive.
141. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement on the quality of teaching. Samples of pupils' work provide evidence that a wide range of skills have been taught successfully throughout the school and that pupils take care and pride in their work.
142. There is a good curriculum that includes a broad and balanced range of opportunities. A scheme of work has been adapted by the subject co-ordinator in consultation with an art specialist to provide valuable suggestions for non-specialist teachers. As at the time of the last inspection, art complements work in other subjects effectively. For example, pupils in Year 4 produce good quality, detailed portrait paintings and drawings of kings and queens as part of a history topic about the Tudors. The subject makes a good contribution towards pupils' spiritual and cultural development. For example, pupils in Year 4 made Islamic tile pictures. The school makes effective use of ICT to add interest to the subject. In Year 3, pupils used the digital camera to capture poses for their paintings of double portraits and used the internet to look at pictures of sculpture. Members of staff take care to ensure that all pupils have equal access to all parts of the curriculum.
143. The subject is managed effectively. The new co-ordinator has clear plans for developing the subject, with an appropriate focus on textile work for younger pupils and clay work for older

pupils. Teaching and learning is monitored by scrutinising teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work and by monitoring lessons.

144. There are suitable procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. There is a good range of resources for practical work and a collection of artwork from various cultures is being compiled to support topics being studied.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

145. Overall, pupils' attainment is above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection when it was satisfactory. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school and the profile of the subject has been raised significantly over the last year. A particular strength in the subject is the range and quality of pupils' work in food technology. In addition, pupils are starting to write effective evaluations of their own work, identifying their own errors in an honest and critical way. Pupils develop a good range of making skills, learn the correct sequence of procedures for designing and making and write plans providing good detail about their intentions. A relative weakness in attainment is the way older pupils do not always take sufficient care when measuring and cutting materials to ensure accuracy.
146. In Year 2, pupils develop a good understanding of how mechanisms such as axles and pulleys work and use this information to help them design and make their own moving models. They design and make delightful puppets, using a range of joining skills, and add detail with various colourful materials. Pupils in Year 1 explore the properties of various fruits before designing and making attractive 'fruit kebabs'.
147. Pupils in Year 3 have a good understanding of health and safety requirements when working with food and make clear flow diagrams to describe the processes involved in constructing a sandwich. They design and make original pneumatic models with moving parts and have a good understanding of what could be improved. Year 4 try out a range of paper mechanisms before making good quality 'pop-up' books with sliders and flaps. Pupils in Year 5 made some good quality toys using cams, as part of a workshop led by a specialist teacher. These models are finished carefully and are colourful and interesting.
148. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed their skills of making and designing further. They use their scientific knowledge to help them construct fairground rides with electric circuits. Their imaginative plans for slippers include drawings from different angles and samples of materials chosen carefully for a specific purpose. For example, some pupils explained how they were using a hard wearing, waterproof material for the soles and a soft and warm material for the uppers. Pupils make good quality, fun masks and models using a plastic material that can be shaped and moulded at a low temperature.
149. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers have high expectations and techniques are explained clearly, enabling pupils to work quickly and safely. Lesson planning is clear and the purpose of each lesson is shared with the class. Questioning is used effectively and correct terminology is emphasised. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, the teacher encouraged pupils to use words such as 'stable', 'frame', 'rotate' and 'structure' when describing to the rest of the class how their models worked. A specialist teacher and a teaching assistant with professional training in catering have very good subject knowledge, which is shared successfully with the pupils. These two members of staff make a very valuable contribution towards pupils' knowledge and understanding. Several parents provide useful voluntary support in lessons. Members of staff have very good relationships with the pupils, commanding their respect and very good behaviour. There is a very calm atmosphere in lessons enabling pupils to concentrate on their work. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was satisfactory. As at that time, pupils enjoy design and technology lessons and are enthusiastic about their work. They are very attentive in lessons and take responsibility in caring for resources and tidying away at the end of a lesson.

150. There is a good, broad and balanced curriculum for the subject, with food technology being a particular strength. Good use is made of a nationally recommended scheme of work to support teachers in their planning. Lessons are carefully planned and evaluated and suitable comments on pupils' attainment and progress are recorded to help with future planning.
151. Pupils have good opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills to support learning in the subject. For example, pupils in Year 2 describe how their models are to be made and give explanations of how a winding mechanism works and pupils in Year 1 use a wide range of adjectives to describe the texture, appearance and taste of fruits. Pupils in Year 5 record precise dimensions for frameworks on their diagrams for moving toys.
152. Some effective cross-curricular links are established in lessons. For example, a feast of authentic dishes was prepared as part of a history topic on the Romans. ICT is now being used appropriately to support learning in the subject, with pupils in Year 5 designing classrooms by rotating and placing shapes on a planning grid. There are plans to develop this aspect of the curriculum further by using models controlled by ICT and by finding other ways of linking design and technology with other subjects.
153. The subject makes a valuable contribution towards pupils' spiritual and cultural development, with good opportunities to taste, appreciate and evaluate various types of food. There are very good links with the local community. For example, older pupils take part in a local competition to make structures using a commercially produced construction kit and pupils in Year 4 take part in a workshop making 'band-rollers'. The school has benefited very well from the support and expertise of a number of specialists in the subject who have led staff training sessions and workshops for the pupils.
154. Management of the subject is effective. The new and very enthusiastic co-ordinator has a clear and accurate understanding of provision in the subject by monitoring teachers' planning and observing lessons. As a part-time teacher, she provides additional support in some lessons on a voluntary basis.
155. There are good resources for the subject and a purpose built food technology room is used very well to support learning.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

156. Because of the nature of the timetable, three lessons of geography but no history lessons were seen during the week of the inspection. Inspection evidence is therefore based on the analysis of pupils' work in books, displays, and interviews with teachers, talking with pupils and observations of available lessons.
157. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations in both subjects by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This means that standards in geography have improved because they were unsatisfactory last time. Standards in history have also risen. Both boys and girls, including those with special educational needs make good gains in their learning in history and geography. Pupils' achievement is good because of teachers' planning, use of resources and the scheme that is followed. This ensures good coverage of each subject's content and the necessary progression of the skills taught. Good links are established between the two subjects by the extensive and very good planning.
158. The pupils' enjoy both of the subjects; they behave well and have good positive attitudes, which have been maintained since the previous inspection. Both areas of study make very good contributions to the social, moral and cultural knowledge of the pupils through extending their knowledge of the world and its peoples' present and past. Their awareness of social and moral issues, particularly in local studies and environmental issues is being very well developed.
159. In history, pupils improve their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past; for example by looking at clothes worn in the past, from visits to places of local historical importance, looking at houses, transport, schools and household objects from the past. They

use photographs and compare past and present lifestyles. They have a good knowledge of the idea of past and present, and some of the differences in life styles in times gone by. Pupils in Year 2 have studied seaside holidays in the past and have learnt the skills of looking at photographs of people, clothes and objects to find out what they can tell us about the past. These skills are taught well and are fully understood by pupils. In geography, pupils have been looking at the local area around the village, the roads, houses and routes to school. Map skills are well taught and understood.

160. The teaching in geography is consistently good. Teachers motivate the pupils who, in turn apply themselves well and show interest in their geography. This was well illustrated in one lesson seen where the teacher focussed the pupils well on the task of looking at and examining the facilities available in the local park. The pupils had visited the park previously and conducted a survey; they were given the task of planning how to improve the facilities for the many different groups of people who might use the area. The aim was to bring out the differences in lifestyles and needs, and to see how to rank the many different possible improvements so as to find one that could appeal to all. Pupils were successful and this was achieved by good teaching.
161. There are good planned links between not only history and geography but also with numeracy in both subjects through displaying information in charts and graphs, and with literacy through written and spoken presentations of ideas. The support given to the teaching staff by the teaching and teaching assistants greatly enhances the pupils' learning opportunities. The planned opportunities for assessment and recording are in place and now need further developing.
162. Geography and history are led by two enthusiastic, knowledgeable and keen co-ordinators, who manage the subjects well. Their effective monitoring of subject planning ensures full coverage of the curriculum.
163. The use of visits, visitors and trips greatly enhances the teaching of the subjects. The levels of resources are good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

164. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when standards of attainment were below national expectations by the end of Year 6. At that time, there were significant weaknesses in resources, teaching and the curriculum, which meant that progress was unsatisfactory. This is no longer the case, with pupils now making good progress in developing skills. There is a well planned curriculum and the recent development of a newly resourced ICT suite, coupled with good quality teaching, means that pupils are now learning well.
165. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 show sound basic skills. They know how to load, save and print work and they accurately give instructions to move a cursor around the screen as they try to build different shapes. They confidently use a range of programmes to draw graphs and pictures or to order numbers. They have a good understanding of some of the different applications of ICT; for example pupils in Year 2 explain how a microwave uses modern technology.
166. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to make good progress, and areas of comparative weakness are a reflection on previous provision rather than on current teaching and learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 have had limited access to data handling programmes in the past, and they do most of their work on 'control technology' during a residential visit in the summer term. Nevertheless, pupils display an appropriate range of skills. They are particularly good at using the internet to find information, for example when pupils in Year 3 researched the different techniques needed to make a sculpture. They confidently log onto the internet, using search facilities where needed to help them locate the best web page for their work.
167. Word-processing skills are also well developed. Pupils use word-processing to edit their work and to make it more attractive to an audience. They know how to use a spell checker and they confidently change the size, colour and font of text to make it more attractive. Good use is made of clip art to add colour to pieces of work. This is seen to good effect in Year 6 work on a

'balloon debate', where pupils used ICT skills very effectively to present their arguments for keeping someone aboard the balloon.

168. The quality of teaching is good overall, with examples of very good teaching in Year 3 and Year 6. Teaching is most successful when learning is made purposeful and skills are placed in a practical context. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 6, the teacher very effectively introduced new skills to help pupils prepare a simple presentation using multi-media techniques such as animation, sound and text. The learning was purposeful because pupils knew that they would have an opportunity to show their 'power-point' presentation at the end of the lesson. As a result, pupils were well motivated and worked quickly to finish their presentation. This lesson was also noteworthy for the fact that the teacher had taken very good account of what pupils already knew by preparing a more advanced task for pupils who had already used 'power-point' at home. This meant that all pupils learnt well and their needs were met effectively, with no time was lost in merely consolidating skills. This high level of differentiation is less evident in other lessons, and on occasions, a lack of understanding of what pupils already know means that not all pupils are challenged sufficiently. This affects the learning of more able pupils in particular.
169. There is a broad and balanced curriculum, with all aspects of the curriculum now being taught. Teachers are beginning to use ICT to support learning across the curriculum, although this could still be developed further. There are some examples of very good practice, especially in Year 3. In this class, the teacher has accumulated a very good resource pack that clearly identifies cross-curricular links. This is very helpful and means that ICT can be integrated effectively into a variety of lessons. In other classes, this practice is not so consistent, and there are some missed opportunities to extend the use of ICT into different areas of the curriculum or to allow pupils to work independently.
170. Developments in the subject have been well managed by the co-ordinator who provides good leadership and is a very good role model, both in classroom practice and in the support given during a very well attended computer club. She has been well supported by external agencies, including the local authority. Together, these factors have helped to raise the profile of the subject throughout the school, with a very positive impact on pupils' standards of attainment. Very good support is offered to colleagues. This has resulted in increased levels of confidence, with all teachers now making good use of the ICT suite to teach specific skills. Monitoring by the subject co-ordinator is very thorough. There is a very good awareness of how provision in the subject can be further improved in the future.
171. Resources have been improved since the last inspection and are now good. New hardware and software, including a recently purchased interactive white board, has considerably improved the profile of the subject throughout the school, and pupils are benefiting greatly from these new resources.

MUSIC

172. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is better than at the time of the last inspection, when standards were in line with national expectations. Since then the school has appointed a music specialist to take the majority of lessons. This was done initially with financial support from the local authority and latterly from the school's own budget. The impact of this appointment on attainment has been immense, with pupils benefiting from teaching that is consistently very good. The teacher has outstanding subject knowledge and plans activities that motivate pupils well and engage them in their learning. As a result, pupils make very good progress throughout the school, with singing a particular strength. Pupils sing very confidently in a range of situations. They sing with gusto and enthusiasm in lessons, and by Year 6, sing tunefully in parts whether they are accompanied or unaccompanied.
173. Musical skills are taught very effectively, with the specialist teacher meeting differing needs well. Pupils with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils make very good progress, relative to their prior attainment. Activities are very carefully planned, being varied according to

the age and ability of pupils. The teacher's great enthusiasm for the subject and her passion for sharing her knowledge ensure that there is a very fast pace to learning, with pupils making rapid progress. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were introduced to syncopated rhythms. They initially listened to a piece of jazz music that showed them what a syncopated rhythm sounds like, before working on developing their own music. The teacher used a very imaginative way to help pupils to develop their own syncopated beat, using graphic scores and different parts of their body to produce a spectacular sound. Pupils are very well motivated and work very hard in lessons. They are keen to achieve well and show great pleasure in listening to the work of others. In a Year 5 lesson, there was spontaneous applause when classmates successfully performed a particularly good composition using percussion instruments on the theme of 'Space'.

174. The other strength of provision is the extensive opportunities that are given to pupils to learn how to play different musical instruments. Many of these lessons are taken by outside specialists and, on these occasions, teaching is good, with pupils showing a good range of skills. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are also able to learn how to play the recorder. They do this successfully, cooperating well with the class teacher and an adult helper as they work on a variety of activities. In this group, more able Year 4 pupils played 'The Drunken Soldier' tunefully and with feeling.
175. The school provides a very broad and rich music curriculum, with all aspects taught well. Music makes a very important contribution to pupils' cultural development. Pupils get many opportunities to listen to pieces of music, as well as performing songs from different cultures. For example, pupils greet visitors to assembly by singing an African response song with great power and feeling. Visits to school support learning very well. Recent examples include visits from an African drummer as well as opera performances specially written for children.
176. Provision is very well managed, with the greatest achievement being that music is now a very valued part of the school's culture, with success celebrated and participation levels very high. In addition, all teachers are improving their own teaching skills because they participate in lessons taken by the music co-ordinator. Part of their role at these times is to assess learning. This is effective, providing good quality information, which the music teacher is able to build into her future planning. It also means that class teachers have a very thorough understanding of how well children are achieving.
177. There is a very wide range of extra-curricular activities, including an orchestra and choir that are given extensive opportunities to perform to members of the public at school events and musical festivals. The orchestra includes pupils, members of staff and parents, and it successfully performs a number of complex pieces of music. There is a purposeful atmosphere in rehearsals, as members prepare for their latest performance

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

178. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment is above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
179. Pupils experience the full National Curriculum programmes of study. In gymnastics, movement and games lessons, all pupils make good progress in the development of their skills. They are taught to improve their skills, and work collaboratively throughout the school. Swimming is part of the curriculum for the pupils in Years 4 and 5; the pupils make good progress and enjoy the sessions. The school reports that a good majority of the pupils achieve the national target of being able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6 and many are taught additional life saving skills.
180. Pupils are encouraged to warm up, and are aware of the importance of exercise and safety. They are also taught to cool down correctly at the end of a period of exercise. All of the teachers provide good role models by changing for the lessons; all of the pupils change into suitable clothing.

181. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 are learning movement skills with different balances; they are able to do this with increasing control and poise. In Year 3, pupils are learning how to strike a ball using a rounders bat. Both the boys and the girls are improving the stance and skills of eye to hand co-ordination necessary to strike the ball.
182. In Year 6, pupils are involved in a putting together a dance sequence using 1960's Rock and Roll music. They are starting to move around the hall with increasing poise and fluency, and beginning to move to the beat and rhythm with appropriate moves and sequences. All of the pupils are starting to learn how to improve their performance by evaluation and discussion.
183. The quality of teaching is consistently good, and it has been maintained at this level since the last inspection. The teachers encourage the pupils to take part with enthusiasm and challenge them to think about their performance and how to improve. All pupils enjoy physical education, their response is good and they behave very well. The lessons are planned and gradually develop the skill or sequence that is the lesson objective. Teachers have good subject knowledge, give clear instructions, which emphasise how improvements can be made, and give encouraging and appropriate praise.
184. The school has a good range of facilities, modern resources and equipment that are used effectively and the subject is well led by a keen co-ordinator. Some monitoring of the teaching and standards throughout the school has taken place and needs further development.
185. The provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent. There is a very good range of after-school sports activities with competitive matches against other schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

186. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2, but is below expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Year 6 have made good progress this year, with the quality of teaching effectively developing an awareness of different faiths. Nevertheless, there continue to be gaps in the knowledge of older pupils that are caused by the weaknesses in provision that were found at the time of the last inspection. Most of the weaknesses found at the time of the last inspection have now been addressed and, in most classes, pupils are making at least satisfactory and often good progress. However, provision continues to be patchy. The quality of teaching and learning, although never less than satisfactory, varies from class to class. The areas that require further development are the need to ensure that there is sufficient challenge in lessons for pupils of differing ability. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that at the moment there is often little difference between the work produced by higher, average or lower attaining pupils. In addition, in some classes there is very little recorded work to show what has been achieved. This means that learning is not always secure even though topics may have been introduced well.
187. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed a sound knowledge of the significance of different symbols in both Christianity and other religions. They produce good pieces of writing, retelling the Christmas story and explaining why Easter is so important to Christians. Visits to a local Church help pupils to understand how and why Christians worship. Pupils are beginning to understand that there are different religions and they are able to name the religious leaders for Christianity, Sikhism, Judaism and Islam.
188. In Years 3 to 6, there are some examples of high attainment. In Year 4, where teaching is very good, pupils have a good understanding of what it means to be a Sikh. In this year group, pupils show good respect for the beliefs of a religion other than their own. They reflect carefully on the meaning of the 'Mool Mantra', showing a good knowledge of its significance in Sikh worship. In Year 6, pupils have a less extensive knowledge of other faiths, although their written work shows that they have extended their knowledge significantly this year, from a very low starting point. They can now explain some of the basic features of Buddhism and Hinduism, comparing these with Christian beliefs. They know how followers of these religions worship and they understand, in very simple terms, how their beliefs affect their lives. For example, pupils took part in a very worthwhile discussion about how a belief in reincarnation might be a factor that leads to most

Hindus not eating meat.

189. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and is often good or better. In the best lessons, a variety of teaching strategies, that include role-play, debate, discussion and writing, are used so that all pupils are able to learn well. In a very good lesson in Year 4, the teacher planned a range of activities that significantly developed pupils' knowledge of Sikhism. The lesson was very well resourced and questioning was used very effectively to assess pupils' knowledge and to challenge them to think about the significance of the Mool Mantra to Sikhs. As a result, they developed a good understanding of the fact that the *'prayer enables them to lead good lives'*. In a good lesson in Year 5, the teacher successfully used debate to help pupils to think about questions of faith that have no obvious answer – *'the ultimate questions'* as they were described by the teacher. Pupils participated well in the debate, which was well organised by the teacher. He intervened well in discussions, helping to focus pupils' thinking so that they were able to contribute well to the final presentations.
190. The curriculum is now broad and balanced. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment, and teachers' long term planning is closely linked to the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This helps to ensure that pupils' learning builds on previous work. This was not always the case in the past and is one of the reasons for the low attainment of older pupils.
191. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in provision based on thorough monitoring of teaching and learning. She has realistic plans to address the weaknesses she has identified. These are appropriate.
192. The school has satisfactory resources for the teaching of religious education. They have been vastly improved over the last year, so that the school is now in a position where it can teach all aspects of the agreed syllabus. Visits to local places of worship, such as the local Anglican abbey and a Sikh temple, contribute well to learning, and local clergy regularly lead assemblies. All these activities make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development.