

INSPECTION REPORT

GOFFS OAK JMI AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Goffs Oak

Waltham Cross

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117243

Headteacher: Mrs. L. Stubbs

Reporting inspector: Mike Capper
23239

Dates of inspection: July 7th – 10th 2003

Inspection number: 247748

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:	Millcrest Road Goffs Oak Waltham Cross Hertfordshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. J. Pearce
Date of previous inspection:	May 2001

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23239	Mike Capper	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Science ICT	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?
9895	Roger Williams	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	Art and Design Design and Technology RE Music Special Educational Needs	How well are pupils taught?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Goffs Oak JMI and Nursery School is located near Waltham Cross in Hertfordshire. Pupils are admitted between the ages of 3 and 11, with most coming from the local area. There are 230 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 mainly favourable home backgrounds. There are 25 pupils on the register of special educational needs and two pupils have 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 since the last inspection, with the headteacher appointed in September 2002. Pupils in Year 6 have had 14 different teachers, although staffing for these pupils has been stable for the last two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a satisfactory school with the strengths now outweighing the weaknesses. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and the quality of teaching is good in the nursery and reception class and in Years 1, 2 and 5. Most pupils are happy at school and work hard. However, pupils in Year 6 who have been most affected by the high turnover of staff do not try their best in lessons and the quality of their everyday work is not as good as it should be. Taking all of these factors into account, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is good in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, history and geography.
- There is good provision in the nursery and the reception class, with pupils achieving well, especially in communication, language and literacy where writing skills are very good.
- The headteacher has established a clear vision for the work of the school that is shared by members of staff and the governing body.
- There are effective procedures for the monitoring and developing of teaching, which means that the school is well placed to address weaknesses.
- There is a good curriculum, enriched by good links with the local community and a good range of clubs, educational visits and visitors.
- The school provides good support and guidance for its pupils and effectively promotes their welfare, health and safety.

What could be improved

- Teachers' expectation of how well pupils should achieve and how hard they should work, especially in Years 3 to 6.
- Strategies for teaching spelling.
- There is not yet a fully effective partnership between the school and parents.

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. Leadership is more effective and the attainment of pupils by the end of the reception year and Year 2 has improved. Standards of attainment are also higher in Year 6, although there continue to be weaknesses in the overall achievement of pupils. Since the last inspection, curriculum and assessment procedures have been significantly developed, the school day lengthened, with imaginative use now being made of available time. The headteacher has introduced effective systems for evaluating the work of the school, including allowing subject co-ordinators to take more responsibility for managing their curriculum areas.

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	D	B	C
mathematics	A	D	C	D
science	C	D	C	D

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

In the nursery and the reception class, children make good progress. Attainment is very good in communication, language and literacy and good in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical, physical and creative development.

By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Test results for 2003, for which there is not yet any national comparative data, confirm that pupils in Year 2 are now achieving well, reaching good standards in relation to their prior attainment. Most pupils are now working at least at the expected level (Level 2). The number working at the higher level (Level 3) in English, mathematics and science has increased in the last year, with pupils benefiting from good quality teaching, which provides good levels of challenge for more able pupils.

Pupils' achievement is not as good by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Year 6 have performed well in statutory end of year National Curriculum tests in 2003, benefiting from time spent preparing for these tests. However, these levels of attainment are not evident in pupils' everyday work and inspection findings are that, by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly average in English and mathematics but below average in science. Weaknesses in English in Year 6 include weak spelling, inconsistent handwriting and a lack of care in the presentation of work. In science, written work is of poor quality and often unfinished. In science, more able pupils do not have a clear understanding of the difference between an observation, a conclusion and an explanation.

By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is good in art and design, design and technology, geography and history. It is satisfactory in information and communication technology (ICT), physical education and religious education. These standards are generally maintained throughout Years 3 to 5, with many examples of good work evident in pupils' books.

By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is satisfactory in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT and physical education. In religious education, 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.

There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement about pupils' attainment in music by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Nevertheless, attainment by the end of Year 5 is good and pupils of all ages sing tunefully in assemblies. The quality of singing by the choir is outstanding.

The school has begun to set targets for attainment in tests at the end of Year 6. These have been reached in 2003, due to the good efforts of pupils in tests.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory overall. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and they have a positive attitude to learning. Some older pupils do not take sufficient pride in presentation when recording their work and are reluctant to participate fully in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons, especially when their teachers have high expectations of behaviour.

	Occasionally, pupils lack self-discipline at lunchtimes and playtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Pupils are generally keen to take responsibility in the classroom and around the school. There is a recently introduced school council. Pupils happily undertake several day-to-day jobs around school but there are few opportunities for them to carry out research or to use the school library.
Attendance	Satisfactory with attendance rates in line with national averages.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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 the teaching assistant have a good knowledge of the needs of young children. There is a good balance between teacher-led and child-initiated activities and good use is made of the attractive outdoor area. Members of staff have high expectations of the children and the very good teaching of basic skills results in children achieving high standards, particularly in writing.

In Years 1 and 2, members of staff teach basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics well, and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are gaining knowledge and understanding in these subjects at a good pace. Learning is made purposeful and fun, enabling pupils to concentrate well. Teachers ensure that topics are covered in depth and have good expectations for the quality and quantity of pupils' work.

Teaching is consistently good or better in Year 5 where the teacher is very enthusiastic and shares her very good knowledge with pupils effectively. Clear explanations, high expectations and a very good pace in many lessons enables pupils to learn quickly.

In Years 3, 4 and 6, teachers are hardworking and prepare well for lessons. When teaching is good, tasks are interesting and pupils are well motivated. However, teachers' expectations for all pupils, particularly for the quality of written work, are insufficiently high and sometimes activities are not challenging enough, resulting in a lack of motivation from the pupils. This is most noticeable in Year 6. The school's strategy for teaching spelling is not successful in Years 3 to 6, with pupils often making avoidable errors.

Throughout the school, the quality of teachers' marking is variable and provides insufficient support to show pupils how to improve.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is a carefully planned curriculum, which is supplemented by a wide range of additional activities, especially in music.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Provision is well managed. Pupils make the best progress in Years 1 and 2, where teaching more closely meets individual needs.
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 school to identify if and when support is needed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural	Satisfactory overall, with pupils given good opportunities to learn about their own and other cultures. Teachers emphasise good behaviour to help pupils understand what is acceptable conduct.

development	
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Procedures for child protection are thorough. The school has good procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress, although information is not yet used consistently to help teachers to plan what needs to be taught next.

Most parents are supportive of the school and feel that it has improved considerably over the last year. However, there are poor relationships with a small group of parents, mainly of Year 6 pupils, who feel let down by the large number of teachers and lack of stability their children have had prior to the appointment of the present headteacher. The headteacher has worked hard to build bridges with these parents, but has not yet been successful in significantly improving relationships.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. There has been a very good pace to change in the school over the last year, with a clear focus on the need to raise attainment. The headteacher has successfully enabled all members of staff to become more involved in the management of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The involvement of governors has improved significantly since the last inspection. Recently introduced strategies for the monitoring of standards is helping them to gain a better understanding of how the school operates.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There are effective systems in place to monitor and improve the quality of pupils' learning.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Budgeting is systematic and based on a good understanding of the needs of the school. The school successfully seeks additional funding from a range of sources and applies the principles of 'best value' to its work, for example by identifying the need to improve attainment.

Accommodation is good. There is a very well used and carefully designed wildlife and garden area. Staffing levels are satisfactory, although there are areas, such as science and ICT, where there are some weaknesses in subject knowledge. Teaching assistants and the nursery nurse make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Resources are satisfactory overall, with good use being made of educational visits and visitors to support learning in different curriculum areas.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements over the last year. • Leadership and management. • The quality of teaching means that children work hard and make good progress. • Members of staff are approachable and friendly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework. • Links with parents. • The quality of work in Year 6. • Information on children's progress.

The inspection team agrees with some of these views. There is some variation in the quality of teaching across the school and parents of pupils in Year 6 have some justifiable concerns about the quality of education in that year group. Homework arrangements are satisfactory overall but practice is not consistent from class to class. Parents are given appropriate information about their children's progress, and members of staff are always happy to talk to parents if they need additional information. Whilst there are good links with most parents, the school is aware that some are not happy despite the headteacher's good efforts to improve relationships.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of attainment have risen overall since the last inspection, especially in Years 1 and 2 where pupils are achieving well in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement is not so good by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Year 6 have performed well in statutory end of year National Curriculum tests in 2003, benefiting from the high amount of time spent preparing for these tests. However, pupils do not show these levels of attainment when at work in lessons, with many pupils in Year 6 lacking motivation and not trying their best unless they are working under test conditions.
2. There have been good improvements in the attainment of children in the foundation stage since the last inspection. Children's attainment on starting school in the nursery varies from intake to intake, but overall, it is broadly in line with the average for the local authority. Since the last inspection, the curriculum has been significantly developed and the good teaching seen during the inspection is having a very positive impact on children's learning. As a result, standards of attainment are very good in communication, language and literacy with the majority of children on target to exceed expectations for their age by the end of the reception year. Standards are good in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical, physical and creative development.
3. Inspection findings show that pupils' attainment in Year 2 is above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards are higher than in 2002 when National Curriculum test results showed that pupils' attainment was well above average in reading, above average in mathematics and broadly average in writing when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was above average in reading, average in mathematics and below average in writing. In science, teacher assessments showed that the number of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 was in the top 5 per cent nationally when compared with all and similar schools. The number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was average when compared with all schools but below average when compared with similar schools.
4. Test results for 2003, for which there is not yet any national comparative data, confirm that pupils in Year 2 are now achieving well, reaching good standards in relation to their prior attainment. Most pupils are now working at least at the expected level (Level 2). The number working at the higher Level 3 in English, mathematics and science has increased in the last year, with pupils benefiting from good quality teaching, which provides good levels of challenge for more able pupils. In both mathematics and science, pupils have a good knowledge of scientific or mathematical concepts, and they are able to apply these skills confidently to practical situations.
5. In 2002, National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 showed that pupils' attainment was above average in English and average in mathematics and science when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was average in English and below average in mathematics and science. A comparison of National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 shows that these pupils made good progress over time in English and satisfactory progress in mathematics and science. Results of tests in 2003, for which there is not yet any comparative data, are much higher than they were in 2002 in English and science. However, this quality of work is not evident in pupils' everyday work and inspection findings are that pupils' attainment is broadly average in English and mathematics and below average in science.
6. Weaknesses in English in Year 6 include poor quality spelling, inconsistent handwriting and a lack of care in the presentation of work. In science, written work is of poor quality and often unfinished. More able pupils do not have a clear understanding of the difference between an

observation, a conclusion and an explanation. Too often, their explanations merely describe what they can see, rather than using scientific knowledge to explain what has happened.

7. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is good in art and design, design and technology, geography and history and satisfactory in physical education. These standards are generally maintained through Years 3 to 5, with many examples of good work evident in pupils' books. However, in Year 6, learning is limited by the amount of time allocated for test revision and the unsatisfactory attitudes of pupils. As a result, by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is satisfactory in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and physical education.
8. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology has improved 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 ICT where standards are good. For example, older pupils have good word-processing skills. Where there remain gaps in knowledge, for example in the pupils' knowledge of data handling in Year 6, it is a reflection of previous weaknesses rather than current provision.
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. 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. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement about pupils' attainment in music by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because there were no lessons on the timetable in these year groups during the inspection. Nevertheless, attainment by the end of Year 5 is good and pupils of all ages sing tunefully in assemblies.
11. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs receive good quality support from teaching assistants. They make good progress in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory progress overall in Years 3 to 6.
12. The school has begun to set targets for attainment in tests at the end of Year 6. These have been reached in 2003, due to the good efforts of pupils in the tests.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and they have a positive attitude to learning. They show a good interest in out of school activities, such as the good variety of clubs provided by teaching staff and volunteers, and the excellent choir. However, some pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not always keen to work in class, and they do not take sufficient pride in its presentation when recording their work. This has not improved since the last inspection. A substantial number of Year 6 pupils are disaffected, and this is reflected in their relationships with their teacher. Many of these pupils do not produce their best work in lessons because they lack motivation, and are reluctant to participate fully. This is most evident in their lack of response to the teacher's questioning. In other classes, when teaching is challenging and pupils are motivated, their response and interest is good.
14. Pupils' behaviour at school is satisfactory. The last full inspection found that attitudes and behaviour were good. The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons, especially when their teachers have high expectations for their good behaviour. This is commonly the case in the nursery, reception and Years 1 and 2 classes. However, some pupils lack self-discipline outside lessons in the playground. This mainly happens during lunchtimes. The new headteacher and the midday supervisors are working hard to improve behaviour through the consistent application of the school's code of conduct. The school is making it clear to pupils what is unacceptable behaviour, and good behaviour is rewarded. The pupils have helped to draw up the school's 'Golden Rules', and these are displayed prominently in classrooms and around the school. This is beginning to have a positive effect on most pupils. One pupil has

been permanently excluded from the school in the past year. The proper procedures were followed, and exclusion is only used as a last resort, after all other strategies for improvement have been tried.

15. Most pupils have a sound understanding of the impact of their actions on others, and the school encourages them to be considerate and caring. This quality is more apparent in pupils in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6. Pupils raise substantial amounts of money for a variety of charities, both local and national, sometimes on their own initiative, and pupils in Years 3 to 6 select a fellow class member as the 'Star of the Week' for trying hard and being considerate. Pupils have a satisfactory respect for each other's feelings, values and beliefs, and it was good to see an older pupil befriend a younger one, who had sat on the 'buddy bench', the provision of which was one of the first requests made by the school council.
16. Pupils are generally keen to take responsibility in the classroom and around the school, and undertake day-to-day tasks very sensibly. For example, pupils act as school librarians, set up the hall for assemblies and are class monitors. Younger pupils are expected to tidy up after activities. Pupils participate eagerly in the recently introduced school council. However, very few examples of research and independent learning or of use of the school library were seen during the inspection. Relationships between pupils and with adults are generally satisfactory.
17. Attendance is satisfactory. Attendance rates are broadly in line with national averages. Most pupils are punctual each morning, which means that a prompt and efficient start can be made to lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the foundation stage and in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is consistently good or better in Year 5. Two unsatisfactory lessons were observed during the inspection, when the behaviour of pupils was not managed successfully and the work provided was insufficiently challenging. The quality of teaching is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection, with notable improvements in Years 1 and 2. There have been many changes of teaching staff since the last inspection and the headteacher has a realistic understanding of current strengths and weaknesses.
19. In the nursery and reception classes, teachers, the nursery nurse and the teaching assistant have a good knowledge of the needs of young children and manage their behaviour effectively. They are calm and caring, and provide patient support for children of all abilities. There is a good balance between teacher-led and child-initiated activities and good use is made of the attractive outdoor area. Lessons are well resourced and members of staff use a wide range of teaching methods to make tasks interesting, helping children to concentrate well. Teachers have high expectations of the children, and the very good teaching of basic skills results in their achieving high standards, particularly in writing. Occasionally in the nursery, there is insufficient direction or structure for some 'free choice' activities and, at these times, children's learning is not extended enough.
20. In Years 1 and 2, members of staff teach basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics well, and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are gaining knowledge and understanding in these subjects at a good pace. For example, in a literacy lesson in Year 2, the teacher demonstrated how to make writing more interesting by adding adjectives, and a game was used effectively in Year 1 to teach pupils how to spell words with the same long vowel sounds. In these two classes, learning is made purposeful and fun, enabling pupils to concentrate well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure that topics are covered in depth. They have good expectations for the quality and quantity of pupils' work.
21. In Years 3 to 6, teachers are hardworking and prepare well for lessons. When teaching is good, tasks are interesting and pupils are well motivated. For example, in a very good science lesson in Year 5, the teacher provided a range of musical instruments to help pupils investigate the relationship between size of instrument and pitch. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils

with special educational needs are given appropriate support in most lessons. However, teachers' expectations for all pupils are not high enough, particularly for the quality of written work, and sometimes activities are not challenging enough, resulting in a lack of motivation from the pupils. There are some weaknesses in the teachers' knowledge in some subjects such as science, ICT, physical education and music. The school's strategy for teaching spelling is not successful in Years 3 to 6, with pupils often making avoidable errors.

22. In Year 5, where teaching is consistently good or better, the teacher is very enthusiastic and shares her very good knowledge with pupils effectively. Her clear explanations, high expectations and a very good pace in many lessons enable pupils to learn quickly. In a very good literacy lesson, she ensured pupils had a thorough understanding of the format for writing a rap, enabling them all to complete the task successfully.
23. Throughout the school, teaching assistants give effective support to groups of pupils. However, assistants are not always used effectively at the start of lessons when teachers are speaking to the whole class. Two teaching assistants make a particularly good contribution towards pupils' learning in design and technology.
24. All teachers explain the purpose of lessons clearly and use a good range of educational resources to reinforce learning. The use of ICT is developing well across a range of subjects and has improved since the time of the last inspection. For example, in Year 2, pupils use the computer to draw their own pictures in the style of Mondrian.
25. The quality of teachers' marking is variable and provides insufficient support to show older pupils in particular how to improve. This was also found to be the case at the time of the last inspection. Teachers carry out careful evaluations of lessons and are starting to use this information to help plan work for the following week.
26. Some parents are unhappy with the provision for homework. Inspection findings are that whilst there is a satisfactory range of homework to extend pupils' learning overall, this provision is inconsistent across the school.

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

27. Overall the quality and range of learning opportunities are good. There is a broad and balanced curriculum. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection, when there were several issues concerning the delivery, planning and time allocation of the curriculum. These major weaknesses from the last inspection have all been successfully addressed. All subjects now have schemes of work and there is detailed and effective long and medium term planning in place. The overall length of the school day now meets recommendations, and imaginative use is made of available time so that the school is able to fit an additional one-hour lesson into each day. This means that there are greater opportunities than are found in many schools to teach subjects such as history and geography on a weekly basis. This is a contributory factor to the good detail in the topics studied in these subjects.
28. The curriculum is now better because planning is more thorough. The long and medium term plans that are now written for all subjects give a clear indication of what is to be taught and how the needs of the different ability groups are to be met. The whole curriculum has been very effectively 'mapped out' to ensure continuity and progression. However, the time spent preparing for the end of year National Curriculum tests in Year 6 has a negative effect on the balance of the curriculum for these pupils, with subjects such as history and geography marginalised for part of the year. The school is aware that a lack of balance in the curriculum for pupils in Year 6 has limited their progress and there are suitable plans to adjust the curriculum in the next academic year.
29. All subjects meet statutory requirements. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There are sound strategies for the teaching of numeracy and this is having a positive effect on

teaching and learning. The literacy strategy is less effective, with insufficient emphasis given to improving spelling and presentation. In science, in Years 3 to 6, some lessons are too long, and pupil interest flags as the pace of the lesson falls away.

30. The curriculum for children in the foundation stage is good. Teachers' planning is thorough and takes full account of the needs of all children. Children who have been identified as having special educational needs are given good support and learn new skills quickly. Teachers' planning is based on the nationally recommended 'Early Learning Goals' and, where appropriate, the expectations of the National Curriculum. Good use is made of the recently developed outdoor area to teach skills across the curriculum.
31. Throughout the school, good and realistic cross-curricular links are established. The skills taught in literacy and numeracy are also being used effectively in other areas of the curriculum such as ICT, science, design and technology, geography and history.
32. Provision for personal, social, citizenship and health education is satisfactory. It is taught through specific lessons, as well as through religious education, science and the wider curriculum. The school has a satisfactory programme for sex education and drug awareness.
33. 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 pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall and they are given equal access to all parts of school life. The quality of individual education plans is good, including targets that can be easily measured. Provision is best in the nursery, the reception class and Years 1 and 2, where teaching is consistently matched to individual needs, helping pupils to learn well. This is not always the case in Years 3 to 6, where pupils make the best progress when supported by teaching assistants.
34. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, which include sports, dance, drama, art and music. Over a quarter of pupils from Years 3 to 6 are members of the school choir, which performs to a very high standard. Pupils perform regularly in public and take part successfully in local music festivals. All clubs and activities are very well supported and have a highly positive effect on the pupils' learning.
35. The sense of community within the school is strong, and staff and pupils believe that the school is an important part of the local area. Good use is made of community, which consequently makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. There are satisfactory links with local primary and secondary schools, helping to ensure a smooth transfer at the end of Year 6. Older pupils have an opportunity to attend a residential centre for a variety of good educational, social and cultural experiences.
36. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. All pupils have a daily act of worship and assemblies contain a moment for spiritual reflection, as well as providing an opportunity for learning about the world and moral issues. In an assembly on the life cycle of the butterfly, the pupils were given a good insight into the scientific facts but with moments of spiritual awareness and wonder at the beauty of nature. Religious education and music teaching greatly enrich pupils' spiritual development.
37. The provision for pupils' moral development is satisfactory. 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 indicate examples of good moral practices. A moral dimension is seen in many lessons where teachers emphasise good behaviour so pupils understand what is acceptable conduct. Unfortunately, this not always reflected in all of the pupils' attitudes to school or in their conduct and behaviour, particularly in Year 6. Adults in the school also set a good example by the levels of courtesy, care and respect shown to pupils.
38. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' social development. Teachers plan opportunities in

many lessons for pupils to develop social skills through 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. Studies of the local village and the environment greatly enhance pupils' awareness of social and moral issues and responsibilities. There are some good planned opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in many aspects of the life of the school, though this could be further developed by giving more opportunities for independent study.

39. The provision for pupil's cultural development is good and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. The pupils have opportunities to study the richness of both their own and other cultures. In history and geography, pupils are able to learn about their own and other cultures, both past and present. The range of good quality visits and visitors, planned as part of the curriculum, enhances pupils' understanding of local culture. The multi-cultural provision is also good. Pupils have many opportunities to experience other cultures and religions, with good use of educational visits and visitors.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare and safety are good, and this has been maintained and developed since the last inspection. Both the headteacher and the senior member of staff who is the school's child protection officer are fully trained. The good child protection policy is specific to the school and is in line with the local authority guidelines. All members of staff receive training annually, and they are vigilant in this important area of children's safety. Health and safety are a priority at the school, and the headteacher is ably backed by staff and governors in ensuring the school, and its immediate vicinity, is a safe place. Parents are periodically reminded in newsletters about road safety issues outside the school. Good records are kept by the school, including regular, written, risk assessments and records of fire drills and electrical checks. First aid arrangements are good.
41. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. Attendance data are stored electronically and monitored by the headteacher and the educational welfare officer, and certificates are awarded annually to pupils with more than 97 per cent attendance. Parents are exhorted to supply reasons for any absence and they must apply for permission to take children on holiday during school terms.
42. Behaviour monitoring, including the monitoring of oppressive behaviour, is good. Detailed reports of all incidents are recorded and the headteacher also records serious misbehaviour, including the very occasional instances of bullying and racism. These are dealt with effectively by the school. The headteacher takes poor behaviour very seriously, and parents are informed and involved in remedial action to highlight these serious incidents and to prevent a recurrence. Circle time, assemblies and personal, social and health education lessons are used to confirm the school's disapproval of such misbehaviour.
43. Pupils about whom the school has concerns are supplied with a personal support plan and targets for improvement. Parents play an active part in this process. The school has a positive approach to behaviour management, and this is beginning to have an impact on the school community as pupils realise what is expected of them.
44. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory overall. Pupils are given very positive encouragement to care for others by taking part in charitable fund-raising. The system used to monitor pupils' welfare is effective in tracking their welfare and personal development as they move up the school. Another important initiative is the provision for developing the social skills of a small group of pupils who need help in this area. A relevantly qualified teaching assistant is used well for this valuable work. Co-ordinators involve pupils in setting their personal targets.
45. The school has good procedures overall for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress. Procedures in mathematics and English are very good. Assessments are made regularly and

targets are then set for the next stage in pupils' learning. Assessment information is carefully recorded so that pupils' progress can be tracked from reception onwards. The teachers know their pupils very well and can plan for their future learning. There are sound assessment procedures in other subjects. The school has identified the need to make sure that assessment information is used effectively to ensure that teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving. Inspection findings indicate that this is an area of weakness in need of improvement.

46. In both the nursery and the reception class, the assessment of children's attainment and progress is good. There is an agreed format for observing and assessing learning and teachers use this information successfully in order to ensure that activities build on previous learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Most parents express their satisfaction with the school. However, a number of parents of children in Year 6 are discontented with the way the school has been run since their children have been at the school. Their complaint centres mainly on the past unstable staffing situation and the consequent lack of continuity. Since the arrival of the new headteacher, the school has employed permanent staff for each year group. However, the Year 6 parents feel it is too late for their children, and they are still dissatisfied with the school because of this. Parents expressed concerns over the leadership and management of the school at the time of the last full inspection.
48. The quality of information for parents, since the new headteacher arrived, is satisfactory. There is a weekly newsletter giving information on events, the curriculum and other important messages for parents. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory and meet requirements. They are clearly written and set targets for improvement. The headteacher has held several meetings to inform parents about various areas of the curriculum, including reading, writing and mathematics. Other kinds of information sessions have been run during her relatively short tenure, for example, 'mothers and daughters', and personal hygiene for children. In addition, a special meeting with Year 6 parents was held to discuss their concerns and the minutes of this meeting were circulated to them.
49. The school has carried out its own survey of parents, separate from the pre-inspection questionnaire. Both surveys indicate that parents would like more information on how their children get on at the school. The pre-inspection survey that was returned by 40 per cent of parents also confirmed that a quarter of parents did not feel the school worked closely with them. About the same number were unsure their child got the right amount of homework. The headteacher is in the process of addressing these concerns, and has already run a mathematics evening as a result of her survey of parents. Both surveys show that most parents are largely positive about most other areas of the school's work.
50. There is a satisfactory level of involvement by parents in their children's learning at home and at school. Several parents and friends of the school commit time each week to helping in the classrooms and others have made story sacks. Parents also help on school trips and visits. The parents concerned are consulted when targets are set for their children's individual educational plans and support plans. The very active parent-teacher association raises very substantial sums to help the school, for buildings and extra equipment, as well as providing a social focus for events. This satisfactory aspect of parents' impact on the work of the school is a positive element and beneficial to the school and to pupils' education. However, this is countered by the continuing resentment of those parents who still feel the school has let them down in the past, despite the efforts made by the headteacher to solve their differences and move on. As a result, the school does not yet have effective links with all parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The headteacher was appointed in September 2002, after a year when the school had three

different headteachers, some of whom were employed on a temporary basis. Since then, there has been a very good pace to change in the school, and the headteacher is providing good leadership. There is a clear focus on the need to raise attainment. Most parents are very happy with the quality of her leadership and feel that the school has improved significantly whilst she has been in post. The headteacher has worked hard to build a working relationship with these parents, but there remain areas where parents do not yet understand how and why decisions are made.

52. Nevertheless, with the exception of this relatively small group of parents, there is a clear, shared vision for the future of the school that is based on a good understanding of how the school could improve. The headteacher has successfully enabled all members of staff to become more involved in the management of the school, both in their roles as subject leaders and as class teachers. The role of the deputy headteacher has been significantly developed and she provides good support to the headteacher, both in the day-to-day management of the school and especially in providing pastoral support for members of staff.
53. Subject co-ordinators have been empowered by the headteacher to take responsibility for their curriculum areas. They now provide good leadership and are actively involved in monitoring standards in their subjects, helping staff to develop a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses. This means that the school is in a strong position to improve further in the future.
54. Strategies for monitoring the work of the school have improved since the last inspection and are now good. The impact of the school's self-review of its work is very evident in recent improvements. For example, there have been significant improvements to the quality of curriculum planning over the last year. The curriculum continues to be monitored and reviewed, resulting in further improvements in the 'curriculum map' that will ensure a more balanced curriculum for pupils in Year 6 in the next academic year.
55. The headteacher has introduced effective systems for monitoring and supporting teaching. As well as formal procedures linked to performance management, the headteacher uses 'drop-in' monitoring as a strategy for judging the effectiveness of the school. 'Drop-in' monitoring involves the headteacher visiting lessons without warning so that she can judge teaching as it is on a normal basis rather than seeing a specially prepared lesson. This has been very effective in identifying key strengths and weaknesses and has helped to improve teaching. There is regular sampling of pupils' work by the headteacher and co-ordinators, and there are recently established but thorough procedures for analysing test data to identify where improvement is necessary. Detailed records of pupils' individual test scores are kept and are used effectively to set targets for improving their attainment. This information is used successfully to identify areas where further intervention is necessary. Taken together, these strategies have had a good impact on the quality of teaching throughout the school and have helped teachers to become more reflective about the effectiveness of their own teaching.
56. The involvement of governors has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Governors are supportive of the school's work and committed to developing the school further. They have a sound understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, and recently introduced strategies for the monitoring of standards are helping them to gain a better understanding of how the school operates. In the last year, the amount of information that governors receive from the headteacher has increased significantly. This information includes detailed feedback on test results, and governors are beginning to use this data effectively to identify what could be improved.
57. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and publish a prospectus and report to parents. These documents meet almost all the requirements but do not include all the required data on disabled access or targets for Level 5 achievement at the end of Year 6. This information was not available when these documents were last published due to the many changes in leadership in the year prior to the current headteacher's appointment.
58. Day-to-day management of the school is good, with the headteacher supported effectively by a

hardworking secretary and financial assistant. Budgeting is systematic and based on a good understanding of the needs of the school. Decisions are properly made on the basis of how they will help the school to improve. In the last two months, the headteacher and governing body have had to make difficult decisions with regard to staffing levels due to budget cutbacks. The decision to cut the number of teaching assistants' hours by about a third has been carefully considered, with due account taken of the likely impact on educational standards.

59. The school successfully seeks additional funding from a range of sources and applies the principles of 'best value' to its work, for example by ensuring that competitive bids are sought for all large purchases. However, there is little evidence of governors formally evaluating the effectiveness of their spending on standards of attainment. Parents make a significant contribution to the financial security of the school. The money they raise is spent well to improve resources or accommodation.
60. Accommodation is good. It is well maintained and kept clean and tidy by a hardworking caretaker. The school has an ICT suite, a spacious hall and attractive classrooms. There is a very well used and carefully designed wildlife and garden area.
61. Staffing levels are satisfactory, although there are some areas of subject weakness, notably in science and ICT. Since the last inspection, there has been a very high turnover of staff leading to great instability in the school. These problems have been overcome so that there is now greater consistency in the quality of teaching throughout the school. Teaching assistants and the nursery nurse make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
62. Resources are satisfactory overall. There have been good improvements in resources for ICT, science and design and technology since the last inspection, and these are now good.
63. Good use is made of educational visits and visitors to support learning in different curriculum areas.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. To improve the school further the governors, headteacher and staff should:
 - Raise teachers' expectation of how well pupils should achieve and how hard they should work by
 - Making better use of assessment information to plan appropriate work for individuals and groups;
 - Taking more frequent account of pupils' individual targets in planning work that challenges;
 - Making more rigorous use of marking to identify pupils' needs and guide the planning of follow-up tasks.

(Paragraphs 21, 25, 45, 101, 103, 105, 127, 128, 129, 132, 156, 185)

- Review and improve strategies for teaching spelling.

(Paragraphs 6, 101, 107, 132, 144)

- Continue to work on improving relationships between the school and the small number of parents who are not yet fully supportive of its work.

(Paragraphs 47, 49, 50, 51, 52)

65. In addition, the following areas for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:
 - Ensure that statutory requirements are met in the annual governors' report to parents and the school prospectus. (Paragraph 57)

- Carry out plans to improve the balance of the curriculum for pupils in Year 6. (Paragraphs 28, 150, 156, 186)
- Make more use of the library to support learning in different curriculum areas. (Paragraphs 108, 156)
- Review arrangements for homework to ensure that there is greater consistency from class to class. (Paragraphs 26, 104)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	24	21	2	0	0
Percentage	0	11	45	40	4	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	207
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	25

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6

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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	18	11	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	18
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	27	27	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (83)	93 (80)	100 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	18	18
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	27	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (83)	100 (97)	100 (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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	17	15	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	16
	Girls	14	11	15
	Total	28	25	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (74)	78 (68)	97 (87)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	N/A (45)	N/A (68)	N/A (65)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

(N/A – not available)

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	155	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	10	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	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
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.8
Average class size	29.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	15

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	15
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002-2003
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	£
Total income	624136
Total expenditure	595074
Expenditure per pupil	2717
Balance brought forward from previous year	26493
Balance carried forward to next year	55555

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	10

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.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	230
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.	50	47	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	33	58	5	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	60	8	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	50	22	3	7
The teaching is good.	34	54	2	1	9
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	44	24	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	39	55	5	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	34	60	4	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	24	51	20	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	18	67	4	0	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	24	67	5	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	11	56	16	0	17

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

66. Children in the foundation stage of their education are taught in the nursery and in a reception class. In the nursery, children attend for mornings only. Children's attainment on starting school in the nursery varies from intake to intake, but overall, it is broadly in line with the average for the local authority.
67. There have been good improvements in the attainment of children in the foundation stage since the last inspection. The curriculum has been significantly developed and the good teaching seen during the inspection is having a very positive impact on children's learning. As a result, children make good progress, acquiring new skills quickly and achieving good standards in both the nursery and the reception class. Standards are very good in communication, language and literacy, with the majority of children on target to exceed expectations for their age by the end of the reception year. Standards are good in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical, physical and creative development.
68. The curriculum for children in the foundation stage is good. Teachers' planning is thorough and takes full account of the needs of all children. Those who have been identified as having special educational needs are given good support and learn new skills quickly. Teachers' planning is based on the nationally recommended 'Early Learning Goals' and, where appropriate, the expectations of the National Curriculum. Good use is made of the outdoor area to teach skills across the curriculum. Great care is taken to ensure that there is a balance between activities that are closely directed by the teacher and activities where children have greater freedom to work at their own pace. At different times during the day, children are required to choose activities for themselves. This is generally effective, although there are occasions in the nursery where children would benefit from being given greater guidance when making choices about where they are going to work.
69. Assessment of children's attainment and progress is good in both the nursery and the reception class. There is an agreed format for observing and recording learning in each class which is carefully adhered to by all members of staff. Teachers keep detailed records of children's progress and use this information successfully in order to ensure that activities build on previous learning.
70. The nursery nurse and teaching assistant give good support in the work of both the nursery and the reception class. They are fully involved in all aspects of teaching and learning, including the planning of activities and the assessment of children's progress. They know the individual children well and are very valuable and important members of the early years' team.
71. There is good liaison between the school and home. There are good links with the pre-school playgroup which uses the nursery classroom in the afternoons and parents are welcomed into school at any time to discuss concerns. New children spend time in the nursery before they are due to start. This helps them to settle into school quickly.
72. The school encourages parents to support children in their work. Homework is regularly set and reading books are eagerly looked at by children and shared with parents. When children come into nursery at the start of each day, many parents stay with them for a short time to work on whichever activity they have chosen. There is a very happy but purposeful atmosphere in the nursery at this time of the day.

Personal, social and emotional development

73. Children make good progress in this area of learning because of the good levels of support that they are given. Members of staff are calm, caring and patient and have a good knowledge of

both the social and educational needs of individual children. They have high expectations and this results in children quickly developing good social skills. Children are given many opportunities to talk together and to celebrate each other's work. These times are used effectively to encourage children to think about things that affect them and to talk about the needs of others.

74. Classrooms are well organised, meaning that children are able to work independently. Resources are readily available and children are expected to find them for themselves. During each day, there are times when children are expected to decide for themselves where they are going to work. They do this confidently. Once they have made a choice, children show good perseverance, normally sticking at a task until it is finished. Members of staff have very high expectations of behaviour. Praise is used very effectively to boost self-esteem and children quickly learn to play and work together amicably and to share things. As a result, children become very confident and secure individuals. They are very happy at school and get on well together.
75. Children who have particular behavioural problems are managed very effectively, so that the learning of others is not disrupted.

Communication, language and literacy

76. The quality of teaching is very good in this area of learning. There is a very strong emphasis on developing children's language skills in all activities, which helps them to make very good progress. Particularly noteworthy is the very good progress that has been made this year in developing children's writing skills. This has been an area of focus for the foundation stage, and it has led to children achieving very high standards in this aspect of the curriculum, with a significant number already working at Level 1 of the National Curriculum. All children develop a very positive attitude towards writing and they are given many opportunities to improve their skills. They are very enthusiastic and are always happy to record their ideas on paper, with even children in the nursery beginning to use recognisable words or letters in their writing. Supplies of paper, pens and pencils are always available and children readily use them. Children are successfully encouraged to write for a range of purposes, for example, when recording illnesses in the veterinary surgery.
77. In the reception class, individual children are supported very well by the teacher and teaching assistant in developing writing skills. Children are often grouped by ability and work is planned that meets the particular needs of each group. Progress is carefully monitored so that additional support can be given if needed. Children are given many opportunities to write in the different areas of learning. For example, they write about mini-beasts in knowledge and understanding of the world and add captions about shapes in their work in mathematics. These very good cross-curricular links help to make writing purposeful and have a very good impact on learning.
78. Children come to school with generally well developed speaking and listening skills and these are extended further. Children are given many opportunities to take part in discussions and talk about what they are doing, so they become confident in speaking to large or small groups as well as to individuals. They explain what they are going to do when they have a choice of activities and talk happily to visitors about the work they are doing. Role-play activities are well planned and are used effectively to support the development of children's speaking skills. For example, children in the nursery worked independently to plan out a story about 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' in the role-play area.
79. Reading skills are taught effectively. A good range of strategies is used to teach children letter sounds and there is a very strong emphasis on learning being fun. Every opportunity is taken to teach children about the sounds that letters make and to introduce them to a range of written vocabulary. Displays around the classrooms help children to understand that language communicates meaning. When talking about different words, teachers, the teaching assistant and the nursery nurse frequently ask children to identify the letters in the word, asking, for

example, which names start with the same sound. This helps children to quickly learn the different sounds of the alphabet and they show high levels of motivation. By the end of the reception year, most children confidently use their knowledge of letter sounds to make words. Stories are read well by the teacher and children listen attentively. When listening to a story, the children respond appropriately, joining in with the teacher when they recognise the text. Most children are beginning to read simple texts and can talk accurately about the events in the story. Most children can read the 'reception year key words' identified in the literacy strategy, with more able children having an extensive vocabulary and reading confidently and fluently.

Mathematical development

80. Children make good progress in developing mathematical skills. Most children recognise numbers to at least ten, with a large number of more able children recognising, writing and ordering higher numbers. Children join in enthusiastically with various number rhymes and know the name of various 2-D and 3-D shapes. When working orally, more able children can work out 'one more than' a given number. Children enjoy playing simple number games on the computer, and confidently use appropriate mathematical language, such as 'bigger than' and 'smaller than'.
81. The good teaching of the subject ensures that all children are well motivated and interested. Members of staff plan exciting and stimulating activities, for which their thorough planning ensures that the needs of all children are met. In both the nursery and the reception class, work is carefully matched to individual needs, and mathematical concepts are often taught in a practical way that involves the children and promotes good learning. For example, in the nursery, children learn about language such as 'big' and 'small' by sorting toy bears into order according to size.
82. In the reception class, elements of the numeracy strategy are used effectively to teach basic skills. In these sessions, activities are exciting and stimulating. Children are encouraged to think of themselves as mathematicians, devising their own ways of recording and finding out. For example, a group of children worked conscientiously on a task that involved them sorting shapes by their names. They worked with various boxes of different shapes and sizes, building towers and then writing down which shapes they had used. The teacher's high expectations were evident in the way that she expected accuracy and encouraged the children to write captions on their work, showing which shape had been used.
83. Members of staff use questioning well to make sure everyone has understood what has been taught. This means that the next lesson can be planned on the basis of what children need to learn next. There is a good level of challenge for higher attaining children, some of whom are already working at Level 1 of the National Curriculum and are learning, for example how to record addition and subtraction sums.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

84. Pupils make good progress in this area of learning. They develop a wide range of skills and knowledge. Children in the nursery talk about the different times of the day and know what plants need to grow. By the end of the reception year, children have a good knowledge of mini-beasts, describing accurately their habitats and life cycles. They name various parts of the body and explain why exercise is important if you wish to stay healthy. They can confidently talk about recent past events in their own lives and understand how clothes have changed over time. Work on festivals and special days such as Diwali and Christmas helps children to understand that not everyone is the same or believes in the same things. This aspect of learning has been well supported by visits and visitors, including a visit to a local Methodist church and a talk from a parent about her Islamic beliefs.
85. Children show appropriate skills when using the computer. They read simple text on the computer and confidently use the keyboard and mouse to write out words, draw pictures or play games.

86. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good, with skills thoughtfully developed in interesting ways. Activities are carefully planned, and the practical focus in work means that learning is made purposeful and fun. Members of staff plan activities that encourage children to explore new ideas. For example, children in the nursery have been learning about plants. They have looked at different types of plants and have planted their own seeds. As an extension to this learning, the teacher posed a question – *'What will happen to a stick of celery if I put it into water that has got coloured dye in it?'* This led to an interesting discussion, with children keen to share their ideas and eager to find out the outcome of the experiment.
87. Very good use is made of the school's exciting wildlife areas to help children learn about the environment. As part of their work on mini-beasts, children visited the wildlife area to identify different habitats. They worked sensibly when outdoors, showing good respect for living things as well as a good understanding of why not all mini-beasts live in the same place. In this activity, children responded well to the high expectations of members of staff, showing good levels of concentration.

Physical development

88. The quality of teaching is good in this area of learning. Children in both the nursery and the reception class get very good access to a range of outdoor activities that successfully promote physical development. This helps children to make good progress and they have a good level of physical skills. They catch and throw confidently and, when moving to music, are able to use their imagination well to make different body shapes.
89. Children in the nursery learn to thread beads. They show good skills when working with construction kits, making recognisable models of different sorts of vehicles. In the reception class, children use tools confidently and safely. Their cutting skills improve and they begin to use equipment without adult assistance, for example cutting materials to make covers for beds that they have made. A teaching assistant gives good support when children are working with wood. He encourages children to try out things for themselves, resulting in good skills being developed.
90. Children's learning is enhanced by regularly timetabled physical education lessons. In a good games' lesson seen during the inspection, children made good progress in developing their catching and throwing skills. The lesson was well organised, with children working in small groups on a range of activities. Children were given very good opportunities to practise and consolidate skills. The teacher and teaching assistant gave good support to individual children. This teaching helped to ensure that the needs of all children, including those who have special educational needs, were fully met.

Creative development

91. Children make good progress in this area of learning. They benefit from good teaching and an exciting and stimulating curriculum. An imaginative range of resources is used to stimulate interest and promote good learning. Children are successfully encouraged to try out different activities and to experiment with the techniques they have been taught. As a result, children draw and paint confidently, with increasing control of a range of tools. For example, they produce well-observed paintings of butterflies as part of their work on mini-beasts and they make good use of space and shape in self-portraits. In the reception class, their 3-D sculptures made out of cardboard are of a very high quality. Children enjoy singing, and join in with enthusiasm when making music in the classroom or in assembly.
92. The quality of children's role-play is good. Members of staff set up interesting scenarios, such as a veterinary surgery, and this means that children maintain their interest for long periods of time and develop complex and interesting story lines.
93. Members of staff have good expectations and encourage children to concentrate on what they

are doing so that they produce good quality work. Children work well together in small groups, and share resources sensibly. There is good challenge in the work planned, with children able to explore ideas by themselves. For example, in the nursery, the nursery nurse encouraged children to try out their own ideas when making model beds. In the reception class, children confidently experimented with mixing their own powder-paint as they made colour wheels.

94. Art work and models are displayed attractively around the nursery and reception class. This helps to children to understand that their work is important and they should try their best at all times.

ENGLISH

95. Pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 2 and average by the end of Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory progress overall in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Year 6 perform better in tests than they do in lessons, when there are considerable weaknesses in their spelling and handwriting and they do not respond well when asked questions. Some unresponsiveness was also noted at the time of the last inspection.
96. In 2002, National Curriculum tests showed that, when compared with all schools, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 was well above average in reading and average in writing. When compared with similar schools, their attainment was above average in reading but below average in writing. Test results for 2003, for which national comparative data is not yet available, indicates that attainment has risen further. All pupils attained the expected level (Level 2) in reading and most attained the expected level in writing. The number of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3) increased in writing but fell slightly in reading.
97. Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 were above average when compared with all schools but below average when compared with similar schools. Test results in 2003, for which national comparative data is not yet available, shows a good improvement from 2002, with more pupils achieving the expected level (Level 4) and the higher level (Level 5). However, inspection findings show that pupils do not work consistently at these levels in class, and progress in the last year has been inconsistent. The school and parents are aware that there continue to be weaknesses in the pupils' writing.
98. The trend in test results is rising at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' attainment is better than at the time of the last inspection. Test results suggest that boys achieve less well than girls, and inspection findings show that their written work is often more careless.
99. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils throughout the school develop satisfactory skills in speaking and listening. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 listen carefully when someone is reading to them, especially when a story is read with good expression. They listen well and speak clearly when working in a small group. However, they often speak too quietly when speaking to the whole class, and not all pupils listen carefully when teachers are talking. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are usually attentive and are keen to share their ideas with the class and the teachers.
100. By the end of Year 2, most pupils read simple texts fluently observing punctuation, using their knowledge of letter sounds and predicting what might happen next in a story. All pupils know how to use information books, can discuss their favourite book and identify rhyming words such as 'ledge' and 'edge'. Higher attaining pupils can talk in depth about the main events and characters in a story and are beginning to relate what they read to their own experiences. By the end of Year 6, most pupils read with some expression and know how to find information from a library. Higher attaining pupils discuss the personalities of characters in a story and find evidence from the book to support their views. Lower attaining pupils are less confident about using strategies to attempt unfamiliar words.
101. By the end of Year 2, pupils usually write in sentences and spell many commonly used words correctly. Most writing is interesting and pupils produce a good quantity of work in English

lessons and in other subjects. Higher attaining pupils are starting to use punctuation within sentences. Lower attaining pupils do not always remember to use capital letters and full stops, and some pupils are reluctant to use a dictionary to help with their spelling. The quality of pupils' written work is variable in Years 3 to 6, with pupils of all abilities spelling many words incorrectly and not presenting their writing with care. Handwriting is inconsistent and work is often covered with untidy crossings out and splashes from water bottles. Higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 write in paragraphs and use punctuation within sentences successfully. They use some good vocabulary to make their writing interesting, such as 'a shadowy figure emerged' and 'I felt a sudden chill in the air'. Average attaining pupils show an awareness of the need to write for an audience and use their imaginations and a range of vocabulary well. However, they are careless with punctuation, often forgetting to use speech-marks, apostrophes and question marks, and some spellings corrected at the start of the year are still being spelt incorrectly at the end of the year. The writing of lower attaining pupils has many weaknesses in spelling, punctuation and the quality of vocabulary used and is not always completed in the time allowed.

102. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6 with examples of good and very good teaching. In the very good lesson in Year 5, the teacher demonstrated editing skills, very clearly helping pupils of all abilities to write and perform 'rap' poems with great enthusiasm. In Years 1 and 2, the teachers ask probing questions to encourage pupils to take part in discussions and listen to their ideas, carefully helping to boost their self-esteem. They support pupils' learning effectively by demonstrating how to complete a writing task and by discussing suitable adjectives to make writing interesting. This enables pupils to work quickly when working unaided and to produce interesting phrases such as 'the floor was as grey as an elephant' and 'it was as chilly as a frosted freezer'. Effective support is given to pupils during group reading sessions, and specific reading and spelling skills are taught well.
103. Teachers' lesson planning is satisfactory overall, although plans do not always show clearly what specific skills pupils of differing abilities are expected to learn in a lesson. All teachers explain the purpose of work clearly and prepare well for lessons. In Years 3 to 6, some teachers do not have high enough expectations for spelling and handwriting and are over-generous with their use of praise. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 work sensibly in small groups when planning stories or writing poems.
104. Pupils are given an appropriate amount of homework, although there is some inconsistency from class to class. They take reading books home and are regularly given other activities to do at home. These activities support learning well. Inspection findings agree with the parents that the books sent home for average and lower attaining pupils in Year 2 are sometimes too easy. Several parents have supported the school effectively by making 'story sacks' to accompany books used with younger pupils.
105. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress over time are very good. The school uses a range of tests to measure pupils' progress from year to year and to provide additional support when needed. All pupils have individual targets in the subject and these are regularly changed. However, teachers' marking is not rigorous enough and this means that pupils are not encouraged to check their own work and do not learn from their mistakes quickly enough. This was also identified as a weakness at the time of the last inspection.
106. Leadership and management of the subject are good and have improved significantly since the time of the last inspection when they were unsatisfactory. The new co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve the quality of pupils' written work. There is a clear action plan to help improve the quality of writing throughout the school.
107. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and covers a broad range of different forms of writing. However, the school's literacy strategy does not ensure that pupils develop satisfactory skills in spelling and handwriting, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Appropriate use is made of information and communication technology to support the development of pupils' literacy skills.

108. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development, with stories and poems from other cultures being shared in lessons. There is a good range of resources to support learning in the subject although limited use is made of the school library for independent research.

MATHEMATICS

109. Pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 2 and average by the end of Year 6. This is confirmed by test data for 2002 and 2003 at both the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. This means that compared to the last inspection standards have risen in both age groups. In most of the classes in Years 3 to 6, pupils' attainment is above average. In the period between the two inspections standards dropped significantly by the end of Year 6. This was largely due to some classes experiencing many different teachers. However, over the last year, pupils' attainment in Year 6 has nearly returned to previous levels.
110. 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 know simple fractions. Currently they are working on techniques of how to gather information and record it on a tally chart and then onto a graph.
111. 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 and have a sound grasp of the four rules, place value and the links between fractions, decimals and percentages. Good work was also seen on ratio and proportion, angles, co-ordinates and conversions between different units of measure. Currently the pupils are learning how to solve problems, what rules and procedures to use when confronted with a mathematical puzzle; this will lead on to algebra. The pupils are encouraged to use the correct mathematical language when dealing with problems in the subject and are able to do so.
112. 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 two out of the six observed good and two very good. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection, when some unsatisfactory teaching was observed. 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 tackle 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 very good lessons, the pace, levels of concentration, effort and progress are very high.
113. The mathematics curriculum is broad and balanced. The numeracy strategy is now firmly embedded in school practice and is having a good impact on standards. Most pupils in the school generally complete a good quantity of work in lessons although pupils in Year 6 do not participate willingly in whole class activities led by the teacher. Numeracy lessons are divided into parts, so as to make sound use of available time. For example, lessons have an effective warm-up and an appropriate review ("the plenary") at the end. All of the pupils are very aware of their own learning, with lesson objectives being made clear at the start of each session. Homework is set and supports learning satisfactorily. Some use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning in this subject.
114. Pupils are encouraged to use their numeracy skills across the curriculum. For example, they use measurements in design and technology and measure or count in science lessons. There are some especially good examples of the use of numeracy skills in science in Year 2, with

pupils making extensive use of charts and graphs to record their findings.

115. Planning for each year group is very good and the teachers have adopted an extensive system for assessing, tracking and targeting pupils' progress. The frequent assessments are used and recorded so as to develop and inform daily planning. Individual targets are set and these are shared with pupils and parents. The school is beginning to make good use of test data to look at the progress of different groups. These procedures are a key factor in the recent rise in standards.
116. Management of the subject is good. There has been subject monitoring of the mathematics teaching by the local education authority, the headteacher and the co-ordinator. The co-ordinator has set clear agendas for improvement, based on a good understanding of what is needed to improve provision.

SCIENCE

117. Pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 2, but below average by the end of Year 6. Standards of attainment have risen since the last inspection in Years 1 to 5, with pupils in these year groups generally working at above average levels. Pupils in Year 6 achieve well in tests but their written work is of poor quality and teaching does not challenge the more able pupils in the year group.
118. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they make good progress in most lessons. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys or girls or pupils from different backgrounds.
119. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress. They have a good knowledge of scientific concepts because topics are studied in great detail so that their learning is secure. As a result of good quality teaching, most pupils achieve at least the level expected for their age (Level 2) and the good levels of challenge provided for more able pupils means that many pupils achieve the higher Level 3.
120. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 confirm the good standards that are being achieved by pupils. In 2002, they showed that the number of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 was in the top 5 per cent nationally when compared with all and similar schools. The number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was broadly average when compared with all schools but below average when compared with similar schools. Inspection findings show that more pupils are working at the higher Level 3 than in 2002, with pupils benefiting from the teacher's high expectations.
121. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of the characteristics of various materials. They group materials according to their properties, recording their findings accurately. Pupils understand the difference between a push and a pull and can identify occasions when each force is being used. Pupils confidently build simple electrical circuits, and they have a good understanding of how electricity can be dangerous. Pupils identify different habitats around the school and explain the various methods of seed dispersal.
122. The commercial science scheme used by the school places a good emphasis on developing practical scientific skills and gives pupils good opportunities to apply their knowledge to investigations. As a result, pupils in Years 1 and 2 confidently undertake a range of experiments and investigations. For example, they carried out an investigation to see whether ice melted more quickly in warm or cool places and they then explained clearly what they had found out.
123. Test results at the end of Year 6 improved in 2002, showing that pupils' attainment was in line with national averages. However, when compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was below average. Inspection findings show that these sound levels of attainment have not been maintained this year. Pupils in Year 6 produce their best work under test conditions. On these

occasions, they try hard. This is reflected in 2003 test scores, where pupils have performed well, with more pupils than in 2002 reaching both the level expected for their age (Level 4), and the higher Level 5. However, these levels of attainment are not evident in pupils' everyday work, which shows below average levels of attainment. Pupils in Year 6 do not participate well in lessons and their progress is unsatisfactory. They are unresponsive and lack motivation. Their recorded work is untidy and often unfinished. There is very little difference between the work of more able or less able pupils.

124. These weaknesses are not evident in Years 3 to 5, where work is of a better standard. For example, pupils in Year 5 produce good quality written work, showing a good understanding of basic scientific topics such as materials, food groups and habitats, as well as a good range of practical skills including data interpretation and the accurate use of instruments to make measurements.
125. By the end of Year 6, pupils know what plants need to keep them alive. They measure accurately in Newtons and identify upward and downward thrusts when studying forces. However, the ability of pupils in Year 6 to apply their scientific knowledge to practical situations is poorly developed. They understand what is meant by a fair test and they measure accurately, using equipment such as thermometers. More able pupils do not have a clear understanding of the difference between an observation, a conclusion and an explanation. Too often, their explanations merely describe what they can see, rather than using scientific knowledge to explain what has happened.
126. The quality of teaching is now satisfactory overall, although there continues to be some variation in quality across the school, with examples of both good and very good teaching as well as unsatisfactory teaching. There was an example of very good teaching seen in Year 5. This lesson was particularly successful because there was a very good pace to learning, with pupils given very good opportunities to learn about how sounds are made through well-planned practical activities. The very practical nature of the work meant that pupils were fully engaged during the lesson. They participated well in discussions, being confident about suggesting their own ideas and willing to listen to the thoughts of others. The lesson was very well resourced and the teacher made effective use of questioning to encourage pupils to think about what is meant by high and low pitch. Work was planned to meet the needs of different ability levels in the class. The teacher very effectively supported more able pupils as they learnt to link the speed of vibration with the pitch of the sound that is produced. A teaching assistant worked with less able pupils, providing good support as they sorted sounds by different criteria such as high and low or soft and loud.
127. This good level of challenge for pupils of differing abilities is not always evident in lessons or in finished work. Methods of recording findings are generally the same, whatever the ability of the pupil, and this is a missed opportunity to extend the learning of more able pupils.
128. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, it is because expectations are not high enough and behaviour is not managed effectively, resulting in pupils not listening when the teacher is talking. On these occasions, pupils do not learn as quickly as they should.
129. Teachers give pupils appropriate opportunities to work on practical tasks, although there are occasions when pupils could be given more opportunity to work independently and to show more initiative in their learning, for example by devising their own investigations or thinking of their own ways of recording their findings. This has the greatest impact on the progress of more able pupils.
130. Pupils are given good opportunities to use their numeracy skills in science lessons. This is particularly so in Year 2, where there are extensive opportunities for pupils to make and draw charts and graphs and to interpret various types of data. In contrast, the overuse of worksheets in some classes means that pupils have too few opportunities to use their literacy skills.
131. The school provides a broad and balanced science curriculum. The time allowed for the subject

is satisfactory, although some lessons in Years 3 to 6 are overlong. When this happens, the pace of learning slows.

132. There are effective systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers mark work regularly, though they rarely add written comments that help to identify what the pupil needs to do to improve. Pupils' spelling is weak and they often make errors in spelling scientific terms. Marking does not pick up on these errors, leading to pupils repeating the error again and again. Occasionally, marking indicates that some teachers are not secure in their subject knowledge.
133. Management of the subject is good. Monitoring of teaching and learning is thorough and this means that the co-ordinator has a clear working knowledge of strengths and weaknesses, including the need to improve the subject knowledge of some teachers. There is a detailed action plan, which sets out clearly key areas for improvement.
134. Resources are good. They have been significantly improved over the last two years. Especially noteworthy are the excellent outdoor resources. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to develop the school's wildlife areas and garden. The garden is especially well planned, with each class having a section that has been planted to support learning in the topics being covered in any particular year. This encourages interesting cross-curricular links. For example, part of the garden has been planted with herbs in the style of an Elizabethan garden to support work in a history topic. Parents and pupils have extensively supported the development of the garden, with a well-attended gardening club overseeing day-to-day maintenance.

ART AND DESIGN

135. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are now making good progress in developing knowledge and skills. The rate of pupils' progress has improved since the time of the last inspection when it was found to be satisfactory and attainment is now good up to the end of Year 5.
136. By the end of Year 2, pupils make good observational drawings and prints showing various patterns seen in the school grounds and use these ideas to make careful clay plaques. Their paintings of parts of the classroom show a good match of line and tone. In Year 1, pupils make interesting sculptures from clay and other natural materials and make some good observational drawings of daffodils.
137. By the end of Year 6, pupils make careful watercolour paintings of plants and have developed imaginative and quirky ideas for decorative hats for a 'mad-hatter's tea party'. However, their observational drawings of moving figures and features in the landscape are not completed carefully and their ability to evaluate each other's work is limited. Pupils in Year 5 make careful sketches of a hand, showing effective use of shading and they mix paints well when decorating containers made from papier maché in the style of fruits sculpted by Kate Malone. In Year 4, pupils make some good sketches of chairs and of Tudor Kings and Queens and Year 3 pupils make careful repeat patterns by printing with different colours.
138. As at the time of the last inspection, the quality of teaching is good overall with an example of very good teaching in Year 5. In the very good lesson, careful explanations and the infectious enthusiasm of the teacher ensured that pupils concentrated very well. Careful prompting by the teacher encouraged pupils to share good ideas and skills with each other. Throughout the school, lessons are well prepared and tasks are explained clearly, enabling pupils to work quickly. Most pupils are enthusiastic about art and design and work hard in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively.
139. The subject is led and managed well and the co-ordinator has clear plans for the future development of the subject. The curriculum has been improved since the time of the last inspection to include a wider range of media, and is now good. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of other cultures. For example, pupils in Year 4 make

interesting Islamic patterns. There are effective links with the local community. For example, two classes have visited an exhibition of sculpture and one class has collected different coloured soils to make their own pigments. A good range of resources supports learning effectively. Appropriate arrangements have been made for assessing what pupils have learned.

140. Good use is made of ICT to make geometric designs. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 make lively and colourful pictures in the style of Mondrian and Jackson Pollock. A group of girls enjoy attending art club where they have the opportunity to work with various materials. For example, during the inspection they made attractive butterflies from wire and cellophane.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

141. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and broadly in line with expectations by the end of Year 6. At the time of the last inspection, no judgements were made about attainment and progress by the end of Year 2 due to a lack of evidence. Attainment and progress by the end of Year 6 were judged to be unsatisfactory. Attainment is rising throughout the school and pupils now make satisfactory or better progress in all lessons throughout the school.
142. By the end of Year 2, pupils cut and join a range of materials successfully and make winding mechanisms and puppets from a range of materials. They make good designs for their models and list the materials needed. Pupils are starting to evaluate their own work critically. For example, a higher attaining pupil commented on the effectiveness of joins on her vehicle by noting that 'the axle kept falling off' but was pleased with the realistic appearance of the 'tyres'.
143. By the end of Year 6, pupils write clear step by step instructions to show how models are to be made. They take care when constructing slippers using a range of suitable materials. They plan what they are going to make, often including dimensions and the materials they intend using. Pupils make satisfactory evaluations of commercial products. For example, pupils in Year 5 made some sensible observations about various types of biscuit. However, older pupils do not evaluate their own work critically enough to show how their designs might be improved. In Year 3, pupils' attainment is good. They are able to explain how a model can move through the use of pneumatics and they use their imaginations well when making monsters from carefully drawn plans. Higher attaining pupils modify their designs to overcome difficulties encountered and all pupils make accurate drawings showing how commercial packaging is made.
144. Throughout the school, pupils are enthusiastic about design and technology lessons and behave well. They are especially well behaved when working on practical tasks. For example, in a lesson in Year 3, pupils co-operated with each other well and shared resources sensibly when making pneumatic monsters. However, pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not all take care in their written work and often spell words incorrectly, including subject specific vocabulary.
145. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement about the quality of teaching at the end of Year 2. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall, with an example of good teaching in Year 6. In the good lesson, a teaching assistant worked with half the class and used quick fire questioning effectively to engage the pupils' interest and to help them prepare plans for motorised vehicles. Firm behaviour management ensured that pupils were attentive and used the correct vocabulary to describe each component.
146. Throughout the school, lessons are prepared thoroughly and resources are readily available. Teachers plan an interesting range of activities and two well-trained teaching assistants make a particularly valuable contribution to pupils' learning, teaching skills and sharing knowledge effectively. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in lessons, enabling them to take a full part in all activities.
147. The curriculum has improved since the time of the last inspection and is now good. A clear scheme of work and suggested lesson plans help support teachers in their work. Pupils have

the opportunity to take part in a good range of interesting activities. For example, in Year 6, pupils put up real tents before building their own structures from rolled paper. The subject makes a good contribution towards pupils' social development and pupils usually work together in small groups sharing ideas and tasks sensibly.

148. The subject is led and managed well and has been a recent area of focus. The subject co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and has a good understanding of areas that require further development. A useful portfolio of pupils' work is being developed to show how skills progress throughout the school. Procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. ICT is used appropriately to support learning in the subject. For example, pupils in Year 5 were learning how to build and programme a small toy. Resources for the subject have improved since the time of the last inspection and are now good.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

149. In both geography and history, standards have improved since the last inspection, with pupils' attainment now above national expectations by the end of Year 2, and in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. There are examples of good work in Years 3 to 5, with pupils generally achieving well because of the imaginative use of resources and a good quality curriculum. The curriculum is carefully planned, ensuring good coverage of the content of each subject and the necessary progression of the skills from year-to-year. Geography and history are taught in blocks of alternating half terms, but teachers are successful in establishing good natural links between the two subjects. This helps to make learning purposeful.
150. Pupils' attainment is weaker in Year 6 than in the rest of the school. In Year 6, time is lost preparing for National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science. The school is aware that there is a lack of balance in the subjects for pupils in Year 6, which limits their progress but there are suitable plans to adjust the curriculum in the next academic year. Nevertheless, at the moment, the quantity and quality of work in Year 6 is not as good as in other classes. Work is often untidy or incomplete, and in lessons pupils show a lack of interest in taking part in discussions.
151. In history, pupils have developed their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past; for example by visiting places of local historical importance, and looking at houses, transport, schools, household objects and clothes from the past. They use photographs to 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 how seaside holidays have changed over time and they 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 understood. In Years 3 to 6, pupils study historical topics such as 'The Tudors' and 'The Romans' in more detail. Pupils in Year 3 have a good recollection of recent work on 'The Tudors'. They can identify key dates in the period, describing lifestyles and explaining how they can find information about the past. In Year 5, work on 'The Victorians' has been thorough. Pupils have been given good opportunities to carry out research for themselves using a range of evidence. Pupils confidently describe how life has changed since then, explaining why they would not like to have been a Victorian child. Pupils in Year 6 have studied 'The Greeks' but they have produced far less work than other classes, and have a limited recall of what they have been taught.
152. In geography, pupils in Years 1 and 2 draw simple maps of the local area and describe different sorts of transport. They are able to locate the continents on a world map and understand that not all places are the same. They develop a good understanding of the differences between locations, with the journeys of 'Barnaby Bear' making a good contribution to learning. The bear travels extensively each year, sending back reports and descriptions about where he has been. Pupils in Year 2 carry out an extensive study of Mexico. They explain very clearly how Mexico is different from Hertfordshire, comparing land use, employment, homes and climate. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a more extensive knowledge of their own and other countries. In Year 3, pupils learn about the USA, beginning to use appropriate geographical vocabulary to describe

transport, land use and the landscape. Pupils in Year 4 accurately explain why people move and settle in different places. In Year 5, work is closely linked to a residential visit to the Isle of Wight. Pupils show good map skills, interpreting evidence in atlases and larger scale maps. In Year 6, pupils have studied rivers. This work lacks detail and does not significantly extend learning beyond skills taught in Year 5.

153. Most pupils enjoy history and geography; they behave well and, with the exception of Year 6, have good positive attitudes to both subjects. 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.
154. The quality of teaching is good overall. The teaching in both subjects in Years 1 to 5 motivates the pupils who, in turn, apply themselves well and show interest in their history and geography. In Year 6 there is a small group of disaffected pupils who rarely contribute and this has a negative effect on the learning atmosphere. In both subjects good teaching skills were seen. For example, in a good lesson in Year 5, the teacher focused the pupils well on the task of looking at and examining census from 1851 and 1891. Pupils were interested and well motivated as they began to identify differences between the two sources of data. Good quality questioning supported their learning well, with most pupils understanding, by the end of the lesson, how patterns of settlement changed between 1851 and 1891.
155. The support given to the teaching staff by teaching assistants greatly enhances the pupils' learning opportunities.
156. There is a good curriculum, with topics studied in great detail in Years 1 to 5. The school day has been changed so that there is time for an additional one-hour lesson during each morning. This has meant that there is more opportunity than is found in many schools to study subjects in depth. This has a good impact on the quality of learning. However, there are some weaknesses in current provision. In both geography and history, there is very little recorded work in Year 6 and pupils generally complete the same piece of work, whatever their age or prior attainment. There are few opportunities for independent research, for example by using the library. As a result, there is sometimes insufficient challenge for more able pupils.
157. Careful use of time available in each day means there are some planned opportunities for cross-curricular links between not only history and geography. Numeracy skills are developed by presenting and interpreting information in charts and graphs, while language skills are developed through written and spoken presentations of ideas. There are good assessment and recording procedures. These now need further developing to assist in day-to-day planning.
158. Geography and history are led by two enthusiastic, knowledgeable and keen co-ordinators who manage the subjects well, leading to standards that are rising in most of the school. Helpful monitoring of teachers' planning by the co-ordinator helps to ensure the progression of skills and coverage of the curriculum.
159. The use of visits, visitors and trips greatly enhances the teaching of both subjects. It is to be regretted that in Year 6, after a long piece of work on rivers, lack of support from a small group of parents meant that a proposed fieldwork visit to a local river to complete the project did not take place.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

160. There have been good improvements since the last inspection and pupils' attainment is now in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There is a well-planned curriculum, with ICT now being taught in all classes. The newly resourced ICT suite is having a good impact on learning.
161. In Years 1 and 2, pupils show sound basic skills. They successfully identify the different parts

of a computer and they move the mouse accurately when playing language or mathematics games. They write simple text using word-processing programmes and most pupils know how to change the font of their writing, using different styles to make their work interesting. Pupils produce simple graphs using data-handling programmes. For example, pupils in Year 2 produce pictograms, graphs and charts showing pet ownership in the class. They successfully use an art programme to produce good quality pictures in the style of Mondrian and Jackson Pollock that are attractively displayed in the classroom.

162. In Years 3 to 6, there remain some areas of comparative weakness. This is 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. Nevertheless, they display an appropriate range of skills for their age. They are especially confident about using word-processing techniques to edit and improve their work. They successfully 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 where pupils added photographs to make a report on a residential visit to Somerset more interesting.
163. Pupils are developing appropriate skills in control technology. Recently purchased control equipment is used well by teachers so that pupils have a good understanding of how to programme a computer to follow instructions and make a machine move. Pupils are beginning to use the internet to carry out research in different topics, although this is not well developed and has been identified by the subject co-ordinator as an area for improvement.
164. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Good use is made of the ICT suite to develop basic skills, with lessons well organised to take account of the fact that there are not enough computers for a whole class to work at once. Explanations are clear, and a large screen is used effectively to introduce new skills step-by-step. Pupils enjoy working on the computers and respond well to the work that they are given. There is generally a good pace to learning, although occasional problems with hardware or software can mean that time is wasted.
165. There is a broad and balanced curriculum, covering all aspects of the subject. Teachers are beginning to use ICT to support learning across the curriculum, although this varies from class to class, with some teachers still lacking confidence in teaching the subject. Nevertheless, during the inspection, pupils were observed developing their skills in a range of subjects, including literacy, numeracy, geography and science. This gives pupils good opportunities to practise new skills and helps to reinforce learning and to make their work purposeful.
166. Developments in the subject have been well managed by the co-ordinator who provides good leadership. There has been a focus on raising the profile of ICT, improving the ICT suite and developing resources. These targets have been achieved and the quality and range of resources is now satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been able to monitor teaching and learning and this has helped to develop a good awareness of how provision in the subject can be further improved. There are appropriate plans in place to develop more detailed assessment procedures based on end-of-topic tests, introducing a local authority scheme of work and further improving the skills of teachers. Inspection findings show that these are appropriate priorities for the school.

MUSIC

167. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement about pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because there were no lessons on the timetable in these year groups during the inspection. Nevertheless, attainment by the end of Year 5 is good and pupils of all ages sing tunefully in assemblies.
168. By the end of Year 2, pupils maintain pitch and line when singing a tune in two parts and create simple compositions using untuned percussion. By the end of Year 5, pupils sing sweetly in three parts, keeping time with the music well. They write compositions using graphic scoring and capture the structure of Copland's 'Fanfare to the Common Man' effectively using tuned and untuned percussion. Pupils' attainment and progress were satisfactory throughout the school at

the time of the last inspection. Evidence indicates that attainment is rising.

169. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement on the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6, with examples of good and unsatisfactory teaching. In the good lesson, the subject co-ordinator set specific tasks to help pupils evaluate each other's compositions and used her very good subject knowledge well to encourage pupils to increase their understanding and skills. In the unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher provided insufficiently challenging work and pupils were inattentive when not taking part in practical tasks.
170. The subject is led and managed effectively. The very enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator has selected a new scheme of work to help support teachers with less secure subject knowledge to plan an appropriate curriculum. Since the last inspection, satisfactory arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have been developed and the school has identified the need to improve the use of these procedures to help plan future lessons.
171. There are good educational resources to support learning, including some purchased with funds raised by parents. The good range of pre-recorded music includes examples from various cultures. Pupils are given the opportunity to compose music by using a computer programme and there are clear action plans to develop the use of ICT further.
172. The curriculum is good overall and parents are rightly pleased with the provision for music. There are some effective links between music and other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 4 listened to Tudor music as part of a history topic and identified some of the musical instruments used at that time. The school provides a very wide range of multicultural music workshops and visitors, including a percussion workshop and a performance by a rock and roll band.
173. There is a very good range of clubs and opportunities for individual tuition on various instruments are made available to all pupils. A large number of pupils from Years 2 to 6 take part in these activities. The choir, including over a quarter of pupils from Years 3 to 6, performs to a very high standard. These pupils demonstrate very good diction, maintenance of pitch and timing, clear phrasing and interesting use of dynamics. Pupils perform regularly in public and take part successfully in local music festivals. These additional musical activities make a valuable contribution to the musical knowledge of these pupils and contribute very successfully to their social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

174. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection.
175. In Year 2, pupils improve their throwing and catching skills, making good progress. In Year 3, the pupils are learning how to sprint and jump hurdles. They are beginning to do this competently. In Years 4 and 5, good quality teaching by the subject co-ordinator helps both boys and the girls to improve the stances and skills of eye to hand co-ordination necessary to strike the ball, field and throw. In gymnastic lessons in Year 6, pupils develop movement sequence, using balances and counter balances. They are starting to move around the hall with increasing poise and fluency and beginning to move with rhythm and to develop good quality sequences.
176. Swimming is part of the curriculum for pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5; the pupils make good progress and report that they enjoy the sessions. The school's records show that 100 per cent of the pupils achieve the national target of being able to swim 25 metres by end of Year 6.
177. Throughout the school, pupils are starting to learn how to improve their performance by evaluation and discussion. They are developing a good awareness of the need to keep healthy and they understand how exercise can affect the body.

178. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with examples of good and very good teaching. Lessons are carefully planned and gradually develop the skill or sequence that is the lesson objective. Teachers give clear instructions, which emphasise how improvements can be made. Praise is used effectively to encourage the less able. In all lessons, pupils are expected to warm up and cool down correctly at the start or end of a period of exercise. Most of the teachers act as good role models by changing for the lessons and all of the pupils change into suitable clothing. 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, but behaviour is sometimes unsatisfactory. This happens when work is inappropriate and lacks challenge or when teachers follow a commercial scheme of work without taking sufficient account of the needs of the pupils they are teaching.
179. The subject is well led by a keen co-ordinator. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the management of the subject was unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator supports colleagues effectively and has a good understanding of areas for development. There have been limited opportunities for monitoring the quality of teaching, but where it has taken place, it has been helpful in improving the quality of provision.
180. The quality of resources and accommodation is good. There are spacious playing fields and school hall and they are used well.
181. The curriculum is broad and balanced, being based around the expectations of a commercial scheme of work. A good range of extra-curricular activities effectively enriches the curriculum and extends learning beyond lessons. There is a good range of after-school sports activities with competitive matches against other schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

182. Pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 but below expectations by the end of Year 6. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made satisfactory progress over the past year. The quantity and quality of pupils' recorded work is improving and is better than at the time of the last inspection, especially in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are making quicker progress in developing knowledge and understanding, although pupils in Year 6 have not achieved as well as they should over time.
183. By the end of Year 2, pupils retell Bible stories and gain understanding of basic facts about various religious leaders. They understand the difference between good and evil and can list actions that fall into each category, such as 'kindness' or 'cruelty'. Following a visit to the church, they can identify important features such as the font, lectern and pulpit and they understand some of the reasons for people going to church. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are enthusiastic in lessons and work hard. They write thoughtful prayers and describe what they have learned in their own words.
184. By the end of Year 6, pupils have limited recall of the work they have covered in the past and sometimes muddle information about various faiths. They know that religions include different values and traditions and that sometimes behaviour is influenced by beliefs. For example, they know that some people are vegetarians because they believe in reincarnation. They understand that people make individual choices, that actions taken do not always follow religious teaching and that we have responsibilities for looking after the world. Pupils in Year 6 show unsatisfactory attitudes towards the subject by being reluctant to answer questions in lessons and by not always presenting their work neatly.
185. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory overall, with an example of good teaching in Year 4. In the good lesson, part of the story of the crucifixion was read with good expression and the teacher asked effective questions enabling pupils to empathise with characters in the story. Lessons are prepared thoroughly and teachers explain clearly what pupils are to do and learn. Whilst teachers mark pupils' work regularly, they do not often include comments to encourage pupils to improve. Teachers' expectations of

pupils' written work are not high enough in Years 3 to 6 and spelling and handwriting are particular weaknesses. In Year 6, several pieces of writing have been copied and this means that there is insufficient challenge in the way pupils record what they have learned. Some parents of pupils in Year 6 expressed concern about the way pupils copy work.

186. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, with improvements having been made since the time of the last inspection. There is a scheme of work to support teachers' lesson planning and pupils have suitable opportunities to learn about the major world faiths and how they influence the lives and actions of their followers. The school is aware that there is a lack of balance in the subject for pupils in Year 6. This has limited their progress but there are suitable plans to adjust the curriculum in the next academic year. Effective use is made of pupils' literacy skills in Years 1 and 2 where pupils write independent accounts about what they have learned. Nevertheless, there are few opportunities for older pupils to carry out independent study.
187. The subject is led and managed well. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable about the subject and has clear plans for improving provision. There have been no opportunities to monitor teaching and learning this year but a scrutiny of pupils' work has helped the co-ordinator to identify appropriate areas for development.
188. Religious education makes an effective contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. There are good links with the local community and people representing various cultures regularly visit to explain their faith and what it means to them. Effective use is made of bought and borrowed resources. For example, in Year 6, a teaching assistant provided the class with interesting photographs of Buddhist temples. Pupils in Years 1 to 3 walk to the local Anglican and Methodist churches and older pupils have heard talks by leaders of different faiths.
189. Assemblies make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding, with suitable opportunities for reflection on spiritual matters. For example, the Year 3 teacher provided pupils with a 'thought for the day', following a Native American story about sharing.