

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GADE VALLEY JMI SCHOOL**

Hemel Hempstead

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117249

Headteacher: Mrs. P. Bandle

Reporting inspector: Mike Capper  
23239

Dates of inspection: September 30<sup>th</sup> – October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2002

Inspection number: 247753

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:	Boys and girls
School address:	Gadebridge Road Hemel Hempstead Herts
Postcode:	HP1 3DT
Telephone number:	01442 391324
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. F. Breadin
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23239	Mike Capper	Registered inspector	Mathematics ICT Physical Education  Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1112	Peter Oldfield	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
23658	Stephen Parker	Team Inspector	English Geography History Educational Inclusion	How good are curricular opportunities?
23609	Alison Cartlidge	Team inspector	Science Art and Design Design and Technology Music RE Special Educational Needs	How well are pupils taught?

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>25</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Gade Valley JMI School is located in Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire. Pupils are admitted between the ages of 3 and 11, with most coming from the area surrounding the school. Pupils are taught in 8 classes, including a nursery, with one class for each year group. There are 215 pupils on roll; 18 of these attend the nursery part-time for mornings only. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds, with a below average number of pupils eligible for free school meals. There are 51 pupils on the special educational needs register, most of whom have learning difficulties, with two pupils having statements of special educational need. These figures are broadly in line with the national average. Test results show that pupils' attainment on entering the nursery is slightly above average. There are no pupils with English as an additional language.

The headteacher was appointed in January 2002. The school is in an area where teacher recruitment is difficult and there is a high turnover of staff, with approximately 25% of staff leaving each year to move to other areas or promoted posts. The school's catchment area is the subject of ongoing negotiations with the local authority, but it currently means that on occasions class sizes in the reception class and Years 1 and 2 rise above 30. When this happens, the school makes short-term teaching appointments in order to comply with statutory requirements. At the time of the inspection, there was an additional teacher working in Year 2.

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

The school has many strengths that help pupils to achieve well by the end of Year 6. The headteacher is a strong and effective leader. There is good quality teaching in the nursery and reception classes and in Years 3 to 6. Pupils behave well in school and most develop positive attitudes towards learning. However, there are important weaknesses in provision for pupils in Year 1 that are having a negative impact on the overall effectiveness of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have established a clear, shared vision for the development of the school.
- Reading skills are well developed throughout the school and, in Year 6, pupils' attainment is above average in English, mathematics and science.
- The good quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 ensures that pupils make good progress.
- The nursery and the reception class curriculum is rich and varied, helping children to achieve well in all areas of learning, with personal and social skills being particularly well developed.
- Members of staff work well as a team and ensure that the school provides a safe, caring and welcoming environment where all pupils are valued.
- Pupils are polite and friendly and enjoy coming to school.

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

- Teaching and learning in Year 1.
- Pupils' attainment in writing in Years 1 and 2.
- Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress over time.

*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 its last inspection in 1998. By the end of year 6, standards are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection in English, mathematics and science. The quality of teachers' planning in the nursery is now good and weaknesses in information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology and art and design have been addressed. At the time of the last inspection, teaching in Year 1 was weak. Despite a change in personnel, this remains the case and is now an identified priority for further school improvement.

## **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	C	C	E
mathematics	D	D	C	D
science	C	C	B	C

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 achieve very good standards in personal, social and emotional development and are on target to exceed expectations for their age by the end of the reception year. Children achieve good standards in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and mathematical, physical and creative development.

The results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 have been high for the last two years. However, inspection findings show that the current Year 2 is not achieving the same high standards. These pupils are now making satisfactory progress in lessons, but they have made unsatisfactory progress over time due to weak teaching in Year 1. There is similar underachievement in the present Year 1. In these year groups, standards are not as high as they should be, with pupils' attainment in the present Year 2 above average for their age in reading but well below average in writing. In mathematics and science, pupils' attainment is broadly average, although few pupils are achieving at higher levels than expected for their age.

Test results for pupils at the end of Year 6 have been improving. Inspection findings confirm that these improvements are being maintained. Pupils in Year 6 are benefiting from especially good teaching, which is addressing gaps in learning that have arisen over previous years. This means that the attainment in the current Year 6 is now above average in English, mathematics and science.

Standards of attainment are satisfactory overall in religious education, history and geography. However, in these subjects, learning is not of consistent quality throughout the school. There are variations in the time allowed for teaching each subject from class to class and this leads to some learning being too superficial. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in art and design, ICT, design and technology, music and physical education, with singing and swimming being good.

The school makes good use of assessments to help set realistic targets for attainment at the end of Year 6. The school successfully achieved the targets set for 2002.

### PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Most pupils work hard, try their best and participate well in school life. However, in Years 1 and 2, pupils show less interest in their work. They often lack independence and require a lot of adult support to keep them on task.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well in lessons and at playtimes and move around the school sensibly.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Pupils get on well together. The school council helps pupils to learn how to take responsibility. They do this well.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are 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	Satisfactory, overall	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall with one in four lessons being very good or better. Basic skills in numeracy and literacy are taught well in most classes, but there are significant weaknesses in teaching in Year 1 where lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' previous work show that teaching is unsatisfactory overall.

In the nursery and the reception class, members of staff work together effectively, providing a very good range of exciting and purposeful activities. A particular strength of teaching is in personal, social and emotional development and this area of learning is taught very well. Teachers have very high expectations and there are very good opportunities for children to work together and to learn good manners and behaviour. The very strong relationships that have developed between members of staff and children means that the children feel secure and happy and are confident when trying out new activities.

In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with examples of unsatisfactory teaching in Year 1. Teachers prepare well for lessons and provide interesting resources in some lessons to make learning more meaningful. Teaching is most successful when pupils are engaged in practical tasks or when they are sufficiently interested in what the teacher or other pupils are saying during discussions. However, children in Year 1 learn too slowly because they lose interest in their work when the tasks they have been given are not matched well to their needs or they are unclear about what they are expected to do. There are a few pupils in Years 1 and 2 who have been identified as having specific behavioural difficulties and whilst they are making good progress overall, their behaviour, along with that of some of the other pupils, is not always managed firmly enough.

In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching is good overall, with examples of very good and excellent teaching in Years 4 to 6. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' attainment and behaviour. A very good range of teaching methods, including 'setting' in mathematics in Years 5 and 6, promote good learning and help pupils to concentrate well. Pupils are actively involved in their learning because teachers write comments on their work to help them improve and share the purpose of each lesson with them. Teachers are very enthusiastic and this inspires pupils to work especially well. Pupils are able to concentrate and work quickly because tasks are explained clearly.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum in the nursery and the reception class is very good, with the use of the outdoor areas especially strong. In the rest of the school, subjects such as religious education, history and geography are not always allowed enough time. Members of staff work hard to make learning interesting and relevant to the pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Provision is well managed. Effective support from teachers and teaching assistants helps pupils to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. School assemblies make a strong contribution to pupils' moral development. Teachers value pupils' ideas and give a clear lead in showing consistent care and concern for all members of the school community. Pupils learn to respect different beliefs and values.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good procedures are in place for ensuring pupils' welfare. The school has sound procedures for assessing learning in English, mathematics and science, but there is an inconsistent approach to record keeping. This means that teachers are not always well informed about what needs to be taught next, especially at the start of each



	academic year.
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The school has good links with parents. The headteacher works hard to keep them well informed and involved in school life.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides good leadership for the work of the school and has enabled and encouraged all members of staff to become more involved in the management of the school in their roles as subject leaders and class teachers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors have a clear understanding of most of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They play a good part in leading school development and supporting the headteacher.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Overall, satisfactory. There is a systematic programme for monitoring teaching and learning but this has not identified the extent of weaknesses in teaching in Year 1 that were found during the inspection. The headteacher has established sound procedures for analysing test data to identify where improvement is necessary.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The day-to-day management of finances by the headteacher, finance committee and school secretary is very good. Budgeting by the headteacher and governing body is systematic and based on a good understanding of the needs of the school. Decisions are made on the basis of 'Will this help the school to improve?' This means that best value principles are applied well.

Staffing levels are satisfactory. There is a good number of teaching assistants. They are well trained and have a good impact on learning. In the nursery, a nursery nurse gives the teacher very good support. There are an appropriate number of teachers but, during the inspection, the additional teacher in Year 2 was not used efficiently and made only a limited contribution to pupils' learning. Administrative staff make a very good contribution to the life of the school. They are very welcoming to visitors. Midday supervisors help to keep lunchtimes calm and harmonious.

Accommodation and resources are good, although the nursery is cramped when all of the children are working inside. A conscientious and hard-working site manager and cleaners keep the building very clean and tidy.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The leadership of the headteacher</li> <li>• The progress made by children</li> <li>• The approachability of teachers</li> <li>• Special educational needs support</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard and behave well</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extracurricular provision</li> <li>• A more consistent approach towards homework</li> <li>• Information about children's progress</li> <li>• Staff turnover</li> </ul>

Inspection findings support most of parents' positive comments, although the teacher's expectations of progress and behaviour should be higher in Year 1. The inspection team feels that extracurricular provision is good, and current arrangements for homework are satisfactory, although there were some weaknesses last year, caused partly by changes in staff. Reports to parents usually give good detail of pupils' attainment and progress, although there were some inconsistencies at the end of the last academic year when a class had been taken by supply teachers. The school has a high staff turnover, but this is beyond the school's control. There are good systems in place to support new teachers.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Pupils' standards of attainment have risen overall since the last inspection. By the end of Year 6, they are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection in English, mathematics, science, ICT, design and technology and art and design. This represents good progress over time, although there remain issues over attainment and progress in Years 1 and 2.
2. Children's attainment on starting school in the nursery varies from intake to intake, but overall, it is slightly above average. This is confirmed by teacher assessments made in the children's first few weeks at school. Overall, children achieve good standards in both the nursery and the reception class. Standards are very good in personal, social and emotional development and children are on target to exceed expectations for their age by the end of the reception year. Standards are good in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and mathematical, physical and creative development.
3. National Curriculum test scores at the end of Year 2 in 2002, show that pupils' attainment was well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was above average in mathematics and average in reading and writing. In science, teacher assessments show that most pupils achieved the expected Level 2, but a lower than average number of pupils achieved the higher Level 3. Test scores have been consistently high for the last 2 years. However, inspection findings show that the current Year 2 is not achieving as well as in the previous 2 years. An analysis of assessments and work in class shows that these pupils have made unsatisfactory progress over time. In the present Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average for their age in reading, with pupils supported well at home. In mathematics and science, pupils' attainment is broadly average, although, few pupils are achieving at higher than expected levels for their age. In writing, pupils' attainment is well below average and is a significant cause for concern.
4. Test results for pupils by the end of Year 6 have improved over the last two years. Inspection findings confirm that this improvement is being maintained and, in Year 6, pupils are benefiting from especially good teaching, which is addressing weaknesses that have arisen over previous years. This means that attainment in the present Year 6 is now above average in English, mathematics and science. In English, pupils' attainment is better in reading than in writing. National Curriculum tests in 2002 were significantly higher than in 2001, with pupils' attainment above average in science and average in English and mathematics when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was well below average in English, below average in mathematics and average in science. In 2002, there was good improvement in the numbers of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science. However, in writing, no pupils achieved the higher Level 5. This issue is being successfully addressed in the current Year 6 class. The inspection found standards in writing in the present Year 6 to be improving significantly, as a result of high expectations expressed through challenging targets and determined teaching.
5. Test data and inspection findings show that there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
6. By the end of Year 6, standards of literacy are good overall. Pupils have good reading skills and speak confidently in a range of situations by the end of Year 6. They can plan and write stories, and are beginning to develop their description of characters and story settings using a range of verbs, adverbs and adjectives. Older pupils write purposefully in all subjects.
7. In numeracy, pupils achieve good standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils add and subtract competently by the end of Year 6, including numbers with two decimal places. They calculate

the area of a range of regular and irregular shapes. Higher attaining pupils use a wider range of strategies to tackle more complex problems. Lower attaining pupils have a less secure knowledge of decimals and fractions and of the value of each digit in large numbers.

8. Throughout the school, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. In geography and history, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, in these three subjects, learning is not of consistent quality throughout the school, with variations in the time allowed for teaching each subject varying from class to class and leading to some learning being too superficial.
9. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6 in art and design and design and technology. In art and design, drawing and painting skills are immature throughout the school, especially where the class has not benefited from specialist teaching. In physical education, swimming skills are well developed but standards are in line with national expectations overall. In music, pupils sing well, with other aspects of the subject being in line with national expectations.
10. In ICT, pupils' attainment is now in line with national expectations. They are beginning to make good progress because of the improved resources and more effective use of the ICT suite to support learning in different subjects.
11. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs receive good quality support from learning support assistants, and they make good progress overall. They are given detailed individual education plans, which help to ensure that their needs are met. More able or gifted pupils are well supported in lessons in Years 3 to 6, particularly when the organisation of classes means that they are able to work with pupils of similar high attainment. This is less evident in Years 1 and 2. The school has identified the need to develop a policy towards the teaching of gifted and talented pupils to ensure that there is more consistent practice across the school.
12. The school makes good use of assessments of pupils' work to help set statutory targets for achievement at the end of Year 6. These targets are based on a good knowledge of pupils' prior learning and are realistically challenging. The school successfully achieved the targets set for 2002.

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

13. Pupils are happy at school and most behave well. This makes a good contribution to improving standards and rates of progress in the school. Most pupils have a positive attitude to their work and show good levels of respect for others' feelings, values and beliefs. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection, and the school continues to be a friendly place for pupils where most of them show a good willingness to learn. The caring atmosphere that has been maintained by the headteacher and other members of staff makes a good contribution to the learning of all pupils.
14. Members of staff have very high expectations of children when they start school in the nursery. This helps them to settle well into school life so that they quickly become happy and confident. They are given opportunities to choose activities. When they do so, they behave sensibly. Children in the nursery and the reception class are enthusiastic about their schoolwork, try hard in activities, and learn to co-operate with each other. They show respect for property as well as care and concern for each other. They develop a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Their relationships with adults in the class are very good.
15. The school works hard to provide a friendly and welcoming environment for pupils. Clear rules are displayed in classrooms, and most pupils respond well to these requests. However, in some lessons in Years 1 and 2 pupils do not always concentrate and they need support from members of staff to help them stay on task. Pupils in these year groups lack independence and

their behaviour and attitudes are unsatisfactory when teachers do not have high enough expectations. In contrast, pupils in Years 3 to 6 work well and have good attitudes towards learning. They are very enthusiastic about their work and concentrate well. There is no evidence of bullying being a concern to pupils or parents. Pupils have a good understanding of what to do if they have a concern and feel it is dealt with well if they need to talk to a teacher. The number of exclusions is low, with only one fixed term exclusion in the last academic year.

16. The school admits pupils with a variety of backgrounds and needs. This helps pupils to appreciate that everyone is different and encourages them to learn to tolerate each other. Pupils' attitudes to work, to each other and aspects of school life are influenced by the good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development emphasised in assemblies and many lessons.
17. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to work as a result of the friendly and practical support they get from teaching assistants. However, the severe learning difficulties and challenging behaviour of a very small number of younger pupils disrupts the learning of others, although teachers and support staff work very hard to include them fully in all activities.
18. Personal development is satisfactory, with relationships a strong element of school life. Pupils have good relationships with class teachers and teaching assistants and these make a significant contribution to their personal development. As a result, pupils integrate well and treat each other with respect. They play together happily and share equipment and take turns. Older pupils are pleased to take an active part in daily routines. They willingly act as register monitors and lunchtime helpers and assist teachers in a wide variety of tasks. The school council is a very worthwhile project, which helps to involve pupils in making decisions about the day-to-day life of the school. Pupils take this responsibility very seriously.
19. Attendance levels are satisfactory and are broadly in line with the national average. Most pupils arrive punctually and lessons start promptly.

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

20. The quality of teaching is good overall with one in four lessons being very good or better. Basic skills in numeracy and literacy are taught well in most classes. However, there are significant weaknesses in teaching in Year 1, where lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' work show that teaching is unsatisfactory overall.
21. In the nursery and the reception class, members of staff work together effectively, providing a very good range of exciting and purposeful activities and good quality teaching. They have a good knowledge of the early years' curriculum and are very good at ensuring that children develop good basic skills in literacy, numeracy. Well-chosen activities make lessons fun and encourage children to work quickly and become fully involved in their learning. For example, a 'farm shop' with real vegetables enabled nursery children to gain good knowledge about the world around them. The 'food' theme was continued effectively in the reception class when children helped to make the unusual cake described in the book they had been sharing.
22. A particular strength in teaching in the nursery and the reception class is in personal, social and emotional development. This area of learning is taught very well. Teachers have very high expectations and there are very good opportunities for children to work together and to learn good manners and behaviour. Children are helped to take the initiative by selecting and planning some of their own activities. They sustain interest in these activities very well. At the end of each 'planning' session children enjoy discussing what they have 'planned' with members of staff and their classmates. The very strong relationships that are evident in lessons mean that the children feel secure and happy and are confident when trying out new activities. All children are required to choose activities for themselves, although older and higher attaining children have limited opportunities to explain their 'plans' in greater detail than they do in the nursery. Attractive and imaginatively arranged outdoor areas are used as very successful extensions to

the classrooms. Children have access to these areas at all times when they are not working in small groups with a member of staff. The nursery nurse and teaching assistant make a very valuable contribution to the children's learning by leading small groups and supporting individuals well during whole class activities.

23. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with examples of unsatisfactory teaching in Year 1. The weak teaching is having a negative impact on learning in Year 1 and has resulted in underachievement in the present Year 2. Nevertheless, teachers prepare well for lessons and provide interesting resources in some lessons to make learning more meaningful. Teaching is most successful when pupils are engaged in practical tasks or when they are sufficiently interested in what the teacher or other pupils are saying during discussions. For example, in a science lesson in Year 2, pupils enjoyed feeling their chests moving when breathing in and out and listened carefully as they discussed types of exercise they do at home. However, children in Year 1 learn too slowly because they lose interest in their work when the tasks they have been given are not matched well to their needs or they are unclear about what they are expected to do. In both Years 1 and 2, a scrutiny of previous work shows that higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. This is most evident in science and has led to a lower than average number of pupils achieving Level 3 in end of Year 2 assessments.
24. There are a few pupils in Years 1 and 2 who have been identified as having specific behavioural difficulties and whilst they are making good progress overall, their behaviour, along with that of some of the other pupils, is not always managed firmly enough. As a result, in some lessons, pupils are unsettled and too noisy. In some subjects, such as science, religious education, geography and history, teachers do not always use their knowledge of pupils' prior attainment to plan sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils and pupils are given insufficient opportunities to use their literacy skills. In Year 2, an additional support teacher employed because the class size is above 30 is not utilised efficiently and has only a limited impact on pupils' learning.
25. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching is good overall, with examples of very good and excellent teaching in Years 4 to 6. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' attainment and behaviour. A very good range of teaching methods and stimulating tasks, promote good learning and help pupils to concentrate well. Pupils are actively involved in their learning because teachers write comments on their work to help them improve and share the purpose of each lesson with them. In mathematics, pupils are 'set' and are taught in different groups according to their prior attainment and this means that their needs are met more closely. Teachers are very enthusiastic and this inspires pupils to work especially well. Pupils are able to concentrate and work quickly because tasks are explained clearly.
26. Teachers and teaching assistants give pupils with special educational needs effective support in lessons and they benefit from intensive support when working with the special educational needs co-ordinator. These pupils make good progress towards specific targets in their individual education plans.

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

27. The school offers a satisfactory curriculum that includes religious education and all required subjects of the National Curriculum. Schemes of work have been adopted for all subjects and provide a secure basis for teachers' planning. The national numeracy strategy has led to an improvement in standards in mathematics. Standards in writing have improved in Years 3 to 6 as a result of the national literacy strategy, supported by planned opportunities to develop reading and writing skills through other subjects. However, the teaching of writing is not structured well enough in Year 1, and writing skills are not developed with enough determination through other subjects. As a result, pupils make poor progress in writing in Year 1 and current standards are well below average in Year 2. Provision for art, design and technology and ICT has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. Teachers are making satisfactory use of ICT in other subjects, although there are missed opportunities to use classroom-based resources to support learning. A good feature of science is the emphasis on

practical investigations, and this has corrected a weakness noted in the previous inspection.

28. Members of staff are imaginative and energetic in organising occasional events, visits and experiences to make learning interesting and relevant. A whole-school topic is chosen each half term, very successfully creating a shared experience while allowing each class to respond in their own way. There has been a significant improvement in provision for children aged under five since the previous inspection. The quality and range of learning opportunities they are now offered is very good, and they learn well because the work is clearly focused and stimulating. Learning opportunities are good in Years 3 to 6, where the work is generally interesting and challenging. This also is an improvement on the previous inspection. Nevertheless, there is a weakness in the balance of teaching time in Years 3 to 6. Some subjects are not allocated enough time for planned work to be completed to a satisfactory standard. A shortage of curriculum time was noted as affecting standards, on occasions, in geography, history and religious education. Though standards overall meet national expectations in these subjects by the end of Year 6, pupils are not consistently reaching their full potential.
29. Learning opportunities are satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. However, the weakness in provision in Year 1, noted in the previous report, remains a cause for concern despite a change in personnel. The work planned in Year 1 is not structured well enough in any subject to ensure that pupils make successful progress. As a result, pupils have entered Year 2 in the current year with lower than normal standards. This has meant that work normally covered in Year 2 is too difficult for them and planning for this year group has had to be considerably revised. At the time of the inspection, such planning was beginning to show positive results in Year 2.
30. There is a good programme of study for personal, social and health education (PSHE). Teachers are guided by a scheme of work that includes relevant aspects of citizenship, health education, and drugs awareness. Pupils take part in weekly class discussions, called 'circle time', where issues of concern can be raised. Visitors who make valuable contributions to the programme include the school nurse, the police and fire service and drugs' counsellor. A visiting theatre group dramatises important issues in a memorable way, and older pupils join others at a nearby primary school for a 'life skills' focus day. These activities make a good contribution to learning and pupils' personal development.
31. The school takes good care to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunity to benefit from the curriculum. Provision for pupils with special educational needs continues to be good, as reported in the previous inspection. These pupils are provided with individual education plans of good quality, with specific targets to guide their development, particularly in language and mathematics. Their targets are regularly reviewed and appropriately updated so that these pupils make consistently good progress. It is a good feature of provision that teachers and teaching assistants plan together so that the needs of all pupils are taken into account. Support in class is well focused and all pupils are included in the main activities. Such careful planning is central to the good progress made by these pupils. When individuals or small groups are withdrawn for intensive instruction, this is carefully timed so they do not miss key parts of lessons.
32. There is a good range and number of extracurricular activities for a school of this size. Activities observed during the inspection were of high quality and well planned to raise interest and standards in academic, artistic and sporting aspects of the curriculum. Many pupils take part and provision is planned to include boys and girls of all ages and abilities. For example, there are separate football teams for boys and girls, and drama groups and cookery classes for younger and older pupils. There are clubs for art and ICT, as well as a choir and a recorder group. A large number of pupils take part in end-of-term music and drama performances for parents and the public.
33. The school takes part in local festivals and competitions, and welcomes a range of visitors from the church and other walks of life to present role models of citizenship. The local community is used well to support fieldwork in geography and history. This has resulted, for instance, in very

good map work in Years 1 and 2, though older pupils do not always study the same local features in significantly more depth and detail.

34. There are good contacts with the main receiving secondary school to ensure that Year 6 leavers make a smooth transfer to the next stage in their education. Arrangements include pupils working on a project that is continued in the new school following transfer, as well as visits from high school staff. There are also valuable links between the two schools through shared physical education facilities and the loaning of resources.
35. Provision for pupils' personal development is good overall, including that for spiritual and moral development, which has improved since the last inspection when it was satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual development is encouraged, for instance in art, English and science, when they appreciate the beauty of the world and their place in it. They show affection and learn to be responsible for the environment and other creatures by caring for the rabbits and goldfish in the attractive courtyard garden in the centre of the school. In their learning, they reflect on their own experiences and explore questions of meaning and purpose. Teachers value pupils' ideas during informal interactions and so pupils are confident in expressing their developing views. Discussions in 'circle time' are used well to develop knowledge and insight into other values and beliefs. The school meets requirements to hold a daily act of worship.
36. Anecdotes and stories are skilfully told in school assemblies and make a strong contribution to pupils' moral development. Care for the physical and emotional well-being of others is evident in all aspects of school life. Teachers and other adults give a clear lead in showing consistent care and concern for all pupils, and in encouraging reflection on the consequences of their actions. In the majority of lessons, teachers control behaviour through positive encouragement, stressing principles of fairness and self-respect.
37. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Pupils respond well to consistent encouragement to co-operate in their learning, and there is a positive working atmosphere in most lessons. They develop wider understanding of citizenship and moral responsibility through charitable fund-raising and hearing of the experiences of visiting adults. All pupils take turns in helping with routine classroom tasks, and each class elects two pupils to represent them at the school council. The level of responsibility increases through the school, with older pupils taking on roles as librarians and greeting visitors. Older pupils take part in a residential visit to widen their experience and develop their social skills.
38. Many subjects make a good contribution to the study of British and other cultures. Learning of other faiths in religious education lessons is developed well through visits to places of worship, although older pupils have a limited recall of what they have been taught in lessons. A different country is chosen as the focus of the annual arts week each year, and the choice of India last year stimulated a good response in recorded work. Moral and cultural development are linked through pupils' contributions to charities such as "Water Aid", helping a rural community in Africa.

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

39. The school provides a safe, caring and welcoming environment where all pupils are valued and where they receive a good level of support. The good support identified in the last inspection has been well maintained.
40. Very good procedures are in place for ensuring pupils' welfare. All staff and adults have a genuine concern for pupils, whatever their needs. Strong levels of support give pupils a good start to their life in school and enable them to feel very happy in the caring and supportive environment. The strong link with the education welfare services and the very high level of care taken with child protection duties carried out by the headteacher have contributed very well to the care shown for pupils. Good links exist with support agencies including the School Nurse, who plays a prominent role in the agreed Sex Education programme.

41. The school has an appropriate number of trained first aiders. Good procedures are in place for dealing with minor injuries. Fire drills are carried out, and testing of fire fighting and electrical apparatus is done on a regular basis. The school has a good awareness of all matters of health and safety and regular risk audits are carried out.
42. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance work satisfactorily. A computer-based system allows the school to make regular contacts with parents, who are generally very pleased to provide information to explain absences.
43. School procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are effective. Most adults have high expectations of pupils' conduct and the high profile of the headteacher around the school contributes very well to the good standards achieved. 'Golden Rules' are prominently displayed around the school. These are known and followed by nearly all pupils. The comprehensive behaviour policy has appropriate rewards or sanctions and members of staff use praise and encouragement well. These arrangements have contributed to the calm and happy atmosphere that exists in most classes.
44. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Teachers generally know their pupils well. Teaching assistants play a good role in supporting pupils and liaise carefully with teachers. Members of staff respond well to likes and dislikes expressed by the pupils and make good use of PSHE lessons to discuss important issues.
45. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, and sound use is made of the information to adjust teaching plans to meet individual needs and to group pupils in lessons. However, there are some important weaknesses in procedures. Records of progress are unsatisfactory and do not ensure that pupils make consistent progress through the school. Most teachers have devised their own informal means of recording pupils' main strengths and weaknesses as they emerge through the year, but the lack of a standardised format means that records are not consistent in quality or detail across all subjects and through the school. In particular, insufficient records are passed from teacher to teacher in Years 1 and 2 and this means that learning is not supported well at the start of each year.
46. Results of the baseline test on entry and the National Curriculum tests in Years 2 and 6 are analysed to give a broad picture of trends in English, mathematics and science. The school evaluates pupils' progress year on year towards standards expected by the end of Year 6. Senior management is beginning to explore the implications of these trends, and resulting action includes setting targets for individual pupils in English, based on the expectations of the National Curriculum. Within each year, progress in mathematics and science is measured against the benchmarks of the National Curriculum. In English, a planned programme of tests in reading and spelling ensures that information on standards is reliable. However, writing is not monitored closely enough, and it is notable that standards in writing over recent years have been more variable and much lower than in reading. In Years 3, 4 and 5 limited use is made of standardised testing to provide comparative data from year to year. This means that it is difficult to monitor the learning of different groups of pupils, as the quality of teacher assessments varies from year to year, especially when there is a large turnover of staff.
47. Pupils with special educational needs are regularly assessed so that the targets in their individual education plans can be adjusted to meet their changing needs. Records of their progress are detailed and well focused on specific targets. Assessment information is also used well to identify groups of pupils with low attainment in literacy, and they are given additional support.

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

48. The school has established good links with parents. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The questionnaires returned before the inspection made clear that many parents have very positive views of the school and the good care that it provides for their children. During the week of inspection, a large number of parents expressed their full



satisfaction with the work of the school, and many positive views were expressed. Parents feel that the headteacher has brought a sense of purpose and friendliness to the school and this is found to be helpful. Parents feel welcome when visiting the school.

49. The quality of information provided by the school is good. Parents feel that this has improved since the appointment of the present headteacher. They now receive more information about the curriculum, and newsletters are felt to be helpful and informative. About 20% of parents would like more information about their children's progress. The inspection team examined pupils' annual reports and found them to be of generally good quality, although there were some inconsistencies where a class had been taken by supply teachers. Reports have been improved since the last inspection and now give a good amount of information about learning in the different areas of the curriculum. There are regular meetings for parents, where teachers give clear directions and advice about topics and expectations. The school brochure and governors' annual report to parents are well presented and informative. However, there are minor statutory omissions in the governors' annual report and the school prospectus concerning the presentation of national comparative data for attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
50. The school is a welcoming place for parents and visitors. Good use has been made of questionnaires to consult with parents, who are also beginning to use a 'comments book' in the entrance hall to write about issues that concern them. At the moment, most of these are positive, for example praising schools events such as last term's 'jubilee celebrations'. Although the number of parents helping in class is small, parents are able to do so if they wish. Parents are keen to attend events that directly involve their children. For example, there was a good attendance by parents at a class assembly held during the inspection. There is a vibrant 'School Association' which raises significant funds for the school and provides good opportunities for social gatherings of staff, parents and pupils.
51. Homework is used effectively to support pupils' learning, and most parents are happy with current arrangements and support their children appropriately. Concerns expressed at the pre-inspection parents' meeting about homework related to the last academic year when some classes had several supply teachers. These concerns were not evident during the inspection.
52. There were some concerns from parents about road safety outside the school. Observations of pupils arriving at and leaving school showed that was caused by very heavy traffic, parking by local residents and inconsiderate parking by a few parents. Most of these matters are beyond the school's control.

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

53. As at the time of the last inspection, the school is well led and managed. The headteacher is providing good leadership for the work of the school. She is very well supported by the recently appointed deputy headteacher and a committed and hard working staff. Parents are very happy with the quality of leadership and feel that the school has continued to improve since her appointment.
54. 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 further. The headteacher has maintained the caring ethos that was evident at the time of the last inspection, and has successfully addressed most of the weaknesses identified at that time. Members of staff have been encouraged to become more involved in the management of the school in their roles as subject leaders. This has had a good impact on the work of the school and all members of staff are committed to further school improvement. This means that the school is in a good position to maintain its rate of progress.
55. Strategies for monitoring the work of the school are satisfactory. The role of subject leaders has improved since the last inspection and they make good use of release time to improve provision in their subjects. The headteacher has established a climate where the monitoring and evaluation of teachers is accepted as an everyday part of life and there is now a systematic programme for doing this. This is led by the headteacher and subject leaders and teachers are

now regularly observed at work in the classroom. The information gained from this is used successfully to set individual targets for improvement, to acknowledge strengths in teaching, and to identify priorities for personal and professional development.

56. Performance management strategies are fully implemented and training for teachers and other members of staff has been given a clear priority. This has helped to develop teachers' confidence in subjects such as ICT. There is good evidence that in the past weaker teachers have been effectively supported to improve their work. However, current monitoring has not identified the extent of the issues of teaching and learning in Year 1, which means that a key weakness in the school's provision has not been addressed. Nevertheless, taken together, monitoring strategies have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching throughout the school and have led to teachers becoming more reflective about the effectiveness of their own teaching.
57. Detailed records of pupils' individual test scores are kept and used very effectively to set targets for improving pupils' attainment. The headteacher has established procedures for analysing test data to identify where improvement is necessary but most of these records are paper-based rather than computerised. This makes it difficult to make full use of the valuable information by, for example, comparing the progress of different year groups, cohorts of children or analysing data using criteria such as gender or ethnicity. Currently, this type of analysis focuses on end of Year 2 and Year 6 test results using data provided by the local authority.
58. The involvement of governors has increased significantly since the last inspection and is now good. The headteacher and governors have developed the school's long-term planning, with governors now taking a very active role in deciding priorities for the future. The school development plan is good. It is detailed and sets a clear and appropriate agenda for school improvement, although some of the success criteria are not easily measured. This is an area that should be developed further.
59. Governors are very supportive of the school's work and are very committed to developing the school further. There are several committees that meet regularly and perform useful roles. Governors have a good understanding of most of the school's strengths and weaknesses, based on regular visits to school as well as the detailed information that is provided by the headteacher. Governors are given detailed feedback on test results, and use this information effectively to gain an understanding of what could be improved. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and publish a prospectus and report to parents. These documents do not include all of the required data on pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
60. The day-to-day management of finances by the headteacher, finance committee and school secretary is very good. All the issues identified in the most recent local authority audit have been rectified. Budgeting by the headteacher and governing body is systematic and based on a good understanding of the needs of the school. Decisions are made on the basis of *'Will this help the school to improve?'* This means that best value principles are applied well. A good example of this is the careful consideration that has been given about funding 'setting' arrangements for Years 5 and 6. The budget would not allow 'setting' in both English and mathematics, so the governors and the headteacher carefully evaluated where this arrangement was likely to have the greatest impact on standards.
61. The school successfully seeks additional funding from a range of sources, and these grants are used effectively so that they have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Parents make a significant contribution to the financial security of the school. The money they raise is spent well to improve resources or the accommodation.
62. Staffing levels are satisfactory. There is a good number of teaching assistants who are well trained and have a good impact on learning. In the nursery, a nursery nurse gives the teacher very good support. There are an appropriate number of teachers but there is an important issue concerning the use of the additional teacher in Year 2 who was appointed because the class size had risen above 30. During the inspection, this teacher was not used effectively or efficiently to support learning. The school is likely to have to make similar short-term

appointments in the future because of difficulties over the limits of its catchment area and should urgently consider how best to make best use of this valuable and expensive teaching resource.

63. Accommodation is good. Classrooms are attractive and a conscientious and hard-working site manager and cleaners keep the building very clean and tidy. Outdoor accommodation is very good. There is a spacious playing area and both the nursery and reception classes have well developed outdoor areas. However, accommodation in the nursery is cramped when all the children are working inside at the same time.
64. Resources are good. There have been good improvements in resources for information and communication technology since the last inspection.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

65. To improve the school further the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- ◆ Improve teaching and learning in Year 1 by;
  - Raising the teacher's expectations of what pupils should achieve.
  - Ensuring that assessment information is used to match work more closely to pupils' needs.
  - Ensuring that behaviour is managed more effectively so pupils are better motivated.
  - Reviewing strategies for managing pupils with specific learning or behavioural difficulties so that they have less of an impact on the overall effectiveness of teaching.

*(Paragraphs 3, 11, 15, 17, 20, 23, 24, 29, 97, 109, 125)*

- ◆ Raise pupils' attainment in writing in Years 1 and 2 by;
  - Giving pupils more opportunities to write purposefully in different curriculum areas.
  - Having higher expectations of what pupils should write and how they should present their work.
  - Ensuring that literacy lessons are planned with explicit and appropriate learning objectives in mind based on clear and accurate assessments of what pupils have already achieved.
  - Making better use of marking to identify how work could be improved.

*(Paragraphs 3, 27, 90, 94, 96, 99)*

- ◆ Further develop effective procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress over time.

*(Paragraphs 24, 45, 46, 101, 146, 150, 170)*

In addition, the following areas for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Ensure that the annual governors' report to parents and the prospectus includes comparative data on pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. *(Paragraphs 49, 59)*
- Ensure that sufficient time is allowed for the teaching of religious education, history and geography. *(Paragraphs 8, 27, 28, 140, 150, 173)*
- Review the use and impact of additional teachers who have been appointed when class sizes rise above 30 in the reception class and Years 1 and 2. *(Paragraphs 24, 62)*
- Ensure that there are consistently high levels of challenge in science for higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2. *(Paragraph 23, 120, 121, 126)*

## 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	22

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	11	20	18	2	0	0
Percentage	4	21	37	34	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 more than one percentage point.

### 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)	18	197
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	12

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	2	49

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5

National comparative data	5.6
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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	13	17	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	10	13
	Girls	15	15	17
	Total	27	25	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (97)	83 (94)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	13	13
	Girls	16	17	16
	Total	27	30	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (100)	100 (100)	97 (100)
	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	15	15	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	11	13
	Girls	14	12	15
	Total	26	23	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (80)	77 (70)	93 (93)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	11	11
	Girls	12	10	13
	Total	24	21	24
Percentage of pupils	School	80 (90)	70 (77)	80 (93)

at NC level 4 or above	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)
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*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.*

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

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

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	173	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.3
Average class size	30

#### **Education support staff: YR– Y6**

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	182

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	591959
Total expenditure	612717
Expenditure per pupil	2531.89
Balance brought forward from previous year	21368
Balance carried forward to next year	610

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
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	242 *
Number of questionnaires returned	67

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	40	7	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	39	53	5	3	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	64	3	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	63	9	5	5
The teaching is good.	31	60	1	3	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	53	17	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	44	50	5	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	49	4	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	18	58	14	3	7
The school is well led and managed.	27	59	3	5	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	30	57	4	6	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	35	30	8	12

*\*This number is higher than the current number on roll because the timing of the inspection meant that questionnaires were sent out at the end of the summer term 2002 when the school had admitted its full intake of nursery and reception children.*

**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.
67. There have been very good improvements in the provision for 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 are now achieving at least good standards of attainment in all areas of learning.
68. Children's attainment on starting school in the nursery varies from intake to intake, but overall, it is slightly above average. This is confirmed by teacher assessments made in the children's first few weeks at school. Overall, children achieve good standards in both the nursery and the reception class. Standards are very good in personal, social and emotional development and children are on target to exceed expectations for their age by the end of the reception year. Standards are good in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical, physical and creative development.
69. The curriculum for children in the foundation stage is very good. Learning is very carefully planned and takes full account of the needs of all children. Very good use is made of the outdoor areas and children are given numerous opportunities to show independence in their learning. This has a very good impact on the development of personal and social skills.
70. Teachers' planning, which was a weakness at the time of the last inspection, is now based on the nationally recommended 'Early Learning Goals' and, where appropriate, the expectations of the National Curriculum. A very good balance is achieved 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. In the reception class, older and higher attaining children have few opportunities to explain their 'plans' in greater detail than they do in the nursery. Children who have been identified as having special educational needs are given good support and learn new skills quickly.
71. Assessment of children's attainment and progress is good in both the nursery and the reception class. It is helpful that there is an agreed format for observing and recording learning in each class. This means that when records are passed on they are easily understood and immediately form a good basis for planning future work. Assessments are made when children start school and this information is used very effectively to identify what individual children need to learn next. Teachers keep detailed records of children's progress and use this information successfully in order to ensure that activities build on previous learning. Careful observations are made of children when they are at work and this information is recorded to show what skills have been used in a particular activity.
72. The nursery nurse and teaching assistant give very good support in the work of both the nursery and the reception class. They are both very experienced and are fully involved in planning and assessing learning. They know the individual children well and are very valuable and important members of the early years' team.
73. There is good liaison between the school and home when children start school. Parents are welcomed into school at any time to discuss concerns and new children spend time in the class before they are due to start. These activities help them to settle into school quickly.

**Personal, social and emotional development**

74. Children make very good progress in this area of learning because of the very good quality teaching. Times when children talk together are used effectively to enable them to think about things that affect them and to talk about the needs of others. Children are expected to work independently and 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. Children are encouraged to resolve disputes by negotiating with each other and they quickly learn to play and work together amicably and to share things.
75. Members of staff are calm, caring and patient and have a good knowledge of both the social and educational needs of individual children. Children's behaviour is well managed, with very good use made of praise to develop self-esteem. The level of independence shown by the children is a particular strength of work in both the nursery and the reception class. Throughout all areas of the curriculum, the teachers, nursery nurse and teaching assistant ensure that children are encouraged to become independent, to relate well to each other and to behave sensibly. As a result, children become very confident and secure individuals. They are very happy at school and get on well together.

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

76. The quality of teaching is 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 good progress. Children are given many opportunities to take part in discussions and talk about what they are doing, so they become confident in talking 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.
77. Reading skills are taught effectively, with children learning to build words using their knowledge of the sounds that letters make. Teachers read stories well and children enjoy listening to them. They respond appropriately, joining in with the teacher when they recognise a text. Members of staff have high expectations of what children should achieve and make learning fun. Teachers are naturally encouraging of the children and this means that they are not afraid to make mistakes. Letters sounds are taught in a variety of ways, often being linked to physical actions to help children recall the sound. This is effective. In the reception class, the teacher cleverly linked letter sounds into a review of food names. This helped to make learning purposeful.
78. Children develop a positive attitude towards writing and are given many opportunities to improve their skills. As a result, children become willing writers. They are very enthusiastic and are always happy to record their ideas on paper, often using recognisable words or letters. 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 writing out 'shopping lists' in the 'farm-shop' in the nursery.
79. Children regularly take reading books home. This homework makes a sound contribution to children's learning.

### **Mathematical development**

80. Children make good progress in developing mathematical skills, with most children recognising numbers to ten. A large number of higher-attaining children recognising higher numbers and confidently carrying out simple addition and subtraction sums. When working orally, higher-attaining children can work out 'one more than' a given number.
81. The good teaching of the subject ensures that all children are well motivated and interested. Careful planning means that the needs of all children are met. In both the nursery and the reception class, mathematical concepts are taught in a practical way that involves the children and promotes good learning. For example, in the nursery, children learn about different coins

when shopping in the 'farm shop'. In the reception class, elements of the numeracy strategy are used effectively to teach basic skills. In these sessions, activities are exciting and stimulating and encourage children to think of themselves as mathematicians. Lessons are well resourced, with good use made of counting equipment and 'number sticks' to give children practical experiences of counting. Opportunities to extend learning are well taken. For example, in the reception class, the teacher asked additional questions such as *'How many more are needed to get five?'* when children were collecting in number cards that they had been using.

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

82. Pupils make good progress in this area of learning, developing a wide range of skills and knowledge. Children know what plants need to grow and understand that things change over time. They can confidently talk about recent past events in their own lives. Work on festivals and special days such as Sukkoth and Christmas helps children to understand that not everyone is the same or believes in the same things. Children talk confidently about where they live and accurately recall recent events in their lives.
83. 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. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when ICT skills were weak.
84. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good, with skills thoughtfully developed in interesting ways. For example, children in the nursery have been learning about food. They have looked at how harvest-times have changed over time and know why things have are not the same. Good quality displays enhance this learning. The teacher had planted grass seeds and the children have been watching it grow. Children are encouraged to explore the world around them, with much of the teaching in this area of learning taking place incidentally as children react to the activities that they are given. Children respond well to the high expectations of teachers and they show good levels of concentration on whichever activity they have chosen.

### **Physical development**

85. 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, catching and throwing confidently and riding tricycles with good control. The outdoor areas are well resourced so that children are able to develop physical skills at a level appropriate to their previous leaning. Members of staff support this well. For example, in the reception class, the teaching assistant worked with a higher attaining boy, helping him to improve his already well developed ball skills by encouraging him to work with a bat and ball.
86. Children's learning is enhanced by regularly timetabled physical education lessons. In the dance lesson timetabled during the inspection, children made good progress in developing their skills, with a commercial tape used effectively to support learning. Children listened carefully to instructions and moved around the hall sensibly. The teacher gave good support to individual children. This helps to ensure that the needs of all children, including those who have special educational needs, are fully met.

### **Creative development**

87. 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. The activities that are set out each day are carefully linked to the class topics and cover a range of different skills such as painting, printing and cutting. Children are successfully encouraged to try out these 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.

88. Members of staff have high expectations and encourage children to concentrate on what they are doing so that they produce good quality work. This was seen to good effect in an outdoor art session in the nursery where children were making clay models of different fruit. The activity was well resourced and children were encouraged to look carefully at the fruit they were replicating. Once they had finished, the teacher made sure that they evaluated what they had done to see if it could be improved. When the teacher thought that the child had not fulfilled his/her potential, she ensured that they persevered to improve their work. For example, after making a model banana, a child evaluated her work and began to improve it by adding a 'dimpled' effect to indicate the black marks he could see on the banana skin.
89. 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

90. Results in the National Curriculum tests in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 have varied considerably in recent years, from well below the national average in 2000 to well above average in reading in 2002. In 2002, test scores show that attainment was well above in reading and above average in writing when compared with all schools and broadly average when compared with similar schools. The inspection found standards in the present Year 2 to be above average in reading and average in speaking. However, standards are below average in listening and well below average in writing. This is much lower than the standards achieved in 2002. Pupils in the present Year 2 have made poor progress in writing in the last year, and current standards are a significant cause for concern.
91. Results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 were well above the national average in 1999 but average in the following years. In 2002 more pupils reached the expected level or higher in reading than in the previous year. By contrast, in writing, a third of the group did not reaching the expected level and no pupil reaching the higher level. The inspection found standards in writing in the present Year 6 to be improving significantly as a result of high expectations expressed through challenging targets and determined teaching. In Year 6, standards are presently above average in speaking, listening and reading, and average in writing.
92. Pupils presently in Years 1 and 2 do not listen well, and teachers have to work hard to hold their attention. The attention of some pupils wanders and they distract others when the interest level is not high or questioning is not energetic and well focused. However, most pupils speak clearly and express their ideas accurately when called on. Year 2 joined in with enthusiasm in reciting a poem, and they later performed it confidently in a school assembly attended by parents. Such opportunities are well planned to train pupils through the school to speak confidently to larger audiences for a widening range of purposes. Pupils from Year 3 onwards pay close attention to instruction in literacy hour, and take an active part in discussions. Pupils in Year 4 listen politely to the views of others, and show good levels of skill in negotiating to solve problems during group work. Pupils in Year 6 take the lead in making formal presentations to the class, speaking confidently and clearly in 'Standard English'. They extend their answers well when encouraged to develop their ideas. They use more formal language appropriately in class discussions, with correct use of technical terms. These good skills help their learning in other subjects, where ideas are explored and developed through talk.
93. Standards in reading are good overall throughout the school, and pupils make steady progress because reading materials are clearly graded for difficulty in the early stages and well chosen for their high interest thereafter. Many parents give good support to reading at home. A well-structured phonics programme gives younger pupils confidence in learning how spoken words are written down. Pupils in Year 2 know how to sound out new words to find their meaning, and have a good understanding of what they read. Those with special educational needs are given

additional support through the school, and are carefully monitored so that they build on their success. Pupils in Year 6 read longer texts silently and with good concentration. Many read aloud very well, with dramatic expression. They are confident in using the library and internet to find information, and their good comprehension skills help them to learn in all subjects. Good quality books are given a high profile in the school library and class collections, so interest in books is high. As a result, most pupils have favourite authors and can explain their preferences fluently, showing strong interest.

94. Many pupils in Year 1 do not form letters or space words correctly. As a result, pupils presently in Year 2 write very slowly and spell too few familiar words correctly. Their knowledge of punctuation is sound, but very few write at length. They write very little in other subjects, and so have too few opportunities to develop confidence. This is in marked contrast to standards at the end of Year 2 last year, when pupils with average attainment or above wrote long stories and accounts in a joined style, with a good level of accuracy in spelling and punctuation.
95. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn to write for a widening range of purposes and audiences. Frequent opportunities to write stories and poetry are good features that catch the pupils' interest. Pupils in Year 3 write well-structured letters and express their meaning clearly in personal accounts. Story writing is a particular strength across Years 3 to 6, and pupils are well motivated to develop their ideas using a wide range of vocabulary and sentence structures. By Year 6, pupils have a good grasp of techniques to grip the reader's attention, such as vivid description and cliff-hanger suspense. They create appealing word pictures in different forms of poetry. Information is clearly expressed in longer pieces, such as news reports, and paragraph structures are well established. In all years, some pieces are word-processed, though there is no evidence of more complex desktop publishing by older pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are given additional support so that they make satisfactory progress in writing for different purposes.
96. Standards of handwriting are satisfactory overall, although pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 present their work less neatly than older pupils. By the end of Year 3, pupils have learnt joined handwriting and use ink pens confidently. Presentation is often untidy in exercise books but good when work has been planned and drafted for display. Standards of spelling and punctuation are generally sound. However, proof-reading habits are not well established, and few pupils use dictionaries as they write or check for accuracy after they have finished.
97. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2, with an example of an unsatisfactory lesson in Year 1. In this lesson, objectives and expectations were unclear and so tasks were not well matched to different levels of attainment and instruction lacked pace and direction. Teaching is good overall in Years 3 to 6. One lesson was excellent; two were good and the other satisfactory. The excellent lesson was characterised by high expectations for attentiveness, pace and quality of written work. Pupils were able to meet these expectations because the work was interesting and part of a very well planned lesson series. The language focus was clearly explained and followed by an inspiring demonstration of story writing technique. By following this model, all pupils were successful and very pleased to share their results with the class. Overall, teachers have a good understanding of the targets of the literacy framework, leading to well focused instruction at the beginning of lessons. They use a very good range of teaching methods, including use of the board and overhead projectors to highlight key points. In all lessons, teachers read well, dramatising characters and bringing the meaning to life so as to catch pupils' interest. Interaction with pupils is generally brisk, with the intention of involving and challenging all to learn and remember.
98. Pupils understand the routines and behave well, so little time is lost in reorganising the class for group tasks. These are generally well matched to the needs of pupils at different levels of attainment, so all pupils work productively in most lessons. Rotas are used efficiently to organise guided reading and computer groups. Teaching assistants are well trained, and it is a good feature that they are involved in lesson planning so that they can give of their best in supporting individuals and groups during lessons. They are particularly effective in helping pupils with lower attainment or special educational needs to make good progress.

99. In marking, teachers respond sensitively to pupils' ideas, give advice and encouragement, and identify where weaknesses need attention. However, in Years 1 and 2, insufficient use is made of marking to set tasks for individuals and groups in following lessons so that pupils learn by their mistakes. Marking in other subjects generally ignores literacy errors, and expectations for accuracy are often too low.
100. The subject is well led and managed. The National Literacy Strategy is securely in place so that lessons have specific targets and a clear structure. The subject leader monitors the quality of these plans and advises colleagues. The curriculum is well planned to develop speaking skills, and good use is made of assemblies and drama performances. In Years 1 and 2, not enough opportunities are planned in other subjects to develop writing skills, and this is a significant weakness. By contrast, in Years 3 to 6, there are good opportunities to write in other subjects, though pupils' writing needs to be more carefully monitored for accuracy.
101. Assessment procedures are best developed in reading, allowing close monitoring of progress and thereby ensuring consistent standards. There is a new assessment procedure for speaking and listening, but it is not yet used in all classes. Assessment procedures are least well-developed in writing. The school has detailed information on standards in spelling and a broad picture of overall standards compared with National Curriculum expectations for each year group. Nevertheless, this information is not adequate to explain why standards in writing are currently so low in Years 1 and 2 or why so few pupils reached the higher level in the Year 6 National Curriculum tests in 2002.
102. Resources are good, and effective work has been done in developing reading materials through the school. High standards of presentation and accuracy are promoted through well presented class anthologies of creative writing and attractive wall displays. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

## **MATHEMATICS**

103. Pupils are attaining broadly average standards in Year 2 and above average standards in Year 6.
104. In the present Year 2 pupils are not achieving as well as they should, and they are not reaching the same high standards reflected in National Curriculum tests in 2001 and 2002. Standards of attainment in Year 2 are now similar to those found at the time of the last inspection, when they were broadly average. In 2002, test results at the end of Year 2 were well above average when compared with all schools and above average when compared with similar schools. However, a scrutiny of current and previous work shows that in the current Year 2, pupils have made unsatisfactory progress over time, with their present attainment not reflecting the above average attainment that was evident when pupils started school. This year group has been adversely effected by weak teaching in Year 1 that has limited their progress and led to many of them developing negative attitudes towards learning. However, needs are being met more effectively in Year 2 where the quality of teaching is satisfactory.
105. Pupils' attainment has risen since the last inspection in Years 3 to 6, and inspection evidence confirms that this upward trend is being maintained in the current Year 6 where attainment is now above average. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are now benefiting from generally good quality or better teaching and from the positive impact of grouping pupils by ability in Years 5 to 6. This arrangement, which has been in place for 2 years, is helping to raise standards significantly by the end of Year 6. National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 have improved considerably over the last two years. In 2002, test results show that attainment was average when compared with all schools but below average when compared with similar schools. This represents a good improvement from 2001.
106. In Year 2, pupils are developing a sound understanding of basic number concepts. They count forwards and back in ones and twos and add and subtract using small numbers. When handling money, most pupils add together small sums using pence and they solve simple shopping

problems. Pupils can halve shapes and numbers, and sort objects into sets according to colour, shape and size. They measure accurately using everyday objects, and are developing an awareness of the need for 'standardised' units of measure. Higher attaining pupils have only a limited understanding of place value.

107. By the end of Year 6, pupils have begun to work confidently with larger numbers. They have a good understanding of multiplication and division, and estimate accurately with numbers up to 1000. Higher attaining pupils accurately identify the value of different digits in large numbers over 1000. Pupils recognise equivalence in fractions and tell the time accurately. They correctly identify different 3-D shapes, as well as understanding different types of symmetry.
108. Pupils are beginning to be more confident about using and applying their mathematical knowledge to practical situations. However, this aspect of attainment is not as well developed as other parts of the curriculum, especially in Years 1 and 2, where there is little evidence of pupils being able to apply what they have learnt to investigations, problem solving or games. In contrast, older pupils are more confident about working out calculations in their heads, but even by Year 6, many of the least able group of pupils still find it difficult to solve problems quickly in their heads, without using resources to help them count.
109. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Year 2 but is unsatisfactory in Year 1. In this year group, although teaching was satisfactory in the one lesson observed during the inspection, a scrutiny of previous work shows that the teacher has too low expectations of what pupils should achieve. Although this teacher prepares carefully for lessons, too little account is taken of previous learning. This means that work is not always closely enough matched to pupils' individual needs. In Year 2, teaching is more effective, although pupils have come to the class with negative attitudes towards work. Indeed, in both Year 1 and Year 2, a small number of pupils identified as having specific behavioural problems are sometimes disruptive in lessons and this slows the pace of their learning. Nevertheless, the Year 2 teacher is working hard to overcome this problem and work is carefully planned to be exciting and fun. There is a good emphasis on practical activities, for example playing a shopping game to reinforce pupils' understanding of the value of different coins. However, the limited amount of assessment information that was passed on at the start of the academic year, means that work is not always closely enough matched to individual needs. In Years 1 and 2, a lot of work is completed on worksheets. This means that pupils get little opportunity to record their own findings or to improve the presentation of their work, which is often unsatisfactory.
110. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6, with examples of very good teaching when pupils are taught in ability groups in Years 5 and 6. There have been important improvements in teaching over the last four years, and this is having a good impact on standards. Teachers are now giving far greater emphasis to teaching mental mathematics skills, and they are assessing learning more accurately. Teachers plan lessons carefully, using a format based on the numeracy strategy and identifying expectations for different groups of pupils.
111. The 'setting' of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is effective in helping to ensure that every pupil's needs are met, with teachers able to plan work that closely matches individual needs. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 study the same mathematical topics at the same time, with work varied according to the ability of the group. For example, during the inspection, the higher attaining group learnt how to change fractions to decimals whilst the lower attaining group learnt how to compare fractions of different sizes. In both cases, pupils' needs were fully met and progress was good. There is a good balance between practical activities and written recording of work, although untidy presentation leads to some pupils making careless errors when recording their findings.
112. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 respond well to the good quality of teaching. They are enthusiastic and behave well, showing good attitudes towards learning. This was seen to good effect in a lesson in Year 4, where pupils co-operated well in an activity that involved folding paper to make different shapes. Questioning is used effectively and individuals are well supported. Where pupils make mistakes, for example in not being certain how to identify the strategy needed to solve a problem, teachers use these difficulties effectively to help extend the skills of all pupils.



In Years 3 to 6, teachers use assessment information appropriately to help them decide what to teach next. Teachers make satisfactory use of review sessions at the end of lessons to share and reinforce what has been learnt.

113. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to use their numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics. They measure in science and use measurements on plans in design and technology lessons. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to use ICT to support their learning, for example, by using data-handling programmes to present their findings in different ways.
114. Work is regularly marked, and this is most effective where teachers add written comments to identify how pupils could improve. This is most evident in Years 2 to 6. Teachers are beginning to set targets for individual pupils, and in Years 2 to 6, these are often shared with the pupils. For example, in Year 4, pupils have target cards showing what they should be aiming to achieve in mathematics in the short term. In Years 5 and 6, teachers identify 'key objectives' in the front of pupils' mathematics books. This helps to involve pupils more in their own learning.
115. Teaching assistants are used very effectively throughout the school to support lower attaining pupils or those who have been identified as having special educational needs. This helps them to make good progress in most lessons
116. The mathematics curriculum is broad and balanced. The numeracy strategy is firmly embedded in school practice and is having a good impact on raising standards, especially in Years 3 to 6. A commercial scheme is used to good effect to support teachers when they are planning work.
117. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment, showing pupils' progress at each stage of the numeracy strategy. The school makes effective use of National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments to measure progress throughout the school and to group pupils. However, the use of teacher assessments rather than standardised tests in Years 3 to 5 means that it is difficult to compare the learning of different year groups from year to year.
118. Management of the subject is good. The subject leader makes good use of release time to monitor teaching and learning across the school. Teachers are supported in their planning of work and the subject leader has identified areas where provision can be improved, for example by making more use of mathematical displays and further developing target setting.

## SCIENCE

119. Pupils are attaining broadly average standards in Year 2 and above average standards in Year 6.
120. There are significant variations in progress from year group to year group, with weak teaching in Year 1 having a negative impact on learning in Year 1 and Year 2. This means that the current Year 2 is not achieving the same good standards reflected in teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2001 and 2002. In those teacher assessments, a very high number of pupils attained the expected Level 2, compared with all and similar schools, but comparatively few attained the higher Level 3. There is little evidence of higher than average attainment amongst pupils who are presently in Year 2.
121. Standards of attainment in Year 2 are now broadly similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. The comparative weakness in the progress made by higher attaining pupils at the time of the last inspection remains and a scrutiny of pupils' previous work indicates that in both Year 1 and Year 2, there is insufficient challenge for these pupils. This is an important weakness in provision that has a negative impact on learning.
122. Good quality teaching has helped to raise standards in Years 3 to 6 since the last inspection, with particular progress being made in the last year. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment was above average when compared with all schools and average when compared with similar schools. In this year, there was a good improvement in the

number of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5. Inspection findings confirm that this improvement in standards is being maintained in the current year 6, who are achieving well for their age.

123. By the end of Year 2, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, develop an appropriate understanding of different aspects of science and make good observations when carrying out investigations. However, higher attaining pupils make limited progress in finding their own ways of carrying out tests and they do not always use their literacy skills effectively to record their work. In Year 1 and sometimes in Year 2, work is recorded pictorially, on worksheets or in simple sentences. Pupils are often unresponsive during whole class discussions, with few volunteering answers to the teachers' questions. In these year groups, pupils respond more positively when given a practical task or when asked questions about their own experiences. For example, pupils in Year 2 were more responsive when talking about changes they had noticed after exercise such as their legs aching or becoming hot.
124. By the end of Year 6, pupils develop a good understanding of the need to carry out a fair test and make suggestions about how an investigation might be carried out. For example, pupils in Year 5 knew that the same amount of soil needed to be used when testing the amount of air in different soil samples and realised that their test was invalid if all the water had not been absorbed. Pupils make sensible predictions and use their numeracy skills effectively when measuring quantities of water, taking accurate temperature readings and presenting information in graphs. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are very good at listening and collaborate sensibly when carrying out investigations. However, the quality of written work is variable and sometimes pupils do not finish recording their findings. They do not always use the correct scientific terms when discussing their work and are sometimes reluctant to consider the scientific reasons for certain events.
125. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Year 2 and good overall in Years 3 to 6. Teaching in Year 1 is unsatisfactory. Teaching has improved in Years 3 to 6 since the time of the last inspection with an example of excellent teaching in Year 6. In the excellent lesson on investigating irreversible changes in substances, the teacher expected pupils to focus on making accurate observations and using this information to explain in scientific terms what had occurred. This meant that all pupils, including lower attaining pupils, gained a clear understanding of how a chemical reaction can result in liquids changing and time was used effectively to concentrate on the most important aspects of the investigation.
126. In Year 2, effective use is made of other subjects and homework to extend learning. For example, pupils reflected on the impact of a physical education lesson on their bodies and kept a diary at home of types of exercise carried out and shared this information in a lesson on healthy living. The teacher provides clear instructions for tasks and encourages pupils to take part in lessons by praising good ideas. In Year 1, a lack of challenge, weak management of the pupils' behaviour and a limited use of interesting resources means that the pace of lessons is slow and pupils do not work quickly enough. For example, pupils were asked to sequence line drawings to show how people change as they get older, without being expected to justify their choices. This activity did not capture their interest, resulting in them becoming inattentive.
127. In Years 3 to 6, teachers explain the purpose of work clearly at the start of lessons and are good at linking the scientific concepts with everyday life. For example, in one lesson in Year 4, the teacher encouraged pupils to think about how we keep ourselves and other things either hot or cold before carrying out an investigation into which materials provide greatest insulation. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils, high expectations for behaviour and establish clear rules to ensure that investigations are carried out safely. Tasks are explained clearly and challenging questions encourage pupils to think. Practical activities make learning purposeful and interesting and the correct use of scientific vocabulary is promoted. The teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly, encouraging them to improve.
128. There have been improvements in the curriculum since the last inspection when pupils had insufficient opportunities to carry out investigations. The curriculum is now good, with practical

work being emphasised successfully. Effective use is made of visits and visitors to extend learning. For example, younger pupils enjoy learning about seasonal changes during nature walks and learn more about the environment from a group of travelling actors. The school has satisfactory methods of showing pupils' progress by assessing pupils at the end of each year. Test results and other assessment information are used to help teachers identify strengths and weaknesses in provision. However, information on what pupils already know is not always passed from class to class successfully in Years 1 and 2, resulting in work not being closely matched to pupils' needs when they go to a new class.

129. The new subject leader has a very clear vision for the future development of the subject and a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through the analysis of test data and pupils' work. This information is being used effectively to improve provision.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

130. Pupils' attainment in art and design is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress throughout the school. Pupils demonstrate some good skills in printing and produce examples of high quality work during the school's 'arts' week'. Attainment and progress have improved since the last inspection when they were unsatisfactory. However, there are still some weaknesses in pupils' drawing and painting skills, with older pupils using little shading to add depth to their work.
131. The quality of teaching is good overall, with an example of very good teaching being observed in Year 4. In the very good lesson, pupils enjoyed showing each other how to use a printing technique to apply more than one colour. The teacher managed the pupils and the activity very effectively, enabling the pupils to develop skills very quickly. A specialist art teacher has recently helped pupils to improve skills and supports other members of staff in their teaching. Teachers provide pupils with good demonstrations of basic skills and time is allowed for them to experiment with ideas in their sketchbooks. Members of staff are careful to use the correct terms such as 'contrasting colour' when discussing work. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when teachers' were insecure about their subject knowledge. Pupils enjoy art and design lessons and work together sensibly.
132. The subject leader has a clear understanding of what more needs to be done to improve the subject and provides effective guidance to colleagues. There is a broad and balanced curriculum providing good opportunities for pupils to learn about art and design from various cultures. For example, when working with an artist during 'arts week', pupils in Year 4 were inspired by Indian textiles. They made an attractive wall hanging using inks, card, thread and wood. Pupils in Year 2 made attractive clay plaques copying traditional designs seen in the local church.
133. Pupils' work is shared in attractive wall displays, exhibitions and impromptu 'pavement shows' held in class and teachers have a satisfactory record of their progress in their sketchbooks and end of topic assessments. Parents are appreciative of the annual 'arts' week'.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

134. No lessons in design and technology were on the timetable during the inspection. Judgements on attainment and progress have been made by scrutinising pupils' work. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement of the quality of teaching.
135. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing a range of skills. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection when attainment and progress were found to be unsatisfactory. By the end of Year 2, pupils draw designs labelling materials they intend using and in Years 5 and 6, pupils use their numeracy skills to show the intended size of their models. Throughout the school, pupils take care when making models, following designs closely and sometimes working collaboratively with others. For example, pupils in Year 2 sewed attractive glove puppets from a range of materials. From Year

2 onwards, pupils write a simple evaluation of their work, although older pupils do not always evaluate their work in sufficient depth.

136. The curriculum provides satisfactory coverage of the subject and ensures that pupils develop a range of skills as they get older. The subject makes a good contribution towards pupils' cultural development. For example, pupils designed and made attractive bead necklaces following a topic on 'Africa' and pupils in Year 1, made brightly coloured clay lamps as part of a celebration of Diwali.
137. The subject leader is new to the role and has not yet had the opportunity to evaluate what further action is needed to develop design and technology. Pupils' work is monitored informally and this means that teachers do not have a clear understanding of how well pupils are achieving.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

138. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. Standards have been maintained at this level since the previous inspection.
139. Little work in geography has been covered this year so far in Years 1 and 2. Work from last year shows that, by the end of Year 2, pupils successfully interpret maps, atlases and globes to find their own home in relation to the school and the world beyond. They make good progress in the use of maps to study the local area, learning to use symbols to represent natural and man-made features. They identify local facilities, recording their findings clearly in writing and diagrams. They recognise differences in ways of life in other places, finding evidence in a story about a Scottish island.
140. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand major features of their own locality and contrast them with those found in other European countries and further afield. Their study of a village in India in Year 4, for example, is well developed through a broad range of topics within a well-defined focus. Pupils show good understanding in their diagrams, charts and commentaries of such features as climate, land use and contrasting ways of life. They respond well in Year 6 to the study of mountain environments. Higher attaining and better motivated pupils respond particularly well to the project approach, which allows them to follow personal interests and express their ideas at length and in a variety of ways. Their written explanations and diagrams show good understanding of key facts, careful attention to detail and correct use of technical terms. However, skills in interpreting and drawing maps are not developed consistently through the school. Too little time was spent on the river unit in Year 6 last year for this element of the curriculum to be covered in the expected depth. Map work in local studies is not ambitious enough year on year in building on what has gone before.
141. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with that of other pupils. They follow the same curriculum and teachers give them effective support in matching work to their needs. Pupils record their understanding in a variety of ways, including drawings and diagrams, which ensures that all take a full part in the main activities.
142. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is satisfactory overall. Of the two lessons seen in Years 3 to 6, one was satisfactory and one, in Year 4, very good. The very good lesson built well on a homework task, and pupils showed keen interest in photographs they had taken of different kinds of environmental damage found in their local area. The teacher's very well focused instructions and high expectations led to a highly productive working atmosphere. Pupils collaborated very well in writing notes on the evidence, showing strong personal values in their reactions to vandalism. In the satisfactory lesson, pupils worked well in the computer suite to record information they had found out for homework on a country of their choice. Progress was slow because of their slow typing speed, and the wide range of countries studied made it difficult to monitor the quality of their learning closely. Nevertheless, all showed strong interest in their chosen country and took care to record their findings accurately.

143. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The curriculum is based on a nationally recommended scheme of work and extended through good use of the locality for fieldwork. However, the amount of time allowed for teaching the subject is not consistent from year group to year group and work needs to be planned more carefully to ensure that the level of challenge in fieldwork and mapping increases appropriately through the school.
144. Assessment procedures are adequate, though they need to be applied more rigorously to ensure that pupils with potentially high attainment make their best progress. Resources are good and include equipment to monitor weather patterns.

## HISTORY

145. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils with special needs follow the same curriculum as other pupils. They are set appropriate tasks so that they make satisfactory progress.
146. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a clear sense of what has changed over time in the context of their own families and familiar objects, such as toys. They show a sound understanding of the causes and effects of significant events in the past, such as the Fire of London, and details of the lives of famous people including Florence Nightingale. They record their learning in a range of different ways. However, the low literacy standards in the present Year 2 mean that very few pupils are able to write at length, and much of their recorded work is in the form of pictures and labelled diagrams.
147. In Years 3 to 6, the work of all pupils becomes more precise and accurate in recording and interpreting evidence from a range of sources, including documents and objects from the periods studied. They gain good practice in literacy skills and write well-structured accounts for example when justifying their arguments with evidence. In some instances, they project into the lives of people in distant times through imaginative writing and they do it well, though this approach is not used regularly. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound understanding of the civilisation of ancient Greece and several periods of British history including the Romans, Tudors and Victorians. They show good understanding of causes and consequences of major events, such as the Second World War, and reasons why children were evacuated. Pupils with higher attainment write detailed commentaries, explaining significant features of social change over time. They search confidently for information in reference books and other sources such as the internet.
148. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching was good in the one lesson seen in Year 2, which although timetabled as a geography lesson had a significant historical content. In this lesson, objectives were well planned and imaginatively resourced so that pupils' attention was held and focused. They made sensible interpretations of evidence on seaside holidays in the past shown in photographs and a video. They stayed on task well to record their findings, though their very limited writing skills meant that few were able to record their learning in any detail.
149. In Years 3 to 6, teaching was satisfactory in one lesson and very good in the other. The satisfactory lesson was well resourced with a good range of reference books. Pupils showed keen interest in finding out about the culture of the Romans compared with that of the Celts, but not all had the high level skills needed to find and record significant detail. In the very good lesson, the high quality of preparation beforehand led to a very productive interaction with a visitor, who talked knowledgeably of social changes in recent times. Pupils concentrated very well, taking notes on their chosen topic to develop later. In all lessons seen, tasks were adjusted appropriately so that pupils with special needs were able to take a full part.
150. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The policy and scheme of work have been revised. Resources have been improved and are now good. However, the time allowance for each study unit in Years 3 to 6 needs review to allow pupils the time to cover the planned curriculum in sufficient depth and detail. There is not enough time to study three units in Year 4, and last

year's Year 6 completed very little of the Indus valley study because they were involved in revision for end of year tests. Procedures for assessment are adequate, but the information is not used rigorously to monitor the impact of teaching. Notably it did not reveal the failure to complete the scheme of work as planned in all years.

151. There are sound links with other subjects, particularly geography. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. Good use is made of visits to museums and local sites of historic interest. These visits are well planned to extend pupils' knowledge and enjoyment of the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

152. At the time of the last inspection, provision for ICT was unsatisfactory. This is no longer the case. Good leadership by the subject leader has led to a good rise in standards of pupils' attainment, which are now in line with national expectations overall by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school has improved resources, developed an ICT suite and is now using a nationally recommended scheme of work to help teachers in planning activities. This has significantly improved the rate at which pupils learn new skills. Teachers make more use of ICT to support learning in different curriculum areas than they did at the time of the last inspection, but this is still an area of comparative weakness in some year groups.
153. Pupils develop suitable word-processing skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils can type in simple texts using a computer. By the end of Year 6, pupils write for a wider range of purposes using word processing skills. For example, they produce work folders on topics such as 'Mountains'. Pupils know how to change the colour and size of font, and, when writing on the computer, show a developing awareness of how they can alter the way that their work is presented so that it is more attractive to an audience, for example by adding clip art pictures to their work.
154. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 confidently play a range of language and mathematical games, and understand that data can be recorded and then classified using ICT skills. For example, pupils in Year 1 produce graphs to show the different heights and hair colours of their class. In Year 2, pupils use art programmes to produce simple pictures or to write their name. Most can explain how they will save this work and understand how to print it.
155. By the end of Year 6, pupils have improved their ICT skills and are able to apply them to a wider range of tasks. They successfully enter data into the computer and then sort it using different criteria. For example, pupils in Year 5 created a database about different types of birds. Pupils understand that ICT can be used as a method of communication and investigation, and teachers work hard to ensure that they use these skills in a purposeful way. Internet access is carefully supervised and pupils are beginning to use the 'World Wide Web' to carry out their own research.
156. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with an example of very good teaching in Year 5 by the subject leader. This lesson was particularly successful because it was very well organised and learning was made purposeful and exciting. Pupils used a 'crime-stoppers' database to learn about using different criteria such as 'and' and 'the same as' to sort and explore information. The teacher very effectively introduced the topic, with very good use being made of an interactive white board to ensure that all pupils understood what they had to do. In other lessons, pupils make satisfactory progress. The number of computers in the ICT suite means that pupils need to work in pairs. This is not always organised effectively, with some younger pupils not being sufficiently involved in their work when their partner is sitting at the computer. This means that time is wasted and learning slowed. Nevertheless, teachers take care to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the curriculum and work is planned for these pupils at an appropriate level
157. Teachers' subject knowledge has improved since the last inspection and they have benefited from recent training. They are now more confident about using ICT to support learning in the different curriculum areas, although this is an aspect of teaching that should be developed

further. Although teachers now make good use of the ICT suite to teach specific skills, there is less evidence of computers being used in class to support this teaching. Nevertheless, some good practice was evident during the inspection. For example, pupils in Year 5 worked in the ICT suite for the mental mathematics part of their numeracy lesson, using the computers to find different numbers on a number line. In Year 4, pupils used word processing skills to draft a list using colons as punctuation. However, this good practice is not consistent across the school.

158. The school is now teaching all aspects of the National Curriculum, although resources to support learning in the 'control' aspect of the curriculum have only recently been acquired. In the past, this has limited learning in this aspect of the subject, although older pupils had appropriate opportunities to develop skills on a residential visit at the end of Year 6. An appropriate scheme of work has been introduced to identify what pupils should be learning from year to year, and teachers' planning is more thorough than it was at the time of the last inspection. Teachers note significant pupil achievement in their records and the school has recently introduced a whole school approach to assessment and record keeping based on a local authority scheme. This has not been in place long enough to judge its effectiveness or its impact on standards.
159. The subject is well led by the recently appointed subject leader, who is a very good role model for her colleagues. All members of staff are provided with good quality support and an 'ICT action plan' identifies clearly how provision is to be improved further. There is a good understanding of the need to make better use of the computers that are in classrooms to support learning now that teachers are more confident about using the ICT suite.
160. Resources are good. The school has many more computers than at the time of the last inspection and has suitable software to support learning in different subjects. The ICT suite is a very valuable resource that is used effectively by the different year groups. Its recent refurbishment and development has been a major factor in the rise in standards since the last inspection.

## MUSIC

161. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, with singing being a particular strength. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, with good progress being made in learning to sing. Pupils' attainment and progress are broadly the same as at the time of the last inspection. A comparative weakness is pupils' inability to maintain a steady beat or constant rhythm when playing an instrument or singing and they tend to 'speed-up' unless supported by an adult.
162. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with an example of good teaching when the subject leader led a singing practice for pupils in Years 3 to 6. In this lesson, a brisk pace maintained the interest of girls and boys effectively. The teacher had high expectations of all pupils when they sang complicated two- and three-part songs without accompaniment. In other lessons, teachers explain the purpose of activities clearly and are careful to use the correct musical terms such as 'ostinato' and 'discord'. Music is carefully chosen to interest the pupils and this means that pupils are usually attentive and well behaved, especially in Years 3 to 6.
163. There is a satisfactory curriculum that enables pupils to develop an appropriate range of skills and knowledge. The subject makes a good contribution towards pupils' cultural development with songs from around the world being learnt. For example, pupils in Year 3 were learning to perform a Native American song using voices and a range of percussion instruments. The school has a good range of multicultural instruments.
164. The subject leader has suitable plans to extend the teachers' knowledge and confidence by providing training and for raising the profile of the subject. Visitors make a good contribution to the subject. For example, various music groups perform to the pupils and run workshops. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 are learning to play the recorder and some older pupils have individual lessons for the piano.

165. A school choir consisting of mostly girls regularly performs in public and has taken part in a concert at the Royal Albert Hall. Parents enjoy the musical performances given by the school. All these activities help to enrich the curriculum. There are no formal methods for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress to enable information to be shared with the next teacher and be used to further improve the curriculum and pupils' standards of attainment.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

166. During the inspection, lessons in dance, gymnastics and games were observed in Years 2, 5 and 6.
167. Overall, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There are some variations in standards from those found at the time of the last inspection. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is now more even, with pupils developing satisfactory physical skills. The strengths in dance and gymnastics that were found in Years 3 to 6 are no longer evident, with most pupils now showing satisfactory skills overall, although there are some weaknesses in gymnastics amongst older pupils. The subject leader has identified the need to improve teachers' confidence in teaching gymnastics and dance, in order to raise standards to the previous high level. In Year 5, when dancing, pupils are beginning to devise their own movements, showing some awareness of the need to vary their responses according to the piece of music. Pupils make simple evaluations of each other's work, but these rarely include suggestions about how to improve the dance that is being evaluated. In Year 6, pupils work in small groups to make a range of balances in gymnastic lessons. They are beginning to sequence balances and combine and perform gymnastic actions. These skills are not yet well developed and are weaker than normally expected for pupils of this age. Throughout the school, pupils handle resources sensibly and work co-operatively when required to do so. They are beginning to show a good awareness of the effects of exercise on their bodies.
168. Pupils' attainment in swimming is good. Pupils use the school's own outdoor swimming pool in the summer term and a scrutiny of teachers' records show that by the end of Year 6, nearly all pupils are able to swim more than 25 metres, with most using well developed swimming strokes.
169. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with an example of good teaching in Year 6. In this lesson, the teacher showed good subject knowledge and helped pupils to develop their balancing skills sequentially, with a good range of activities helping to sustain motivation. Throughout the school, teachers ensure that activities are interesting and fun. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop and practise a range of movements. Lessons are well resourced and teachers give pupils good opportunities to work co-operatively. This makes a good contribution to their personal development. Behaviour is managed effectively, and pupils respond well to the sensitive way in which teachers help them as they work. In most lessons, boys and girls participate equally well in activities, although a small number of girls in Year 5 show a reticence to take part in dance lessons.
170. The curriculum is carefully planned to include all aspects of the National Curriculum. Older pupils have the opportunity to extend their skills on residential visits. This includes the chance to take part in a range of outdoor and adventurous activities such as problem solving and climbing. Teachers' medium term planning is detailed and shows how pupils are to develop skills over time. However, there are no assessment procedures to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. At the moment although teachers do assess learning in lessons, the school has no system for showing the progress of individual pupils over time. This means that on occasions, higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged in lessons.
171. Management of the subject is good. The recently appointed subject leader has a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses and has identified strategies for improving provision. These include improving resources for gymnastics and dance, providing training for teachers in these two aspects of the physical education curriculum and developing assessment procedures.



The school has good links with a local 'sports' college' who have provided helpful support and training for pupils and teachers and loaned various items of equipment.

172. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities for older pupils. There are football, netball and rounders clubs, which are well attended and give pupils good opportunities to practise and develop skills outside lessons. Good use is made of visits by coaches from various sports clubs, including local football and rugby clubs, to introduce pupils to new activities and supplement learning in the classroom. Pupils are able to compete against each other in lessons and on sports days, as well as in a variety of other activities. For example, over the last year, pupils have taken part in competitive activities in rounders, football and netball.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

173. Pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They make satisfactory progress overall, although there are variations from year group to year group. Whilst pupils learn about various major world faiths and consider issues such as expressing beliefs through art, they do not always write about or remember what they have learnt and some topics are covered in insufficient depth. This is because the amount of time allowed for teaching religious education is too low in some classes. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy discussing and comparing the differing beliefs and values in the religions they are studying and pupils in Year 3 empathised well when considering Mohammed's feelings on witnessing acts of greed and cruelty. Pupils' attainment and progress are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
174. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with an example of very good teaching in Year 4. In this lesson, the teacher's very good subject knowledge was shared with the pupils and Sikh music and wedding clothes were available to inspire pupils as they worked. In other lessons, few resources are used to add interest to the subject. Teachers explain the purpose of each lesson clearly but provide too few opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills and write about what they have learnt. A discussion at the end of a lesson in Year 3 was used effectively to share the good work of some higher attaining pupils to help encourage others to improve their work. Pupils produce their own 'special' books in Years 1 and 4 and whilst this is a good idea, there are insufficiently high expectations of how work in these books should be presented to show that they are valued.
175. The locally agreed syllabus forms the basis of lesson planning and the curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits to different places of worship. For example, pupils have visited an Islamic exhibition and visitors from a Buddhist Centre raised pupils' spiritual awareness. There are good links between religious education and art and design, with pupils learning about the use of art as an expression of belief by studying art from places of worship.
176. The subject leader has clear plans to develop the subject and has identified the need to improve attainment in the subject by meeting the needs of all pupils more closely through monitoring their work and ensuring that there is a greater consistency in provision from class to class.