

INSPECTION REPORT

CRANBORNE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Potters Bar

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117369

Headteacher: Marion Dupen

Reporting inspector: Dennis Maxwell
8798

Dates of inspection: 11 - 14 November 2002

Inspection number: 247768

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Laurel Fields Potters Bar
Postcode:	EN6 2BA
Telephone number:	01707 652714
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ann Harrison
Date of previous inspection:	19/01/1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2259	Dennis Maxwell	Registered inspector	Science Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13481	Douglas Binfield	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17541	Frances Ashworth	Team inspector	Design and technology Information and communication technology Educational inclusion	
20457	Brian Fletcher	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23009	Anne Hogbin	Team inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils - assessment?
8560	Margaret Lynch	Team inspector	English Art Religious education	

5565	Bimla Thakur	Team inspector	Geography History Foundation stage English as an additional language	Staffing.
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cranborne Primary is a community school for pupils aged three to 11 years, opened in 1934 but moved to a new building in 1990. It is much bigger than other primary schools, with 372 pupils on roll. It is situated centrally in the town of Potters Bar and serves the local community. The area includes a mixture of housing association and private accommodation. The socio-economic circumstances of the community serving the school are similar to those found nationally. There is a wide range of ability amongst the children and, overall, their attainment on entry to the school is average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, at around 10 per cent, is below the national average. There are six traveller children at present. A few more children than in most schools speak English as an additional language. Around 10 per cent of pupils enter or leave other than at the usual time, which is above average and it takes careful arrangements to help them adjust to the expectations of the school. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average, with most pupils having moderate learning needs. The school aims to promote pupils' personal development as well as provide an interesting and challenging education. The school was represented by a football team that was a National Finalist for two consecutive years: winners in the Wigan Stadium in 2001 and runners up at the Millenium Stadium, Cardiff, in 2002.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a happy and secure environment for the children to learn and a satisfactory standard of education. This is a school that is tackling identified weaknesses carefully through the positive leadership of the recently-appointed headteacher. The school has made satisfactory progress in improving standards since the last inspection. Overall, standards by Years 2 and 6 are average, which matches pupils' attainment on entry. The children make a good start to their education in the nursery and reception classes where they learn well through good teaching; this is a good improvement since the last inspection. There is some very good teaching, particularly in Year 6, which is having a direct impact on standards. Overall, satisfactory teaching enables pupils to make sound progress through the school. The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff are satisfactory. There is a new climate of increased expectations which is beginning to have a positive impact on standards and the quality of learning. The children, staff and school community benefit from a high level of care from the cook in the quality of school meals and other fare. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The children get a good start to their education in the Nursery and reception classes.
- Standards in art are very good. In information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education standards are above average by Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils have good relationships and attitudes; and they quickly become interested in their activities. Their behaviour is good overall. The pupils are supported well by the school's good approach to pupils' personal development.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good so that they make good progress.
- The headteacher and deputy are providing thoughtful support at a time of change and adjustment.
- Links with parents, the local community and nearby schools are very good.
- Provision for activities outside lessons is very good. The orchestra and choir are particular strengths.

What could be improved

- While assessment in the core subjects is developing through good recent focus, procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress in the foundation subjects are unsatisfactory.
- The need for teachers' professional and personal development has not been given sufficient attention recently because the school has given most thought recently to national initiatives.
- Aspects of leadership and management require improvement, including the design of the school development plan and the structure of the senior management team.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998. The governing body appointed a new headteacher from Easter 2002 who, with the senior staff, is committed to school improvement. There has been satisfactory

improvement in the weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection, although the full impact of recent changes are still becoming established through the school. There are suitable monitoring procedures to identify strengths and weaknesses, such as lesson observations and a check on lesson planning. Standards in Year 6 have improved in line with national trends since 1998. The quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum has improved, resolving the weaknesses in the Nursery and reception classes, and Years 1 to 2 and there are good strengths in Year 6. Pupils with special needs are now identified in nursery and reception classes and appropriate provision is made promptly. There are relevant schemes of work for all subjects which provide a suitable basis for planning. The lesson planning seen during the inspection was good. The new headteacher has identified weaknesses through her realistic evaluations. She has placed priorities for improvement in the school development plan, although, in the format used for several years, she recognises it does not provide a sufficient basis for managing improvements across all aspects of school. The school has a satisfactory capacity for further 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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	C	D	D	E	Well above average A Above average B Average C Below average D Well below average E
Mathematics	D	D	E	E	
Science	D	C	D	E	

Standards in the work seen during the inspection are average in English, mathematics and science by Year 6. This indicates a lowering of standards since the last inspection, although the view that standards were then above average was not borne out by the summer 1998 national tests. Standards in these subjects are average by Year 2. Standards in art and design are well above average by Years 2 and 6. Standards in ICT are above average and in religious education exceed the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards have been maintained in the other subjects since the last inspection at both Years 2 and 6 and meet national expectations. The more challenging work usually set for higher attaining pupils enables them to reach higher standards. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory from entry to the school through to Year 6. However, this is not always the case, for example when the same task is given to all groups of pupils, which indicates that assessment is not used sufficiently in planning. In the Foundation Stage, pupils are making satisfactory progress and the majority is likely to meet the expectation in all six areas of their learning by Year 1.

The table above shows that standards in the most recent national tests in Year 6 were below the national average in English and science, and well below average in mathematics. The results of national tests show that the pupils made satisfactory progress to Year 6 from their prior attainment in Year 2 in English and mathematics. A significant proportion of the pupils entering the school during the school year other than at the usual time have learning and behavioural needs that require firm action and support. This tends to shift the balance of attainment and more pupils attain the lower levels in the national tests. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their targets and make recorded gains in basic skills and self-esteem. The trend in results from 1998 to 2001 was in line with the nationally improving trend. The school did not meet its targets for English and mathematics, for the percentage of pupils expected to gain Level 4 or above in 2002. The school has set very challenging targets for the summer tests of 2003, based on early internal assessments of the pupils, which may be over-optimistic but the good teaching is having a positive impact on standards in Year 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to their work and respond well to the teachers' clear expectations. Teachers usually establish a good working atmosphere so that pupils are interested and try hard at the tasks. Most pupils persevere well although opportunities for them to show initiative are less established.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good. Most pupils have good personal discipline which helps their concentration and learning. They usually work together well and are considerate with their friends. They understand the school's clear system for rewards and sanctions. A few pupils present challenging behaviour that is handled firmly by the teachers and classroom assistants.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good amongst the children and staff, reflecting the strong emphasis by the school. Most pupils form good friendships and think about others' feelings. The pupils' good personal development comes to fruition by Year 6, and is a significant influence on pupils' progress and learning.
Attendance	The attendance rate has increased from year 2000 and is now good. Nearly all pupils are punctual and attend regularly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching in the school is satisfactory overall, indicating a much-improved position since the last inspection when a fifth of teaching was unsatisfactory. Teaching has a positive effect on standards and on pupils' learning, although there is inconsistency. Two lessons were seen where the teaching was excellent. Children in the Nursery and reception classes get a good start in school through a good choice of interesting tasks and mostly effective teaching. Throughout the school a significant proportion of teaching was very good in the lessons seen, particularly in Year 6. Examples of good or very good teaching were observed in almost all subjects and classes, indicating much strength in teaching and that school monitoring and support procedures are effective. Very few lessons were seen where teaching was unsatisfactory, although there were points to improve in several lessons. It was noted that the present Year 3 classes present very challenging behaviour for teachers which was usually managed well. The results of these pupils' national tests last year were below average.

The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught appropriately and pupils learn relevant skills in most lessons, such as observing and recording how sugar dissolves in a Year 6 science lesson. However, in a few lessons tasks are not challenging and pupils do not gain subject specific skills, such as how to design and make their own sensory box. The teaching of all subjects is at least satisfactory overall, and teaching in art and design is very good, while in history, ICT, music and religious education it is good. At times pupils are kept sitting for too long being taught as a class, so that they get restless and have limited time for productive independent working. Much questioning challenges pupils to think but many questions are also closed and pupils just have to give the correct answer without an explanation or reason. The daily lesson plans seen during the inspection are good and are usually set out to meet the needs of all pupils but the usual plans require stronger links with the intended teaching and learning approach. On a few occasions the higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently provided for, for example in an ICT lesson where they completed the set work quickly. Pupils often make good gains in their learning during lessons but several need very consistent support. Teachers plan

effectively for special needs and progress towards personal targets is closely monitored. Teachers usually make on-going assessments of the pupils from their answers and as they work but procedures for recording assessments are unsatisfactory in several subjects. Pupils are given suitable opportunities to apply their skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of tasks is satisfactory for pupils in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 2; it is good overall in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. Schemes of work provide a suitable structure and progression for planning and tasks are usually worthwhile and interesting. The choice of tasks for artwork, ICT and religious education is good. Productive links between subjects are developing.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)	The SEN co-ordinator and the classroom assistants work closely together to maintain a good standard of provision. The school offers well-planned opportunities to meet pupils' needs. Pupils make good progress through sensitive and well-directed support. Classroom assistants have a basic special needs training; some are well qualified in specialist areas such as provision for partially sighted children.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school has good arrangements for support when required. The provision ensures the pupils' learning and progress are at least in line with their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is good. There is a good basis of support for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, such as the residential visits, assemblies that celebrate world religions and the expectations for considerate behaviour. Good attention is given to cultural understanding, through art and music, for example, and there is increasing attention to preparing pupils to live in a multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school ethos reflects a high level of personal care for the children. There are good procedures to deal with inappropriate behaviour when it occurs. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment information are unsatisfactory.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school. There is very good communication with class teachers. Parents have a very high opinion of the school. The school takes several initiatives in forming a good working partnership.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, deputy and senior staff provide satisfactory leadership and management overall. The headteacher has formed a good view of strengths and weaknesses in the school through her evaluations. The deputy head is highly committed to providing a good quality education for the pupils. The senior management team gives a satisfactory lead but the present structure is not best suited to managing change or providing oversight.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors understand their responsibilities and provide satisfactory leadership and direction. They have been effective in forward planning to make improvements to facilities and the building.

The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has recently introduced sensible procedures to monitor standards and provision. These are placing clear expectations and accountability on staff. The recently-appointed assessment co-ordinator has made a good start in setting up procedures but the analysis and use of test information is under-developed.
The strategic use of resources	The headteacher deploys staff carefully according to need, for example by placing strong teachers in Year 6 and putting additional support into Year 3 because of the identified needs of pupils. Governors understand the need to obtain good value in their decisions and evaluate the effectiveness of improvements with standards and children's needs in mind.

The level of staffing is satisfactory. The accommodation has several good features such as the library and practical areas, but is satisfactory overall since the classrooms are small. The quality and range of learning resources are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents think their children like school, work hard and make good progress. The behaviour is good; and teaching is good. Parents are made welcome and are provided with helpful information. They feel the school is led and managed well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closer working with parents. More activities outside lessons.

The inspectors broadly agree with parents' positive views. Inspection evidence indicates that the school makes every effort to deal with parental concerns in a helpful manner. The range of activities outside lessons has recently been extended and is now more than in many schools, with provision of several clubs, especially for music and sport, and also for art/ design and for computing. Parents value the work of the Friends of Cranborne.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the work seen in the school during the inspection standards are average in English, including literacy, in mathematics, including numeracy, and in science by Year 2 and by Year 6. The school has taken part in training for literacy and numeracy which has helped to address areas for improvement, so that short-term planning for English and mathematics is clearly set out. As a result, much teaching in these subjects is good, shows teachers' growing confidence and is having a positive effect on standards. The school set challenging targets in English and mathematics for Year 6 in 2002 and, while not meeting them, is beginning to use the results to direct teaching to areas of weakness. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection by Year 2 in English, mathematics and science. Standards in English, mathematics and science have declined by Year 6 from above average at the time of the last inspection according to the previous report to broadly average. However, the results of the national tests taken by the 1998 Year 6 cohort in English were well below average, in mathematics were below average and in science were average, indicating some lack of skills and knowledge at the time of the last inspection, at least in English and mathematics.
2. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6 in relation to what they have learnt before, and they make satisfactory progress through the carefully planned activities. The school's emphasis on literacy and numeracy is having a positive effect on learning and standards. Pupils who have English as an additional language have standards that are similar to their peers and achieve similarly. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their targets through effective support.
3. Standards in the 2002 national tests in Year 2 were at the national average in reading, and below average in writing and mathematics. Taking the three years 1999 - 2001 together, standards have been a little above national averages in each of reading, writing and mathematics. There has been no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. The school's performance in science, from the teachers' assessments, was close to the national average. In comparison with schools in similar contexts, standards by Year 2 in reading were average, and in writing and mathematics were below average. This represents a decline over the previous year which was anticipated by the school's internal assessments and is confirmed by inspection evidence of those pupils, now in Year 3. The trends in standards have been broadly in line with the national trends for reading, writing and mathematics over the past four years.
4. Standards in the 2002 national tests at Year 6 were below the national average in English and science, and well below average in mathematics. In comparison with schools in similar contexts standards were well below average in all three subjects. However, the pupils made satisfactory progress to Year 6 from their prior attainment in Year 2 in English and mathematics compared with schools which had similar results at Year 2; although progress in science was below average. The percentage of pupils gaining higher than the expected level, at Level 5, was average in English, indicating that the higher attaining pupils performed relatively well. The trend in standards for all core subjects has been broadly in line with the national trend since the time of the last inspection in 1998. The recently appointed headteacher is ensuring that strengths and weaknesses are identified so that teaching and learning are closely targeted towards needs. The additional support in Years 3 and 6, for example, is effective in raising standards. The difference in standards between the national test results in 2002 and inspection evidence of the present Year 6 is partly explained by the very positive approach to teaching and learning now in Year 6 whereas there is evidence of pupils lacking skills and knowledge in previous years. The Year 6 pupils of 2002 also had a higher proportion than usual of pupils with special needs and who had joined the school during Years 3 to 6 with low attainment.
5. Standards on entry to the Nursery are more variable than at the time of the last inspection. The attainment on entry to the Nursery for the majority of children is broadly average and in some cases below that, particularly in language and literacy, mathematical development and in social skills. In the Nursery, children make at least satisfactory progress, and standards on entry to the Reception class are broadly average and typical of children of this age. By the time children reach Year 1, the

majority is on course to achieve the expected levels for the age in all areas of learning. Boys and girls, including the developing bilinguals, make satisfactory progress and they achieve as expected. Progress is better for children in the Nursery and for those with special educational needs in relation to prior attainment, through more effective support.

6. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in art and design are well above average. Standards exceed the expectation in ICT, and in religious education exceed the expectation of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In all other subjects, standards are average. The more challenging work usually set for higher attaining pupils enables them to reach higher standards, which is an improvement on the last inspection. The pupils apply their skills of literacy and numeracy suitably in other subjects. The use of ICT skills in other subjects is satisfactory and is a developing area as teachers become more confident. There is evidence of some lack of development in basic learning skills by several pupils previously and the school is aiming to consolidate these skills through thorough planning and monitoring.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the classroom. The quality of the Individual Education Plans is good. They are accessible and easy to read, which enables teachers and classroom assistants to plan the support programme. Pupils' individual targets are realistic and measurable and carefully set to match individual need. The targets are carefully revised every term. Pupils' progress towards their achievement is closely monitored. There are recorded gains in pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy and in behaviour.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. All groups of pupils have good attitudes to learning. They like school and are keen to participate fully in each day's activities. During lessons pupils listen attentively and undertake written and practical tasks in a conscientious manner. They help one another when working together in pairs and small groups. Most pupils enjoy answering questions, explaining views and contributing to discussions. A particularly good example of this was seen in a successful Year 2 religious education lesson. The responses by a visiting Muslim speaker to a wide range of questions from pupils helped provide a clear understanding about Islam faith and worship. In a few lessons, a small number of pupils become distracted if their interest is not fully captured, but overall positive attitudes contribute well to the standards achieved. Pupils often have a strong determination and commitment to do well, especially in Years 5 and 6.
9. Behaviour is good. Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations so that there is a calm and orderly approach in the school that helps to support learning. Nearly all pupils behave well in lessons and good examples of this are seen throughout the school. A few problems do arise occasionally, notably by a few pupils with behaviour difficulties in Year 3. Pupils are well mannered in the dining areas and very attentive during assemblies. The few incidents of serious misbehaviour that arise, including bullying, are dealt with quickly and fairly. Where appropriate, parents are consulted on such matters. There were no exclusions or incidents of racism last year. Pupils from all backgrounds show respect for one another and this contributes to the friendly environment that prevails.
10. The previous report drew attention to inconsiderate behaviour by older boys in the junior playground. Several steps were instigated to improve the position including restricting football to one year group each day and the provision of quiet games equipment and benches. A recent initiative is the 'friendship stop scheme' so that a pupil with a concern can readily be helped by others. During the inspection, boisterous play by some boys was seen especially during the latter part of the lunch hour. The hard play area is relatively small for the large number of pupils involved. The problem has been accentuated by the closure of the adjoining adventure play area for safety reasons. The headteacher and governors are giving active consideration as to how the current difficulties should be addressed. Behaviour in the infant playground is good and children in the Foundation Stage benefit from the recently fenced play area.
11. Good provision is made for pupils' personal development. This is helped by the good relationships throughout the school that are well promoted by staff. There is a full programme of educational visits and talks by specialist speakers, including local clergy. Pupils in Year 4 and Year 6 make residential visits to Cuffley and Canterbury respectively. The school clubs covering music, sport and other

activities are popular and well attended. Pupils undertake monitoring duties in class and elect representatives to serve on the effective school council. The 'buddy scheme' whereby each Year 6 pupil is linked to a child in the reception class is very successful. Year 6 pupils also undertake special tasks at lunch times and break times. The opportunities for showing initiative or undertaking independent work during lessons, however, are limited. All children are given opportunities to take part in school productions. Overall the wide range of activities provided has a positive impact in promoting pupils' social skills and self esteem.

12. Attendance is good. The school's record compares favourably with the national average for primary schools. Unauthorised absence levels are low. A few pupils of the travellers' families are away for longish periods, mainly because of their parents working away from the local site. Punctuality is good, enabling a prompt start to be made to the school day. Lessons and other activities begin and end in line with the approved timetable. The positive features on attendance and timekeeping have a good impact on learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in the Nursery and reception classes, showing a good improvement since the last inspection when teaching was unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 - 2, showing an improvement since the last inspection in English for example; and also satisfactory overall in Years 3 - 6 where the standard of teaching has been maintained. Throughout the school a significant proportion of teaching was very good in the lessons seen, particularly in Year 6 where the thorough and imaginative teaching is having a direct impact on current learning and standards. Two lessons were observed in the school where the teaching was excellent. Examples of good or very good teaching were observed in almost all subjects and classes, indicating many strengths in the skills and approaches used. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught carefully, often very well in literacy. Additional sessions are provided with a good focus for those pupils having weak skills in literacy. Very few lessons were seen where teaching was unsatisfactory, although the quality of teaching is inconsistent. There were elements to improve in several lessons that were satisfactory otherwise. The recently-appointed headteacher has maintained and extended monitoring and support procedures so that they are becoming increasingly effective. This is beginning to have a positive impact on teachers' expectations and performance, and is also helping to identify training needs where teachers lack confidence.
14. The quality of teaching is having a positive impact on the learning of different groups of pupils overall. In most lessons teachers focus carefully on basic skills such as colour and form in art. However, some skills are not given sufficient attention, for example reading a passage of text from a book during English to provide a good model for children. Further elements of teaching which were identified as inconsistent included lessons with insufficiently high expectations and the lack of emphasis and opportunity for pupils to reason or explain their ideas since much questioning concentrates on factual answers. Few lessons expected pupils to use research skills or problem-solving skills since tasks were firmly directed by the teachers. There were exceptions to this, however, such as in two science lessons in Year 6 where pupils designed their own experiments for dissolving sugar. Teachers usually bring the pupils together usefully at the end of a lesson to discuss what they have learnt and to reinforce their learning, but several of these sessions are too short to be of real value. Overall, the teaching of English, mathematics, science, and several foundation subjects is satisfactory and meets the needs of the differing groups of pupils. Teaching in art is very good, and in ICT, music and religious education is good, having a strong impact on standards.
15. The school has improved the planning for English and mathematics along the lines of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies so that most lessons have a good basic structure and choice of tasks. This is helping to bring greater consistency to the teaching and is having a positive effect on standards. The planning does not usually identify the strategies teachers intend to use, however, so that the school is not consciously working together to consider and evaluate the most effective methods. Pupils' work is marked regularly although the quality of written comment to help pupils improve varies. The learning intentions are clear and usually shared with the pupils. The objectives are seldom adapted to indicate how the higher attaining pupils are to be extended, although more demanding tasks are usually planned. The arrangement for teachers to plan in year groups helps to support each teacher and to bring consistency. While subject leaders monitor this planning and

provide comments to improve it, the school does not have effective procedures in place to make the leaders' subject knowledge available at the time of planning. This has the effect that some tasks lack depth and worthwhile purpose.

16. Teachers usually provide interesting and carefully presented introductions to lessons that are based on sound subject knowledge, for example in a geography lesson in Year 3 about the effects of weather on humans - with a poster of a man in a car surrounded by flood water. In several lessons the introductory session is too long, with the pupils sitting on the carpet becoming restless or listening for too long, which limits the time for pupils to work independently or in groups. The teaching of basic skills related to the topic and content of the lessons is usually thorough, although in a few lessons the teachers' subject knowledge is unsatisfactory so that specific subject content and skills are over-looked. For example, in combined science and design and technology lessons in Year 1 pupils were not challenged to observe and record the different textures of materials nor to design and make their own boxes. On the other hand, several examples of good practice were noted which challenged pupils to use their initiative and to explain their findings. This was exemplified well in an art lesson in Year 4 where pupils had choice over their starting point in mixing paints to various shades and colours, such as related to a sunset. In these lessons pupils had very good learning experiences.
17. During introductory sessions, whether for literacy, numeracy or other subjects, most teachers establish pupils' interest well, by using practical materials or demonstration for example. These help develop discussion about ideas such as using a play-script in Year 3 and encourage pupils to share their ideas and experiences. Several teachers have a skilled questioning approach that probes pupils' understanding and reinforces their learning. At times, however, too many questions are 'closed', pupils having to guess what is in the teacher's mind as the correct answer. The teachers' good management of the pupils and behaviour strategies are usually effective in maintaining concentration with a good work focus. Most lessons sustain an effective pace, with planned tasks for pupils' differing attainments. Teachers often set a time limit for a task which helps to make clear expectations, although on several occasions the time is too short for worthwhile independent work. Teachers are careful to provide varied opportunities for pupils to work in differing groups, where children may show strengths in one subject and are able to form new working relationships. Most discussion sessions are carefully structured to bring together the main learning from the tasks, such as a group reading session in Year 6 about extracts from the book: 'Lost - one pair of legs' which brought out interpretation of phrases very well. In a few lessons insufficient time is planned to reinforce pupils' understanding of what they have learnt.
18. Teachers use several ways to pick up on pupils' understanding during lessons, particularly from their spoken answers. While teachers value pupils' answers and respond positively to them, insufficient attention is given to keeping manageable records of pupils' progress in the different subjects.
19. The quality of teaching for pupils with special needs is good. Teachers plan well for individual need in numeracy and literacy; they carefully assess the progress of each pupil. Teachers have very positive attitudes and this markedly increases the self-esteem of the pupils, who are eager to learn and to show what they can do. In the classroom, pupils are integrated well. An example of good practice is that classroom assistants make notes about named pupils' progress and regularly exchange these with the class teacher. All classroom assistants receive basic training. Several receive supplementary, specialist training.

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

20. At the previous inspection, the curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage was considered to be too narrow and lesson plans for the Years 1-2 classes made too little mention of learning outcomes. The curriculum has been carefully reviewed in the intervening years and now provides for a wider range of learning experiences than were evident four years ago. The Foundation Stage curriculum is stronger and lesson planning has improved throughout the school. All teachers have worked hard to secure a curriculum that helps to raise standards and that serves all pupils equally well.

21. The school offers a curriculum that is broad and balanced. The teaching in all subjects is collaboratively planned in year groups and learning objectives are carefully identified. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are firmly in place and appropriate emphasis is given to pupils' acquisition of basic skills that allow access to all parts of the curriculum. The development of skills in ICT is good and all classes have access to the well-resourced computer suite. There is insufficient opportunity for pupils to practice their skills in the course of a normal lesson, but the school is already addressing this issue.
22. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory overall and in line with what is recommended. The curriculum is generally balanced and relevant to children's ages and needs - covering all six areas of the learning. There is now an increasing balance between child-initiated play and adult-directed activities. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. The planned outdoor play provision has also improved from before and now successfully promotes some areas of their learning, particularly physical development for children in the Nursery. The planned and regular use of outdoor space and resources could develop further to include all areas of learning. At present, limited opportunities are provided for using the big space and the good range of equipment that is already available. Procedures for assessment are sound for children in the Nursery and linked to the 'Stepping Stones' and 'Early Learning Goals'. Children's needs are taken into account while planning activities in different areas of learning. Assessment is weaker in the Reception class, and is less successful in supporting the planning of activities to match the children's growing needs, and not sufficiently focused on the 'Stepping Stones' to ensure that more able children progress at a higher rate. Children's achievements are not recorded systematically at present, which leads to uneven progress being made in the different areas of learning.
23. All subjects in the National Curriculum are taught appropriately, including religious education. Sex education is taught in accordance with the Governors' policy and drugs awareness is part of a well-planned personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme. The aim of the PSHE programme is to cultivate pupils' personal development and to give them the knowledge and skills they need and ultimately, to lead confident and independent lives. Wherever possible, teachers make links with other subjects so that pupils are beginning to experience the curriculum as a whole. Further development is needed in this aspect of planning, but a good start has been made.
24. There is good provision for mathematics and English. Both subjects are given a prominent place in the curriculum and the time allocated is used well. Teachers plan well and give proper weight to each element. The well-stocked library provides valuable learning opportunities for all pupils. Planning for all subjects has improved since the last inspection. Schemes of work provide a good background for continuity and progression in learning, although not all schemes are sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of the school. The curriculum is significantly enhanced for pupils in Year 6 by the provision of specialist lessons in spoken French. This lays a very good foundation for language work in the secondary school.
25. The curriculum is inclusive. The needs of all pupils are taken into account at all stages of planning. For example, good provision is made for travellers' children who have had little formal education previously and they make good progress. However, in several lessons more attention and questioning was given to boys or to girls because they were the ones responding and other children became passive. Conversely, some teachers have highly skilled questioning styles that target all pupils and probe their understanding. The school is beginning to evaluate its own performance by analysing test results and by careful scrutiny of teachers' plans. This leads to changes in the curriculum and improved learning. For example, the arrangement of mathematics classes in Years 3-6 by prior attainment has led to gains in achievement and to pupils' confidence.
26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and much better than at the time of the previous inspection. It fully reflects national practice. The provision is good in literacy and numeracy. The teachers and the classroom assistants give pupils good support in acquiring basic skills for learning. The quality of Individual Education Plans is good and they include targets for numeracy, literacy and behaviour. The personal targets for numeracy, literacy and behaviour are realistic and achievable. Pupils' progress towards them is carefully measured and recorded.
27. The provision for after-school activities is very good and provides pupils with a wide array of opportunities for self-fulfilment. A large number of pupils learn to play musical instruments and are

well taught by visiting teachers. The very good orchestra and choir frequently perform to a high standard in public. There are several recorder groups. In sports, pupils play football, netball and table tennis. There are clubs for art, design and technology and information technology. All after-school activities are well attended and contribute very well to pupils' personal development.

28. The school makes very good contact with the local community. For example, Year 5 is involved in an active business link with a local supermarket. Pupils design and make biscuits that they sell to the other school in the project, thus engaging in a little friendly rivalry. Local estate agents sponsor the school's football and netball kits. Pupils deliver the gifts of Harvest to sheltered accommodation for senior citizens and entertain them to refreshments at the school.
29. The school has very good relationships with its partners in education. It maintains good contacts with the local secondary schools and exchanges teachers and information. The school takes student teachers from the local universities and work-experience students from the secondary schools. The headteacher has strong links with all local primary and secondary schools and joint training programmes are devised.
30. Provision for spiritual education is good. Religious education lessons include many opportunities for thinking about the values and beliefs of different people. Pupils celebrate beauty in art and dance. They sing with enthusiasm and love making music with a variety of instruments. In mathematics they become fascinated by numbers and the patterns they form. They have many opportunities in science and history lessons to express their ideas and look from different perspectives. For example to consider what living through the Blitz or being an evacuee must have felt like. In Year 6, pupils have drawn cartoons to illustrate issues such as disease, want, ignorance and idleness. There are strong links with the local Anglican church and the Salvation Army and the vicar regularly leads assembly. The school provides a daily act of collective worship, which always includes singing, prayer or reflection time and music played by pupils. Poppy day was thoughtfully treated in assembly and reinforced by other teachers before and after the minute's silence. There was a moving moment when the French tutor described the atmosphere for young soldiers in the trenches of the Somme.
31. Provision for moral education is good. Assemblies emphasise moral values and explore moral dilemmas. For example, in a week devoted to the loyal and dependable aspects of a good friend, one assembly posed the question "Should I lie for my friend?". In Year 6, pupils have been discussing both responsibilities and the more difficult idea of rights. They have thought hard about these ideas and come up with their own 'Children's Charters'. A speaker from the Royal Veterinary College came and put the case for 'Animal Rights'. Pupils then looked at the issue from the other side and discussed when using animals might be justified. Teachers provide good role models. They promote thoughtful behaviour at appropriate times in their teaching for example when talking about cheating. They encourage pupils to listen to each other's views and to work collaboratively together. The golden rules are displayed in corridors and classrooms and playground rules are prominently displayed outside. Achievements and good behaviour are rewarded in a variety of ways. The school has procedures for involving the parents in cases where behaviour is causing concern. The PSHE programme provides many opportunities to develop the ideas of justice, honesty, respect and the effect of one's behaviour on others. There is a new policy for Promoting Race Equality which aims to address the need for awareness of racial issues.
32. Provision for social education is good. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. Pupils in Year 6 each have a 'Buddy' to look after from the reception classes. Pupils serve refreshments to visitors after the Harvest Assembly, help to tidy areas of the school, take registers to the office and take charge of the projector, CD and cassette players in assembly. They are given many opportunities to hand out and collect in equipment. Good opportunities for social development are provided for pupils who go on the residential visits in Years 4 and 6 or become involved in the school productions. All pupils are involved with the school's many charitable events. The school has strong links with the community, lending its field for a variety of uses, from fireworks to carnivals. Pupils have helped to plant saplings in cleared woodland nearby. The scouts use projects in the school grounds for work on their Environment Badges. Pupils have opportunities to work in different groupings although socially isolated pupils are not always sufficiently included. Collaborative work, sharing and taking turns are encouraged; for example, in Year 2 music, pupils took turns to conduct. At lunchtime pupils are courteous and respectful, waiting for permission to leave the table. The newly introduced 'Friendship Stop' signs in the playground are already being used by pupils to make new

friends and help those who are upset. The School Council has initiated many ideas. For example they were displeased at the amount of paper wasted by the school and instigated a system, run by pupils, whereby boxes of waste paper are collected from classrooms and by the photocopier and sent for recycling. The school provides limited opportunities for pupils to show initiative in lessons. In many classes teachers talk too much, denying pupils the space to put their own views. In practical lessons pupils are often told what to make and which materials to use rather than being allowed to make decisions and choices themselves. This is true in many classes but not in Year 6, where there is more encouragement of pupils' own ideas.

33. Provision for cultural education is good. The school works well with the community and welcomes visiting speakers, musicians and artists. Pupils have opportunities to look at the similarities and differences between their families and others. For example, pupils in Year 6 have researched and written a biography of a family member. In history lessons pupils look at different events and consider the differences between the way we live now and in the past. In Year 2 design and technology a visit to St Paul's Cathedral enabled pupils to compare their designs for Joseph's coat with the patterns on the traditional robes worn by clergy. Traditional British culture is well represented in music and English with folk songs and folk tales.
34. Provision for multi-cultural education is satisfactory. In art and music pupils see examples of paintings, sculptures and instruments from around the world. Each week this term the music in assembly has been from a different country. The school celebrates the festivals of the Christian calendar and takes advantage of other opportunities. For example a student teacher has offered to lead an assembly on Hannukah. Visiting speakers have helped Year 1 pupils to understand the customs and beliefs surrounding Divali and Year 2 pupils to find out more about Islam. Traveller pupils in Year 5 last year were encouraged to compare their way of life with that of a fictional character in the class book. Pupils have visited a Sikh temple and Kingdom Hall. Copies of the Torah and Qu'ran are used in religious education lessons. Because the celebration of the major festivals of other faith communities, and the consideration of their beliefs and customs, is not planned into the cycle of assemblies, pupils' multicultural experiences depend on which year group they are in.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. Very good provision is made for pupils' guidance and welfare. The school's emphasis on providing a friendly and supportive environment is helped by the high quality of pastoral support provided by staff. Parents are very pleased with this feature of the school's work.
36. There is a well planned programme for personal health and social education. This is dealt with in a weekly lesson for Years 1 to 6, supplemented by special themes in some of the assemblies. Regular information is given about personal hygiene and healthy living. Older pupils receive advice on sex and drugs education. The programme makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils contributed well to a helpful discussion about bullying and racism. Their written work recognised the need to show understanding and tolerance to help achieve social cohesion. The school supports pupils well in the process of electing representatives to serve on the effective school council so that they are able to discuss ideas and matters that are relevant to their school life. Pupils take part in fund raising activities to support the work of charities at home and overseas.
37. The governors' Premises Committee places strong emphasis on safety matters, including risk assessments. Such work is helped by regular inspections of buildings and equipment and by the expertise of the experienced site manager. All staff recently undertook a training course in basic first aid. Accidents and illness are handled efficiently. Written procedures are in place and any incidents are carefully recorded. An area identified for improvement in the previous inspection was the reduction of the high level of accidents in the playgrounds at lunch-time. The arrangements for infants are now satisfactory. In the junior playground the number of knocks received is often at a reasonable level having regard to the high number of pupils using the facility. Nevertheless on some days there is still a high incidence and this suggests that renewed efforts are required to resolve the problem of overcrowding. There are appropriate arrangements for child protection and issues that arise are dealt with sensitively in co-operation with the specialist agencies.

38. Very good systems are in place for promoting high standards of behaviour. The behaviour policy has recently been updated and copies of this have been sent to parents. Pupils are familiar with the 'golden rules' and respond well to the rewards system that includes merit marks, class points and the headteacher's half-termly awards. There are clearly defined sanctions for dealing with misbehaviour, including bullying. The school ensures close liaison with parents and external agencies to provide support and guidance to pupils when individual behaviour difficulties occur.
39. The procedures for promoting regular attendance are very good. Parents are well advised about the importance of regular attendance and are co-operative in advising reasons for absence. Registration is undertaken carefully and attendance records are well maintained. Office staff monitor the position closely and any unexplained absences are followed up immediately. The fortnightly visits by the education welfare officer are most helpful and enable any particular problems to be discussed with the headteacher.
40. In the Foundation Stage, the Nursery and Reception classes, the collection of assessment information, record keeping of children's progress and the use of assessment data to plan future teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. These are satisfactory in the Nursery, but weak in the Reception class. There is no over-arching system. This is because the two classes have not sufficiently considered themselves a distinct stage of development, with different and more appropriate planning and assessment procedures from the rest of the school, and as recommended as good practice nationally. Overall, there is no established system to ascertain how well the children are attaining within the Stepping Stones, and progressing towards the Early Learning Goals, which are the recognisable stages of development for children of this age. As such, there is no quantifiable measure for knowing how effective teaching and learning are within the Foundation Stage or whether the curriculum has any weaknesses.
41. The Nursery teachers are more aware of what is required and what is good practice. They make good use of the children's assessment on entry to the nursery class, and plan suitable activities for their children. Observations are made on a regular basis and these are often linked to the Stepping Stones. This work is at an early stage of development. Children's assessment records are transferred to the next teacher in the Reception class but full use is not made of this information to ensure continuity in children's learning and progression. In Reception class, apart from gaining some information on what the children can do when they start their full time school, using the statutory LEA procedures for assessment, there are no documented procedures for knowing how well the children are achieving, and if their achievement and progress are good enough. The school plans to address these issues by developing assessment systems in the Foundation Stage in a variety of ways. Presently, the Reception class teacher knows her children well, and takes note of the few children who have performed particularly well or badly in a planned lesson. She also has some information about the children's ability to recognise sounds. As a part of the Action Plan, the Reception class teacher has recently undertaken some training at Worcester University on the Effective Early Learning Project.
42. Provision for the monitoring of pupils' academic progress is unsatisfactory overall. This is because the procedures are at an early stage of development following the recent changes to improve assessment skills. A target system aimed at helping individual pupils to improve their skills in English and mathematics has been introduced. This information is being shared with pupils and is reflected in the advice given to parents about areas for development. There is a need for such work to be given greater emphasis during lessons and for the system to be extended to other subject areas. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and those from travellers' families is monitored well.
43. Satisfactory arrangements are made for monitoring of personal development. The class teachers know the pupils well and maintain appropriate records about personal achievements. They are well supported in this work by teaching assistants. The information is well used in the annual written reports and in the feedback given to parents at meetings with class teachers.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The school has very good relationships with parents. The level of parental satisfaction with the school has improved significantly since the last inspection. Parents are strongly committed to supporting the work of the school and all sections of the community have confidence in their relationship. The effective partnership arrangements are having a very positive impact on the school's efforts to raise standards of achievement.
45. Parents indicate that their children like school, work hard and make good progress. They feel that behaviour is good. Parents are pleased with the quality of teaching and consider that the school is well led and managed. They indicate that the school makes them welcome and provides good information on their child's progress and school activities. About one in six of parents replying to the questionnaire thought the school should work closer with them and that there should be more activities outside lessons.
46. Inspectors broadly agree with parents' positive views. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is satisfactory overall. In many lessons it was good and sometimes very good or excellent. Inspection evidence indicates that the school makes every effort to deal with any parental concerns in a helpful manner. The range of activities outside lessons has recently been extended by the provision of clubs for art/design and for computers.
47. The school's links with parents are very good. Parents are given very helpful information about their child's progress at consultation meetings with the class teacher and in the annual written reports. There is every opportunity for parents to raise any individual concerns informally with a member of staff. Parents are well advised about important changes affecting their child such as induction arrangements, preparation for national tests and the transfer to secondary schools.
48. The prospectus provides a full range of information about the school. Newsletters are issued during each half-term, drawing attention to forthcoming events and topical issues affecting the school. The governors' annual report gives a detailed and wider ranging account of the school's activities and achievements. However, the report does not fully meet legal requirements. This is because there is no reference to the targets for the national tests at age 11, professional development undertaken by teachers and progress in implementing the action plan drawn up after the last inspection.
49. The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school is very good. High attendance levels are seen at consultation meetings, school concerts, assemblies, the annual meeting with governors and the summer exhibition of pupils' work. A large number of parents helps in classes with reading and other activities and others assist with educational visits. Most parents give a high degree of support to the work that children undertake at home. An outstanding feature is the success achieved by the Friends of Cranborne Association. A large number of parents and friends supports the Association's social and fund raising programme. All social events at the school are enhanced by the personal contribution of the school cook in providing welcome refreshments of a high standard. Donations by the Association have a positive influence on pupils' learning and well being. Examples include providing finance for the computers in the ICT suite and enhancements to playground equipment.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The headteacher has formed a thoughtful view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is exerting a positive influence on school improvement. She has already made decisions that are beginning to have a positive impact on provision, for example in appointing a very capable co-ordinator for assessment. She has rightly focused on the need for staff professional development as a central strategy in the drive to raise standards. She has also extended the regular monitoring procedures to improve classroom practice. These procedures include lesson observations by herself and the deputy, using the opportunity to help teachers reflect on their performance. The governing body recognises the value of this objective comment and has agreed to fund continuing classroom cover to allow release time for subject leaders. The role and influence of subject leaders has improved since the last inspection but has not yet been extended sufficiently to include focused time in colleagues' lessons so that they may observe the quality of learning and standards through the school.
51. The headteacher provides sound leadership and management; she is giving the school a clear direction through her thoughtful evaluations and experience. She is building on the valuable staff experience through the school to strengthen the sense of common purpose. All staff work extremely

hard for the benefit of the children. The headteacher has formed a good view of strengths and weaknesses in the school through her evaluations. The deputy head is highly committed to providing a good quality education for the pupils. The headteacher's insights are helping to use the undoubted strengths amongst the staff more effectively and to make subject leaders more accountable. The headteacher and senior management team together provide sound leadership. They meet regularly and are establishing supportive procedures that encourage staff to work together. The present structure of the senior management team provides appropriate support in most respects but the needs for co-ordination of the Foundation Stage and Years 1-2 are not served best by the one person carrying both responsibilities. There is a developing sense of shared effort as they identify and tackle improvements. The aims and values of the school are expressed well through personal care for individual pupils and a growing emphasis on high expectations. The school has established a satisfactory quality of education since the last inspection through the headteacher's and all staff's commitment to meeting the needs of all children.

52. The members of staff with management responsibilities take them on willingly and support the promotion of good standards. The headteacher places a good emphasis on regular monitoring of planning and of children's work so that teachers are becoming more familiar with the processes of evaluation. The support staff makes a good contribution to pupils' learning as part of the whole staff team.
53. The school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. The work of the Foundation Stage has made good progress. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is now good, having been unsatisfactory previously. The quality of teaching has improved in Years 1 - 2. The short-term lesson planning seen during the inspection is good, although the school has yet to establish this standard in usual practice. The school has adopted national guidance to provide curriculum coverage and progression, but is still in process of adapting it to the needs of the pupils. The headteacher is introducing appropriate formal assessment procedures to track pupils' progress and provide a basis for lesson planning. However, the procedures are currently unsatisfactory since they are only in place for the core subjects and the information is not being fully used. Also, the headteacher and senior staff are only just beginning to analyse national test data to inform their management decisions.
54. The headteacher and governing body have prepared a school development plan which takes reasonable account of needs identified by the headteacher. It re-visits weaknesses identified at the last inspection in order to strengthen provision, for example related to the Foundation Stage and assessment. The current priorities are clearly set out, with targets and success criteria. However, the development plan, which was adopted through expedience at the time of her appointment after Easter, does not have an adequate structure to cover all aspects of the school's work. For example, there is no separate section on management, nor to guide governors in their role. The plan is also for a single year and does not provide the longer-term view that is required for forward planning of priorities.
55. The governors provide sound direction for school development and in fulfilling their responsibilities. They have effective ways to visit the school and form an independent view of its needs through a sensible programme whereby visits are linked to a subject or class. This enables them to discuss developments and to inform their governing body decisions, such as making additional funds available to subject leader responsibilities. They have agreed a good policy for performance management that is becoming established through agreed targets. This, together with the improved monitoring procedures, is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and hence on standards. Governors attend suitable training courses and make use of them to improve their contribution to school decisions. Their strong commitment to the school is having a direct impact on shaping improvements, for example in the decision to provide a computer suite to address previous weaknesses.
56. There is a satisfactory level of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum and pupils' learning. The teachers are deployed well to ensure that their experience is used for the pupils' benefit, for example in the deputy head teacher's time-table and the strong team in Year 6. Teachers manage the pupils well to create an orderly working atmosphere and generally use time well. The administrative assistants are very efficient, and are thoughtful in their communication with parents. The school caretaker and cleaning staff take a good pride in the school and keep the premises bright and clean. The standard of accommodation is good. There is a good programme of redecoration and

repair that helps keep the school attractive, which is also significantly enhanced by the many attractive displays that value pupils' work. The school makes good use of its accommodation and the quality of facilities is satisfactory. The quality and range of resources are good. Teachers use learning resources well within lessons on most occasions.

57. The co-ordinator for special educational needs (SEN) is well organised and manages the provision well. She is virtually a full-time classroom teacher but this is compensated by her willingness to work especially hard and by the capacity to develop a team approach. Her knowledge, commitment and organisational skills are the foundation for good provision. The development plan for SEN takes full account of the need for closer contact to be made between class teachers, classroom assistants and the co-ordinator. There is a shared commitment to raise standards. The school tries hard to involve parents at every stage of the process and most parents attend the annual review. The quality of information for parents is good. At secondary transfer, good contact is made with SEN departments in order to pass information and establish continuity of care. Good resources for SEN, centrally located and easily accessible, make a strong impact upon the quality of learning. There is currently insufficient access to information technology for special needs pupils but additional computers about to be provided in the areas outside classrooms are expected to remedy this deficiency.
58. Financial management procedures are good and carefully directed towards educational priorities. Governors and the headteacher carefully monitor expenditure and income against the budget, which is linked to the priorities expressed in the school development plan. The governors direct spending towards raising standards and improving the quality of educational provision. There are satisfactory procedures to discuss and evaluate the effects of financial decisions, such as how well the improved outside play area for young children is working, and governors have a good understanding of the principles for obtaining good value. The accounting work is computerised and a finance officer from the local education authority provides a high quality advisory service. Day-to-day transactions are handled efficiently through the school office in line with appropriate internal control systems. The school received a complimentary audit report last year.
59. The arrangements for supporting educational priorities through forward financial planning are unsatisfactory. When finalising the budget for 2002/03 governors gave careful consideration to competing demands and to ensuring that emphasis was placed on areas that would help to raise standards. Governors rightly took similar considerations into account when considering recommendations from the new headteacher about priorities for the current year's school development plan. There is a need for strategic planning to take into account the school's longer-term requirements. This could be achieved by extending the development plan to cover a period of 3 years. It should include an outline of the financial and resource implications of the proposals.
60. Satisfactory arrangements are made for the use of financial, staffing and other resources. The higher than normal financial reserves are to be reduced in the current year in order to support the drive towards higher standards. Money obtained through the standards fund is used well for the intended purposes. The governors and headteacher carefully review pupils' performance in national tests compared to that in other schools. There is extensive consultation with staff to help identify key areas for development. Orders for work and services are placed only after the most careful consideration about cost effectiveness. Such measures help the school to achieve best value.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of learning the governors, headteacher and staff should give attention to the following.
- (1) Improve the quality of assessment procedures and the use of assessment information by: (Paragraphs 22, 40, 41, 42, 53, 54, 65, 71, 98, 110, 116, 122, 126, 132, 140, 156)
- ◆ Agreeing a whole school approach to assessment.
 - ◆ Preparing and agreeing an assessment policy that takes full account of the principles underlying good practice.
 - ◆ Enabling the assessment co-ordinator to provide effective leadership, including opportunities for further training.

- ◆ Ensuring there is more consistency of practice in assessment of the core subjects.
 - ◆ Making thorough analyses of test data to identify strengths and weaknesses and to inform decisions.
 - ◆ Reviewing and improving arrangements for assessment in the foundation subjects so that pupils' progress is tracked through the school.
 - ◆ Providing training in the processes of on-going assessment in the classroom, and introducing manageable arrangements to keep records of different groups of pupils.
 - ◆ Making effective use of assessment information for planning and teaching, in order to match tasks to pupils' attainment, and hence to raise standards.
- (2) Improve the quality and effectiveness of management in the school by: (Paragraphs 23, 48, 50, 51, 53, 54, 55, 57, 59, 60, 101, 110, 116, 133, 140, 147, 157, 164)
- ◆ Reviewing the purpose of the school development plan and placing identified priorities into a helpful structure that covers all the major aspects of the school's work.
 - ◆ Reviewing the structure and role of the senior management team in relation to the needs of the school, particularly for guidance and support at the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.
 - ◆ Providing training for subject leaders in their role of support and evaluation, making arrangements for effective ways to monitor standards and provision, including lesson observations, monitoring pupils' work and curriculum planning, with pupils' needs in mind.
- (3) Improve the quality of classroom practice, lesson planning and forms of support, placing a high priority on teachers' and support assistants' professional development by: (Paragraphs 1, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 29, 41, 71, 82, 90, 98, 99, 101, 108, 115, 133, 140, 141, 163, 164.)
- ◆ Providing training in further aspects of the role of subject leader.
 - ◆ Giving particular training for teachers' subject knowledge in English.
 - ◆ Setting up procedures for learning assistants to observe and record pupils' responses and understanding during literacy, numeracy and other lessons while pupils are taking part in class discussions.
 - ◆ Developing more effective strategies to challenge higher attaining pupils by giving them more demanding tasks.
 - ◆ Discussing and preparing guidance on teaching and learning strategies and styles, taking account of the need to vary the approach according to the subject matter and tasks.
 - ◆ Making suitable provision in the school development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	81
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	17	32	27	3	0	0
Percentage	2	21	40	33	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.

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)	21	351
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	44

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	51

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	44

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	35
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	40

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	35	24	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	29	32
	Girls	19	19	22
	Total	49	48	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (86)	81 (84)	92 (88)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	31	30
	Girls	19	18	20
	Total	49	49	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (86)	83 (88)	85 (95)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	33	27	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	16	23
	Girls	21	20	21
	Total	38	36	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (76)	60 (66)	73 (84)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	22	27
	Girls	21	19	21
	Total	40	41	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (81)	68 (71)	80 (83)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
328	0	0
9	0	0
37	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
7	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
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)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.7
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	200

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.1
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	24
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10:1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	866,036
Total expenditure	865,884
Expenditure per pupil	2,054
Balance brought forward from previous year	46,578
Balance carried forward to next year	46,730

Recruitment of teachers

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

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	372
Number of questionnaires returned	145

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	36	3	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	40	50	9	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	55	10	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	51	10	2	5
The teaching is good.	49	46	2	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	52	12	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	38	2	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	45	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	31	53	14	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	37	50	5	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	49	7	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	45	12	3	5

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

62. Children are admitted to the Nursery on a part-time basis in September or in January after their third birthday, and they move into Reception in September or January after their fourth birthday. At present, there are 23 children attending the Nursery in the morning and 18 in the afternoon, nearly two-thirds of these are boys, and there are 25 children on roll in Reception. Currently, there is only one Reception class in school - supported by a nursery nurse and an experienced Reception teacher, who has the overall responsibility for co-ordinating the provision in the lower school. The second Reception class is to begin in January and the second Reception teacher is providing non-contact cover for other teachers in the school. Currently there are two part time teachers in the Nursery sharing their work load evenly between them and they are supported by a full time nursery nurse. There are good links with the local playgroups and transition arrangements from home to Nursery and from the nursery to reception are smooth; this benefits the children as they settle in. Partnership with parents is strong and leads to effective support in teaching and learning both within class and at home. Parents are kept well informed of the provision and of the progress their children make through informal discussions, meetings and the end of year reports.
63. The introduction of the Early Learning Goals for pupils of this age is now becoming established in planning activities for the age groups. The outdoor areas have undergone substantial change and improvement since the last inspection, although the regular use of the space and equipment could be improved further. There is new large fixed play equipment and an enclosed designated play area exclusively for use by nursery and reception children. The rooms are pleasantly decorated with children's art and craft displays and with well-organised resources to provide for areas of learning, so that children have a supportive and stimulating learning environment. There are now far more opportunities for the children to explore, experiment and consolidate learning using their own initiative and for uninterrupted play - some of the weaknesses reported in the last inspection. Materials such as sand, water, paints and glue are now more freely available in the nursery and children are able to choose them as part of their daily routine. All this is resulting in improved choices of activities and effective learning in all areas of the curriculum.
64. Work completed by children in the Nursery and Reception class since September was scrutinised. Children's annual records, who are in Year 1 at present, were also considered, to evaluate attainment and progress. At the time of the last inspection, standards were above average on entry to the Nursery and most children achieved above average standards before moving into Year 1. Standards on entry to the Nursery are now more variable. The attainment on entry to the Nursery for the majority of children is broadly average and in some cases below that, particularly in language and literacy, mathematical development and in social skills. In the Nursery, children make at least satisfactory progress and standards on entry to the Reception class are broadly average and typical of children of this age. By the time children reach Year 1, the majority is on course to achieve the expected levels for the age in all areas of learning, including: communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, personal, social and emotional development, and physical and creative development. Boys and girls, including the developing bilinguals, make satisfactory progress. Progress is better for Nursery children and those with special educational needs in relation to prior attainment, through more effective support.
65. The provision overall - for children in the Nursery and Reception classes - is at least satisfactory and in some aspects better, for example, in developing children's skills in using the computer. Teaching in all areas of learning is good overall and has much improved since the last inspection. Planning is improved as a result of receiving support from the LEA Early Years' Adviser and through observing good practice from other schools. There are now clear long and medium term teaching plans across the six areas of learning for both Nursery and Reception classes. Short term planning, however, needs improving further to ensure assessment is used effectively, to plan the next steps in learning and meet the children's growing needs. In the Reception class, for example, there is a need to ensure that grouping is well informed by focussed assessment and that more challenging tasks are planned for more able children. All staff know the children well and have a good understanding of their needs in general.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. The majority of children enters the Nursery with personal and social skills that are broadly average or slightly below those expected for their age. Children are taught effectively and in consequence make satisfactory progress. They achieve expected levels by the time they are five. There is good emphasis on working together, having a sense of self-worth and a feeling of achievement. Routines are being established and children are becoming used to recognising and putting away their name cards, to register their presence for each session. Children know that there are rules to follow and that there are generally expectations of good behaviour. For children who have some difficulty in settling into activities, adults' skilled interventions help them to understand the need to take turns, listen to others, and to carry out instructions.
67. In Reception class, children build on the progress made in the Nursery. Concentration span improves, so that most pupils are able to sit for longer periods of time and take part in whole group sessions, including sessions for developing literacy skills and numeracy. Rules and routines are observed and most children begin to select activities and use resources independently. Guidance and support from adults, with intervention as necessary, help to ensure children stay engaged in activities and complete their set tasks. Children are beginning to concentrate and work in small groups - at times without any adult support. Reception children have a programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) along with the rest of the school. Children are developing their self-esteem, as a result of discussions, such as 'in what way they are special' and 'what makes their friends special' during their class discussion activities.

Communication, language and literacy

68. The majority of children are likely to achieve the expected levels in this area by the time they are five and some exceed these, especially those who have three terms in Reception class. All children make satisfactory progress, including those with English as an additional language. Children with SEN make good progress as a result of the individual attention they receive. There is generally a good emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills, for example, through telling others what they did at the weekend and places they visited during holidays. On entry to the Nursery, many children use single words to give their answers and a few are more confident using longer utterances which include simple sentences. Staff plan creatively to develop early reading and writing and, to some extent, imaginative play. With some prompts, children develop their conversation whilst playing in the role-play areas. Teachers read books well to the children and use questions skilfully to help them understand sequences in the stories. They work hard to encourage children to think of initial sounds of words they are using in the day. Games and toys are used well to encourage children to talk and to recognise letters and sounds in words. Often children are encouraged to act these out, especially when this relates to their chosen topic: 'animals that come out at night'. Children are given opportunities to talk about what they have made or done in the lesson, and this is a valuable sharing time for everyone.
69. Children make satisfactory progress in recognising words, letters and sounds in the Reception class, and are provided with a stimulating learning environment of words and pictures. Reading, writing and communication skills are encouraged through a variety of activities, including planned lessons in literacy. Staff plan well together to encourage reading and writing through the current 'topic', which is also intended to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Teachers make good use of phonic games and group activities to help develop an awareness of links between letters and sounds and to develop listening and speaking skills. Most children can write their name recognisably, with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters. Higher attaining children make their books, such as 'Dear Zoo' and learn to write a letter, using Cranborne School as the address, and that of Potters Bar - showing some recognisable words. Children begin to read with interest and like taking their reading books and diaries home to read to their parents. Some parents and children have expressed that they would like to take books home on a more regular basis, and with a slightly harder text - as they find that books sent home are too easy for higher attaining children.

Mathematical development

70. This area of learning is taught well through many practical tasks and games, and children make satisfactory progress as a result. The majority of children is likely to achieve the expected level by

the time they are five, and some should exceed this. Members of staff plan carefully so that children's mathematical language, vocabulary and understanding develop through all areas of learning. Children sing number songs and counting rhymes, and use different objects to count and order numbers to five.

71. By the time children enter the Reception, they have gained more understanding of the numbers and their positions, and their concentration skills have improved. They count numbers to ten using different objects, fingers and a number line; some count reliably beyond ten without any visual support. Through using a large number rod, they begin to be aware of the position of numbers, and get a feel of larger and smaller numbers. Number songs and rhymes foster an early understanding of 'more' and 'less' and of practical addition and subtraction. Lower attaining children take more time to show the correct number of fingers when counting in a group. The higher attaining children begin to use the language of position well. For example, they select, say and place 'the little red bear' 'next to' 'the middle sized bear' or place it directly 'above' or 'below' it. Staff generally plan well-organised numeracy lessons and are confident about teaching basic skills in numeracy. However, more able children could be stretched further, for example, through providing more challenging tasks - on the basis of ongoing assessment of children's needs. Children's records from Year 1 show that while they are good at describing the common flat shapes, most are not yet able to describe familiar three-dimensional shapes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. Children achieve well in relation to their prior attainment because of the activities that are provided and as a result of good teaching. In the Nursery, staff plan to attract children's interests and curiosity, and stimulate learning by holding discussions with them in groups - for example on characteristics of different animals. There are many opportunities to observe and to develop children's thinking skills, through structured play and exploration. Children respond well to these. For example, in the Nursery, children observe floating and sinking of objects, and draw their own conclusions - predicting first before trying this out. Staff organise activities well and provide a good level of support in developing children's language for thinking. They make note of these observations, which are later transferred to the children's longer-term assessment records and used for future planning. During free choices, children enjoy playing with water. They work in pairs, make bubbles using pipes and try to catch water in a large or small sieve, to see if it would hold any, and if their toys and materials will float or sink.
73. In Reception class, staff build on children's understanding through planned activities and experiences. During 'free activities', children are able to make their own choices and learn to experiment with a range of natural and made materials. They learn to distinguish between wild and domestic animals, and talk about their needs and that of other creatures. Children are well aware of the local area, through regular use of walks to local parks and woods. They are aware of the 'journey of a letter' - from the writer to the receiver - and go out with the staff to post their letter. Children are beginning to be aware of their own culture, through hearing stories and celebrating festivals, and talking about how others celebrate their special festivals. There are no examples, however, to show how children might differentiate between past and present events in their lives. This is because there is no clear planning about how the sense of passing of time will be taught to Reception class children. Computers are available in the Nursery and Reception classes. Good use is made of the computers to explore the range of new and exciting activities available, often with the parents' support, which is proving useful in building confidence and skills. Reception class children also have access to the computer suite, where they learn to explore the use of the computer by themselves. They have good control of the mouse, and use it well to paint their pictures, erase them and make changes as necessary and print their pictures with good results. This area is a strength and a major improvement since the last inspection.

Physical development

74. The majority of the children are on course to attain the expected levels by the time they are five and are making at least satisfactory progress as a result of good teaching. From their entry into the Nursery, children are learning to use their tools effectively, for example for writing, drawing patterns, for painting and for making collages. They also have some opportunities to make three-dimensional models, using re-cycled materials and they increase these skills in the Reception class. Children

use scissors with increasing efficiency, and they show good manipulative skills when playing with large and small bricks, and in fixing simple construction toys together.

75. In the Nursery, there are many opportunities for physical development through outdoor activities. Children make imaginative use of the interesting outdoor area. Teachers organise a good range of activities outdoors, and this gives children the opportunity to move with control and confidence, using the good range of wheeled toys available, and the fixed climbing apparatus. This is a good improvement from the last inspection. Children play with balls of different sizes, and with hoops and beanbags, to develop throwing and catching skills. By the time they enter Reception, children's ball skills have improved further. Children show confidence and are controlled in their movements when using the large toys and equipment outside. In more formal lessons, children's use of space is improving, for example they become more used to working in the large hall and responding to adult instructions, and to listening and responding to musical instruments and the taped music.

Creative development

76. Children make satisfactory progress in this area and there are improvements from the last inspection, because of the wider range of opportunities and resources now provided to develop skills, and as a result of more effective teaching. Most children are likely to attain the expected levels, by the time they are five. Children in the Nursery enjoy painting with their brush and wax candles, and use a variety of techniques to create their pictures and prints. Their marble pictures and vegetable prints are well displayed on nursery walls. They use glue and glue spreaders, pasta, rice and strings to create and decorate their pictures. Children generally remain engrossed in their activities. There are more opportunities now to work with malleable materials, such as playdough and clay. Children mould salt dough into 'hedgehog shapes' - they enjoy the feel of the cold material - and create patterns by cutting it with their tools. Staff plan imaginative activities for children both inside and in the well-equipped outdoor area. Children generally play with an awareness of each other when they are outside driving their pushchairs, bikes, tricycles and scooters. Children enjoy singing and they learn new rhymes and songs, and listen well to the playing instruments. They are good at guessing sounds made by different animals and imitating.
77. In Reception, children love music and are delighted when it is time to sit down and sing. This is because teaching is now more effective in this area. Children enjoy singing and have a repertoire of new action songs and musical instruments; through these, they also learn to read and write some of the high frequency words that are planned. They have a good understanding of colour, shape, texture and pattern, and they try hard to make their pictures symmetrical - as expected by adults. Children are becoming increasingly skilled at creating their own pictures on the computer. Children's observational drawings improve increasingly as they take more time and care with their work. There are some opportunities to play imaginatively in the classroom and outdoors, with some intervention from adults, which helps to develop children's play and their language. Since the last inspection, there are many improvements in this area. However, there is still some scope for providing more opportunities for children to be spontaneously creative and imaginative.

ENGLISH

78. Standards in the work seen in English are average by Years 2 and 6, which is broadly similar to the position at the time of the last inspection. Pupils enter school with average attainment and they make, overall, satisfactory progress in English to Year 6. Most groups of pupils make similar progress with the exception of pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress in relation to their targets as a result of effective support. Some able pupils make insufficient progress on a few occasions through a lack of appropriate advice, intervention and direction due, at times, to some weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge. Throughout the school there is focussed use of effective support staff. They are present in most lessons and their work makes a significant contribution to standards in pupils' learning. Judgements on standards and the quality of work are based on an analysis of examples of pupils' work from the last school year as well as current work, since the inspection took place in the first term of the school year.
79. Standards in speaking and listening are, overall, satisfactory. Pupils listen and respond, use formal English, contribute and interact, and sustain their speaking and listening. They speak for different

audiences, participate in discussion and group interaction and talk explicitly about speaking and listening. It was not possible to make a judgement on standards in drama due to a lack of evidence. Drama should be an entitlement for all pupils.

80. Standards in reading are satisfactory overall, and pupils of differing groups achieve appropriately by Year 2 and Year 6. Able readers use a variety of strategies in their reading of texts. All pupils have, in differing degrees, knowledge, skills and understanding, of phonemic awareness and phonic knowledge. They have appropriate word recognition and graphic knowledge, grammatical awareness and contextual understanding. Pupils have the skills to read for information. They also read from literature and from non-fiction and non-literary texts.
81. Standards in writing are satisfactory, overall. Many pupils can, to varying degrees, plan, compose, draft, punctuate, spell and produce writing in Standard English. Pupils have good knowledge of the methodology of acquiring a good style of handwriting. Standards in handwriting in Years 1 and 2 are very good.
82. The teaching of English is satisfactory overall, with a range of teaching from, on occasion, unsatisfactory to excellent. Teaching generally has a clear positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers' planning for English follows that of the National Literacy Strategy and has explicit aims and objectives. This planning has rigour. Specific planning from the National Curriculum for English, most especially for the programmes of study for the teaching of speaking and listening in English and in subjects across the curriculum, was not evident in a significant number of lessons observed.
83. Teaching of speaking and listening varies from very good to unsatisfactory - as, for example when the teacher missed an opportunity to talk to the class about an aspect of knowledge about language. Where standards of attainment in speaking and listening were good during the inspection, they resulted from well-planned opportunities and good teaching as seen, for example, in a Year 1 class. In the lesson, selected pupils had, in turn, to feel an object by placing their hand under the cover of a box. They had to try to identify the object, for example a brick or a teddy bear, and use words to describe the object to the class, for example, hard, soft, large or small. This preparatory work then led to discussion about the 'steps' or 'stages' in the writing of an information text –how to make a 'feely' box. Here good learning about speaking and listening was achieved through focussed teaching. In another Year 1 class, good teaching of speaking and listening was observed as pupils learnt about the index system of the non-fiction library. Pupils could offer suggestions as to how they knew if a book was appropriate for them. These Year 1 pupils worked with enthusiasm from a number of varied tasks supplied by the librarian, for example, 'Find a book with the number 294.5'. Here, reading skills as well as listening and speaking skills were required. As a result of focussed planning by the librarian these Year 1 pupils listened and spoke enthusiastically for a specific purpose. Their learning was of a very good standard.
84. In a Year 2 class pupils discussed their findings of an investigation on homonyms. First the pupils had to look at cards and match the homonyms. Pupils then had to think of sentences that included the word. In the reflection on learning, the teacher asked pupils to share their results. One boy offered 'saw' and 'sore' as homonyms, which the teacher accepted and did not recognise the problem for pupils' learning.
85. In a Year 3 lesson observed, where teaching required greater rigour, the teacher's talk dominated the initial session on prefixes and it was unclear how much had been understood by the pupils. Whilst there was an even gender balance, only one girl in the class answered a question in relation to the work. In a Year 5 class, pupils worked very well collaboratively. In pairs they had to proof read and edit texts in order to improve them. Pupils were eager to be involved and lively, purposeful discussions as to possibilities for improving the text were evident throughout the class. In the plenary that followed, teacher and pupils participated in a genuine reflection on very good learning, which had resulted from the very good teaching.
86. In a satisfactory Year 6 lesson for a lower ability group, pupils collaboratively considered facts written on large cards, from a non-chronological report on life-cycles. The pupils had to consider a possible order for the information. Their next task was to plan a non-chronological text about the school. The teaching did not look sufficiently at how good writers have done this with buildings and then, informed, the pupils could discuss and create their own model. However, pupils listened to each

other and spoke enthusiastically of their ideas for an information text on the school. A special needs teacher assisted one group. The pupils had many ideas and placed these on the circular diagram prepared by the teacher for their group.

87. In a group-reading lesson, eight Year 6 pupils discussed, with enthusiasm and humour, part of Joan Aiken's book 'Lost - One Pair of Legs'. All pupils were involved. There was good application and obvious enjoyment. Relationships with the teacher were positive and there was excellent group work in listening and speaking as they displayed humour, alongside respect for others' views. The teacher maintained good pace, questioned well to allow engagement and probed to elicit pupils' possible hypotheses. Pupils applied intellectual effort to their work in this very good lesson and reading, listening, thinking and speaking skills were taken further forward as a result of very good teaching.
88. The teaching of reading is satisfactory. In a significant number of lessons observed, teachers did not model reading from the very good range of large books they have for the teaching of reading. Pupils, therefore, began the reading of a shared text by reading with the teacher or alone. Whilst there had been some preliminary discussion about the text there had been no modelling by the teacher of how the text should be read. Pupils, therefore, were disadvantaged from the start of the lesson. This was of particular concern for pupils in Year 2. There had been for them no model of the sound, flow, or understanding of the author's intent in the text, to which they could aspire with a good reading.
89. A suitable programme of phonics teaching is delivered and pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a good interest in words. They are developing an understanding of phonemic awareness and phonic knowledge, word recognition and graphic knowledge. Texts used in literacy hours enable a growing understanding of contextual understanding and some knowledge of grammatical awareness. Pupils know where to find information books in the excellent library and both information books and storybooks are well used. The cross-section of pupils from the school who read to inspectors and discussed books were, overall, performing within the assessment level judged by the school.
90. In one Year 3 lesson, however, where the reading revolved around pre-fixes, time was spent with pupils copying a list of words for spelling from the board. This is unsatisfactory practice since several pupils copied many words wrongly during the process of moving their eye from board to paper. In another Year 3 lesson there was unsatisfactory teaching in reading when the teacher did not use appropriate subject knowledge in the teaching of a play script – layout, use of colons, stage directions, and use of brackets. Little time was spent on an introduction to the form of writing yet these young pupils were required also to make connections to speech bubbles and direct speech. Without explicit teaching from good models in the reading lesson pupils found it extremely difficult to move to successful writing of a play.
91. However, excellent standards of teaching were seen in Year 3 towards the end of a lesson on direct speech. Through excellent teaching of these styles of reading the teacher was able to provide a thorough reflection on learning, and so assess the learning that had taken place. The teacher who manipulated a diagram on a white board, where a speech bubble was deleted and speech marks inserted, skilfully enabled pupils' success in reading and manipulating text from speech bubbles into reported speech. Moreover the excellent teaching inspired pupils to consider the introduction of adverbs. Pupils were all on task and most enthusiastic about their learning. Pupils fully understood the relationship of speech marks and speech bubbles and learnt much about both reading and writing.
92. As there are no computers in individual classrooms there was no evidence of the use of ICT in the many opportunities that arose within literacy hour lessons, for example into research with reading information texts. The uses of ICT have been seen in displays of pupils' work in English but there are lost opportunities in every day classroom life to interrogate ICT texts.
93. The school's standard of provision for books for pupils to read is very good. There is a very good selection of fiction and non-fiction books and an excellent library with excellent systems. The school is fortunate to have a librarian as a part-time member of staff. Furthermore the school makes provision for further celebration of books in book weeks and book fairs. Parents, having listened to pupils reading at home are encouraged to write in pupils' reading diaries, thus providing an important home-school link. However, overall, there is scope for the use of these diaries to be enhanced to provide a continuous school/ home link towards raised standards in reading alongside pleasure in

reading and a knowledge of pupils' reading habits. During the inspection, a sample of pupils read to inspectors from fiction and non-fiction texts and spoke about their experiences of reading in a variety of contexts. Few children in the sample were members of out of school libraries. Many read at home from a range of texts – fiction, non-fiction, media (magazines, comics, newspapers) and from computer programmes. In such sessions, children spoke of the support they received with reading at home from parents who listen to reading. Many parents provide computer programs and facilitate ownership of books, magazines and comics. Pupils who read to inspectors during the inspection were, overall, reading within their age-appropriate National Curriculum level, though with different levels of fluency, expression and ability to talk about the texts read.

94. Pupils from Year 2 who read to inspectors had little understanding of the difference in pronunciation of A/a as a letter of the alphabet and A/a as a word. All these pupils pronounced the word as they would the first letter of the alphabet.
95. The teaching of writing has areas of strengths and significant weaknesses. The weaknesses arise from insecure subject knowledge by several members of staff and result in examples of low quality writing by pupils. A scrutiny of pupils' written work indicates significant benefits from the programme of Early Literacy Support (ELS). A Year 1 boy was helped to write a poem with his group and he then copied it out well. The poetry had shape – it looked like a poem, though some narrative writing features were included. Such work is very well acknowledged by the teacher and presented for an audience to read. Very good examples of work include writing on what skeletons are saying and a circular diagram of eight sentences written by a pupil. . Appropriately the school has 'published' such work in corridors and books for the wider school audience to read. Year 1 pupils involved in the ELS programme have written "Who am I?" scripts. The work scrutinised during inspection clearly shows that these young pupils are learning to behave like 'real' writers. Lessons observed in Year 2, however, indicated that there could be many opportunities for pupils to write more freely without a duplicated page on which to write very little in the spaces given. Some writing activities seen in Literacy Hours made too few demands on Year 2 and Year 3 pupils and teachers' expectations in this area were sometimes too low.
96. Whilst large books are used throughout the school for literacy lessons, the overall absence of models of reading by teachers in reading lessons and the discussion that should follow on how writers write for effect, results in some insignificant writing by pupils. In Years 5 and 6 pupils, appropriately, are encouraged to proof read and edit their own writing. In one Year 5 class the teacher had made deliberate errors in writing about Queen Victoria, which the pupils were keen to spot and correct. They were enthusiastic editors and the teacher followed a very good lesson with a real reflection on learning in the plenary session, which empowered the pupils to continue with their good work.
97. Where teaching was very good in a lesson on the writing of non-chronological reports with the Year 6 upper ability group of seventeen boys and twelve girls, there were clear objectives and a summary of key issues for consideration. Learning was helped by the teacher's high expectations, very good questioning skills and subject knowledge. Pupils were on task with a very high level of co-operation. Learning was very good as were pupils' attitudes and behaviour.
98. The scrutiny of work showed that Year 6 pupils have a very useful assessment paper that is attached to written work when it has been marked. This is taken from the marking schedule for the end of Year 6 tests. The scrutiny of work showed up significant errors in teachers' marking where, through lack of teacher subject knowledge, pupils' errors had not been picked up and teachers had graded work in a higher or lower category than the work merited – more often in a higher category. In work on autobiography, the marking is not secure as many paragraphs begin with a small letter. The teacher's marking states - 'a secure biography'. However the teacher's writing, too, has errors. There is a need for staff training in English so that teachers' subject knowledge is secure and pupils have the best possible entitlement to good teaching.
99. The management of English is satisfactory with some very good features, for example the library provision, ELS provision, the booster classes and the upper school ability group reading. A Year 1 teacher, who took over the role in January, leads the management of English. The original policy of 2000 was updated in 2002 to include a Foundation Stage statement. The headteacher takes responsibility for looking at weekly planning. A number of methods are used to assess and record attainment. These include writing targets, termly unaided levelled writing in order to track pupils'

progress, work sampling and the use of national tests. However there has been no analysis of pupils' answers to such tests to indicate to the school areas for development in pupils' learning. Such an analysis of pupils' response to question types is critical and would provide information for teaching and learning.

100. The school has given considerable attention and energy in efforts to further improve standards in English. Equality of opportunity is addressed through the school's inclusion policy. A teaching assistant has been employed to work with groups of pupils who have special educational needs. The development of literacy skills is helped by the provision of Booster classes, Early Literacy Support, Additional Literacy Support and Further Literacy Support. The co-ordinator attends conferences, is involved in a programme of work with the literacy consultant, works with feedback from staff that has attended courses and has liaised with the school librarian for the development of the library as the excellent resource it is for pupils' learning.
101. The management of English as a subject, including drama, is handled satisfactorily. There is a general understanding that it must be a dynamic process, which has an impact on the attitudes and behaviours of pupils towards listening, speaking, reading and writing positively and promotes their independence and enjoyment. The co-ordinator recognises that the process combines the elements of information gathering about standards and quality of provision, analysis of information, taking action to secure and improve pupils' progress, and evaluation of effectiveness. The school is already forward thinking and has developed a pathway for improved assessment. The current post holder is rigorous in her attempts to fulfil her co-ordinator role. The school is ready to think through the further development of the management of the subject and address, with training, teachers' subject knowledge for the benefit of pupils' learning.

MATHEMATICS

102. Pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6 attain the standards expected for their ages in numeracy and in other areas of the mathematics curriculum, including shape and measure and data handling. Since the previous inspection, pupils have made better progress in developing basic number skills, as a result of the consistent use of mental and oral work at the start of each lesson. Additional classes are arranged to support the further development of number skills, where pupils work at a slightly slower pace to consolidate their understanding.
103. The 2002 national test results paint a similar picture at the end of Year 2, where the standards reached are broadly in line with the national average and that of similar schools. At the end of Year 6, pupils' results are below the national average but nonetheless indicate satisfactory progress against prior attainment at the end of Year 2. Overall, standards are rising.
104. During the inspection week, there were no discernible differences in the performance of boys and girls, indicating that teachers are taking into account previous learning. Pupils throughout the school achieve satisfactorily and most progress at a satisfactory rate. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the personal targets set for them. There is evidence that high attaining pupils in Year 6 are usually but not always suitably challenged by the pace of work set.
105. By Year 2, pupils have a sound knowledge of counting, ordering and adding numbers. They count forwards in ones, fives and tens with confidence but with some hesitancy when counting backwards. Most pupils know how to double and halve two digit numbers and have a sound knowledge of place value to 100. Pupils apply their number skills to working out the correct change to be given from fifty pence and one pound and also to telling the time at the quarter and half hour. Pupils recognise pattern in number, such as odds and evens and extend their practical knowledge, for example, by looking at the arrangement of numbers on house doors. Many pupils have a good knowledge of the names and properties of 2D and 3D shapes and, in conversation, confidently point to rectangles, squares and circles in the classroom. Higher attaining pupils know how shapes fit together and produce attractive tessellated patterns. Pupils' workbooks record the estimated and actual measurement in centimetres of classroom objects.
106. In Year 5, and hence by Year 6 as pupils move on to the next class, pupils recognise and draw the lines of symmetry in a wide range of shapes. This extends pupils' knowledge of pattern in number and shape. For example, one group discovers that regular shapes have the same number of sides as

lines of symmetry. The infinite lines of symmetry of a circle fascinate pupils. Higher attaining pupils are able to reflect, rotate and translate shapes on a numbered grid and in so doing learn about the co-ordinates of all four quadrants, those in the negative quadrant providing the greatest degree of challenge and difficulty. Pupils solve problems in metric measure satisfactorily but some are not yet secure in converting measurements to common units. High attaining pupils, although suitably challenged by the problem solving exercise, need to be allowed to work at a faster pace. Pupils know about probability and games of chance. They conduct experiments using coins and dice and record their conclusions on bar charts and pictograms. Overall, pupils are well prepared for work in the secondary school.

107. Pupils use number skills satisfactorily in other subjects. In geography, pupils use their knowledge of co-ordinates to read maps and in history, use a timeline to chart historical events. In science, pupils use measuring skills in preparing and conducting experiments and illustrate results on a bar chart. Dedicated lessons in the computer room enable pupils to confirm their skills in number, shape and data processing but information technology is insufficiently used in the classroom as a normal part of everyday learning.
108. The quality of teaching throughout the school in mathematics is satisfactory and it is more consistent than at the last inspection. Pupils are well managed and are usually given interesting and challenging things to do that ensure good behaviour and the enjoyment of mathematics. Pupils in Year 5, for example, are eager to locate the lines of symmetry in classroom objects and pupils in Year 6 tackle problem solving enthusiastically, quickly learning that some methods are better than others. Equipment is often used well to reinforce learning. The support given by classroom assistants to pupils with individual special needs is well targeted. The use of a 'fractions wall' in Year 4, for example, leads to a secure understanding of equivalent fractions that in turn develops pupils' confidence in their own abilities. Joint planning across year groups is more secure than at the previous inspection and provides equal access to the curriculum for all pupils.
109. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and behave well and pupils do not often disappoint, although the behaviour of a small group of boys, in the one unsatisfactory lesson in Year 3, had a disruptive effect upon the learning of others. The expectations of higher attaining pupils are sometimes not high enough. As a result these pupils occasionally repeat work in which they are already competent. Assessment procedures are developing well and daily assessment is appropriately used to inform planning. Teachers mark well, commend good work and encourage further effort. Teachers are mostly on good terms with their pupils. Relationships are based upon mutual respect, providing a secure environment in which pupils enjoy learning.
110. The school has made satisfactory progress in mathematics since the last inspection. The joint co-ordinators are working well together to secure higher standards. The priorities for development are appropriate, namely to continually review the use of assessment and to complete the setting of individual targets for all pupils. The monitoring of teaching is broadly satisfactory and the current emphasis placed upon the sharing of good practice, including the use of equipment and assessment procedures, is intended to lead to better learning and higher standards of attainment.

SCIENCE

111. Standards of the work seen in science are broadly average by Years 2 and 6. This maintains the position by Year 2 but is a decline by Year 6 in the standards noted at the time of the last inspection. Using teachers' assessments of Year 2 pupils in summer 2002, standards were well below average, and fewer pupils gained the higher level 3 than usual. Standards in the national tests in science by Year 6 of summer 2002 were below average. Their progress from Year 2 to Year 6 was below the average for schools with similar results at Year 2. Inspection evidence shows that, overall, pupils are achieving appropriately. All groups of pupils are making satisfactory progress.
112. In a lesson planned to integrate science, art and design and technology in Year 1, pupils had suitable opportunities to experience the textures of different materials in making a sensory box. Pupils applied themselves well with good concentration and many produced attractive designs. However, the level of scientific observation was limited since there were missed opportunities for discussing the scientific properties of materials and for experimenting with them. In a well-prepared lesson in Year 2 pupils examined small blocks of ice using magnifiers and noted several details about how the ice

slowly melted and changed. Pupils understand that some materials change when heated or cooled, and that ice will change back to liquid again. The teacher's good knowledge and understanding promoted good discussion with the pupils about the ice and the changes, showing good subject knowledge through lively discussion and questioning. Many pupils were keen to answer questions about how the ice changed and how it was made. The session acted as a good preparation for the pupils' own investigations later. Previous work indicates satisfactory coverage of the subject, with evidence of a selection of practical work. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs, have a satisfactory knowledge of scientific ideas and how to set up an experiment by Year 2.

113. In the Year 3 classes, initial discussion about rocks and where they come from showed that pupils had little idea of where rocks are to be found and what is underground. Through the teacher's careful questioning and discussion that encourage pupils to talk about their ideas they came to recognise that rock is under the soil, water or sand and that rocks form the mountains. During class discussion after pupils had carried out individual tasks, the pupils demonstrated good progress in their learning, for example in how the earth is formed with a crust for the outer layer. Through very-well focused questioning one pupil suggested that you could test the hardness of rocks by seeing whether one would scratch another. In a lively lesson in Year 4, the teacher captured the pupils' interest well on how liquids are different. The good relationships and control encouraged pupils to suggest how they might test four liquids - their very good behaviour demonstrated by the fact that none played about with the liquids during discussion. Pupils tested how the liquids moved down a sloping surface, showing satisfactory experimental skills by measuring the time or the distance. However, the challenge was limited through pupils being expected to follow the class teacher's method. Pupils sustained a high level of interest, mostly collaborated well in conducting the experiment, and improved their skills of observing and recording results. The good teaching ensured all pupils were included well and that they had good learning experiences overall, reaching a consensus about the results.
114. In a well-planned and prepared lesson on sound in Year 5, pupils demonstrated satisfactory understanding of how sound is made. Their ability to listen and interpret sound was extended well through a two-minute silent listening time. Most pupils listened well and explained clearly what sounds they heard. Initially pupils were dubious about which materials sound might travel through but after experimenting they understood that sound will travel through glass, metals and wood as well as air. For example, pupils put their ears to an iron banister and heard the sound clearly as one tapped it. Pupils with special educational needs were supported well by the classroom assistant so that they were fully included and made good progress. The good practical basis for pupils' learning was extended further in Year 6 lessons where pupils carried out experiments to observe how sugar dissolves in water of differing temperature. Pupils responded very well to the high level of challenge and expectation, working together well with very good attitudes and behaviour. Most pupils understood the need to control how the experiment was conducted to get fair results and demonstrated satisfactory skill in measuring the amount of water and recording the times of dissolving. The teachers' good subject knowledge was shown through the emphasis on correct procedures and observations. The teachers' highly skilled questioning reinforced the pupils' understanding so that most were confident in explaining the relationship between water temperature and time of dissolving. In a further very effective extension to the lessons, the teachers gathered the results of all the groups' observations and demonstrated that together the relationship was shown through a line of best fit. This very good teaching is having a very good impact on pupils' learning so that standards are broadly average by Year 6.
115. Overall pupils demonstrate good attitudes and behaviour through the school, with a few examples of particularly strong interest and personal self-discipline. This is encouraged by the teachers' mostly good practical approach, with teaching in Years 1 - 2 satisfactory overall, and in Years 3 - 6 good. Clear objectives are presented and pupils are managed and supported well. There is more scope in a few lessons for more class or group discussions to ensure that pupils have talked about and understood the ideas for themselves. Previous work indicates that pupils make steady progress in knowledge and understanding across the aspects of science. Most classes presented work that shows a satisfactory practical basis, with accounts of experiments, charts, tables of results and graphs. The higher attaining pupils demonstrate good understanding, with well-presented work of a good standard. Similar tasks are usually provided for all pupils, although the lower-attaining pupils often receive more direct help through prepared worksheets. Teachers give appropriate emphasis to literacy and numeracy skills, and ICT is beginning to be used. Pupils are invited to talk to the class

about their ideas, helping their speaking and listening skills. A few pupils are very clear and articulate. Numeracy skills were used in lessons for such things as charts and graphs of their investigations. There is good support for pupils with SEN, who are integrated fully into lessons.

116. The subject is managed well by the co-ordinator, who has a good understanding of the role. There is an agreed policy for the subject and national guidance forms the basis for a scheme of work. Resources are satisfactory. Marking of work is usually satisfactory, but varies considerably from a few ticks to a few good examples where thoughtful comments are used to indicate how pupils may improve. Assessment procedures for science are satisfactory, and becoming established through the school.

ART AND DESIGN

117. Standards in art and design are very good in both Years 1 - 2 and 3 - 6 through the impact of very good teaching. Evidence for the inspection was drawn from scrutiny of files and pupils' work, observation of two lessons and an interview with the co-ordinator.
118. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils had to experiment with tools and techniques and apply these to materials and processes, using clay, art, straw and paint. Pupils were appropriately dressed with aprons, and plastic gloves for some. There were clay tools and objects for making impressions in clay. The pupils' task was to experiment with tools and techniques and apply these to materials and processes to create part of a mural depicting Paul's Cathedral, which they had visited. Through the use of classroom assistants pupils were able to divide into three spaces in the classroom and corridor work areas. This worked very well. The teacher gave appropriate advice about health and safety, which included allergies and the careful use of tools.
119. Pupils had a choice of starting points. The work, when finished, will be part of a mural on St. Paul's cathedral. Reference materials included pictures of St. Paul's and visual diaries. The pupils worked very well to the task. They investigated possibilities and materials. Sensibly, they tried out tools and techniques and applied these to different materials. One group represented St. Paul's with white paint on black paper. Another group worked with great concentration to cut, place and paste white straws on black paper to represent the cathedral. There were appropriate reference books to glance at. The teacher has displayed three key words on the different activity tables, for example, clay, tiles, mural, scissors, glue, shorter, longer, measure, scissors, glue. All pupils have a visual diary. It is a record of their work and follows guidelines for teaching art in national guidance. Within it are, for example, patterns of buildings and Joseph's coat (one with wax crayons and one with fabric). Pupils' learning was very good. The quality of help from a parent helper was very good and the teacher's calm approach and rigour facilitated a purposeful session.
120. Teaching in a Year 4 lesson was excellent. In this lesson, pupils were required to use watercolour, and be able to mix paints to various shades and colour. They had, as resources, previously completed sketches of Tudor monarchs, which they were to paint using watercolour and a small brush. Pupils spread out over three areas within the classroom and outside in the dining hall. There was good quality classroom support from adults, some of whom were parents. A choice of starting points was given. Some pupils initially just experimented with colour. Others had a preferred aim – a sunset. There were clear expectations by the teacher. The pupils worked exceptionally well exploring and developing questions. They were able to make thoughtful observations about their work. They had good control of brushes and water. They moved sensibly. Meantime the teacher circulated, discussing work and commenting, very definitely at the centre of it all in a quiet way.
121. Pupils then moved to a second stage of work. They took their individual A4 page, earlier stained with a solution of coffee and water – to provide an appropriate background for their Tudor portrait - and worked on it. They worked with reference books on Tudors displayed in the room alongside copies of the work of artists who had created portraits in this style. Teaching was excellent throughout. All pupils worked well with good concentration and care. They had respect for the materials, their work and others' ideas. Great respect was given to the classroom helpers. Pupils engaged with helpers, teacher, and peers in focussed discussion. Quietly they collaborated. They were investigating their art. Some shared their sketchbooks with the inspector. They compared and commented on ideas,

approaches, and methods. Some began to manipulate materials. They were able to evaluate and discuss their work.

122. The walls of the school show a great range and wealth of artwork including very good use of ICT in art. There are in use, digital cameras, still cameras and a website – their school gallery is on the web. Multicultural art is embedded in the work of the school. This is a school where art is dominant as a creative force. It all stems from the excellent management of the subject by the enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who has been responsible for the raising of standards, the profile and total enjoyment of art in the school. Pupils from the nursery up have sketch books. Assessment has been introduced by the co-ordinator. The management of the subject, together with good teaching, results in very good standards. The co-ordinator's knowledge and enthusiasm influence the whole school community and leadership is excellent. There is a clear focus on what has to be done next – the introduction of assessment linked to skills development. Training for staff has been arranged – most recently the reception teacher on a willow sculpture course with the aim to develop this with children. ICT in art is very well used, with CD ROMs and scanners. Year 1 scan pictures. Year 2 pupils benefit from an after school art club attended by thirty-two pupils. Currently they are working on Picasso techniques. The school arranges visits and visitors have included a sculptor. The co-ordinator monitors and samples work in non - contact time. The budget is very well used.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. Standards in the work seen are average by Years 2 and 6 and teaching is satisfactory. Very little teaching was taking place during inspection week so judgements have also been based on teachers' plans, photographs of last year's work and discussion with staff and pupils. The pupils make satisfactory progress, including those with special needs, but it varies from class to class depending on how the teachers interpret the task. For example, last year in one reception class the pupils used a wide range of recycled materials to build a vehicle of their choice. This involved a lot of decision making and thinking about suitable choices, trying different ideas when initial ones did not work. The result was a line-up of very strange vehicles. The other reception class were given templates and their cars looked all the same, thereby omitting most of the design and evaluation opportunities. The pupils' skill levels vary because the curriculum has had a bias towards construction in the past. As a result, pupils in Year 2 had to be taught to thread a needle this year because no textiles work had been done before. The scheme of work just introduced is based on national guidance and the co-ordinator has written some introductory tasks to start building early design skills in the reception classes. Until Year 4 the work is broad and aims to develop skills in all areas. Unfortunately, there are no textiles modules after Year 4 and no food module in Year 6.
124. Pupils in Year 1 continue to improve their cutting and joining skills in cross-curricular projects like making a sensory box for science. In their design task this term they were able to choose fruits, decide whether they needed peeling or de-pipping, and chop them up and make a fruit salad. It had to be designed so that everyone liked it and it was evaluated by being eaten. Pupils in Year 2 are in the middle of a well-planned project on designing Joseph's coat. They have looked at the shape of a coat, made templates for their own, designed the patterns on computer or paper, drawn them onto their coats with fabric crayons and learned basic sewing skills to join the seams. Later in the term they will extend this idea and practise their skills again in making a costume for the Christmas tree fairy. Photos of an earlier Year 2 project on Incy-Wincy Spider revealed less pupil involvement as many of the materials and shapes were identical in all models.
125. A project in Year 3 with the co-ordinator on making photo-frames to hold pictures of themselves, has been put on hold but in Year 4 pupils have made boxes which they next intend to fit with alarm buzzers to prevent their treasures being stolen. Low pupil involvement is indicated by the fact that all the boxes are the same size and made with the same materials and techniques. In Year 5 pupils are experimenting, making temporary musical instruments from junk to see what types of sounds and range of notes they can produce. This is the prelude to making a permanent instrument of their own. They are learning more about temporary and permanent joining techniques and are being encouraged to experiment, evaluate and improve. Some pupils are not used to this open approach and react by being noisy and silly. Last year's top junior class made an album of their projects and annotated it themselves. Following on the workshop making balloon buggies, pupils designed their own remote-controlled vehicles. This was a suitably challenging project, where they made their own design

decisions and had to overcome problems. For example, one pupil discovered that the axles rubbed on the bodywork and re-built it with axles enclosed in plastic tubing.

126. Progress in this subject is not currently assessed although an assessment sheet has been proposed. The new policy has not yet been discussed by staff or accepted by governors. The monitoring of teaching is planned but not properly underway. The parents' association has contributed to the purchase of updated materials for food technology and the subject is reasonably well resourced.
127. In order to improve this subject the school should consider how to improve planning so that parallel classes have projects approached in a similar way; how to ensure that plans contain all the stages of the design process; how to use a wider range of contexts for upper juniors so that pupils continue to work with food and textiles; and organise lessons carefully to avoid pupils misbehaving when allowed freedom to choose.

GEOGRAPHY

128. It was only possible to see a limited amount of teaching because geography was only being taught in Years 3 and 4 during the inspection week. As pupils have been in school for only two months since September, the work available for scrutiny was from all classes in the previous school year. From this and lessons seen in the inspection, standards are judged to be in line with those expected nationally for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress, including the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support they are given by their teachers and support staff.
129. Limited evidence of pupils' work from Years 1 and 2 was available. Pupils in Year 1 are aware of where they live in relation to the school and know some of the familiar roads - they have the skills to draw these on a map. The curriculum plan indicates that children in Year 1 discuss the local area, make visits and discuss how they can make their local area safer. Pupils in Year 2 make a plan of their living room, and understand that maps can be presented in different ways. They do simple map work showing features, such as a river, a bridge, a hill or a post office and a school. Using a story as a base, they follow the 'Travels of Barnaby Bear' and learn about geography at different scales. For example, they learn about Barnaby Bear's local travels, his travel to London, to Europe and his world travels. They also know that a passport is needed to travel to another country. Children show satisfactory awareness of places beyond their own locality and have some awareness of the environmental issues related to their topic.
130. Scrutiny of work in Years 3 - 6 from the last academic year indicates that pupils build satisfactorily on skills developed in Years 1 and 2. Tasks match pupils' capabilities and skills appropriately. Pupils in Year 3 show good understanding of the 'water cycle'. They use a good range of geographical vocabulary to describe the 'continuous journey of water', using terms, such as 'evaporation' and 'condensation'. They begin to understand the effect of weather on human activity; for example, how the rain can cause flood and how the flood might affect people. Pupils in Year 4 make good geography links with their history topic, the 'Roman Settlers', and find out, with some help from teachers, why early settlers chose certain places and how these places derived their names. They have limited skills in finding out information for themselves, but have relatively better mapping skills and can answer questions about why it was necessary for the early settlers to have a base near a river. In Years 5 and 6, the work is more advanced and higher standards are achieved. Pupils in Year 5, for example, are well aware of the topical environmental issues, such as global warming, pollution and how the traffic can cause problems for the local people. They discuss issue, such as whether the decision about building the Potters Bar Bypass is right and should go ahead or whether people should protest against the Council's decision. They use ICT skills well to write a report on their traffic survey in Potters Bar.
131. Direct teaching was not observed in Year 6, but a scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that the majority is attaining at least a satisfactory standard, and progress in much work is good. Mapping skills are developing satisfactorily. Marking is good and the teachers' expectations are appropriate. Pupils usually present their work well and there are interesting comments on a range of topics. Good

questions are asked to challenge pupils to think and find out more about the topic being studied. There is good curriculum content: pupils have studied in depth about mountains in the British Isles and the major rivers and mountains of the world. There is good level of map work at world scale and the use of geographical vocabulary is appropriate for the age. Pupils are able to investigate places and environments, using books, atlases and other sources, including the use of a website to find more information.

132. The work scrutiny and the two lessons observed indicate that teaching and learning in geography are satisfactory overall. Teaching is better for older pupils, especially in Years 5 and 6, where there are several strengths. Attitudes towards geography are good and pupils enjoy using maps and giving their own views about topical environmental issues. It is not possible to comment on the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2, as no teaching was seen. In the lessons in Years 3 and 4, good emphasis was made on developing pupils' geographical vocabulary and mapping skills. There was good teacher demonstration, which led to developing good knowledge and understanding of the early settlements and of weather patterns and their effect on people. Strengths in teaching included the good subject knowledge of the teacher - having a good effect on children's learning. The teacher in Year 4, for example, made good links with the history topic, 'Roman Settlers', and asked appropriate questions to make pupils think, making a connection with how the places derived their names, such as Cambridge, Colchester and Potters Bar, how the language has changed over the years but that place names still tell us about a location. Weaknesses mainly related to the lack of suitably differentiated work to match the range of abilities within the class. This is directly linked to weaknesses that are identified in assessment procedures.
133. The subject has been maintained well since the last inspection. The geography curriculum map ensures that pupils are taught the agreed scheme of work progressively from year to year through topics based on the nationally recognised scheme of work. The co-ordinator for geography is new, but an experienced manager, who has been responsible until recently for managing literacy throughout the school. She has met with the previous co-ordinator, and has a clear view on how the subject should develop. She has identified the need to get some subject-specific training to prepare her well to take an effective lead in the subject development. The co-ordinator manages the subject thoughtfully and ensures that teachers have clear guidelines for lessons. She has monitored the planning and provided feedback to teachers where necessary. Teachers' planning had been monitored in the past by the previous co-ordinator, who had also managed to sample the pupils' work from each year group. This has been useful in establishing strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and having a clearer idea about how the pupils are developing their geographical skills. However, effective procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are not yet in place. There has not been sufficient emphasis on monitoring and evaluating the teaching of geography. This was also raised in the previous inspection report. Resources are generally good. There has been a recent audit of the resources and the co-ordinator ensures that there are enough resources to support the units of work. Visits are planned from time to time to support work during the year, and the pupils benefit considerably from these experiences. Pupils in Year 4, for example, have visited Cuffley Camp for a week, and pupils in Year 6 have had a residential week in Kent, producing follow-up work as a result of these visits and they present a visit assembly to their parents and the whole school. There are good subject links with history. Literacy and numeracy are promoted well through planned activities. There are good opportunities for pupils in the upper school to develop ICT skills through their programme of work in geography.

HISTORY

134. Attainment by Year 2 is as expected for pupils of this age and by Year 6 for the majority is in line with national expectations. Standards have been at least maintained since the last inspection and there is a small improvement as a result of the good and often very good teaching. Boys and girls in Years 1 – 6, including the small number of pupils with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of past events and people. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support from their teachers and support staff.
135. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about changes over time and compare how present day toys are different from the past, and what seaside holidays were like in the past. They understand that they

learn history from a variety of sources, including photographs, paintings, videos and artefacts. They learn to frame their own questions about Florence Nightingale and look for answers from their big non-fiction books. Pupils of this age enjoy learning history through role-play, and have a developing sense of the time when people might have lived and when events might have happened. Pupils in Year 3 find out why the Romans invaded Britain and what was life like before and after the arrival of the Roman. They compare between the lifestyles of Celts and Romans, and compare Roman styles of entertainment with that of today. Pupils in Year 4 study the time line relating to the Tudor period and talk about Henry VIII and his family tree. They discuss main issues faced by the Tudor kings and develop a good understanding of these through their role-play - which was organised well by the two Year 4 teachers during the inspection. Pupils understood how decisions made then brought about changes and these have also affected our lives in some ways.

136. Pupils in Year 5 find out about the past using different sources, for example, maps, trade directories and a census return. They begin to appreciate the different sources of finding historical facts from the past. They make a good use of sources to find out about the local history, for example, how did the arrival and expansion of the railway during the Victorian period affect people and buildings in Potters Bar. Pupils in Year 6 realise how Britain has changed since 1945 and how much easier it is for them to find out information using primary sources, including photographs and videos of actual events. They also begin to appreciate how reliable these sources are and the possibility of a bias.
137. Teaching in history is good overall and often very good, especially for older pupils in the school. Pupils enjoy learning about the past history and in their writing and discussions show a good understanding of what they have learned. They show enthusiasm and interest in doing the challenging tasks that are set and they achieve well. Where teaching is very good, pupils learn effectively, as teachers plan very thoughtfully and ensure that lesson content is very relevant and meaningful to pupils' age, and in learning why people in the past acted as they did and of the implications for life today. Lessons are structured and organised well and tasks provided are challenging for pupils of differing ability. Pupils are fully involved as a result and a range of practical activities are included to motivate them. Time targets are set for pupils for the completion of tasks, ensuring the lessons proceed at a good pace. In a successful lesson seen in Year 2, for example, many of these features were present. The teacher concerned was successful in ensuring that pupils learn that commemorations are linked to real events and people, and that some events are celebrated every year, such as the 'Remembrance Day'.
138. In another very good lesson in Year 6 on 'A better Britain for All', very good explanations were given by the teacher, which led to a good understanding of the concepts of 'Welfare State' and that of the 'National Health Service'. Pupils were able to empathise with people of the time, affected by disease, want and the lack of jobs, houses and schools. Their cartoons - inspired by a cartoon they had observed illustrating the depth of feelings shown by people waiting outside a dental surgery - were of exceptionally high quality, showing their levels of understanding of the people's feelings. Planning was very good, both medium and short-term, showing clear line of progress in knowledge, understanding and key skills in history. Tasks were suitably differentiated. This enabled all pupils, including higher attaining pupils, and pupils with special educational needs to contribute well to the class discussion. By the end of the lesson, all misconceptions were clarified and pupils had made good gains in their knowledge and understanding - of the difficulties faced by people immediately after the War, the main problems faced by the then government, and how solutions were found that continue to affect our lives today. The very good teaching seen generated a high level of interest and discussion amongst pupils and the teacher.
139. There is a developing sense of chronology in school, and time line is used well by teachers to ensure that pupils place events, people and changes into correct periods of time. Knowledge of the local area is developed well through maps from different times, traffic surveys, census returns, and walks that are arranged from time to time. Teachers make appropriate use of the Internet and books to encourage pupils with their research. There are planned and useful opportunities to develop skills in literacy through formal literacy lessons, and appropriate skills are developed through linking lessons with geography. Art is promoted effectively through history and adds to the pupils' level of motivation to learn history.
140. There is good improvement in the development of the subject since the previous inspection. The history curriculum map ensures that pupils in all classes cover different topics each year, based on

the nationally recognised scheme of work, which has been adjusted to suit the school. There are appropriate guidelines for teachers and a good range of resources to support the topics that are planned. Systematic assessment of pupils' attainment and progress, however, is not yet satisfactory. This results in the lack of systematic development of key skills in history for pupils of all ages. The co-ordinator is new to leading this area but already has a suitable plan for action for further development of the subject. She has attended some training, which has benefited the school as a whole, and she is intending to receive more training in the near future. A draft model of assessment is ready to be introduced - awaiting discussion with senior managers. In this model, however, there is no cross-referencing with the National Curriculum levels to ensure that expectations in relation to the development of skills are also age-appropriate.

141. Teachers' planning is supported well and monitored. The co-ordinator has sampled pupils' work to ensure the curriculum coverage. There have been no opportunities, however, to monitor the teaching or to share good practice that has been observed. Visits are arranged to museums and places of interest and visitors are invited to the school to rehearse experiences of people in the past through role-play, which is very effective in developing a good understanding of the past events and people's actions. The Victorian Day at the school, for example, was very successful in finding out about what life was like for the children during the Victorian times, what it was like to experience a Victorian classroom, and how this compares with their own classroom in Cranborne School. Overall, history makes very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development - through opportunities to empathise with people and events in the past, and for pupils and teachers to work collaboratively.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

142. Standards in the work seen are above average by Years 2 and 6 showing good improvement since the last inspection. The school has committed considerable funding to setting up the computer suite and training staff. Teachers and teaching assistants show good levels of confidence and expertise. Pupils are making good progress in learning the basic skills and applying them to challenging tasks. Pupils with special needs make good progress for their ability and a keyboard with large symbols enables a visually impaired pupil to join in. The school scheme of work is based on national guidance. It is broad, covering a wide range of ICT applications, and sets work of a high level. Some of the older pupils have not had the opportunity to acquire the full range of basic skills in previous years. They are making very good progress filling in the gaps in their knowledge as well as learning much higher level skills. For example, some of the pupils learning how to make hyperlinks also had to learn how to cut and paste.
143. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue the mouse control they have begun in the Foundation Stage and start to draw and word process with more sophistication. Year 1 pupils were observed drawing a scary monster lurking amongst trees. The majority use the brush tool with reasonable control. They are able to make closed areas to fill with colour and if it leaks to use edit-undo. Some used the spraycan tool for foliage. A few remembered how to save and print, but most had to be reminded. Year 2 pupils were also observed drawing, this time a night scene with fireworks. They used the same tools but with more control and sophistication. They were able to write descriptive words around their pictures and some learnt how to change the box colour so that just the word showed up. All of these lessons started with very good demonstrations using the projector, to remind pupils of the tools and procedures. Teachers made deliberate mistakes, for example flooding the whole screen with colour, and then asked pupils why it had happened and how to put it right. All pupils had sufficient time on the computers to complete most or all of the task, but some teachers are better organised than others to ensure pupils receive equal keyboard time. Teachers use opportunities in other lessons to practise and extend pupils' computer skills. For example in Year 2 design and technology some pupils have used a drawing package for their design for Joseph's Coat and in Year 2 art some have drawn a cityscape as a result of their visit to St Paul's cathedral.
144. In Years 3 and 4 pupils begin to understand how databases work. They design simple questionnaires, enter data and print it out in tabular form. They word-process with increasing confidence and import pictures to illustrate their text. Pupils in Year 3 did this when researching their history project on the Romans and to accompany their poems. They learn how to send and receive emails in Year 3 and exchange messages with pupils from another school. They begin to make fuller

use of the internet as a source of pictures and information. For example, Year 4 searched the internet for pictures by Kandinsky. They printed them out and then made praiseworthy copies of their chosen pictures using a wide range of features from a drawing package. Pupils who knew more taught their partners. For example, a pupil who knew how to change the hue to increase the choices on the colour palette enabled his partner to find the exact shade she wanted for one corner of her picture. Later they made a further search for suitable text about the artist, imported and edited it.

145. In Year 5 pupils continue to use databases, identifying and correcting errors in the data, checking the screen data against paper copies. They begin to work with spreadsheets, understanding cell notation, setting up formulae for simple calculations and drawing graphs of results. They start to realise how powerful spreadsheets are when given a problem to solve about costings. They are delighted that altering cells will produce a new total without them having to work it out. In Year 6, pupils are expected to combine many of the skills they have learnt before, to produce a multimedia story for younger pupils. This involves text, pictures and sound and in the lesson observed they were learning how to set up hyperlinks between pages. Pupils were using previously learned skills in formatting text and selecting borders without prompting. By the time they leave the school pupils are able to use ICT equipment across the curriculum. For example, they use a digital microscope in Year 6 science and desktop publishing skills to produce simulations of a newspaper in their project on the Blitz. They develop their skills in sensing and control technology using Robolab. An enthusiastic group of Junior pupils attend Internet Club every week where they research topics which interest them or are useful for school projects
146. Teaching is good overall, and some very good teaching was seen with pupils responding with enthusiasm to the confidence and expertise of the teachers. These combined the learning of new skills with the opportunity to explore and experiment. Some good lessons could have been improved further if the aim had been less narrow and skills-based. One lesson focussed for so long on a paper-based task that some pupils barely had a go on the computer, wasting the time allocated to the computer suite. The only unsatisfactory teaching seen was caused by the teacher's inability to overcome equipment problems.
147. The subject is well-led by an enthusiastic new co-ordinator taking over from very competent leadership in the past. Procedures for assessing progress are in place although they are only just starting to be used by all staff. Monitoring of plans and teaching is ongoing and results in clear recommendations for improvement. Much hard work has been put into the school website.
148. In order to improve, the school should consider how to use ICT to develop literacy and numeracy skills for pupils with special needs; to plan extension tasks, with further materials for a rapidly growing number of pupils with high levels of skills; to improve the confidence levels of some staff; and to ensure that the maximum amount of time spent in the computer suite is practical at the computers.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

149. Once a week pupils in Year 6 are taught French by a specialist tutor. These lessons introduce pupils to spoken French successfully. Pupils build up a folder of useful phrases which they may look up if they have forgotten. Small amounts of written work used as homework help pupils to memorise suitable phrases and important words. The teaching is lively and interesting. Each 45 minute lesson is crammed with activities. Pupils are enthusiastic and have already picked up a basic vocabulary. They participate willingly and speak with creditable accents. A very good foundation is being laid for later language work, and standards exceed the expectation for the age.

MUSIC

150. By the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in classroom music is in line with that expected nationally. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and take a full part in all lessons. The standards evident at the time of the previous inspection, particularly the very good standards of performance music, have been wholly maintained. This reflects very well upon staff, including visiting teachers, and pupils.

151. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all elements of the music curriculum and pupils' achievement, related to age, is at least satisfactory. Pupils' achievements in singing and playing instruments are very good. The performance of the choir and the orchestra is outstanding and well above that normally found in a primary school. Parents are pleased with the high standards of performance in music.
152. In all year groups, performance is the strongest in the music curriculum. Pupils sing well, in tune and with expression, in the classroom and in assembly. Pupils learn new songs quickly and invariably sing enthusiastically. To this quality, the school choir adds flair and style. Many pupils learn to play instruments, including strings, woodwind, brass and percussion. The rehearsal of the school orchestra was impressive in both musical discipline and competence. Pupils perform regularly in public and take part in ambitious school productions. Pupils give solo and ensemble performances in assembly. As pupils assemble, they listen daily to recorded music from a wide range of different cultures. In these ways, music contributes very well to the social and cultural development of the pupils.
153. Classroom music is not quite as good as that heard in performance, but the introduction of a new scheme of work is designed to promote continuity and progression in music throughout the school. Pupils are steadily acquiring musical knowledge and skills, but presently do too little writing to confirm what they know.
154. By Year 2 pupils know that music is made up of long and short sounds and silences. They learn how to make different sounds with voice and instruments. Pupils enter into this activity with great enthusiasm. At the end of the lesson (observed in Year 1) pupils provided a musical accompaniment to the flight of a soap bubble across the room and offered a fitting climax as the bubble burst. Pupils are familiar with the pulse of music and recognise the steady beat of nursery rhymes, as seen for example in Year 2. Pupils work in small groups, appoint a conductor, and devise a short percussion piece to be played to the class.
155. By Year 6, pupils develop considerable confidence in their singing abilities. In the space of a single lesson, Year 5 learns the words and the tune of a Zulu call-response song. Although, initially some pupils lacked the maturity to sing in a different language and idiom, by the end of the lesson, all gave a spirited and moving performance. Year 4 claps the rhythm of a Caribbean calypso and then sings the melody to a percussion accompaniment. Meanwhile, Year 3 revises the words of the Noah Rap and gives a very convincing performance of the collective roar of lions. From the book of Genesis they move forward to the present day and begin work on the Space Shuttle rap. Year 6 were not heard in concert during the inspection week but planning indicates that they extend their control and understanding of pitch to encompass the singing of a two part round, 'Reginald the Robot'.
156. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, because teachers are bold and ambitious in what they ask the pupils to do. Consequently, pupils engage well and quickly with the lesson and noticeably improve as the lesson progresses. However, pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to evaluate their own work or that of others. Teachers are not equally confident or accomplished in their musical skills but they learn well from one another. The fact that music in the school has a high profile enables teachers to provide more challenging work that they might otherwise do, although in the lessons seen more time was given to performance than to other aspects of the music curriculum. The key deficiency is that pupils do very little written work in music and this limits their understanding of its more technical aspects. There are no formal assessment procedures for music, although there are satisfactory recorded assessments of groups of pupils at the beginning of the year. Assessment does not feature prominently in lesson planning. This is a weakness.
157. The school has made satisfactory progress in music since the last inspection. There is now no unsatisfactory teaching and the cultural range of percussion instruments has been well extended. The new scheme of work will offer more detailed guidance to help teachers plan their lessons. The subject co-ordinator gives good encouragement to her colleagues but her present role does not focus sufficiently on improving teaching and learning or on raising the standards of classroom music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

158. Standards in physical education in the lessons observed meet the expectation by both Years 2 and 6, maintaining the position at the time of the last inspection. In Years 1 - 2, teachers provide good warm-up activities, emphasising to pupils the need to prepare their bodies for more strenuous activity. In Year 1, the teacher had good discipline and control so that pupils worked well in pairs while experimenting with how to use a large ball. Her clear expectations promoted good learning so that pupils felt confident in trying out new ideas. The teacher also provided good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work, inviting pupils to demonstrate their way. By Year 2, pupils show more control and co-ordination in their movements, for example while travelling. Most pupils performed interesting sequences of bunny hops and other steps - along a bench for example. The teacher used the good strategy of having pupils demonstrate to the others to help them all improve, although there was less clarity of just what standards are expected. All pupils were included fully in the activities, and most pupils co-operated together well. The high attaining pupils demonstrated good co-ordination and development. There is no significant gender difference in pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in developing skills.
159. In Year 3 pupils were developing a dance sequence to music by Prokofiev, building on their work of the previous lesson. The teachers' good explanations and relationships with the children helped them to listen carefully and to try hard to improve their techniques. Most pupils moved to time, using the effects of the music. A few pupils have good, imaginative style, for example in building a building with their bodies. In another Year 3 lesson, the class teacher's very positive relationships and style with the pupils encouraged them to work hard to improve. The well-managed session led to good improvements in pupils' control of a ball using hockey sticks. By Year 6, pupils have improved their control, skill and fluency in movements. For example they demonstrated satisfactory skill for the age in their accuracy of passing and receiving a ball during netball. The pupils began to use space more effectively and improved their accuracy of passing. Many pupils were very keen and excited but were well-behaved, playing co-operatively within the teams. Their good attitudes and involvement contributed well to their efforts and learning. The teacher's good explanation about attacking and defensive skills encouraged the pupils to work hard at these, while also enjoying healthy competitive activity. The teacher also used good strategies by demonstrating best moves, and having pupils evaluate their own work. The good pace and determination to help pupils improve led to good learning. Overall, during Years 3 - 6 the pupils demonstrated satisfactory skill in the tasks, with good attitudes that resulted in good gains in skills.
160. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall through the school, although with several examples of good teaching, and this is having a positive impact on standards. Teachers set out clear learning intentions and usually share these with the pupils. The good choice of task provides a good level of skills development and challenge. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils which results in pupils showing good attitudes and behaviour. Teachers have several good features in their approach, for example the good practice of inviting pupils to demonstrate and evaluate their work, which helps to raise standards. The teachers are very careful over health and safety matters. Most pupils in all age groups have good attitudes and behaviour, with good levels of concentration. The pupils are learning the routines for setting out equipment correctly.
161. The school provides a good range of experiences in physical education. The subject leader gives good direction for the subject and ensures that it meets statutory requirements. She takes personal responsibility for organising local competitive sports, and her enthusiasm is helping pupils to gain regional and national recognition. The quality and range of resources are satisfactory and the school hall provides a good space for pupils' physical development, although it is a little small for the older and bigger pupils. Assessment procedures to track pupils' skills and progress are unsatisfactory, although teachers use their observations during lessons to help pupils improve. There are suitable procedures to monitor lesson planning.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

162. Progress since the previous inspection has been good and standards exceed the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Teaching is good overall. The school follows the Hertfordshire scheme of work and 2000 New Agreed Syllabus for religious education which, after a previous overlap in themes taught, has now been slotted in.

163. The management of religious education is very good. Two members of staff, who have come into the role as interested, practising Christians, undertake it as a job share. The co-ordinators appropriately attended in-service training for the implementation of the LEA's new scheme of work and have put in place the school's current religious education policy.
164. Provision for teaching and learning in the subject is appropriately monitored by the co-ordinators and recorded on an evidence of provision statement. The school is helped in its assessment by the use of monitoring procedures that are based on the LEA's exemplification of standards in the LEA's Agreed Syllabus. These procedures include lesson observation, a scrutiny of pupils' work and talking with pupils. The co-ordinators have plans to further extend the provision with more links to ICT and with appropriate books for use as texts in the literacy hour. Currently staff submit medium term planning to the co-ordinators at the beginning of every term. The school then allocates monitoring time for the co-ordinators who will scrutinise pupils' work and observe lessons.
165. Resources for the teaching and learning of religious education are good and the school has the facility of a loan service from the LEA for artefacts of the various faith groups. The school also accesses the Faith Communities Directory and makes good use of visits out of, and visitors into, the school. Such activities enhance pupils' learning. During the inspection there was one such visit. A Church of England vicar addressed all Year 3 pupils. The emphasis was on some of the religious symbols in Christianity, for example, chasuble, 'dog' collar, alb (with clip for microphone), girdle and Stoll. The vicar spoke well to the pupils and they were interested in the presentation. The garments were introduced and their significance explained. Pupils were then shown the chalice and paten (plate) for the bread. The vicar spoke of the concept of light and cross-referenced this to other religions. Pupils were unable to hypothesise as to why light was a symbol. The vicar responded with an explanation from Christianity of Christ – the light of the world. Further information was given in connection with fish symbols, water, the letters INRI on a crucifix. Pupils posed questions. Their interest was held and there were very good relationships between pupils and Vicar. In class afterwards, Year 3 teachers followed up the presented work in more detail and it was obvious that there had been significant learning opportunities for the pupils.
166. In the one of the two lessons observed, teaching was very good. The lesson followed on from the Vicar's visit and although the Year 3 pupils must have experienced some tiredness after the presentation by the Vicar, when they had been seated on the floor, their attitudes and behaviour for the follow up in class were good. They were motivated to respond to the teacher's open questions. As the teacher sketched symbols on the whiteboard the pupils were asked probing questions that reinforced, confirmed and extended information. There was a very good review of the Vicar's presentation and what pupils had learnt. The high expectations of the teacher and clear, questioning and demanding teaching led pupils to a deeper understanding. The teacher's expectations were high. Through the teacher's good interactive teaching, gains were made in pupils' learning. Other visitors to the school in recent time have been some parents and a Hindu family of a Year 6 pupil.
167. In the second lesson observed during the inspection teaching was good. This was a Year 6 lesson on symbolism in Christianity. The Year 6 pupils were to understand the significance of the cross to Christians and to understand how Christians express their faith through art. Pupils were knowledgeable about the cross but only one pupil knew the word crucifix and its difference from a cross. In this lesson, the teacher's knowledge was good and good use was made of photographs and text about different crosses. The teacher ensured pupils' understanding of words such as perseverance and justice. Connections were made to other curricular areas as in the term AD (history) and to pottery. The pupils' task was to design a cross and their learning was good.
168. The contribution of religious education teaching to pupils' broader learning is very good. These lessons develop pupils' understanding of moral issues, multicultural awareness and aspects of citizenship. The teaching observed enabled pupils to learn at an appropriate rate through work matched to their needs. Pupils are willing to share experiences honestly. They acquire an understanding of religious concepts, language and symbolism. They learn to use some appropriate subject vocabulary. They can understand something of the richness and diversity of religions.
169. Scrutiny of pupils' work showed good use of ICT in the 'Jewish Telegraph' – The King has finally arrived, and in 'The Israeli Time' – The King enters Jerusalem. The King is here. This was an

exhibition of a good standard of work with pupils working at National Curriculum levels 4/5. An appropriate future plan for religious education is to meet the LEA's new assessment scheme and this will be done through comprehensive planning.

170. The teachers follow up some assembly themes in their religious education lessons, such as on festivals, although this arrangement is not formalised at present. Management of this subject is very good.