

INSPECTION REPORT

**THUNDRIDGE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Ware, Hertfordshire

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117408

Headteacher: Mrs A. C. Grant

Reporting inspector: Miss Savi Ramnath
21334

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 5th March 2003

Inspection number: 247777

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ermine Street Thundridge Ware Hertfordshire
Postcode:	SG12 OSY
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. E. Norman
Date of previous inspection:	12th January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Miss Savi Ramnath <i>Registered inspector</i> 21334	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation stage Science Religious education Education inclusion including race equality	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements What the school should do to improve further English as an additional language
Ms Elizabeth Jay <i>Lay inspector</i> 19680		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?
Mr Tom Allen <i>Team inspector</i> 31218	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs Beryl Richmond <i>Team inspector</i> 31142	English Art and design Design and technology Music Special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a small, Voluntary Controlled Church of England school situated at Ware in Hertfordshire. It caters for pupils aged three to eleven years and has 73 pupils on roll, which includes 11 children who attend the Foundation Stage class for either 3 or 5 morning sessions and 8 who attend all day. This is an increase since the last inspection. Pupils are organised in four classes, all of which include pupils of mixed ages. The school draws pupils from a wide area. It serves families whose social circumstances are much more favourable than national averages and this is reflected in well below average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Across the school, eleven per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, for a variety of learning difficulties but none of these has a formal statement. Almost all the pupils are of white British origins and are fluent in English. Pupils' levels of attainment on entry to the school are varied, but are above average overall. Since the last inspection, there has been major refurbishment of the accommodation resulting in separate accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Thundridge provides a satisfactory education for its pupils in a caring and supportive environment. Relationships between pupils and adults are good. The school has a productive partnership with parents, which leads to positive attitudes and good behaviour on the part of pupils. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall but systems for monitoring and supporting teaching lack rigour. This has caused inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning which, although satisfactory overall, has resulted in some pupils not always doing as well as they should. Overall, pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 achieve satisfactorily and attain standards in line with national expectations in English and science but above national expectations in mathematics. However, achievement in the Foundation Stage is less than satisfactory because work and play activities are not well matched to children's previous attainment. All staff work well together and along with governors they share a commitment to raising standards and improving the quality of education for all pupils. Finances are used efficiently and the school provides satisfactory value for money from the funding it receives.

What the school does well

- Standards in mathematics and physical education are above the level expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6
- The school provides a very good range of extra curricular activities.
- It works effectively with parents and involves them well in their children's learning
- The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. As a result, pupils' behaviour and personal development are good
- The support staff and school administrator make important contributions to the effectiveness of the school
- Financial planning is good and the budget is managed efficiently.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in religious education are below the level expected nationally at the end of Year 6.
- The standards achieved by the higher attaining pupils in the school.
- The use of assessment information to plan work that is well matched to pupils' needs and levels of attainment.
- The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage¹.
- The rigour of the systems for monitoring, supporting and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

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

¹ Foundation Stage: education before pupils enter Year 1, i.e. in the Nursery and Reception classes

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998. Overall improvements since that time have been satisfactory. Action has been taken on the weaknesses identified in the last report although not all aspects have been fully dealt with. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology and music has risen steadily and now meet national expectations. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects and help to ensure that pupils' skills develop systematically from year to year. However, in the foundation subjects² and science these have not been adapted sufficiently to meet the needs of pupils. As a result, the same work is often given to all pupils regardless of age or prior attainment in the mixed age classes. The role of the governors has developed since the previous inspection and governors now play a greater part in the strategic development of the school. Statutory requirements are now met in the provision of the daily act of collective worship and in the completion of attendance registers. However, the school prospectus and the governor's annual report to parents still have some minor omissions. For example, the attendance figures and school's National Curriculum test results have not been compared to national data. In addition to addressing the key issues from the last inspection, the school has made significant improvements in enhancing the accommodation both internally and externally. The staff and governors are dedicated to improving the school and it has sufficient capacity to improve.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average³ point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools ⁴
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	C	C	C
Mathematics	A	C	C	D
Science	D	A	C	D

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

Note: Only a small group of pupils takes the tests each year, so trend over time and comparisons with results nationally should be treated with caution. In 2002, ten pupils in Year 6 took the tests and seven in Year 2.

National Curriculum tests results for pupils in Years 2 and 6 show variation over recent years. Although over the past three years standards have fluctuated they have remained in line with the national average. In 2002, the school's targets for raising standards in English and mathematics were greatly exceeded. Appropriate targets have been agreed for 2003 and the school is making good progress towards achieving them. Although test results at the end of Year 6 in 2002 indicated that girls performed better than boys, inspection evidence shows little difference in their current performance.

For pupils at the end of Year 2 the results in the 2002 national tests when compared with all and similar

² Foundation Subjects - Subjects other than English, mathematics and science

³ Average points score - pupils' levels in National Curriculum tests are converted to points and used to compare a school's performance with schools nationally and with similar schools.

⁴ Similar schools are those that have a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals

schools were well above the average in reading and in the highest five per cent of schools in writing and mathematics. The teacher's assessment in science showed that pupils' performance was average when compared with all and similar schools. Girls and boys did equally well.

Attainment on entry to the school is normally above average, though the attainment of even one child in a small cohort can cause fluctuations from year to year. The attainment of the present Year 2 and Year 6 groups of pupils when they started Year 1 was at the level expected because children were taught as part of a mixed aged Year 1 and 2 class.

Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of the Foundation Stage the majority of children are on target to reach the standards expected (the Early Learning Goals), by the time they join Year 1 in all areas of learning except in their personal, social and emotional development which are above expectations. Overall, children's achievements (the progress they make in relation to their initial attainment) in the present Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. This is because assessment information is not used well enough to provide suitably matched work.

Starting from average standards for the current Year 2 and 6 pupils, the achievements of the pupils are satisfactory during their time at the school. However, pupils do not always achieve as well as they should. This is partly because too little use is made of assessment information to plan work and as a result pupils of different ages and prior attainment in the mixed age classes are often given the same work. Inspection of pupils' work in the current Years 2 and 6 show that attainment is above national expectations in mathematics and physical education. In English and science, standards are in line with the level expected nationally. In all other subjects, standards are at the levels expected nationally except in art and design where standards are above expectations for Year 2 pupils. In religious education, there was insufficient evidence for a secure judgement to be made on standards for Year 2 pupils. However standards are below the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for pupils in Year 6 because their awareness of different world religions is not sufficiently developed. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Higher attaining pupils are not given enough challenging opportunities for learning at higher levels.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils have positive attitudes; they want to learn and try hard. They enjoy school, are keen to take part in most activities that school offers and work well together.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They have a clear understanding of the school's high expectations of conduct. No pupils have been excluded. Pupils are courteous and respectful towards each other, to teachers and other members of staff at all times.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships between pupils and adults are good. Pupils are friendly and courteous to visitors. Older pupils are beginning to play a larger part in the life of the school and carry out additional responsibilities reliably and carefully.
Attendance	Very Good. Attendance is well above the national average. Pupils arrive at school in time for the start of the day. Lessons begin and end promptly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Foundation Stage	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Unsatisfactory	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 overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and has shown some improvement since the previous inspection where the proportion of good lessons has increased. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. This is because work and play activities are not always well matched to children's above

average attainment on entry. Expectations of what they can achieve are not always appropriate.

Teachers benefit from the framework of the National Numeracy Strategies and the use of a commercial publication in mathematics. As a result, teaching is good. Although the teaching of English and science is satisfactory the needs of pupils are not always well met. In religious education teaching is unsatisfactory because pupils make too little progress over time in learning about major world religions and work is not always well matched to their needs. In all other subjects, where it is possible to make a judgement teaching is satisfactory. Strengths in teaching include good questioning to motivate and challenge pupils, good planning with appropriate resources effectively used to increase learning, and the demonstration of good subject knowledge which enables teachers to extend pupils' understanding. Weaknesses in teaching over time slow down the rate of learning and there is a lack of rigour in monitoring progress. Assessment is not effectively used to plan the teaching of a mixed age and mixed levels of attainment. The teaching and support of pupils with special educational needs are well met in lessons when support is provided. Although the needs of the higher attaining pupils are generally met well in mathematics through the scheme of work, these pupils are not always provided with work that is sufficiently challenging in other areas of the curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. A broad curriculum is provided for all pupils, Enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities and visits. However, there are weaknesses in meeting the needs of pupils in the mixed age classes and in the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils who need extra support are identified early and their progress is carefully tracked. Special needs pupils make good progress particularly when they receive specialist support. Parents are involved in reviewing appropriate targets for improvement.
Provision for pupils' personal, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall good. The school is successful in promoting pupils' spiritual Development except in religious education lessons. The very good Provision for pupils' moral and social and the good provision for their Cultural development has a very positive impact on pupils' Personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Overall satisfactory, but with weaknesses. Procedures for child protection, first aid, and health and safety are good. Assessment procedures are satisfactory in most subjects of the curriculum. Although staff know pupils well, the use of assessment information to plan work to meet the needs of pupils is unsatisfactory.

The school works hard to encourage parents to be involved in the children's education. Parents are very supportive and keen for their children to succeed.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership for the work of the school. She is supported well by staff who share a common purpose and work well as a team. The impact of subject co-ordinators is limited in terms of monitoring teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors provide effective support and are playing an increasing part in decision making and evaluating aspects of the school's work. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities satisfactorily and have a developing understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory but with weaknesses. The headteacher tracks pupils' performance throughout the school. Good use is made of statistical data to target support where it is most needed. However, the monitoring of teaching to determine precisely where improvement is most needed has

	not always been frequent or rigorous enough.
The strategic use of resources	Overall good. Financial administration and control are efficient and best value is sought when making spending decisions. Funding has been used well to enhance accommodation and has brought benefit to both teaching and learning.

The school is well staffed. Teaching assistants are valued and make a significant contribution to pupils' progress. Although there is no school hall, the accommodation is adequate for the delivery of the curriculum. There are sufficient resources to support learning in all subject areas.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents returned 48 questionnaires (65 per cent of those sent out) and 11 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • They find the school approachable and think it works closely with them. • The teaching in the school is good. • They think that the school encourages good behaviour and is helping children to become mature. 	Very few parents expressed concerns

Comments were favourable. The inspection team supports some of the positive comments but found that teaching and pupils' progress was satisfactory overall.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

This section should be read in conjunction with the section on standards in the summary. What is reported there is not necessarily repeated here. Details about standards will also be found at the beginning of each subject report and through examples given in those reports.

1. The previous inspection in January 1998 reported that standards for pupils in Years 2 and 6 were in line with expectations in English, mathematics, science and some of the foundation subjects. Standards were below the levels expected nationally in information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology (DT) and music at the end of Year 6. In the years following the inspection, a number of initiatives have been put into place to improve overall standards. These have had a satisfactory impact on standards which, when compared with the last inspection, have been maintained or improved in most subjects except religious education at the end of Year 6 where standards are now below the requirements of the local agreed syllabus.
2. Children are admitted to the school in September or January on a part-time basis in the academic year in which they are four and attend full-time in the September or January of the academic year in which they reach their fifth birthday. Their attainment on entry to the school is normally above average. Overall, children do not achieve well enough in the Foundation Stage. This is partly because not enough use is made of assessment information to determine each child's progress and what they should do next. Expectations are not always matched to children's prior attainment. Despite this, by the time children are ready to start Year 1, nearly all are in line to attain the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning except in their personal, social and emotional development where children exceed expectations.
3. In the 2002 national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2, standards in mathematics and writing were very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally. In reading, standards were well above national expectations. All pupils gained the expected Level 2 of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, with nearly half attaining the higher Level 3 in reading and writing and nearly all reaching the higher levels in mathematics. Compared with similar schools (those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals), the test results were equally good. The results as a whole represent good achievement for the majority of pupils. Based on teachers' assessments, attainment in science was in the top five per cent of schools nationally for those pupils reaching the expected Level 2 but no pupil reached Level 3.
4. In the 2002 national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 6, results in English, mathematics and science were in line with the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards are less favourable and are average in English but below average in mathematics and science. Test results for 2002 indicate some differences in the performance of boys and girls at the end of both Years 2 and 6. Girls did better than boys.
5. Despite the small number of pupils, the school uses its performance data well to set targets for raising standards in mathematics and English. As a result of data analysis and teacher assessments, appropriate targets have been set for Year 6 pupils for 2003 and the school is working hard to achieve them.
6. The achievement for the present Years 2 and 6 pupils is satisfactory in relation to pupils' prior attainment, which was average on entry to Year 1. This was because pupils were then taught as part of a mixed age Years R, 1 and 2 class. Work seen during the inspection indicates that standards in Year 2 are not as good as those reported in the national tests and teacher assessments of 2002. Inspection findings are broadly similar to test results in 2002 for pupils at the end of Year 6 except in mathematics where inspection findings are better than test results.

7. The findings of the inspection show that standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are at the level expected nationally in English and science. In mathematics, standards are above national expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6. The school has benefited from the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the use of a commercial scheme of work, which has helped to meet the needs of pupils in the mixed age classes. In the majority of other subjects, standards are in line with the levels expected nationally. The exceptions are in art and design where standards are above expectations at the end of Year 2 and in line with the level expected nationally at the end of Year 6 and in physical education where standards are above expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. In religious education, there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2. However, at the end of Year 6 standards do not meet the requirements of the local agreed syllabus.
8. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve satisfactorily and reach levels of attainment in line with their prior attainment. Identified pupils receive additional input by dedicated support staff and make good progress when staff refer to pupils' individual targets in planning work for them and focus on the development of language skills. Higher attaining pupils are not doing as well as they could in all subjects across the curriculum. This is because assessment information is not used consistently to plan work to meet the needs of pupils of different levels of attainment. Where teaching is good higher attaining pupils are often given extension work, but, in many lessons, they have too little opportunity to extend their skills, knowledge and understanding by, for example, pursuing ideas independently or by undertaking more demanding tasks.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' good attitudes to work, behaviour and personal development, noted in the previous inspection report have been maintained. Pupils are eager to come to school and take part in all the activities that the school offers, and parents confirm this. The school reports that pupils want to come to school even when they are not well. Children in the Foundation Stage have settled into school well and have quickly adapted to routines. They generally pay good attention and are particularly attentive and maintain concentration well when engaged in practical activities. In Years 1 to 6 pupils settle quickly to their work, are attentive and most concentrate well. For example, in an English lesson, one group of Year 1 pupils was seen to continue to work together while the teacher was helping another group. Pupils are confident in talking to the class and are pleased to discuss their work and explain what they are doing and what they have achieved. They work well together and are happy to help each other.
10. Pupils behave very well in class and around the school. When they are working in the main school corridor, they maintain their interest and concentration to work. Pupils are very polite and are happy to speak to visitors and they handle all equipment and resources carefully. Although the playgrounds are small, pupils make good use of the space and play football and netball. Parents agree that bullying is not a problem in the school; there have been no racial incidents and no exclusions.
11. There are good relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils. All staff treat pupils with respect and courtesy, and their example is followed by pupils. The warm tone in which teachers and other adults speak to pupils adds to the positive atmosphere and helps to create a supportive community. Pupils are aware of other people's values and beliefs; they listen to each other. In a Years 1/2 lesson, pupils listened attentively with respect to an introductory lesson on Islam.
12. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of school life. They have positive attitudes to their work and learning, try hard and concentrate on their tasks until they are completed. Pupils are well behaved and respond well to the encouragement they receive, which helps to boost their confidence and to take pride in their achievements.
13. The personal development of the pupils is good. They are willing to help and enjoy taking on responsibilities, whether they are the 'special helper' in the Foundation Stage giving out milk cartons, or helping in assembly and in the classrooms. Pupils spoke of their enjoyment in

looking after younger children when they join the school and of the 'buddy' system in which they befriend pupils joining the school at a later stage. Pupils have been very moved by the conditions under which their pen friends in Uganda, lived and through the 'Seeds for Africa' charity they raised funds through their own efforts in order to help them.

14. The attendance rate of pupils has improved since the last inspection report, and is now very good, and well above the national average. Commendably, there is almost no unauthorised absence; pupils arrive punctually for school, allowing a prompt start to the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Although the overall quality of teaching is judged to be satisfactory and similar to the findings of the last inspection there are important weaknesses in the Foundation Stage where teaching is judged to be unsatisfactory. Of lessons observed, 52 per cent were satisfactory and 48 per cent were good. Whilst teaching is broadly satisfactory in the mixed ages classes of Years 1/ 2, 3/ 4 and Years 5 / 6 some weaknesses remain, notably in planning for the different ages and levels of attainment in the mixed age classes. There are some examples of good practice of teachers providing different levels of work to suit different prior attainment but this is not consistent. Frequently the tasks are matched more to the average attaining pupil, so that the older, higher attaining pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable. This was a weakness identified in the last inspection.
16. The overall quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage varies in the different areas of learning. It is satisfactory in the development of children's personal, social and emotional development which is given good emphasis. This plays a significant part in helping children take a more active part in other learning activities. The use of staff, time and resources is especially effective. In other areas of learning teaching over time is unsatisfactory. This is because teachers' knowledge and understanding of the stepping-stones and Early Learning Goals are not strong enough. Expectations of what children can achieve are not always appropriate and insufficient use is made of assessment information to provide suitably matched work. In addition the monitoring of individual children's experiences is not sufficiently rigorous to provide staff with information that would allow them to produce a balanced curriculum and meet the needs of all children especially the higher attainers.
17. Good teaching was observed across the school. The teaching of English and mathematics has benefited from the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The teaching of mathematics is good. In all lessons there is an appropriate focus on the development of mental arithmetic at the start of the session and teachers encourage pupils to explain their methods of finding solutions to problems. Where teaching is good teachers explain concepts clearly and, as a result, learning is good. In English, teaching is satisfactory. Most teachers provide a good balance between whole class and group activities and make effective use of the shared reading texts. However, short-term plans are unsatisfactory. The daily literacy sessions do not take sufficient account of the ages and wide range of levels of attainment in the mixed age classes and expectations are not always sufficiently high. As a result, learning, especially of the higher attaining pupils is limited. Although literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory taught across the curriculum and key words are emphasised in several subjects, there are, however not enough planned opportunities for pupils to extend their literacy skills in all subjects. Although the teaching of science is satisfactory pupils in the mixed age classes in Years 3 / 4 and Years 5/ 6 are often given identical work regardless of their age or prior attainment and work is not always well matched to the National Curriculum. Since the last inspection teachers are now more confident in the teaching of ICT and more use is made of the skills learnt to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. In religious education, no judgement is made about the quality of teaching in Years 1/2 although teaching over time has been unsatisfactory for the present for the present Year 6 pupils. No judgement is made about the quality of teaching in art and design and design and technology. In all other subjects teaching is satisfactory except in physical education where the quality of teaching is good.

18. Since the last inspection the school has adopted the optional national guidelines for most subjects of the curriculum. This has assisted the planning process and has helped to ensure a whole-school approach. However, the medium term plans, which are used as the basis for delivering lessons on a weekly basis, are too brief and objectives often describe the activities to be undertaken rather than what is to be learned. Plans rarely take account of the needs of all pupils nor give a clear indication of the levels that pupils of different ages and levels of attainment should be working to attain. The provision for pupils identified with special educational needs are not routinely planned.
19. Teachers' expectations vary and although satisfactory, overall, are not always high enough for higher attaining pupils. Teachers do not always have a clear understanding of where pupils have reached in their learning and what they need to learn next. In the most successful practice challenging activities and high expectations of what pupils can achieve result in good gains in learning. In these lessons, pupils are managed very well and expectations are high. For example, in a Years 1/2 science lesson on materials learning was good because of the careful planning employed by the teacher. The lesson was well planned to meet the needs of all pupils and expectations. All teachers manage pupils very well and create a calm atmosphere, which is conducive to learning. Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and pupils respond well to this creating a productive working environment.
20. Teachers' use of day-to-day assessment is inconsistent and there is significant variation in the quality of information recorded by teachers. This is mainly due to a lack of a whole-school approaches and guidance. While some records give detailed information regarding individual pupil's achievement in subjects there is inconsistency in practice. Most teachers make good use of probing questions, which helps to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Where teaching is good or better teachers ask questions that vary in difficulty and opportunities are provided for both boys and girls to answer questions and make contributions. In a Years 5/ 6 mathematics lesson on solving problems the teacher skilfully asked a range of questions that made very different demands on individual pupils. This sensitive and skilful questioning ensures that all pupils have the opportunity to learn.
21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils have been accurately assessed using outside agency support where necessary and their individual education plans are targeted carefully to help them learn. Most teachers use a range of successful strategies to motivate, involve and challenge pupils, and regularly monitor the progress pupils are making towards achieving their targets. The special educational needs co-ordinator works well with class teachers to ensure that pupils have the necessary support and resources, for example mathematics mats and literacy banks. Most records are well maintained and regularly updated to enable teachers to carefully track progress. Learning support assistants work effectively with pupils when working with a small group but their work in plenary sessions is less effective. This important aspect of their work needs to be developed.

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

22. At the time of the last inspection the curriculum was reported as being good. It is satisfactory and the school continues to offer a broad curriculum with all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education being taught. However, it is not sufficiently balanced and as a result not all aspects of the local agreed syllabus for religious education are fully covered. This has had a detrimental effect on pupils' performance and by the end of Year 6, standards are below expectations in religious education. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. There are strengths in the curriculum, in particular, children's personal development is given an important focus. Although planning takes account of all six areas of learning work is not always well planned to meet the needs of children.
23. The school has in place a two-year rolling programme for all subjects except mathematics and

English, where teachers plan on an annual basis. The two-year programme helps to ensure that pupils do not repeat topics. However, the overall curriculum map lacks rigour in terms of the expectations for year groups and pupils of different levels of attainment. The skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are not consistently identified in teachers' planning. The school has started to look at the allocation of time to the foundation subjects; particularly the large amount of time spent learning to swim and the over long sessions in the afternoons.

24. Provision for the development of personal, social and health education is good and contributes to pupils' understanding of their own development, and their responsibilities as individual people. There is a scheme of work that operates on a rolling programme and the school recognises that this programme needs to be more strongly linked to the overall curriculum map.
25. The provision of extra-curricular activities is very good. The school offers the opportunity to participate in computer, art, drama and gardening clubs. In addition, pupils can sing in the choir and benefit from netball and football coaching and have the opportunity to play in matches. Visitors and visits enrich the curriculum very well. For instance, the pupils have had the opportunity to watch the Salamander Theatre perform 'Bill's New Frock' to support their personal, social, health curriculum and they have worked with the Hertfordshire Archaeological Society on cross curricular activities. They have visited many places, including Hanbury Manor, Ware Museum, Hertfordshire Fire Station and a mosque to support and enhance the curriculum. The community contributes well to pupils' learning. There are good links with the church and other local organisations such as the Fire Service and Police. There are good constructive links with the local secondary school and with local primary schools in the same cluster.
26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The school provides support, either in class or in small groups out of the classroom, depending on the needs of the individual pupils. Teachers have copies of pupils' individual education plans but how they are used to effectively plan suitable work to meet the needs of individuals was not always apparent. A register of gifted and talented pupils is not yet established. The school aims to give all pupils equality of opportunity but this is not reflected sufficiently in practice as the needs of all pupils are not fully met.
27. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and has been maintained since the last inspection. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. There are good links with local churches, and a local minister comes to the school most weeks to lead a whole school assembly. Pupils also attend services in the church to celebrate important festivals. Interfaith aspects of spiritual development are enhanced by visits to a mosque, and by a school display of Sikhism. Whole school assemblies are held twice a week, the second being used to celebrate pupils' achievements. Class assemblies are held on three days a week. These vary in the contribution that they make towards the provision of pupils' spiritual development; however a class assembly for younger pupils was effective as the pupils sat in a circle, with a candle in the centre to focus their thoughts. Pupils and staff sing well, even when unaccompanied and this contributes to a suitable atmosphere for worship. The school is linked with a rural school in Uganda, through the charity 'Seeds for Africa' and pupils have been deeply affected by this. Through the exchange of letters and photographs, pupils are challenged to think about the death of parents through Aids, and orphaned children being responsible for the care of younger brothers and sisters.
28. The school's provision for moral education is evident in assemblies and throughout the school day. Pupils are asked to consider whether things are fair, whether they are right or wrong and they respond with thoughtful answers. They discuss and draw up school rules at the beginning of the school year and these include respecting and caring for others and being kind. The school is part of a cluster of schools and this provides wider social contact and opportunities for sport, which are important in a small school. The cluster also joins together for school journeys, which again gives pupils the opportunity to work together and to meet and deal with new situations.
29. The school provides a rich programme of visits and visitors to the school, which give the pupils a

very good picture of their own and other peoples' cultures as well as contributing to the pupils' social development. All pupils have an opportunity to learn French, either in an after school club or as part of the curriculum in Years 3 to 6. Visitors to the school range from a storyteller of Anglo Saxon tales and visits from a local artist. Visits and workshops include experiencing Tudor life at Hanbury Hall and a visit to a mosque which help to raise pupils' cultural awareness.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The high standard of care, support and guidance for pupils, described in the last inspection report has been maintained: teachers know their pupils very well, and the commitment of staff to their pupils' welfare, including those with special educational needs, is evident. There is a nominated person trained for child protection, and local education authority procedures are known; however this training has not yet been shared formally with all staff. Health and safety procedures such as checking electrical and fire equipment are in place; risk assessments are made and governors and head teacher make regular checks of the school building, which is well maintained. Dinners are taken in the village hall, which is a short distance from the school. Good care is taken to ensure the safety of pupils when walking to the hall. The pupils are supervised well before school, during break and lunchtime, with staff setting high standards of behaviour and encouraging consideration for others.
31. Staff are aware of pupils' medical needs: a list of pupils with medical conditions such as asthma and allergies, is in each register. All staff are trained to deal with severe effects of allergies, and several staff are trained in first aid. Asthma inhalers are kept in the classrooms, helping pupils to accept responsibility for their own health. The school cares appropriately for pupils with special educational needs. Outside agencies are involved, as required, to help meet their specific targets.
32. Procedures for monitoring the personal development of pupils are satisfactory. The procedures, as in many small schools, have been informal, except for the useful comments in the pupils' annual reports. The school is now evaluating a more formal system to achieve this, which helps to assess and record attitudes to learning, self-esteem, perseverance and relationships.
33. Monitoring of behaviour is good. The school reinforces its high expectations of good behaviour by its 'star pupil' system, in which, every week in the special awards assembly, a pupil from each class is awarded the star for different types of achievement and places the star on his or her photograph in the school entrance. Records of these awards are maintained to ensure that all pupils have their achievement recognised. In addition, each class has its own reward system; for example, pupils are given stars for having everything they need for a lesson, quickly. The very few, isolated, incidents of less than satisfactory behaviour are logged and dealt with effectively.
34. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good. Registers are correctly filled in, distinguishing between authorised and unauthorised absence. The school secretary telephones parents about absent pupils early in the school day; this is done both sensitively and efficiently.
35. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessment in most subjects and is meeting all statutory requirements for National Curriculum testing. Pupils have targets for English, mathematics and science that are displayed in their classrooms and are part of their everyday routine. However, sometimes these targets are not specific enough and there are too many targets on display at one time, for instance in science.
36. The school's use of assessment information to plan the next stage of learning is unsatisfactory. For example, the lack of different tasks for pupils of different levels of attainment in many lessons has an impact on the learning of the highest attaining pupils. Teachers do not always use assessment information well enough to plan their lessons and too often, the same task is given to all pupils in the class. This limits how much pupils can achieve and opportunities are missed to raise standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. Parents' good partnership with the school, noted in the last inspection report has been maintained. Very positive views were expressed in the questionnaires completed before the inspection, in which, for example all parents agreed that behaviour is good, that children make good progress, that the school helps pupils to become mature and that the school is well managed and led. These views were reinforced in the parents' meeting,
38. Information provided for parents is satisfactory overall, with some good features. Parents are kept regularly informed of day-to-day events and school news by well-written, friendly newsletters. Pupils' annual reports to parents include useful information about the work that has been covered during the year, but, as noted in the previous inspection report, there is a lack of detail about the foundation subjects and there is insufficient information about what pupils can do and have achieved. There is a valuable section on the personal development of pupils and many parents take the opportunity to comment, favourably, in the appropriate parents' section; however not all pupils are given the opportunity to contribute to the assessment of their year's work. Parents sometimes have the valuable opportunity to attend special curriculum evenings, for example on teaching mathematics, but the school does not as yet inform parents what work their children will be covering in the next half or full term. The governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus do not contain all the required statutory information.
39. The school informs parents at an early stage if their child has special educational needs. Parents have copies of pupils' individual education plans and where pupils are receiving extra support, partnership letters and information on specific areas explain to parents about the provision for their child and how they can help. Parents are invited to all reviews and can make an appointment at any time. Links between home and school are regular and constructive and this helps to ensure that pupils receive satisfactory support and make satisfactory progress.
40. Parents show their commitment to the school in very practical ways; 'Friends' of the school raise considerable amounts of money for the school and, in addition, parents carried out the work of creating a safe and interesting play area for children in the Foundation Stage. Several parents make a sustained commitment to help pupils with reading on a daily basis and many also help with cooking and with outings and swimming. Some parents have been able to take up the opportunity of training for helping in the classroom. Thus in all these ways, together with supporting their children's work at home, parents make a substantial contribution to their children's education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher and staff with management responsibilities provide satisfactory management for the school. All staff share a common vision for moving the school forward especially in the light of rising numbers. The caring ethos of the school is reflected in all aspects of their work and this contributes to the feeling of well being demonstrated by the pupils.
42. The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities is satisfactory overall. Governors meet on a regular basis and provide satisfactory support to the headteacher and staff. A 'governor of the month' visit provides the opportunity to become informed of curriculum and other matters affecting the day to day running of the school. The chair of governors is in regular contact with the headteacher and provides good support in liaising with parents. She is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and receives regular reports from the chair of committees. In general statutory duties are fulfilled but the governors' annual report lacks a

national comparison with the school's National Curriculum test results and the prospectus does not include attendance figures.

43. The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching and learning in all classes but not all subjects are covered. Formal observations are followed up with written and verbal feedback indicating areas for improvement. This is working relatively well and is beginning to have an impact upon teaching and learning in some classes. Overall, the school's monitoring systems are not sufficiently rigorous to affect the quality of teaching and learning in all subjects. As is common practice in many small schools, the subject co-ordinators have responsibilities for a number of areas. They have a clear understanding of their role and are beginning to provide colleagues with helpful support and advice.
44. Procedures performance management are in place and operating satisfactorily. Targets set for individual teachers are linked to the school's main development priorities. Induction procedures are good. A number of trainees present at the time of the inspection expressed satisfaction with, and praise for the school as a place for training.
45. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good leadership. The co-ordinator ensures that all pupils have been accurately assessed, using outside agencies when necessary and ensures that pupils have relevant achievable targets. She has adequate opportunities to monitor and evaluate the work of colleagues and the use made of individual education plans. The school has reviewed the policy for special educational needs with all staff to ensure that it reflects the 2001 Code of Practice. All staff have participated in training to ensure that they have up-to-date knowledge.
46. Financial planning is good. The school makes good use of the allocated funds to meet the needs of both the whole school and of the individual. Funds have been earmarked to provide additional support in classes and resources for building developments and reorganisation of space. The school's administration is very efficient which enables the school to function smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Additional funds, available for the school's work in supporting pupils with special educational needs, are used effectively. The school uses new technology appropriately to support the administration. The school is aware of and effectively applies the principles of best value.
47. The school is well staffed to teach the age range, including pupils who have special educational needs. The teaching staff offers an adequate range of expertise in the subjects of the National Curriculum. The quality of accommodation has improved since the time of the last inspection both inside and also in the outside environment. Considerable improvements have been made to the secure play area in the Foundation Stage and the grounds, which are attractive, well maintained and well used. Learning resources are adequate to support the curriculum. Resources for ICT have improved since the last inspection with the provision of new computers for each class. In English, there is a good range of equipment and books for guided reading, mainly due to the result of the implementation of literacy hour. The library has an adequate range of non-fiction books and a good range of storybooks.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. In order to build upon the improvements which have taken place since last inspection and to raise standards of attainment further the school needs to:

□ **Improve the progress of all pupils especially the higher attaining pupils by:**

- monitoring teaching and learning rigorously and taking action to resolve weaknesses;
- putting assessment procedures in place to identify the very able from the earliest age;
- using assessment information thoroughly to provide a better match of work to pupils' previous attainment especially for higher attainers.
- raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve;
- further adapting the schemes of work in the foundation subjects and science in order to ensure that learning develops systematically year on year.

[paragraphs 8,15,19,20,55,60,65,70,72,73,77,81,83,84,87]

□ **Improve the quality of provision for children in the Foundation Stage by:**

- ensuring that all teachers understand the use and implications of the stepping-stones and Early Learning Goals in planning activities and lessons;
- improving assessment so that it is firmly based on the stepping-stones and that the information gained is used to formulate individual targets and programmes for all children especially the higher attainers;
- improving short-term planning to indicate in detail what different groups of pupils will experience and learn and ensuring all activities available to children are carefully planned;
- ensuring that there are more regular planned opportunities for children to link their oral work more closely to their written work;

[paragraphs 2,16,22,52,55,56,57,58,59]

□ **Raise standards in religious education by:**

- ensuring that religious education lessons more fully meet the recommendations of the Local Agreed Syllabus
- ensuring that pupils especially in Years 1 and 2 have more opportunities to record what they have learned.

[paragraphs 102,103,106]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	-	-	11	12	-	-	-
Percentage	-	-	48	52	-	-	-

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	6	64
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	3

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	1	7

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.8
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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	3	4	7

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	7	7	7
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	100 (91)	100 (82)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	7	7	7
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	100 (82)	100 (91)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	5	5	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	5	4	4
	Total	9	8	8
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	90 (83)	80 (100)	80 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	5	4	4
	Total	9	8	8
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	90 (83)	80 (100)	80 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No pupils of on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	61	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	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)	4.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.6 : 1
Average class size	18.6

Education support staff:**YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	78.75

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.1
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	26.25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.5 : 1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.***Financial information**

Financial year	April 2001- March 2002
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£

Total income	190,831.38
Total expenditure	182,661.56
Expenditure per pupil	3,528
Balance brought forward from previous year	5,278.83
Balance carried forward to next year	13,448.65

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.6
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

74

Number of questionnaires returned

48

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	21	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	74	26	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	36	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	50	2	0	0
The teaching is good.	62	36	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	44	7	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	24	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	19	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	53	42	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	57	43	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	72	28	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53	32	15	0	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

49. At the time of the last inspection, this aspect of the school was inspected according to the areas of learning for children under five. The provision was judged to be satisfactory and children made satisfactory progress. Since then, the Foundation Stage for children's learning has been introduced. In this report provision for the children in the Reception class was inspected according to the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals for the Foundation Stage.
50. The attainment of children on entry to the school varies, but is generally above the level expected for children of a similar age. Children enter the Foundation Stage class in two groups. At the time of the inspection there were 8 children who attended all day and eleven children who attended the morning sessions. Two children have been identified as having special educational needs and one child has English as an additional language.
51. By the end of the Foundation Stage the majority of children are in line to attain the standards expected (the Early Learning Goals), by the time they join Year 1 in all areas of learning except in their personal, social and emotional development which are above expectations. Overall, children's achievements are unsatisfactory starting from an above average attainment on entry.
52. Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in improving provision for children in the Foundation Stage. Despite this, teaching and learning over time are unsatisfactory. This is because short-term plans takes insufficient account of recommended guidance to determine each child's progress and what they should do next. Lesson plans do not always make clear what skills the children will acquire and the information gained from the day-to-day monitoring of children's attainment and progress is not used consistently to match activities to particular needs. Relationships between adults and children are consistently good. The children are managed well and good discipline is achieved through a caring yet firm approach.
53. Induction procedures are good and all children make a happy start to school life. Parents and carers have opportunities to visit the school formally and are also welcome to discuss problems and concerns on a day-to-day basis. The caring ethos of the class helps children to settle in quickly and to develop very good attitudes to learning. There is a good arrangement in place to ensure that the younger children have some opportunities to work separately from the older children. All children are taught by a qualified teacher for the morning session and in the afternoon children are taught by a nursery nurse and a well-qualified classroom assistant. The spacious classroom, outdoor facilities and learning resources of satisfactory quality effectively enhance children's learning. There has been some monitoring of teaching and learning but this has not been sufficiently rigorous in order to identify what needs improving.

Personal social and emotional development

54. Children's personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority and progress is good. Teaching is effective in this area. Children come into the classrooms happily and confidently and part easily from their parents and carers at the beginning of the day. All children including those who started in January and those who attend part time quickly understand the routines of school life such as lining up, listening quietly to the teacher or putting their hands up when they want to contribute to a discussion. They play well alongside each other and together have good relationships with adults. Children are beginning to develop an appropriate understanding of right and wrong and take turns sharing toys and equipment fairly. For example, they happily wait to take their turn to use the balancing equipment. Most are developing good attitudes to learning and sustain concentration well. They are curious and keen to try new activities. For example, they greatly enjoyed cooking and eating the pancakes they had made. They confidently described the ingredients and know how pancakes are made. Occasionally,

when the time given to some discussion periods and whole-class activities is too long children become restless and lose interest. Teaching is good in this area, and, as a result children learn quickly. Adults have a consistent, encouraging approach and value each child's contribution. All adults maintain a good day-to-day dialogue with parents and carers as they come to bring and collect their children and this partnership makes an important contribution to children's personal and social development. Teachers successfully encourage children to handle books and equipment carefully and to develop their social skills.

Language and literacy and communication

55. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children attain standards that meet the nationally approved recommendations for children of this age in early reading and writing activities. In speaking and listening, they exceed the expected standards. However, overall progress in this area of learning is limited because of inappropriate expectations and insufficient use of assessment information to plan work. The good emphasis on speaking and listening activities ensures that all the children make good progress, including those with special educational needs, who are well supported. Language work underpins all the areas of learning and adults successfully encourage the quietest children to respond to questions while the others listen attentively. Overall most children talk confidently and fluently and few have limited speaking skills. They use a growing vocabulary with increasing fluency to express their ideas when discussing the contents of their 'story boxes' and respond to the thoughts of others during focus sessions. Listening skills are good and this supports children's learning effectively in all areas of learning. Despite their limited time at school, the youngest children readily share experiences and talk at length in well-formed sentences to give clear interesting information. A few less confident children speak only briefly, giving general information. All children handle books carefully, turning pages correctly and know that print is read from left to right. Lower attaining children can 'retell' a story using the pictures in the storybook to illustrate the meaning and average and higher attaining children confidently answer questions about the events in a story and read simple text with accuracy and fluency. They are able to recognise their own names and most find their name cards without help at registration time. In the morning sessions there is an appropriate focus on phonics through the 'Letter of the Week' that prepares children well for their early reading skills. When taught as a group most older children readily contribute words such as, rope, rain, robot and road as words which start with the letter ' r ', however this level of work is not sufficiently challenging for higher attaining children who know that 'chicken' and 'child' begin with the 'ch' sound and know the initial and end sounds to words. Several write their names independently and in their independent writing they copy simple words. Higher attaining children write simple sentences with the correct spelling of simple words and are beginning to use a full stop correctly. However, many children still write in an uncontrolled way. Earlier work shows that children have made slow progress when compared with their prior attainment and in the early part of the Spring term teachers were still scribing for children rather than allowing them to write for themselves. In many instances the work provided does not build well enough upon the previous work and there are not enough planned or self initiated opportunities for children to practise their early writing skills independently or for different purposes.

Mathematical development

56. Despite the fact that children start school with above average attainment they only attain the levels expected in mathematics by the end of the Foundation Stage. As a result progress is unsatisfactory. This is because expectations are not high enough and assessment information is not used well enough to provide suitably matched work. Much teaching results in reinforcement rather than challenging the higher attaining children. Despite these weaknesses nearly all children can accurately count and order numbers to 10. Many are familiar with larger numbers and higher attainers know that if one name tag is missing then there will be 19 and that 5 gm of flour are needed if the scales indicated 95 gms when 100 gm were needed. Although priority is given to learning through practical work, this is often basic and undemanding for some children. Workbooks completed indicate that there is too much repetition and an emphasis on working through the commercial scheme rather than planning work to meet the prior attainment of the children. Previous work shows that children confidently and accurately carry out simple addition

and subtraction activities writing clearly formed numbers however, there is little extension work for higher attainers. Most accurately use mathematical language such as 'more than' and 'less than' when counting animals and confidently sort objects by colour, size and shape and explore concepts of capacity and measures when they use sand and water and fill containers with various items. They practise incidental counting in a variety of situations, for example during registration, accurately recognise the most common flat shapes such as, triangles, circles and squares and enjoy using songs and rhymes to support their learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

57. When they start school many children have a good basic general knowledge and most are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. However, progress is unsatisfactory because work does not always build on children's prior attainment and planning does not take sufficient account of recommended guidance. As a result, progress is not as rapid as it might otherwise be. The children's work on display and in their books and teachers' planning show, for example, that children learned to name their body parts, and learned about the life cycle of a butterfly when listening to the story 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. They begin to understand the needs of living things by investigating which fruits can be grown from 'pips' and develop their early understanding of the properties of materials when discussing how the ingredients for making pancakes change when they are blended and the changes that occur when they are cooked. All children enjoy using the computer. Many have good control of the mouse to move objects on the screen and to match words and pictures. However, opportunities to use and develop skills in ICT are not always carefully planned to ensure that they develop systematically and build on the skills that children bring from home. Children's understanding about caring for each other and how people care for them is heightened through, for example, well-told stories and effective discussion where they are given many opportunities to talk about their own experiences and beliefs and those of others. They develop their understanding about the past in the context of discussing the difference between materials used in toys from the past and toys made now. They learn about the immediate environment around the school and the people, such as the policeman and nurse who help them to stay safe. Children start to develop their geographical vocabulary in the course of following routes in the outside play area and the changes in the weather when they complete the daily weather chart. They enjoy using' construction toys and make good use of recycled materials to construct a recognisable model.

Physical development

58. Although the majority of children are in line to reach and some to exceed the expected outcomes by the end of the Foundation Stage in skills of running, balancing and using large wheeled toys progress in extending their fine motor skills is unsatisfactory. This is because monitoring is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that all children experience fully the range of activities on offer to develop these skills. Few children handle scissors; pencils and brushes with confidence and their writing and cutting skills are not well developed when taking account of children's prior attainment. Despite this, many take apart and build with construction toys, use rolling pins to roll their playdough to make pancakes, pour water and sand into containers and place items accurately when engaged in small world play with increasing confidence. Since the last inspection the school has developed the secure play area for the Foundation Stage. This is a spacious area and includes a grassed area, a garden, climbing apparatus and a tarmac area. The school has made a good start in developing the outdoor provision and further developments are planned. There is a good range of wheeled toys and children use these confidently and enthusiastically. Teacher interaction is good and children are encouraged to extend their concentration when crawling on hands and knees when playing the game 'Teddy's in the Tunnels'. Children develop their co-ordination skills by pedalling tricycles, manoeuvring wheeled vehicles, carrying equipment and balancing activities. There were no opportunities to observe the development of children's early gymnastic skills, movement or use of apparatus in the village hall.

Creative development

59. By the end of the Foundation Stage the majority of children are in line to attain the nationally agreed learning goals. However, progress is unsatisfactory. This is because the range of activities chosen for developing children's creative and expressive skills is not sufficiently well planned to ensure that skills develop systematically as children move through the Foundation Stage. Plans and practice do not take account of what the children already know, understand and can do and teachers do not plan how to best develop children's ability to imagine and to solve problems through their play. In the afternoon sessions when creative development is the main focus, the small group of full-time older children receive targeted, effective adult support from the nursery nurse and classroom assistant. This enables them to work carefully, imaginatively and thoughtfully and to develop their skills appropriately. A good example of this was their self-portraits, which showed appropriate features and an increasing attention to detail. Earlier work indicates that children know how to mix paints to produce a range of attractive colours to paint the different fruits that the caterpillar ate in the story 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' or a rainbow for the classroom display. They draw and colour pictures with varying degrees of accuracy and detail as demonstrated in their drawings of 'People who help us'. Children enjoy music and participate enthusiastically when singing songs and rhymes such as 'The Pancake Rhyme' and 'If you go down to the woods today'; many of which provide additional practice for their work. Most are able to perform actions in time to music and respond to changes of pace and volume as they sing. Although children enjoy using the role-play area, opportunities for imaginative play are limited. This is because the role-play area, currently arranged as a 'hospital' is outdoors and this is not always convenient for adult supervision. In addition role-play activities are not always considered within daily plans and the range of free choice activities for developing children's creative and expressive skills are not always well planned. The writing centre is unexciting and generally underused.

ENGLISH

60. Standards in all aspects of English are at the level expected nationally by the end of Years 2 and 6 and are similar to the findings of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress throughout the school. The pupils begin their English course suitably equipped with basic skills. Progress is satisfactory but there is little variation in tasks set so the higher attaining pupils do not always achieve as well as they might.
61. Throughout the school standards in speaking and listening are in line with national expectations. Pupils listen carefully in lessons and are interested in what others have to say. Good teaching and appropriate pace encourage pupils to listen well. However, opportunities to promote pupils' speaking and listening skills are sometimes missed. For example, in an English lesson in Year 6, pupils were encouraged to read their work aloud, but were not asked to explain why they had chosen particular words for effect. Other pupils in the class were not asked to reflect on and then volunteer why they liked or disliked a poem or to describe how they felt or what they pictured when they heard it. In paired work, teachers give pupils good opportunities to discuss their ideas with a partner but this does not usually lead to giving pupils the opportunity to explain to the whole class.
62. Standards in reading are at the level expected nationally by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils enjoy reading. Some read regularly both at home and at school and have access to a wide range of books. Years 1/2 pupils are regularly taught the skills of reading and have a daily opportunity to practise in a group as the school has excellent help from parents. Pupils in Year 2 read accurately from the level of text expected for their age. They successfully link letters with their sounds, using this strategy when they are unsure of a word. They are less used to using other strategies, for instance, reading the whole sentence through and then making an informed guess of an unknown word. In Year 6, most pupils read fluently with expression and have a wider range of strategies at their disposal for reading unfamiliar text. Some confidently recounted the story in the book they were reading in an informative and interesting way and gave

a plausible well-thought-out prediction of how the story might continue. Pupils are familiar with the library system and accurately explain how to locate books. A school governor regularly helps pupils with their library skills and supports their choices for reading. Pupils made good use of the Internet, CD-ROM's and the library for research.

63. Standards in writing are in line with expectations for pupils in Years 2 and 6. The school has identified writing as an area for further development. Teachers provide a wide range of learning experiences for the pupils who write for different audiences and purposes, usually independently. For example in Years 3/4 pupils wrote portraits of pirates using descriptive and expressive language. All pupils have writing targets and have been given good opportunities to develop their writing skills in English lessons. Opportunities to develop these skills in other subjects are missed. Expectations of presentation are not high enough and the skills of handwriting are not taught consistently. The school has already identified this as an area for development. The basic skills of spelling and grammar are taught progressively and consequently pupils are able to demonstrate in their work satisfactory knowledge of the conventions of English.
64. Teaching in English is satisfactory overall. Basic skills are satisfactorily taught in all classes. Relationships in lessons are good. This enables pupils to have the confidence to try out new ideas and to share them with their fellow pupils as in a Years 5/6 lesson on using similies. Where teaching is good, work is well planned to take account of prior attainment. This was well demonstrated in a Years 3/4 lessons on writing portraits of a pirate. In this session work was well matched to pupils' need, resources were well organised and adult support well targeted. Overall, lessons are well managed and move along at a satisfactory pace. However, the end of session discussions are not always well used to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding through effective questioning
65. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has attended all relevant recent training, improved resources and implemented target setting to address identified weaknesses. The procedures to assess pupils attainment and monitor their progress are satisfactory. However, the use of assessment information to plan work to meet the needs of all pupils is unsatisfactory. Resources are good and accessible. The curriculum has been enriched by offering junior pupils the opportunity to participate in a 'Midsummer Night's Dream' workshop and interviews with Saracens Rugby Club. All pupils have had the opportunity to participate in World Book Day.

MATHEMATICS

66. Standards in mathematics are above national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and better than those reported at the last inspection. Although the attainment of pupils on entry is normally above average, for the present Years 2 and 6 cohorts attainment was 'in line' on entry. Overall, pupils make good progress when compared with their prior attainment .
67. In Year 2, pupils understand and use two digit numbers, They perform simple multiplication and division, know their 2, 5 and 10 times tables, understand tens and units and work with coins giving change from one pound with confidence. They record measurements in centimetres accurately and record amounts in litres. Most use the correct mathematical names for common flat and solid shapes describing their properties, including the number of sides and corners. Higher attaining pupils begin to understand the place value of numbers to 1000 and some know that a hundred centimetres make a metre and are able to convert millimetres to centimetres and use a range of contexts covering capacity and time. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand place value to three digits and perform doubling and halving to three digits. They successfully perform multiplication operations with two digit multipliers. They round numbers up and down to the nearest hundred, estimating lengths in centimetres and metres and use appropriate vocabulary when performing these operations. However, they have limited opportunity to develop their own ideas in problem solving and to begin to express simple formulae. They make calculations to two places of decimals and understand the effect of multiplying or dividing by 10

and 100. Pupils successfully identify three-dimensional figures and know the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes as well as determining lines of symmetry. They calculate simple fractional parts of given quantities. Higher attaining pupils confidently explain the probability of outcomes. They make good use of ICT produce graphs and present statistical information.

68. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers benefit from the implementation of National Numeracy Strategy and the use of a commercial publication to help meet the needs of pupils in the mixed age classes. In lessons observed the good knowledge of the teachers enables them to challenge the pupils to apply what they already know to a new situation. The good pace of lessons especially in mental mathematics generates interest and excitement and an eagerness to learn. Pupils are given work, which matches their levels of attainment, and resources are provided for pupils to work at their own pace. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good because of the good level of support that they receive. The good relationship between the staff and pupils and the willingness of the pupils to learn provide a good environment in which they make good progress in their learning. Good use is made of computers to support teaching and learning as observed in a Years 5/6 lesson on time when pupils took turns to find out time differences in major cities across the globe.
69. Leadership of the subject is good. The development of mathematics has received a high priority since the last inspection, and the impact of the initiatives undertaken by the school has been positive. Resources are good in both quality and quantity and regularly updated. Analysis of data is used to help identify areas of focus to maintain or improve standards and target setting is being extended. Although more work remains to be done in order to raise standards further, the overall picture in mathematics is positive and indicates good improvement since the previous inspection.

SCIENCE

70. Standards are in line with the level expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6 and have been maintained since the last inspection. Although pupils achieve satisfactorily irrespective of their gender or social circumstance overall achievement is satisfactory but sometimes limited because teachers do not make sufficient use of assessment information to plan work to meet the needs of all pupils, especially that of the higher attainers.
71. Only three lessons were observed and judgements are largely based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, previous planning and discussions with pupils. Pupils in Year 2 are becoming familiar with experimental and investigative approaches and are developing the skills of scientific enquiry, observing carefully and recording their results. For example, they enthusiastically investigate the amount of force needed to move a variety of objects drawing on earlier work on forces. Previous work shows that pupils have experienced a wide range of science topics and many are beginning to record their observations in drawings and simple tables whilst higher attainers write brief sentences. They correctly identify different sources of light. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of how to plan, make predictions, conduct and record experiments in a logical manner as seen in the experiment investigating the rate of evaporation in everyday situations. They are able to explain clearly what they think will happen and why. Pupils understand why the test must be fair and that, if certain parts of the experiment were to change, their results would be different. Examination of earlier work covered shows that Year 6, pupils have an appropriate understanding of life cycles and the differences between solids, liquids and gases. Work in science has contributed to developing pupils' ICT skills in the use of tables to present findings and graphs to display information.
72. The quality of teaching and learning, including that for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory although some good quality teaching was seen during the inspection. Since the last inspection there has been an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' investigative skills. Some weaknesses in current practice which limit the progress that pupils make is evident from a scrutiny of pupils' earlier work and teachers' planning. For example, pupils in the mixed age classes in Years 3/4 and Years 5/6 are often given identical work regardless of their age or prior

attainment. Medium term plans, which form the basis of the weekly science lessons are not always well matched to the National Curriculum and rarely identify the level at which different groups of pupils are expected to work. Partly due to the two year planning cycle the systematic development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding is not always ensured, as topics do not always build on earlier learning. As a result, the opportunity to practise and develop skills is much slower than it should be. Despite these weaknesses, teachers have sufficient subject knowledge and this enables them to use questioning effectively to enhance pupils' participation and promote their learning. This, for example, led to an interesting discussion in Years 3/4 when pupils were engaged in discussing the function of the roots. Where teaching is good, lessons are well thought out with interesting and stimulating activities. In these sessions what pupils are going to learn is explained carefully to them at the start of the lesson and this helps them to develop a better understanding of what they are doing and why. Good use is made of discussion and questions are carefully targeted to individual pupils ensuring all levels of attainment are involved. Pupils are encouraged to think about the 'what' and 'why' of science. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' good behaviour, which promotes a calm learning environment in which pupils enjoy what they do. All classes showed interest in science and in practical activities. Pupils of different ages and levels of attainment worked together well and contributed willingly to discussions, making many thoughtful and informed observations as seen in the Years 1/2 lesson on sorting materials. This contributed well to their attainment and progress.

73. The co-ordination of science is satisfactory. Helpful guidance is provided for teachers. Regular end of topic assessments are carried out but the information is not always well used to plan work to meet the needs of pupils. Across the school, pupils' work is marked regularly but the teachers' comments do not often show the pupils how to improve standards, quality or presentation of their work. The monitoring of teaching and learning in order to identify what needs improving does not take place. Resources are adequate and good use is made of the local environment. The use of ICT as an aid to improve presentation in science is developing well.

FOUNDATION SUBJECTS

74. During the week of inspection it was not possible to see the teaching of all foundation subjects. Judgements on standards are based upon interviews with pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and assessments and interviews with teachers and staff.

ART and DESIGN

75. Standards are above expectation at the end of Year 2 and in line with the level expected nationally at the end of Year 6. They have improved at the end of Year 2 and are similar to those reported in the last inspection at the end of Year 6. No art and design lessons were observed during the time of the inspection therefore it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching and learning.
76. The work seen and displays around the school show a good range of work, using different media, for example, pencil, paint and pastels. In Years 1/2 pupils have been drawing in pencil, still life natural objects and local places paying particular attention to colour and tone. Pupils in Years 3 / 4 have looked at colour and line in Aboriginal art and used this as a stimulus for their own paintings. They have discussed how colour can create mood. Using the work of Picasso as a starting point, they used pastels to create their own 'blue' pictures in his style. They have used 'Tragedy' by Picasso and the 'Potato Eaters' by Van Gogh as stimuli for colour mixing work and 'Mars' by Gustav Holst as a musical stimulus for pastel work. Opportunities to work with other artists and a potter have enriched the art and design curriculum for pupils. The school has participated in Hertfordshire's Open Studios week. The work in the pupils' sketchbooks was however, unsatisfactory. It was undated and unmarked. In Years 5/6 pupils have mixed and matched colour well to create some 'half and half' pictures and a good quality big book had been made of their work. Pupils' good clay work was seen on display. In the Years 1/2 class, pupils have made an attractive collage; in Years 3/4 clay candleholders and in Years 5/6 pupils

clay pots with lids.

77. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and knowledgeable. The school has adopted and adapted the Hertfordshire scheme of work into a rolling programme but recognises that more work needs to be done to ensure that pupils' skills develop systematically from year to year. The current system of recording assessment at the end of each year mean the teachers have insufficient ongoing information upon which to base their lesson planning and the lack monitoring means that the school is unaware of how to improve provision and standards. The use of ICT to support learning of the subject is developing.

DESIGN and TECHNOLOGY

78. During the period of inspection only one lesson was observed. As a result, there was insufficient evidence for a secure judgement to be made on the quality of teaching and learning. However, inspection judgements are made following examination of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and teachers and scrutiny of planning documents and samples of work.
79. Standards in design and technology are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Since the last inspection, standards have improved at the end of Year 6 and been maintained at the end of Year 2
80. In the lesson observed for Year 4 pupils, the teaching of design and technology was good. The teacher questioned pupils well and gave them opportunities to explain. She had resourced the lesson well and consequently the pupils had good opportunities to investigate different structures. The teacher provided a good range of resources including, pictorial resources, construction kits and appropriate planning sheets to enable the pupils to make good progress in designing a photograph frame. Pupils were able to discuss and evaluate the properties of materials and how they could be joined together.
81. Leadership and management of are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is well established, has had extensive training and is enthusiastic about the subject. Since the last inspection more time has been allocated to the subject to enable pupils to be taught in year groups. Monitoring is done informally but there are as yet insufficient formal opportunities to monitor teaching in order to ensure consistency across the school and the dissemination of good practice. Although there are procedures in place for assessing individual pupils' coverage of work at the end of the year the co-ordinator is aware of the need to refine and extend them in order to assess more accurately individual pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. There are good links with the local secondary school and the curriculum is enriched through business links. Pupils have the opportunity twice a year to participate in workshops where they have designed and made balloon buggies, structures and bridges.

GEOGRAPHY

82. Standard are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 and have been maintained for Year 6 pupils. No judgement was made at the time of the last inspection about standards for pupils in Year 2. Younger pupils understand the importance of location when they record and learn their address and discuss them in relation to other locations in England. Their observation of buildings increases their awareness and the need to care for the environment. Surveys of the number of vehicles using the road near the school provide them with the opportunity to make tally sheets and draw graphs using the computer. This leads logically to road safety and discussions about different features of the landscape both natural and manmade. They begin to appreciate rivers, hills and mountains, bridges, towns and villages, traffic lights and maps. By the end of Year 6 pupils begin to take an interest in how changes in the landscape affects them. They study proposals for the A10 bypass, download maps and information from the Internet and simulate a public enquiry on the proposal. Good linkage to

literacy skills is emphasised in the presentation of persuasive arguments for or against the bypass. Evidence in pupils' work include the destruction of habitats, loss of farm land increase in traffic and pollution as well as easing traffic congestion and reducing the risk of accidents in the rural community. The study of contrasting locations includes tourism in Minorca and Majorca, climatic differences in Australia and flooding in India.

83. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The teachers are knowledgeable about the areas and aspects they teach and this enables them to extend the pupils' understanding of how different locations compare and contrast with their own environment. The enthusiasm of teachers for the subject is clear from discussions with pupils who recall things they have learnt. Good use is made of the Internet to enhance teaching and learning. There was however little evidence of graded work to match the prior attainment of the pupils.
84. The present co-ordinator has been responsible for managing the subject from the beginning of the academic year and does so satisfactorily. Since the last inspection additional resources have been acquired and the school has adopted the optional national guidelines which are used as the basis of the scheme of work. Long-term plans have been updated to reflect the interest and expertise of the staff and the work is monitored through planning and checking of pupils' work. The planning provides opportunities to contribute to the spiritual, moral and cultural development of the pupils by including studies of, for example flooding in India, life in Kenya and in Uganda. However monitoring of the subject is not sufficiently rigorous to improve standards. Planning does not take account of the different levels of prior attainment as all pupils in the mixed age classes are given the same tasks and assessment is insufficiently used to inform planning. Information and communication technology skills are used effectively for example in drawing graphs and analysing data such as temperature and rainfall statistics for Australia.

HISTORY

85. Standards at the end of both Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations and have been maintained since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2 pupils demonstrate a very clear understanding of past and present when comparing the toys which their parents and grandparents had, with those of today. They note the difference between life styles in Victorian times and their own. Detailed study of a dining room, a kitchen and a bedroom indicated how things have changed. They survey buildings in the locality noting the contrasts between old and new. Their awareness of chronology is increased through the use of artefacts, pictures of the past and stories about life in other times. They study the life of people in the past and understand some of the differences then and now. In the one lesson seen the pupils confidently used the Internet to access pictures and information on the life and times of Florence Nightingale. With the aid of a time line they develop a sense of chronology sequencing events and objects. Satisfactory improvements have been made since the time of the last inspection.
86. By the end of Year 6 all pupils learn about selected periods of the history of Britain from Roman times to the present. They use a time line to sequence major events over the period of the Roman conquest of Britain to the end of the Second World War. They understand the reasons behind the invasions and appreciate some of the impacts of war and conquest. Pupils in Years 3/4 know the story of Boudicca's revolt against the Romans in Colchester. Their visit to Verulamium Museum in St Albans helped to reinforce their understanding of how life differed in the past as well as learning that evidence of past life remains to the present. The opportunities for role-play, dressing up as Roman soldiers, children and women added impetus to their learning. Older pupils also use a time line to note major happenings in the period between 1901 and 1945. They carry out individual research on a topic of their choice for example the history of cars. The Internet is well used to provide additional material on topics of interest.
87. Only one lesson was seen in progress during the inspection but there is ample evidence that pupils acquire a sound sense of chronology as a result of what they are taught. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Good use is made of visits to museums and places of historical interest such as Verulamium, Ware

Museum, Wimpole Hall and Hatfield House to help bring history alive for pupils. From the study of toys by younger pupils they progress to analysing the reasons for differences between the past and the present and to understand why people acted differently in the past. Teachers' enable pupils to develop confidence when talking about the past as they build up their vocabulary of historical terms. Analysis of previous planning and work indicates that there are some weaknesses, which the school recognises. For example, work is not always adapted to meet the needs of pupils in the mixed age classes. Overall, there is little difference in the expectations of work from pupils of different levels of attainment or ages.

88. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the subject and is dedicated to the task. Monitoring is done through involvement with planning across year groups but there is, as yet, a lack of opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching to ensure consistency across the subject and the dissemination of good practice. The use of assessment information to inform planning is underdeveloped. There are adequate resources for the delivery of the curriculum and plans for the acquisition of more computer software to support the teaching of history. The subject makes an important contribution to the social, moral and cultural development of the pupils in the school.

INFORMATION and COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

89. The standard of work seen is in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection for pupils in Year 2 and have improved for Year 6 pupils.
90. By the end of Year 2 pupils confidently use the mouse to move the arrow across the screen, select icons and position the cursor in the required position. They use the keyboard effectively to produce text when writing stories. They input data and draw graphs using the results of their survey of vehicle movements near the school. In a history lesson pupils were seen to use Talking First World to select information on Florence Nightingale. They use Textease to vary the size of print, select different fonts and use colour to produce material for different purposes. Younger pupils know that many mechanical devices such as record players, traffic lights and CD players respond to commands and perform operations. By the end of Year 6 pupils have covered all elements of the National Curriculum programme of study. They use a variety of fonts to word process their work to suit a range of purposes, input and retrieve data and use spreadsheets including the application of formulae. They add and remove data from records, save and print as required. Higher attaining pupils use a sensor to detect and show changes in physical conditions. In multimedia presentations they successfully use sound and animations to increase the quality of reporting.
91. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. All teachers have confidence in their knowledge as a result of their NOF training and use the computer resources available to advantage in order to enhance learning in all subjects. During most lessons observed the pupils took turns in using the computer or CD-ROM to extend their learning in the subject being taught. Teachers plan opportunities well and pupils work systematically through the exercises. They are given responsibility to record what they have achieved on their self-assessment sheets. The learning support assistants have also received training in computer skills and give good support to pupils with special educational needs.
92. Overall, leadership and management is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator is organised and enthusiastic and has achieved a great deal during the short time in post. She offers advice and support to colleagues in planning and teaching but has not had the opportunity to visit other classrooms to observe the teaching of the subject. A self-evaluation system of assessment has been introduced to enable pupils to record their rate of progress and move to the next stage of skill development. The range of hardware is good because there has been a significant purchase of equipment in the last two years. All classrooms have access to the Internet.

MUSIC

93. Standards are in line with expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement on the situation at the time of the last inspection when not all elements of the music curriculum were being taught and standards were below national expectations for pupils in Year 6. Standards have been maintained for pupils in Year 2. Singing is strength of the school, especially in assemblies. Pupils sing tunefully, with expression, enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment.
94. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were learning about high and low pitch. Resources were well organised including musical instruments, CDs and prompt cards. Good use was made of graphic notation in a Years 5/6 class to describe moods in music. They chose instruments to demonstrate a range of sounds which gave them the opportunity to develop their own interpretation of sounds depicted on cards. However, the summing up part of the lesson did not give pupils sufficient opportunity to demonstrate what they had been working on. The good relationship between the teacher and pupils' ensured positive attitudes and behaviour during music lessons.
95. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in annual musical productions and music is an integral part of other school occasions. Pupils are offered and take up opportunities to learn to play the flute, recorder and violin. Pupils enjoy participating in the choir that takes place as an extra-curricular club. This choir regularly takes part in competitions at the local secondary school. The school has provided some very good opportunities for pupils to experience and enjoy music from many cultures. A steel band has visited the school, the pupils have visited 'Aklowa African Village' and they have had opportunities to enjoy Japanese, Turkish and Caribbean music over the last few years.
96. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A new co-ordinator has recently taken over these responsibilities. She is knowledgeable, enthusiastic about the subject and has clearly identified some priorities for raising standards. Since the time of the last inspection, the school has improved its instrumental resources, including buying some multicultural instruments and more listening resources. The two-year rolling programme has been reviewed to avoid pupils repeating topics and a published scheme is now in place to give support to non-specialist teachers of music. There are satisfactory procedures for tracking pupils' progress but the information is not well used to ensure that work is planned to take account of pupils' prior attainment.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

97. Standards in physical education are above national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. No judgement was made at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs make good progress. Although it was not possible to observe all aspects of the curriculum being taught, teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils indicate that the full physical education curriculum is taught. By the time pupils leave school all meet statutory requirements for swimming and pupils speak highly of the opportunities provided. This is regarded a strength of the school. The school achieves success in some other sporting activities by being representatives of the county. They have a very positive attitude to the subject and enjoy physical education.
98. By the end of Year 2, pupils perform a sequence of dance routines and contribute to school performances at Christmas and summer productions. They demonstrate their skills in games such as cricket, football and netball, during break and lunch times in the playground. In a games lesson seen in a Years 3/4 class the pupils demonstrated good skills in controlling a basketball while moving between two points. Years 5/6 pupils respond well to the coaching they receive from a professional coach who takes their games lesson each week. Pupils work co-operatively in groups, practise the skills learnt and respond well as members of a team. They evaluate their performance and that of others and make good efforts to improve. Evidence of high standards is reflected in the winning of two trophies in the Millennium Gala against local

schools. The school competes within the cluster group in football, rugby, cross-country, athletics and swimming competitions.

99. The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well because of this. All pupils are acquiring a good range of physical skills. Teachers plan activities well, give praise for good work and use the skilful performance of pupils to demonstrate good practice thereby providing opportunities for others to improve. The management of pupils in lessons is very good and teachers make every effort to include all pupils.
100. The subject is well managed by an experienced co-ordinator whose contact with sport outside school is used to good effect for example in obtaining additional resources and coaching for the pupils. Extra curricular provision such as netball, football and cross country clubs after school help to enhance the subject. Younger pupils have the benefit of the dance and drama club. Limitation of space restricts the amount of apparatus work that can be undertaken but specialist advice is actively being sought. The provision of residential outward-bound activity provides additional opportunities for pupils to experience a wider range of physical pursuits such as sailing and rafting.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

101. Owing to lack of evidence it is not possible to make a judgement on standards at the end of the Year 2, Pupils' overall attainment of the end of Year 6 does not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Standards have not been maintained since the last inspection when attainment was at the expected level. Progress is unsatisfactory and pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable by the end of Year 6. However, progress within the lesson observed in Years 3/4 was at least satisfactory with all pupils showing increasing awareness of Christianity.
102. There is very little evidence of recorded work in Years 1/2, but, from talking to pupils and looking at teachers planning, it is evident that, by Year 2 pupils know that Jesus is the leader of Christianity and know the main facts about his life. They have a satisfactory understanding of some of the parables he told and know that these stories convey important messages about good and evil. Pupils recognise that different religions have distinct custom for examples Muslims use a special mat when praying. However, insufficient emphasis is placed on recording, which allow pupils to consolidate their thoughts and learning through applying literacy skills. There is little use of computers to support pupils' learning.
103. In Years 3/4 pupils learn that the Bible is a sacred book that forms the basis of the Christian faith and discuss what makes it different from most other books. They listened to the story of the 'Last Supper' and discussed the significance of the bread and wine in the Christian ritual of 'Holy Communion'. Pupils show a satisfactory knowledge of some aspects of the Sikh faith; for example, the significance of The Five Ks and know that Muslims follow particular purification rituals before prayer. Discussion with Year 6 pupils and the limited amount of written work show that pupils are unsure of the traditions and beliefs of the major world religions they study and are unable to readily make factual comparisons between them. They do not apply the rules, for example, from different religions or discuss how these may have an impact on their own lives. These are a requirement of the agreed syllabus. Although pupils recall with some support the holy books of different faiths most have difficulty recalling and explaining recent work relating to Judaism and have superficial and sometimes confused ideas about Muslim and Sikh customs.
104. Although some good features were seen in lesson observed, overall, teaching is unsatisfactory because pupils make too little progress over time and work is not always well matched to their needs. In particular, pupils' awareness of different world religions is not sufficiently developed. This has its roots in the changeover from a four year to a two year rolling programme. Learning is also limited when pupils of different levels of attainment and ages are set the same task in the mixed age classes. For example, the task of designing a Christmas card and comparing sacred and secular symbols was not sufficiently challenging for Year 6 pupils. In the lesson observed in Year 3/ 4 the teacher demonstrated knowledge of the subject that enabled her to deliver the

subject matter confidently, answer questions from pupils correctly and make pertinent teaching points in the lesson. As a result, pupils extended their knowledge of the significance of the 'bread' and 'wine' at the Last Supper.

105. Pupils' response to religious education lesson is variable. They are interested in information shared with them and willingly make contributions to the lesson. They enjoy sharing thoughts about their own faiths but quickly lose interest when follow up tasks are not demanding or involve writing.
106. The subject co-ordinator has only been in post for a short time and has yet to get to grips with some aspects of the post. Planning follows the locally agreed syllabus. However, there is, currently, no monitoring of teaching and learning to improve standards. Assessment procedures are inconsistent and information is not always well used to inform planning. Satisfactory resources and religious artefacts to aid the teaching of the subject are well used. Visits to places of worship include a church and a mosque and visitors to the school include the local vicar and a representative of the local community. Overall the subject makes a limited contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.