

INSPECTION REPORT

ST TERESA'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Borehamwood, Hertfordshire

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117466

Headteacher: Miss T McBride

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Greenfield
7070

Dates of inspection: 30th June - 3rd July 2003

Inspection number: 247789

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
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brook Road Borehamwood Hertfordshire
Postcode:	WD6 5HL
Telephone number:	(0208) 953 3753
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Dillon
Date of previous inspection:	21 st May 2001

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7070	Mrs J Greenfield	Registered inspector	Music Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9563	Mrs J Reid	Lay inspector		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?
10808	Mr A Britton	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Foundation Stage	
18632	Mrs U Basini	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Geography	
20560	Mr P Adams	Team inspector	English Art and design History Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

With 239 pupils on roll, St Teresa's RC Primary School is an average sized primary school catering for boys and girls aged 3 - 11 years. Children join the nursery in the autumn and spring terms after their third birthday. Currently 29 children attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Pupils come from a range of social and economic backgrounds, providing a balanced mix. Their attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Around three-quarters of the pupils are of white-British origin and the remaining pupils are mainly from Black-African and Asian heritages. Fourteen pupils are identified as having refugee status and eleven pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average. Three pupils have a statement, which as a proportion of the school population is broadly average. The range of needs includes specific and moderate learning difficulties, and communication and behavioural difficulties. Since the last inspection, the school has had two acting headteachers and there has been a considerable changeover in staff. The school is now more settled under a permanent headteacher.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Teresa's RC Primary School is an improving school and overall provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils respond well to the good teaching, which enables them to learn well in most subjects. The new headteacher leads and manages the school well and has brought stability to the school and a clear sense of direction. All pupils are valued and there is a strong feeling of community within the school. Good progress has been made since the last inspection and the school now provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- By Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and history.
- The overall good quality of the teaching ensures that pupils make good progress in their learning.
- The school's ethos, including provision for pupils' moral, spiritual and social development, encourages positive attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- The wide range of learning experiences in the Foundation Stage provides children with a good start to their education.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support, enabling them to make good progress.
- The effective leadership and commitment of the headteacher provide clear direction for the continued improvement of the school.

What could be improved

- Raising standards in geography in Years 3 - 6 and in music and physical education across the school, as they are not high enough.
- Developing effective procedures for assessing pupils' progress in the foundation subjects.
- Providing more specific and regular information to parents about the progress their child is making.
- Increasing the range and level of resources in art and design, geography, music and physical education, and climbing equipment in the Foundation Stage.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since its last inspection in May 2001. Standards in most subjects have improved, as have the quality of teaching and learning and leadership and management. All the key issues identified at that time have been addressed satisfactorily and in the areas of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning more rigorously, improving teachers' subject knowledge and enhancing the opportunities provided for children in the Foundation Stage, they have been addressed well. Under the leadership of the current headteacher, the school is on course to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	E	A	B
mathematics	B	E	B	C
science	C	E*	A	B

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

Children's knowledge, understanding and skills are broadly average when they enter the Nursery, although the speaking and listening and social skills of a significant number are below average. They make satisfactory progress during the Foundation Stage so that they reach the expected standards in all areas of learning other than in a few aspects of their physical development. The lack of appropriate balancing and climbing equipment means that children do not get enough opportunity to develop these particular skills.

In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2002, the results were above the national averages in reading and writing, and average in mathematics. When compared with the results of similar schools, the results were average in writing, but below average in reading and mathematics. The provisional results for 2003 suggest that standards have improved in writing, have remained at a similar level in reading but are slightly lower in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that standards are above expectations in English, mathematics, science and history. In the remaining subjects, standards are in line with expectations in all subjects other than physical education, where they are below average. There is insufficient evidence to make firm judgements about standards in music.

The results of the national tests taken by 11-year-olds in 2002 were well above the national averages in English and science and above average in mathematics. When compared with those in similar schools, the results were above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Over time, the results have improved in line with the national trend. When account is taken of their earlier attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieved very well in English and science and well in mathematics. The provisional results for 2003 suggest that standards have improved slightly in mathematics, are broadly similar in English and are not quite as good in science, especially at the higher levels. The school exceeded its targets in English and mathematics in 2002. Pupils' current work shows that standards are above expectations in English, mathematics and history, and are in line with expectations in all other subjects except geography and physical education, which are below average. There is insufficient evidence to make clear judgements about standards in music. Pupils achieve as expected in the majority of subjects and achieve well in English, mathematics, history and ICT.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school. They are keen to learn and participate well in lessons. They take a pride in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and courteous and show respect for their teachers. There are isolated examples of inappropriate behaviour, mostly in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are positive. Pupils listen with an open mind to the views of others. When given the opportunity, they are willing to take responsibility and show initiative.
Attendance	Attendance is well above the national figures but unauthorised absence is

	slightly higher than average. A small but significant minority of pupils often arrive late for school, which affects their learning.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching throughout the school is mostly good. It has improved considerably since the last inspection, with a reduction in the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching and an increase in the amount of good and very good teaching, especially in Years 3 - 6. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory. Nearly all the teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and some is very good, where the teacher has a good understanding of how young children learn. On occasions, some very good teaching occurs in other years. The teaching of English, mathematics, history and ICT is good and it is satisfactory in the remaining subjects other than music, where there is insufficient evidence to make a clear judgement. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well in lessons and there is an appropriate emphasis on writing. Pupils with special needs receive good support from their teachers and work is appropriately adapted, enabling them to make good progress. Support staff make a valuable contribution to these pupils' learning and to that of others, including those in the early stage of learning English, and give good assistance to teachers. Strengths of the teaching include careful planning to provide pupils with interesting and mostly challenging work, and teachers' management and organisation of, and relationships with, the pupils. As a result, most children work hard and learn well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Children in the Foundation Stage are given a good range of learning opportunities. The curriculum in Years 1 - 6 is broad and meets the needs of pupils well, but it is not wholly balanced. Literacy and numeracy strategies are effective and the range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision is managed very well. Effective systems ensure that pupils receive good support and make good progress. They are fully integrated into the work and life of the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The majority of pupils with English as an additional language have a satisfactory grasp of oral English. Pupils at an early stage of fluency in English receive appropriate support to help them learn.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development and good provision for their spiritual and social development. The school's positive ethos enables pupils to feel valued as individuals and as members of a caring community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are satisfactory. Pupils receive appropriate support and guidance from their teachers and other adults, and systems for ensuring good behaviour and attendance are effective. Not enough is done to assess pupils' progress in the foundation subjects on a regular and systematic basis.

Although the provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall, the school does not do enough to develop their awareness of different cultures or prepare them sufficiently for living in a multicultural society. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory and improving steadily under the new headteacher.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The good leadership provided by the headteacher since her appointment has brought a clear sense of direction and stability to the school. She has instigated a number of changes which are already improving the quality of provision. The role of subject leaders has been extended and is now satisfactory overall.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors undertake their roles and responsibilities satisfactorily in the main but have not ensured that all statutory requirements are met. They have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the ways in which they can support its improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school uses data appropriately to help it set targets and to monitor the progress of individual pupils, especially in English, mathematics and science. Senior staff monitor teaching to good effect but some subject leaders do not have enough opportunity to monitor the teaching of their subjects across the school.
The strategic use of resources	Overall, the school makes satisfactory use of its staff, finances, accommodation and resources.

There are an appropriate number of teachers, several of whom are overseas-trained graduates, to teach the curriculum. The level of support staff is high but they provide valuable support to teachers and to pupils. The accommodation is satisfactory overall but lacks some specialist areas. There are some health and safety issues that have been drawn to the attention of the governors. Resources are mostly satisfactory but there are weaknesses in art and design, geography, music and physical education and there is an absence of climbing and balancing equipment in the Foundation Stage. The school endeavours to get best value for money from the spending decisions it makes.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school's high expectations and the good progress their children make. • The good quality of the teaching. • They feel comfortable in approaching the school if they have any problems or concerns. • The way the school helps their children to become more mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wider range of activities outside lessons. • More information about the progress their child is making. • Closer working relationships between the school and parents. • The arrangements for setting homework.

Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents. They consider that the range of activities for pupils after school is satisfactory and note that the school has plans to extend them next year. Under the new headteacher, the school has made great strides in establishing a closer working relationship with parents, which they readily acknowledge. The amount of homework provided is appropriate. Inspectors judge that parents do not receive enough information about their child's progress or what their child needs to do to improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the Nursery on a part-time basis in the autumn and spring terms after their third birthday. On entry, their knowledge, skills and understanding in the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage are broadly average but the speaking, listening and social skills of a significant minority of children are weaker than other areas of their development. All children make good progress in the Nursery as a result of the good teaching and careful planning of the curriculum. They continue to make good progress in the Reception class, which pupils join on a full-time basis in the autumn term before their fifth birthday. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children are on course to achieve the early learning goals expected for their age in five of the six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and creative development. In the area of physical development, whilst most early learning goals are met, children do not have sufficient opportunity to develop their skills of climbing and balancing as there is no suitable equipment in the outdoor area. The good levels of support, which are carefully targeted, ensure that the small number of children with special educational needs and those in the early stages of learning English make good progress during the Foundation Stage in all areas of learning. The careful organisation of the curriculum, detailed planning and regular assessment of their progress ensure that children learn a wide range of skills successfully. Some of the higher-attaining children at the end of the Reception year would benefit from more challenging tasks related to the National Curriculum to enhance their mathematical development.

2. In the national tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2002, the results were above the national average in reading and writing and in line with the average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, these results were average in mathematics and below average in reading and writing. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 was in line with the national average. Although there are no national figures against which they can be compared, the provisional results for 2003 indicate that standards have remained broadly similar at Level 2 or above in reading, are slightly higher in writing but are slightly lower in mathematics. However, there has been a considerable increase in the proportion of pupils attaining Level 3 in writing and mathematics, as well as gaining Level 2b or above in all three areas. Standards in science, based on the teachers' own assessments, were below average in 2002 but show some improvement in 2003. Girls performed better than the boys in mathematics in 2002 and in the last three years, but boys did better than the girls in reading and writing. The school's results have continued to improve since the last inspection at a similar rate to that found nationally, although not consistently from year to year.

3. The results of the national tests taken at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were well above the national averages in English and science and were above average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, the school's performance was above average in English and science and in line with the average in mathematics. Pupils did very well when account is taken of their earlier performance in the national tests in Year 2. Standards have improved considerably over the past five years, although there was a significant dip in 2001 in all three subjects. The trend in the school's performance over the last five years has been broadly in line with the improvement found nationally. In mathematics and science, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 or above in 2002 was well above the national figures, with boys doing particularly well in these subjects. A much higher proportion of girls than average attained Level 5 in English. The provisional results in 2003 in all three subjects are broadly similar to those in 2002 at Level 4 or above but are not quite as good at the higher Level 5 or above. The work of this particular Year 6 class has been badly affected by staffing difficulties in the past, which has meant that under their current teacher they have had to catch up a lot of ground in all three subjects this year. The results represent good achievement for this class. Boys generally do better than the girls in mathematics whilst girls do better than the boys in English. In science, the picture is more variable.

4. Inspection findings indicate that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is above the standard expected nationally, reflecting the test results in 2002 and the provisional results for 2003. In science, pupils are attaining above-average standards by the end of Year 2, better than the teachers' assessments in 2002 indicated but in line with the provisional figures for 2003. The

improved standards are the result of more investigative work and a greater emphasis on developing scientific concepts. By the end of Year 6, standards in science are in line with the national expectation. In the remaining subjects, standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above expectations in history, in line with expectations in art and design, design and technology and ICT, but are below the expected standard in physical education. In geography, standards are average by the end of Year 2, but are below average by the end of Year 6. It is not possible to make firm judgements about standards in music, but the small amount of evidence available suggests that they are below average.

5. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are being developed effectively in English and mathematics lessons as well as in other subjects. Most pupils speak and listen satisfactorily, and do so well in Years 1 and 2. Standards of reading are above average by the end of Year 6 and their writing skills are developing well. Pupils' numeracy skills are well developed and they use them appropriately in other subjects as required.

6. Most pupils are making satisfactory progress and achieving as expected when account is taken of their attainment on entry to the school. In a few subjects, including English, mathematics, history and ICT, and science at Key Stage 1, pupils are making good progress and achieving well. They make faster progress in some classes, for example, in Years 4, 5 and 6 and in Reception, than in other years. This is directly related to the quality of the teaching as teachers expect more from their pupils and provide more demanding work that challenges and interests them. Most pupils respond well to these demands. Whilst inspectors did not find any significant differences between the performance of boys and girls during the inspection, test and assessment data are clearly pointing this up as an area to be investigated further by the school.

7. The school provides an inclusive and supportive environment in which pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. They receive good support in lessons from their teachers and other support staff. According to the provisional data, only three pupils failed to achieve the expected level in English by the end of Year 2 in 2003. The progress of pupils learning English as an additional language and gifted and talented pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve as expected. Whilst the school analyses the relative progress of boys and girls and pupils with special educational needs, insufficient is done to track the progress of pupils from different minority ethnic heritages, with English as an additional language or who are gifted or talented.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes to learning and to the school in general are good, similar to the position at the time of the last inspection. They enjoy coming to school, and most participate fully in the wide range of activities provided for them. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire say that their child likes school. Overall, pupils show an interest and take an evident pride in their work. They concentrate for sustained periods of time and generally work well in class, especially when the lessons are stimulating. In around three-quarters of lessons, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and often better than this. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson where pupils were using money and adding numbers together to make a number larger than ten, they all listened well and readily offered ideas. In a Year 2 art lesson, where pupils were developing the theme of three-dimensional sculpture, they responded to the task with enthusiasm and perseverance, and showed initiative in working with the patterns. However, instances occur when pupils work noisily, and some pupils are passive during discussions. The attitudes of different groups of pupils are positive throughout, showing co-operative and collaborative approaches in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language show confidence as they are supported well by staff and their peers.

9. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and by the end of the Reception year develop good attitudes to learning and to the school. They are generally confident in their approach and have established good relationships with one another and with adults.

10. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils behave well. The school has a calm and orderly atmosphere. Pupils are clear about the way they should behave. In a Year 5 athletics lesson, where pupils were practising standing long jumps and 50 metre sprints, they applied themselves well and acted responsibly. There are, however, isolated incidents of inappropriate behaviour, generally in the playground,

but these are dealt with appropriately. The good attitudes and behaviour of pupils make a positive contribution to learning. Pupils of different minority ethnic backgrounds integrate well, both in the playground and in the classroom. There are very few incidents of bullying or harassment. Parents confirmed that this was their experience and that incidents are quickly and effectively dealt with by the school. During discussions, pupils said that bullying was not a problem. Behaviour in the playground is managed well by the midday assistants. Exclusions are rare, with one pupil excluded for a fixed period during the year prior to the inspection.

11. Pupils' personal development is good. Parents say that their children grow in maturity and become more responsible. In a Year 5 history lesson where pupils were finding out about the experiences of evacuees in World War II, they had an ability to understand the range of feelings and needs of the children who were evacuated. The quality of relationships in the school is good. Pupils listen with an open mind to the views of others. There is good social interaction in many lessons. In a Year 2 English lesson about fiction and non-fiction books, the discussions of pupils within the groups was co-operative and collaborative. Although there are limited opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, they respond well to them. Pupils on the school council take their position seriously and understand how they can influence change to improve their time in school. Pupils show their awareness and concern for the wider community by organising or contributing to fund-raising events for various charities, such as cake sales or talent shows.

12. Overall attendance rates for 2001/2002 were well above the national figures and they remain broadly similar in 2002/2003. Unauthorised absence is slightly higher than average. However, since the introduction of the earlier starting time for the school day, a small but significant minority of pupils are late to school. Some pupils who are late are not reporting to the office as required. Registers are called efficiently and pupils settle quickly to work. The recording of lateness in the register in a few classes is unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good and has improved considerably since the last inspection. The proportion of good or better teaching has doubled and there has been a sharp reduction in the proportion of less than satisfactory teaching. Very little of the teaching is unsatisfactory and none is unsatisfactory in Years 3 - 6, where a quarter of the teaching was unsatisfactory or poor at the time of the last inspection. There is a higher proportion of good and very good teaching in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 - 6 than in Years 1 and 2 but the differences are not significant. There is a close correlation between the quality of pupils' learning and the quality of teaching, with pupils making better-than-expected progress in those lessons where the teaching is good. The school has worked hard to develop teachers' subject knowledge and improve planning since the last inspection, which has helped to raise standards as pupils receive more challenging work.

14. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage, both in the nursery and in the reception class, is mostly good and occasionally very good. There are teaching strengths in all areas of learning, although in some aspects of physical development, they are not as strong. This predominantly good teaching results in children making good strides in learning, preparing them well for beginning the National Curriculum. Children are keen to be involved in a wide range of practical, relevant and challenging activities that are planned for them and, as a consequence, successfully learn a wide range of skills. A variety of play activities is effectively structured to promote learning across the areas of learning, with a good emphasis on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills and their personal, social and emotional development. The teacher has developed a good understanding of how young children learn and of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff in the Foundation Stage have established good relationships with the children, which help them to feel secure. Children's skills of working independently are fostered well as a result of the choices and the responsibilities they are given. The large numbers of teaching assistants in both the nursery and in the reception class provide good support and are actively involved in all the activities. Under the leadership of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator, they play a positive role in planning and organising the various activities provided for the children and in assessing their progress. The small numbers of children with special educational needs or with a home language that is not English make good progress in their learning through the effectiveness of the support they receive. The weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed well.

15. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching of English, mathematics, science, history and ICT is mostly good. There are examples of some very good teaching in English and mathematics in Year 1. In these lessons,

pupils make very good progress and achieve above-average standards as a result of the teachers' very good use of questioning and explanations, and the challenging activities they provide for the class. The teaching is satisfactory overall in art and design, design and technology and physical education. No lessons were seen in geography and music and therefore it is not possible to make a clear judgement about the quality of teaching. In one physical education lesson in Year 2, the activities did not challenge pupils sufficiently and as a result they did not make the expected progress and their learning was unsatisfactory.

16. In Years 3 - 6, the teaching of English, mathematics, history and ICT is mostly good. There are a few examples of very good teaching in English, mathematics, science and history in some classes. In science, art and design, design and technology and physical education, the teaching is satisfactory overall, although there are examples of good teaching of these subjects in some lessons. As in Years 1 and 2, there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in music, although it was satisfactory in the one lesson seen.

17. Teachers' subject knowledge is good in many subjects, especially in English, mathematics, history, ICT, and in science in Years 1 and 2. In most other subjects, it is broadly satisfactory. There are weaknesses in some teachers' subject expertise in physical education, with the result that the planned activities are not always suitable or sufficiently challenging for the pupils. Occasionally, the activities are too challenging for them. As a result, they do not make as much progress as expected in some lessons. The lack of a whole-school scheme of work for physical education also means that teachers do not have sufficient guidance to help them in planning appropriate work.

18. Throughout the school, teachers plan their work well in most subjects. Where the planning is linked to the teacher's strong subject knowledge and understanding, pupils are given a variety of interesting and challenging tasks and activities, enabling them to make very good gains in their learning. For example, in a Year 4 science lesson, the teacher used an investigative approach to explore a variety of habitats. The teacher introduced the lesson by reading a letter written by a snail to a worm, which captured the children's interest at the start and stimulated their imagination very well. Working in smaller groups, pupils explored their allocated habitat, guided by a well-prepared workbook. When the bark was pulled off some rotted logs that the teacher had brought in, there were squeals of glee and delight at the range of creatures they found there. Another group effectively developed their knowledge of making a fair test in measuring the temperature of the soil. The whole lesson had been carefully planned to provide a wealth of opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of observation and their understanding of the range of animals occurring in different habitats. In a Year 5 history lesson about the feelings and experiences of evacuees, a range of resources, including photographs, gas mask and a packed suitcase, was used very effectively to stimulate pupils' thinking and develop their skills of analysing evidence and inference. In this lesson, the work was carefully planned, with clear objectives, to meet the needs of different pupils. Together with the teacher's direct and sustained interaction with pupils, this ensured that all were suitably challenged and made very good progress in the lesson. The work in this lesson was effectively followed up in a very good English lesson on extended writing, when pupils used their knowledge to help them write the evacuee's first letter home.

19. Teachers ensure that pupils are clear about the objectives of lessons and usually use the last part of the lesson to review what has been learned. Such strategies are successful in consolidating pupils' learning. Teachers use a variety of effective teaching methods to interest and motivate their pupils. All lessons include an appropriate balance between whole-class activities, individual, pair or group work. Most pupils work well in small and large groups and listen attentively to the views of others. In a few classes, where there have been a number of staff changes in the past, teachers have to work hard to maintain pupils' interest and focus. In general, teachers manage their classes well and have high expectations of their response. They explain new ideas clearly, and use a variety of questioning techniques to engage and involve all pupils in the lesson. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long, with a consequent drop in the pace of the lesson. Teachers expect much from their pupils in terms of effort and behaviour and are appropriately rewarded. Most pupils work hard and sustain their concentration well. They show a great deal of interest in what they do and are keen and eager to share and develop their ideas.

20. The needs of different groups of pupils are addressed well through the effective teaching. Staff know their pupils well and suitable systems are in place to identify those with particular learning and other needs. Lesson planning takes account of their needs and individual education plans are used effectively when planning work. Tasks are carefully adapted and teaching assistants and learning support staff are used well

in lessons to help them learn. As a result, they make good progress and attain higher standards than expected.

21. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well and are promoted effectively in many subjects. The teaching of ICT has improved considerably since the last inspection, when it was judged to be unsatisfactory, and it is now good. Teachers' knowledge and confidence have increased and the use of ICT to support pupils' learning has developed well.

22. Teachers give good praise and encouragement to pupils to help them learn. They assess pupils' work and progress in lessons, clarifying misunderstandings and giving them constructive feedback of what they need to do to improve. Marking is mostly satisfactory. However, the quality and use of assessment, whilst satisfactory overall, are not as strong as other aspects of teaching, especially in some foundation subjects. For example, in art and design, design and technology, ICT, music and physical education, not enough is done to assess pupils' work on a systematic basis, both to help pupils know more specifically what they need to do to improve but also to inform curricular planning more effectively, and this is a weakness. Homework is used appropriately to reinforce and extend pupils' knowledge and skills, particularly their literacy and numeracy skills. Inspectors found little evidence to support the concerns of some parents that insufficient homework is given.

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

23. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that is broad and appropriate for all pupils. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is well planned in accordance with the early learning goals in the six areas of learning. The planning for the overall balance of the curriculum from Year 1 to Year 6 is broadly satisfactory, although there are some weaknesses.

24. The school has introduced a new curriculum plan, which is in the process of being implemented. At present, this curriculum map is not providing adequate structure to ensure balance and there is no guidance on the time to be allocated to individual subjects. This results in some weaknesses in planning and an inconsistent allocation of time, particularly in geography at Key Stage 2 and physical education and music throughout the school. The strengths of the curriculum are in English, mathematics and history. This good provision plays an important part in helping pupils develop as learners. Schemes of work are in place for nearly all subjects, but their implementation is inconsistent. Some policies are still in draft, such as inclusion and equal opportunities, and not all policies are up to date. The new headteacher has taken responsibility for the overall management of the curriculum and has audited the current situation. She is well placed to implement the changes needed.

25. Since the last inspection the school has made changes to the school day, moved to single-age classes, begun to develop longer-term planning and is providing clearer guidance for teachers. However, progress since the last inspection is only satisfactory because there are still weaknesses in some foundation subjects, including music and physical education, and in the planning for personal and social education.

26. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are well established and are having a positive effect on pupils' learning. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, make progress in these subjects at a higher rate than expected nationally. Where necessary, new or inexperienced staff are given additional training and support so that they can improve the quality of what pupils learn. Teachers plan consistently well for literacy and numeracy and this makes a significant contribution to the good basic skills which most pupils acquire. There are good links with literacy across the curriculum; for example, pupils in Year 5 wrote letters home to their families as if they were wartime evacuees. Pupils' numeracy skills are developed well in science, but are not so evident in the planning and teaching of geography and other subjects. Throughout the school, homework is set regularly and is mainly linked to developing basic skills.

27. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and a strength of the school. Detailed individual education plans identify appropriate targets, which are understood and known to all, including pupils and parents. The co-ordinator for special educational needs meets regularly with staff and

pupils to review and amend targets in the light of informal and formal assessments. Consequently, the staff work effectively together, with teaching assistants well prepared by their teacher colleagues. The school ensures that pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language are able to gain access to the curriculum and are given appropriate support. Higher-attaining pupils are well catered for within the classroom by the more challenging activities planned into the teaching. This view is supported by the test results at the end of each key stage. There is a strong sense of community in the school and value placed on all pupils. The school provides good opportunities for all pupils to learn and make progress. A good feature of the curriculum is the way teachers identify clear learning objectives for lessons and share those with the pupils.

28. Extra-curricular provision is satisfactory. There is an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities including netball, football, French and music. School teams take part in regular inter-school tournaments and competitions, including swimming. Pupils have the opportunity to visit an outdoor residential centre in Years 3 and 4, and a further visit to France or York takes place in Years 5 or 6. The school provides regular opportunities for pupils to perform in end-of-term concerts.

29. The school makes satisfactory provision overall for pupils' personal, social and health education but there are some weaknesses. There is a limited curriculum plan for developing these aspects of pupils' personal development, but it is not being followed in a consistent way. This means that aspects of sex and relationships education, including drugs awareness, are not covered adequately in accordance with the school's policy. The school is aware of this and a new and thorough plan is in place for the coming school year. Personal, social and health education is mainly taught through subject teaching, and often reinforced through assemblies and religious education lessons. This provides opportunities to develop an understanding of important issues such as caring for others and the exploration of personal feelings. The school council meets regularly to discuss issues and work towards improving their school. All staff encourage pupils to assume responsibilities within lessons, although these opportunities are not as extensive as in many other schools. The school's positive ethos supports the pupils' personal development well.

30. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is satisfactory. There are regular visitors to school to support and enhance the curriculum, such as an artist visiting Year 4 and an actor representing Mary Seacole in Year 2. The school is host to breakfast and after-school clubs, as well as a Jewish class at weekends. Pupils contributed to the recent Town Festival, and are active participants in the church and parish community.

31. There are satisfactory links with local partner institutions. Pedestrian training in Years 1 and 2 is supported by the road safety unit. Members of the local secondary school help with preparation for events, such as the end-of-term concert. Additional links to promote induction for Year 5 and 6 have been made through a field trip to the River Ver, as well as a mathematics and science day. These links ensure Year 6 pupils make a smooth transfer to the next stage of their education.

32. The school successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Although there is no policy for the development of these areas, there is a strong mission statement that is evident in the school's routines.

33. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good, mainly supported through the assemblies and acts of collective worship, the ethos of the school and religious education lessons. At every assembly, a candle is lit to remind the children of the presence of God: this is a powerful moment, one of reverence. Assemblies provide opportunities for reflection and for pupils to extract meaning for themselves of the themes that are discussed. Assemblies are carefully planned: they include active participation in responding to questions, engagement in prayer and the celebration of pupils' achievements. Opportunities in the assemblies to develop the spiritual dimension through singing are not always satisfactorily realised. The curriculum in geography and science provides opportunities to elicit a spiritual response to what is being taught. A good example of this occurred in a science lesson when Year 4 pupils, while investigating animal habitats on a rotting log, were amazed at the variety of life they found. This was accompanied by squeals of wonder and appreciation. There is a close link with the church. Children attend holy day masses and children's liturgies.

34. Very good provision is made for developing pupils' moral awareness. The ethos of the school has a positive influence on the moral development of pupils and there are high expectations of good moral behaviour within the school. Pupils are aware of the differences between right and wrong. These values are promoted through classroom and playground practices, assemblies, the daily life of the school and its routines. Moral values are well supported by staff through their good relationship with pupils. Staff set very good role models of behaviour, by example and their support of the pupils. The pupils clearly understand the school's code of practice called 'The Golden Rules', which are displayed in every classroom. The majority of pupils respond to school and classroom rules and behave appropriately. In all lessons, teachers manage pupils well, setting high standards of discipline. Throughout the school, pupils' self-esteem is recognised and consistently supported. The school council successfully provides opportunities for pupils to develop responsibilities to other pupils and the school. Moral responsibilities to the wider community and the world are realised through contributions to charities such as UNICEF, CAFOD, Catholic Children's Society and the Neo-natal Unit of Barnet Hospital.

35. Provision for pupils' social development is good. It is nurtured in lessons as teachers provide pupils with many opportunities to interact with one another in small and large groups. Lunchtime arrangements are satisfactory in contributing to pupils' social development. Boys and girls sit together and chat to one another in a friendly manner. Team games and extra-curricular activities develop a sense of involvement and encourage co-operation. The school provides further opportunities for social development through interesting visits, including a residential visit linked to the curriculum. The use of the courtyard area enables pupils to talk to their friends in a peaceful environment. There are discos where children can meet in an informal setting. Sports day and a talent show provide an opportunity for children to meet socially in a different setting.

36. The school's provision for enhancing pupils' cultural awareness is not as strong as the other areas of their personal development but overall it is satisfactory. Knowledge and understanding of traditions, festivals, literature and customs of this country are well established. The knowledge of other cultures is less well developed, especially the multi-cultural dimension. Although people from different cultures are treated with respect and are appreciated, there is no special celebration of the richness and diversity of the many cultures represented in the school. Some knowledge and understanding of other cultures is provided through geography, history, science and music but it is not a planned and explicit aspect of the school's work. There are insufficient books in the school library about the diversity of cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory. The school provides a caring, supportive and happy environment. Teachers and other adults know pupils well, treat them as individuals, and understand the variety of needs. Learning support assistants and midday assistants play an important part in the school. They liaise well with teachers and contribute to the calm ethos. The school takes account of the views of pupils through surveys and the school council. They attend the spring parents' evening with their parents to hear about their progress and personal development. However, there is no comprehensive personal, social and health education programme to support their personal development in a systematic way. Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and show initiative are limited. When there are concerns, the personal development of pupils is closely monitored, but there is no formal monitoring of the personal development of all pupils.

38. The school has effective procedures in place to promote good behaviour. Teachers and other staff expect high standards of behaviour from pupils and have good relationships with them. Overall, they are consistent in taking effective action to maintain discipline and encouraging positive attitudes in pupils. Good behaviour, both individual and whole-class, is rewarded. Pupils value the golden leaves they can gain for the Golden Tree, and the Golden Time they can be awarded. The school provides an environment where pupils know that harassment and bullying will not be tolerated. Parents say that incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly and effectively. Different aspects of relationships and behaviour are discussed within the religious education programme and in assemblies.

39. The monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. The attendance figures are analysed to identify differences between year groups each term. Reasons for absence are followed up. Parents know that these are required and say they are discouraged from taking holidays in term time. However, the school does not monitor the attendance and punctuality of individual pupils routinely, but leaves this to the

Educational Welfare Officer. The school meets the requirements for the recording and reporting of attendance.

40. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory. There is a health and safety policy, but specific responsibilities are not identified. The headteacher and caretaker carry out risk assessments each term, which are recorded. The governing body is appropriately involved. Fire drills are carried out and the electrical and physical education equipment are checked annually. There are appropriately trained and sufficient first aiders, two of whom are State Registered Nurses. Some aspects of safety, which require urgent action, were drawn to the attention of the headteacher and the governing body. The school has effective child protection procedures. The designated teacher has received no specific training as yet but arrangements have been made for this to occur next term. The training of staff is not up-to-date.

41. Assessment arrangements are good in the core subjects of English and mathematics and are satisfactory in science; in the foundation subjects, they are mostly unsatisfactory. The assessment of English and mathematics is thorough and coherent and is a strength. All pupils in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 - 6 have a level of attainment and a target for English and mathematics. These were attributed to the pupils at the start of this academic year after rigorous screening using external standardised tests as well as an example of pupils' writing. This was checked against the end-of-year optional tests and was amended as necessary. As a result of these assessments, predictions were made for the end of year and for the mid-point (February). Any difficulties in children's learning were highlighted with appropriate targeted work. In this way, assessment informs the next stage of planning for the year. In science, the assessment is not as rigorous or high profile because the schemes of work are new and are being trialled. Science assessment is in the hands of individual teachers who use a range of end-of-unit tests. As yet there is no coherent system but it is an area of priority for the next academic year and included in the school's improvement plan. Assessment of the foundation subjects is informal, with no established or consistent system in place. Teachers are aware of their pupils' strengths and weaknesses but do not systematically record pupils' achievements. Nevertheless, the knowledge they have about each pupil informs their report writing and oral reporting to parents at parent-teacher interviews.

42. There is good support for all pupils within lessons. Teachers and support staff are clear about their responsibilities to different groups of pupils within the classroom. Not enough use is made of assessment evidence to track the progress of different ethnic groups, pupils with English as an additional language and pupils who are considered to be gifted and talented.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Nearly all parents acknowledge the improvements made in the school's partnership and relationship with them since the arrival of the new headteacher. They believe that the teaching is now good and that their child makes good progress. Most parents are comfortable about approaching the school and think the right amount of homework is set. Some parents would like more information about their child's progress and to work more closely with the school. They would also like a wider range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team agrees that parents do not receive information about their child's progress frequently enough, and that they get insufficient guidance about how to support their child's learning, for example, through curriculum evenings. The new headteacher acknowledges this. The team finds that the range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory for pupils of this age.

44. The school has satisfactory links with parents. Parents say that the school is open and that teachers are readily available to discuss issues or exchange information. The new Parent Forums take parents' views into account and fully involve them in the life of the school. Parents view them very positively. Formal opportunities take place twice a year for parents to meet their class teacher. The autumn term meeting is to get to know the teacher. In the spring meeting, parents are told the targets that have been set in English and mathematics for their child for that half term and the level their child is working at in different subjects. However, they are not informed of the new half-termly targets that are set in English and mathematics for the remainder of the year. The annual reports to parents give details about what the child has learnt, but nearly always fail to give the level the child is working at and what the child specifically needs to do to improve in each core subject. There is no follow-up meeting with parents to discuss these reports. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in reviews and target setting.

45. Excellent class newsletters are sent to parents each term giving very detailed information about what their child will be learning in different subjects. General information to parents is good. The prospectus is clearly written and conveys the ethos and expectations of the school well. However, the governors' annual report to parents does not fully meet statutory requirements. Regular newsletters keep parents up-to-date with school information, issues and events.

46. The impact of the parents' involvement in the life of the school is satisfactory. Parents are very supportive of anything that directly concerns their child, such as parents' evenings, class assemblies and school events. Parent volunteers help in classes, on visits, with pedestrian training and after-school clubs. However, not all classes have a homework book, and they are not used effectively to communicate with parents. The Friends' Association is run by a dedicated group of parents. It raises considerable sums of money for the school, which are currently enabling the purchase of a new reading scheme.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The last inspection report identified weaknesses in the quality of leadership and management and the school was judged to have serious weaknesses as too many important aspects of its work, especially in relation to the curriculum and teaching, were in need of improvement. A succession of temporary or acting headteachers enabled the school to address many of the issues in the intervening period until the appointment of a permanent headteacher who took up her post in January 2003, less than six months before the inspection.

48. The new headteacher leads the school well and provides a clear sense of direction and vision to the school's development. She is liked and respected by staff, pupils, parents and governors. Although relatively inexperienced, she has brought a sharper focus to school improvement and has succeeded in gaining the co-operation and commitment of staff to making their work more effective. She is building well on the progress that the school has made under the two previous acting headteachers but has not hesitated to put her own stamp on areas that need to be tightened further. There is a strong commitment to good relationships and equality of opportunity for all. Teamwork amongst staff is developing satisfactorily but has been somewhat hindered by a number of temporary appointments and changes of staff. There is a good focus on raising standards and improving the quality of educational experiences provided for pupils. This has required changes to the organisation, planning and timing of the school day and to the curriculum. These changes are having a positive impact on the work of the school. Further changes are planned for the coming academic year.

49. The headteacher is supported effectively by the acting deputy headteacher, who is leaving the school at the end of term, and the newly appointed deputy headteacher, who will take up her post next term. Together they have worked hard to support less experienced staff and to provide them with models of good practice. The leadership provided by other staff with management responsibilities is satisfactory overall but variable in quality. Some co-ordinators are new in post and others are carrying a large number of other responsibilities. There are areas of real strength, for example, in English and special educational needs, where the thoroughness of approach, including robust systems for monitoring and evaluating progress, are examples of best practice that need disseminating more widely. The special needs co-ordinator is very knowledgeable about this area and her efforts in securing effective provision and support for pupils with special educational needs are successful and reflected in their good progress. There is also good practice in the Foundation Stage, mathematics, science and ICT. Leadership and management are satisfactory in art and design, geography and history but are unsatisfactory in physical education. The subject leader for design and technology and music is on long-term absence. Not all staff are clear about their responsibilities, what is expected of them or how to undertake them, and need further guidance and support.

50. The governing body has worked hard since the last inspection to ensure that it fulfils its roles and responsibilities more effectively. They have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are much more involved than hitherto in its strategic management and in determining its future direction. Governors are strongly committed to the school and are very supportive of the new headteacher. The headteacher provides governors with good information about the school's work which is enabling them to play a more positive part in monitoring and evaluating the school's effectiveness. Governors fulfil most of their statutory responsibilities adequately but there are areas of non-compliance including, for example, the annual report to parents, meeting all the requirements of the SEN and Disability Act 2001, and monitoring the progress of pupils with special educational needs and by racial group.

51. The school improvement plan is a satisfactory document to manage change and support school improvement. The headteacher and the governors are clear about the school's priorities and a new plan is being drawn up for the coming year. The priorities are appropriate for the school's stage of development. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the work of the school by senior staff are comprehensive, particularly the quality of teaching and learning and the school's performance in external tests. Some of these have been carried out with the support of staff from the local education authority. Subject reviews have been undertaken in all areas and many of these identify clear areas for improvement and development. Not all are as comprehensive or as evaluative as the best, reflecting the more limited experience and expertise of the subject leader concerned.

52. There are sufficient, suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum satisfactorily. Some classes are taught by temporary staff and/or teachers with overseas qualifications. This has had an effect on pupils' learning in the past, but rising standards throughout the school are an indication of a much more settled future. The school has a high number of support staff, both to support pupils with special educational needs and to assist teachers in classrooms. Their work is very effective. Administrative and other staff provide good levels of support for all teachers and pupils.

53. There are good arrangements for the professional development of staff, for example, in the recent ICT training provided for teachers and support staff. The induction of teachers new to the school is effective and a very comprehensive staff handbook gives them good guidance and information. Formal performance management has not yet been fully implemented this year as the headteacher has only been in post since January. However, subject leaders in English and mathematics have monitored lessons in all classrooms and the headteacher is due to be appraised by the end of the year.

54. The school has sufficient accommodation for the curriculum to be taught effectively, as well as extensive grounds. Accommodation for the Foundation Stage is good overall, apart from the lack of a covered outside area for inclement weather. A new ICT suite, office and storage areas are currently being built. However, much of the school's structure needs renovation. The roof has been replaced and some toilets renewed, but much of the fabric of the building needs replacement. Although there is a planned refurbishment programme, some toilets are still unsatisfactory and a few areas are shabby. The building and grounds are very clean and well maintained by the caretaker and staff.

55. The level and quality of resources are satisfactory overall. Resources are good in English, mathematics and history and satisfactory in science, design and technology and ICT. There are insufficient resources to support teaching and learning in geography, art, physical education and music, which affects standards in these subjects. For example, in physical education, although the portable equipment for gymnastics is of good quality and in good condition, there is no fixed equipment and some of the games equipment is unsatisfactory in both range and quality. There are insufficient geography resources to teach about a locality in a developing country. In art, there are not enough books and pictures of the work of different artists, including those from other cultures, and the provision of sketchbooks, consumables and clay is unsatisfactory. There are insufficient resources for music, which affects the quality of pupils' learning.

56. The library is a large, pleasant room and contains sufficient books to support the National Curriculum and to promote higher levels of literacy skills. However, it is not used often enough for private study and individual research. At present, the library contains several computers and has been used to teach ICT skills. The range of books to support English, mathematics, science, history and religious education is good. There is a satisfactory collection of art books but not enough to support learning in design and technology, geography, music and physical education. There are insufficient books to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the multicultural dimension of society, both in Britain and elsewhere.

57. The school works efficiently on a day-to-day basis and administrative arrangements are effective in supporting the work of the school. Administrative staff are clear about their responsibilities and carry them out in a positive and helpful manner. The school makes satisfactory use of new technologies for administrative purposes, record keeping, financial planning and management and to support the school's use of data. The school manages the resources it has satisfactorily. The governing body with the headteacher have taken a specific decision to maintain for the moment the levels of support staff, which limits the flexibility they have to support other initiatives. Financial planning is satisfactory and linked to the

school improvement plan. Other funding is used appropriately. The recommendations made in a recent audit report are being implemented satisfactorily. The governing body, through its finance committee, receives regular financial reports which are monitored carefully. The school seeks to obtain value for money from the spending decisions it makes but not explicitly in terms of the four principles underpinning best-value. For example, not enough has been done to consider the implications of the school's high levels of expenditure on support staff in relation to the unsatisfactory levels of resources in some subjects, which are affecting standards in these subjects. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money, which is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. The school should:

- i. raise standards in geography at Key Stage 2 and music and physical education throughout by:
 - allocating more time to these subjects;
 - ensuring that the programmes of work from year to year develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding systematically;
 - improving the balance of activities in physical education;
 - ensuring a stronger role for the subject leader, especially in physical education, in monitoring and evaluating work across the school;

(Paragraphs: 4, 14, 15, 17, 24, 25, 49, 113 – 115, 131 - 133, 135 - 137 and 139)

- ii. improve the arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' progress, particularly in the foundation subjects, across the school and use assessment more effectively to plan the next stage of learning;

(Paragraphs: 7, 22, 41, 112, 118, 134 and 138)

- iii. improve the information provided to parents about the progress their child is making and their achievements;

(Paragraphs: 43 and 44)

- iv. increase the range of resources in art and design, geography, physical education and music to support children's learning, including climbing and balancing equipment for children in the Foundation Stage.

(Paragraphs: 1, 55, 56, 73, 107, 112, 118, 134 and 139)

In addition to the key issues, governors should consider including the following issues in their action plan:

- tightening the procedures for monitoring and improving punctuality;
- preparing pupils more effectively for life in a multicultural society;
- ensuring that statutory requirements are fully met with regard to:
 - the governors' annual report to parents;
 - the SEN and Disability Act 2001;
 - the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000; and
 - drugs awareness.
- addressing the safety issue identified with the school.

(Paragraphs: 7, 12, 29, 36, 39, 40, 42, 50 and 116)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

43

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	8	21	13	1	0	0
Percentage	0	19	49	30	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	15	210
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	36

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	35

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	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	20	14	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	19
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	32	31	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (97)	91 (88)	97 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	19	16
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	31	32	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (97)	94 (97)	88 (97)
	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	13	23	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	10	13
	Girls	20	18	20
	Total	31	28	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (62)	78 (50)	92 (65)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	10
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	29	29	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (62)	81 (76)	78 (65)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	134	1	0
White – Irish	32	0	0
White – any other White background	7	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	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	4	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	26	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)	11.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	185

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29
Total number of education support staff	2.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10

Financial information

Financial year	2002/03
	£
Total income	682,225
Total expenditure	712,993
Expenditure per pupil	3,169
Balance brought forward from previous year	43,560
Balance carried forward to next year	12,813

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	225
Number of questionnaires returned	46

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	26	0	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	48	48	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	59	7	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	40	9	2	0
The teaching is good.	57	37	4	2	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	37	15	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	30	7	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	48	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	44	11	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	53	36	2	7	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	44	4	4	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	38	33	7	9

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

59. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage in the last inspection was considered satisfactory. Since that time, the provision has improved and it is now good. The key issue from the last inspection concerning the provision for more opportunities for children to choose their own activities and to explore and develop their ideas and creative skills without over-direction by the teacher has been fully resolved. The wide range of learning opportunities in the Foundation Stage provides children with a good start to their education and is a strength of the school. All children make satisfactory progress in the Nursery as a result of the good teaching and by the end of the Reception year nearly all children are achieving the expected standards in all areas of learning, other than some of the movement and spatial elements of their physical development.

60. Children enter the Nursery on a part-time basis in the autumn or spring term after their third birthday. Most children transfer to full-time attendance in the Reception class in the autumn term before their fifth birthday. A significant number of children join the Nursery with below-average skills in speaking and listening and some find it difficult to mix socially and to take turns and share. Despite this, the children achieve well in the Nursery and Reception classes and they successfully learn a wide range of skills. The good ethos and sensitive support provided by the Nursery staff successfully develop all children's self-esteem and sense of worth.

61. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is rarely less than good and helps all children to broaden and consolidate their knowledge and skills in all areas of learning. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory overall. The substantial number of teaching assistants in the Nursery and Reception classes, who are actively involved in all the activities, also helps in this respect. All staff in the Foundation Stage work very well as a team, both in planning and assessing the numerous activities provided for the children and encouraging them to initiate their own activities. The effectiveness of the support ensures that the small number of children with special educational needs or in the early stages of learning English make the same progress as their classmates. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children are skilfully assessed and targeted for extra focused support if there is any risk of them falling behind their peers. The Foundation Stage leader, who provides very good educational direction for staff and children, manages and organises all staff and provision very well. The Nursery and Reception classes are well organised and children have easy access to a wide range of resources to support their learning, both inside and outside.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. Some children enter the Nursery class with immature skills in personal and social development and in speaking and listening. By the time they leave the Reception class, they attain the early learning goals in this area. This shows good achievement and reflects the skilful teaching where children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. Liaison between parents and the Foundation Stage staff is good. Children and their parents visit the school prior to entry and a regular newsletter is sent to parents to enable them to assist their child in any topic work. Even the very youngest children receive small homework tasks, usually related to their creative development or knowledge and understanding of the world. All children are given good opportunities to play and work together. Adult support is provided, when needed, to encourage them to take turns, share and show consideration for others.

63. In both Foundation Stage classes, children show interest in the many experiences provided for them and become increasingly independent in making choices and initiating ideas for activities. For example, when entering the classroom at the beginning of the day, children identify their name cards and place them in a tray for registration, answer the teacher's literacy question and then choose an activity before lessons actually begin. With the good opportunities provided and the positive approach of adults, children grow in confidence and quickly learn to link up with others while at work and play. The Foundation Stage class is totally inclusive, with all children, including a pupil with a statement of special educational needs and another with English as an additional language, having equal access to all the opportunities provided. As a result, all children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Resources,

both indoor and outdoor, are good and children have access to a hard and grassed surface play area directly from their classroom. However, there is no covered outdoor accommodation and no permanent climbing and balancing apparatus or equipment, which hinders aspects of children's physical development. Throughout the Foundation Stage, staff take appropriate action to address any unacceptable behaviour and, as a result, children's behaviour is generally good. By the time they leave the Reception class, they have a clear sense of right and wrong. In the Reception groups, they settle quickly to the more structured activities, such as literacy and numeracy and are able to concentrate for appropriate periods of time. Most Reception children attend to their personal hygiene appropriately and dress and undress themselves independently when preparing for physical education lessons.

64. Personal, social and emotional development is strongly promoted in all areas of learning through thorough planning. Nearly all activities provided by staff strengthen bonds and relationships within the activity areas. All adults working with the children in the Foundation Stage provide good role models for the children, always treating each other and the children with respect. This leads to trusting relationships and helps the children to develop an awareness of the needs of others. Well-planned activities provide good opportunities for the children to choose whether to work alone, in small groups or to work with an adult. Sufficient time is allotted for children to initiate their own ideas through play, for example, in the various play and activity areas or outside using the large wheeled toys.

Communication, language and literacy

65. On entry to the Nursery, a minority of children show delayed development in their speech, language, speaking and listening ability. A high priority is given to promoting language skills in the Nursery and good teaching ensures children make good progress. By the time they move to the Reception class, most listen attentively and respond with appropriate language to recreate roles and experiences. Staff provide many opportunities for children to communicate with each other and adults. As a result, they become more confident in their use of a growing vocabulary, make good progress and by the time they leave the Reception class, nearly all children have attained the recommended early learning goals in communication. In the Nursery, activities are carefully planned which encourage children to give verbal responses to questions in order to extend their vocabulary. The Nursery environment is enriched by the signs and labels, which reflect the importance staff put on the development of language. Role-play areas and dressing up clothes are also used well to stimulate communication between children, and adults join in role play activities to extend children's ideas and imagination. For example, they re-enact office work in the 'office corner'. In the Reception class, many opportunities are provided for children to develop their speaking and listening skills; for example, in a literacy lesson, children were encouraged to discuss aspects of the story *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.

66. Children make a good start to reading in the Nursery. They enjoy listening to stories and through sharing books with staff, soon recognise that pictures carry meaning. Children learn to recognise their own name and they are encouraged to read it at every opportunity. In the Reception class, most children know that information can be relayed in the form of print and understand the concept of a word. The higher-attaining children read familiar words in simple texts independently.

67. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children are presented with many opportunities to experiment with writing, for example, in the activity areas like the 'office corner' and the 'home corner'. Children in the Reception class make a good effort to write independently. For example, a group of more capable children were able to write a short paragraph about butterflies. The remainder needed various degrees of support but finally produced an acceptable piece of written work.

68. The classroom is well planned to promote the importance of language. Books are effectively displayed and children are encouraged to enjoy them and use the stories they hear in their play activities. Elements of the literacy framework are introduced gradually at the end of the Reception year, but their introduction could be developed further. Children develop a sound understanding of letter sounds through the use of a commercial phonic scheme, which is enhanced by the teacher encouraging each child to identify a letter and sound within a word when they register their arrival in the morning. Supplies of paper, pencils and crayons are readily available for children to use and they happily 'have a go' at writing.

Mathematical development

69. Children's mathematical abilities are mostly average when they start in the Nursery. The good teaching and provision in the Foundation Stage successfully promote children's mathematical development and nearly all children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave Reception. In the Nursery, good use is made of a wide variety of activities to consolidate and extend mathematical skills. Children are provided with a wide range of practical experiences, such as building towers with bricks, sorting activities and number games. They are encouraged to use the appropriate mathematical language in these activities. Teachers in the Reception class build on these learning experiences and use imaginative ideas to enhance mathematical development, such as the 'feely box' for identifying three-dimensional shapes by touch. Most children make good progress in their number recognition and many can count out loud and recognise numbers beyond 20. Children in Reception class use a range of strategies for addition, from the use of fingers to multilink cubes. Most children recognise colours, are able to name a triangle, circle and square and can copy a simple repeating pattern of two colours. Some children are beginning to identify three-dimensional shapes like cubes, cuboids, pyramids and spheres. Their use and understanding of mathematical language such as 'more' and 'less' to compare size and numbers are as expected for their age.

70. Mathematical development is well promoted through the use of games and songs throughout the Foundation Stage. The good teaching in the Nursery ensures that the children develop their mathematical ideas through well-planned play activities. The more formal activities for mathematics are introduced carefully to Reception children and they are divided into two groups of 16 to ensure effective learning. However, some higher-attaining children, towards the end of the Reception year, could be challenged further through the provision of tasks related to the National Curriculum. Classroom displays are used effectively to display numbers and give counting opportunities.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Most children enter the Nursery with a basic level of general knowledge. The Nursery provides a stimulating environment and staff ensure that children's natural curiosity and enthusiasm are enhanced by questions that promote learning. The curriculum offers them a wide range of experiences to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Activities are well planned and organised to enable all children to explore aspects of the environment and to relate the work to their own experiences. The outdoor environment of the Nursery is used well to stimulate children's interest: for example, after discussing their 'special places', children were encouraged to have their photographs taken in their special place in the outdoor area. Discussion forms an important part of the work and children are encouraged to be observant and describe what they see, for example, in their work on mini-beasts and butterflies.

72. In the Reception class, these skills are built upon well. Good use is made of the school environment and visits to places within the vicinity of the school to introduce children to features in the place they work and those within their immediate locality. Outdoor activities allow children in the Reception class to use a wide range of equipment and engage in role play that relate to their everyday experience. A wide range of construction toys and materials is provided for children to explore and use their skills to make models. Children in the Nursery show sound 'making' skills and by the time they leave the Reception class they have developed a good sense of how things join together and make imaginative models of spiders and three-dimensional shapes. They show an increasing understanding of modern technology as they regularly use computers in the Nursery. In the Reception class, children make good progress and demonstrate appropriately developed skills in using a computer for mathematics and creative development activities. Careful consideration is given to supporting children and deepening their knowledge of different cultures and religions through listening to stories. The celebration of special events like Chinese New Year, Christmas and Easter further raises their awareness. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. A wide range of planned activities enables children of all abilities to expand their experience and knowledge of the world. Nearly all children will achieve the recommended goals for learning by the time they leave the Reception class.

Physical development

73. Children in the nursery achieve broadly what is expected for this age group. They show increasing control and skills when using the wheeled toys outside and are developing a greater awareness of space around them. The spacious outside area is well resourced and provides children with a good range of equipment for them to practise physical skills such as running, playing bat and ball games and riding

tricycles. However, the opportunity to develop their skills in balancing and climbing is limited by the absence of any large climbing apparatus in the outdoor area. Staff make very good use of the space and the time outdoors, equally well as the time indoors as part of the everyday activities provided for the children. By the end of the Reception year, children attain appropriate standards in relation to the early learning goals in most aspects of their physical development. However, the absence of balancing and climbing equipment both outdoors and in the school's main hall means that their ability to travel, under, over and through, while climbing and balancing, is under-developed. Staff successfully develop children's confidence and teach them to be independent when they dress and undress for their physical development lessons.

74. Good opportunities are provided for all children in the Nursery and Reception classes to develop their finer manipulative skills. For example, in putting together jigsaw pieces, using brushes for painting, cutting with scissors and gluing with spatulas. They are also provided with an appropriate range of malleable materials such as play dough and plasticene. Consequently, by the end of the Reception year, nearly all children demonstrate increasing dexterity and control in the use of scissors, construction sets and puzzles. Most children are developing the ability to form letters soundly in their writing. The quality of teaching is good overall, and this supports children of all capabilities well in the development of their physical skills.

Creative development

75. The provision of a very good range of activities, with well-focused adult support and encouragement, means that children make good gains in learning and by the end of the Reception year are well on course to attain the national recommendations. The quality of teaching and learning is good and indoor and outdoor activities are well resourced and organised. Children start from a fairly basic level when they enter the Nursery and achieve well through a wide range of experiences in art, music and imaginative play. The home corner, office corner and mini-beast displays are popular and give good opportunities for imaginative role play. Adults enthusiastically join in role-play activities and help children to develop their ideas and gain confidence. Their creative play outdoors is well linked to their work indoors, for example, in the 'special places' topic. The Nursery and Reception classes provide a stimulating environment for children to work and this aspect of learning is well supported by the sensitive intervention of all adults.

76. Most children enjoy acting out their own stories and create interesting models using a wide range of construction kits. In their artwork, children use paint imaginatively, print with different objects like butterflies and have produced their own paintings in the style of Matisse and Kandinsky. They learn to use crayons and pencils skilfully and show great care and detail in their observational drawings of flowers, especially in the Reception class. Children in both classes learn a range of songs by heart and enjoy participating in action songs to enhance their mathematical and creative development.

ENGLISH

77. Standards in English overall are above average and are improving. This is because of the good quality of teaching and a positive climate for learning. Subject leadership is very good, with an effective policy and system of monitoring and assessment.

78. In the statutory tests at the end of Year 2 in 2002, the results were above the national averages in reading and writing. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 or above was in line with that achieved nationally. When compared with similar schools, the results were above average in reading but below average in writing. The provisional results for the statutory tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 are broadly similar to 2002, other than in the writing of higher-attaining pupils, which was much improved. The work seen during the inspection reflects the standards attained in the statutory tests.

79. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002, the results in English were well above the national average and also above average when compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was well above the national average and above the average of similar schools. Pupils also achieved well in relation to their earlier attainment. At both key stages, girls did better than boys in all areas - particularly apparent at the higher levels in the Year 6 tests. Although girls achieved better than boys in the statutory assessments, there were no significant differences in their work during the inspection. In the Year 6 tests in 2003, although fewer pupils achieved the higher levels, the provisional results indicate that standards are broadly similar to those in 2002. Only three pupils did not achieve the expected level in English, indicating that pupils with special educational needs and other groups of pupils achieved well.

Pupils' current work by the end of Year 6 is above average, reflecting the standards attained in the national tests.

80. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 speak and listen well. The teachers' effective questioning means that pupils respond confidently. For example, pupils in Year 1 give imaginative and descriptive answers in response to questions about 'Mr Magnolia's' lost boot. In Year 2, the teacher extends children's vocabulary well and one child knows the Latin name for a blue whale. However, there are times when teachers have to work hard to overcome the pupils' limited vocabulary. This was seen in Year 2 as the pupils talked about 'fake' or 'false', when the term 'realistic' was needed. Reading standards at the end of Year 2 are above average. Pupils enjoy reading; they take books home regularly and are beginning to recognise familiar authors. They are able to talk about characters and what they like or dislike about a story. They use strategies they have learned to tackle new words effectively. In Year 2, a lesson on fiction and non-fiction texts showed that most pupils can define terms such as glossary, contents and index, with reference to alphabetical order. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have learnt to write in sentences using capital letters and full stops. In Year 1, pupils completed their own ending to a story, developing a sequence of ideas and using different ways of emphasising words. Pupils make good progress during the school year. They are writing in a legible and consistent script and are able to adjust style to purpose. In Year 2, factual writing about the life cycle of the frog is accurate and chronological, yet in story writing they include appropriate use of descriptive language.

81. By the end of Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are at least in line with national expectations. Pupils in Year 3 speak confidently about the way the rhythm of a poem is affected by its rhyme. Additionally, they show good listening skills when discussing what they have been taught, using a model poem to reinforce their own rhyming patterns. Pupils in Year 5 read their writing out aloud accurately and other pupils are able to evaluate it in terms of the lesson's learning objectives. Reading standards by the end of Year 6 are above average. In Year 4, pupils explain clearly their ideas about books and their preferences for authors and types of books. Pupils enjoy reading and they take books home regularly. In a lesson on conversational poetry, pupils in Year 4 were able to recite poems and develop patterns of rhythm; they were able to see how punctuation affects intonation and emphasis. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 6, when discussing two poems by Ted Hughes, identify words and phrases used to convey emotion, and they are able to point out examples of alliteration and metaphor. Lower-attaining pupils explain how they might use a thesaurus to extend their ideas and are able to provide examples of idiom. By the end of Year 6, pupils have learnt to write with a range of purposes in mind. The end-of-term concert provides them with opportunities to read and write pen-portraits, publicity material, synopses and play scripts. Most pupils are using a fluent and legible style of handwriting; they are aware that the use of italics, bold type and capital letters can show emphasis in writing.

82. All pupils make good progress. The factors contributing to this progress include: consistently good or better teaching; good planning and effective implementation of the national literacy strategy; very good use of assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning; the focus on developing literacy skills in other subjects; and the effective use of classroom assistants to support specific groups of pupils.

83. The last inspection report identified that there were too few opportunities for extended writing activities to enable the writing of continuous prose. The school has allocated time within the timetable to address this weakness, with positive benefits. In Year 5, pupils were able to discuss, draft and complete a finished piece of writing, which was effective because of the way the teacher structured the lesson.

84. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and often very good. This is seen in sustained concentration and interest, good listening skills and their confidence to respond. This is promoted by the positive relationships between staff and pupils. The attitudes of different groups of pupils are positive throughout, showing co-operative and collaborative approaches in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language show confidence as they are well supported by their staff and their peers.

85. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and sometimes very good. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to prepare lessons well, with good pace and effective use of questioning to develop pupils' literacy skills. In lessons, teachers make it clear what pupils have to learn and review what has been learned at the end. The needs of different groups of pupils are met well. A particular feature that ensures pupils' involvement is the identification of clear learning objectives which are shared with them; this provides

a clear focus to lessons, relevant challenges and work that meets their particular needs. In a very good lesson in Year 3, pupils with special educational needs were well supported with a range of different activities. They were encouraged to be independent in word-building, using both phonic and visual cues, so that they were able to read back their own poems.

86. The curriculum ensures a balance in the range of work covered, including non-fiction and fiction texts, writing for a range of purposes, as well as poetry. There is evidence of good literacy links with other subjects, which often contributes to pupils' moral and social development. The marking of pupils' work is consistent, effective and up to date. A strength is the often analytical and evaluative comments made by teachers. The use of targets is helping pupils to focus on areas that they need to improve; as these are reviewed with pupils, new targets are set. Pupils with special educational needs are supported by detailed individual education plans and effective support staff, who are well prepared by their teaching colleagues. Throughout the school, homework, which concentrates on basic skills in literacy, is provided regularly.

87. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully. This could be extended to review the progress of groups other than boys and girls and pupils with special educational needs. Parents get good termly class newsletters, and there is regular information about progress through open evenings and an annual report. Not all pupils are helped with their reading at home, but the school does encourage parents' support with reading.

88. The subject is very well led and managed. The range of processes employed demonstrates good practice and could be used as a model for other subjects. A very good subject manager's review, which includes comprehensive monitoring, is used to inform staff and governors of progress and to set new targets and priorities.

89. The school has experienced considerable staff turnover and whilst there has been good progress since the last inspection, the school must continue to improve in areas related to extended writing and language development. When areas for development are identified, they are acted upon; for example, the support given to overseas-trained teachers with the National Literacy Strategy.

90. Learning resources are good, with effective writing resources giving structure to and source material for the National Literacy Strategy. However, higher-attaining pupils in Year 1 could work more independently with better provision of class dictionaries. The school is aware of the need for a reading scheme to ensure greater progression in learning.

MATHEMATICS

91. Standards by the end of Year 2 are above the national expectation, similar to the judgement made during the last inspection and the results of the national tests in 2002. The provisional results for 2003 are also in line with this finding. All pupils achieve well during in Years 1 and 2 and they are beginning to develop the ability to explain their methods of working in any problem-solving activity and use the appropriate mathematical vocabulary. Pupils in Year 1 understand the operation concerning addition and most are able to add two numbers together to make a number larger than ten using money. By the end of Year 2, they recognise the links between addition and subtraction. They use this knowledge and understanding well by using money in real-life situations like shopping, calculating the required change when purchasing items under 20 pence. A few pupils are able to work out in their heads the change from a pound. They have a good knowledge of two-dimensional shapes and are able to identify the number of sides and corners on a shape.

92. Overall standards by the end of Year 6 are above the national expectation. This is an improvement on the results of the national tests in 2002 and the findings of the last inspection. However, it is in line with the provisional results for 2003. Pupils' work in mathematics builds well on previous learning and becomes more demanding as they move through the school. Pupils of all levels of attainment gradually increase their knowledge, skills and understanding in all aspects of mathematics. Their ability to explain their mathematical thinking is developing well and their use of this skill for investigation and problem solving is already well developed.

93. Pupils in Year 3 use their knowledge and understanding of addition and subtraction facts by using all four rules of numeracy to make up their own total of 10, a junior version of 'Countdown'. This indicates a good use of their numeracy skills for problem solving. By the end of Year 4, they are able to use the

decomposition method of subtraction. In their data-handling work, most pupils collect, classify and interpret data in Venn diagrams and solve consequent problems. Most pupils in Year 5 match equivalent fractions and decimals and some match these accurately to percentages. They have a good understanding of negative numbers and have produced a line graph to indicate the times of sunrise and sunset throughout the world. The use of ICT in their data-handling work is relatively under-developed. Approximately two-fifths of Year 6 pupils are working at the higher Level 5 standards. Nearly all use their understanding of place value well to multiply and divide whole numbers by 10, 100 and 1000. Most pupils of this age group order fractions or decimals and give clear explanations of their methods of working, for example, converting fractions to decimals or converting fractions to the same denominator. They know that the angles of a triangle add up to 180 degrees and use this knowledge to find the size of the missing angle. They estimate the size of angles well but some pupils have difficulty in using a protractor to measure angles accurately.

94. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they are given appropriate work in lessons and receive good support from teaching assistants. Several pupils with English as an additional language are in higher-attaining mathematics groups throughout the school. Teachers plan their lessons with an appropriate degree of difficulty for the higher-attaining pupils and provide challenging activities for all levels of attainment using investigation and problem-solving factors.

95. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and very good in some lessons. The most effective lessons are well paced and challenging and teachers have very high expectations of the pupils' performance. In all classes, teaching assistants are used well to support lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. A very good lesson in Year 5 began with quick-fire questioning on multiplication tables and doubling and halving numbers. This introduced good pace and challenge into the lesson to enable all pupils to enhance their mental skills. Pupils were used very well in the main activity by being encouraged to place their 'fractions' in the correct order on the 'washing line'. The teacher's exposition and skilful questioning indicated very good subject knowledge and understanding. Planning, which is comprehensive, ensures that the work enables all pupils to make very good progress. Pupils are managed well in the majority of classes and most are kept on task by teachers organising relevant and interesting activities. Pupils' progress is assessed regularly and teachers use the information very well. They encourage pupils to explain their methods of working and pupils react well to this encouragement using appropriate mathematical vocabulary. An emphasis on problem solving and investigations throughout the school is resulting in higher standards. Pupils' work is marked regularly but only a few teachers add helpful comments to enable pupils to know what they have to do to improve. Most recording of pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 is done on worksheets, which inhibits pupils' development of neat, well-presented work.

96. The experienced mathematics co-ordinator, who is also a member of the senior management team, gives good leadership and educational direction to the subject, which has led to a recent rise in standards throughout the school, especially in the number of pupils attaining the higher levels. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced successfully. The teaching in all classes, including the Reception class, has been monitored and the co-ordinator has used the expertise of the local authority advisor in this respect. Pupils' progress and attainment are evaluated by work sampling and half-yearly tests and these test results are used to set targets and focus development planning. Pupils' numeracy skills are used well in other curriculum subjects such as science and geography but their use in ICT is less well developed. This has been identified as a priority for development when the new computer suite is opened in September 2003. Resources for the subject are good and well used. Teaching assistants work well to ensure that all pupils make good progress.

SCIENCE

97. Standards by the end of Year 2 are slightly above the national expectation. This is an improvement over the school's figures for 2002 when the assessments undertaken by teachers indicate that standards were below the national average. The provisional figures for 2003 show an improvement over the figures for 2002. By the end of the Year 2, pupils are attaining standards that are above the national expectation. This good achievement has been the result of a greater focus on conceptual development through investigative work. Pupils in Year 2 study a wide range of science topics. They investigate electrical currents and different materials of conductivity to reach their own conclusions. They explore the speed of cars on ramps, showing their results in tabular form. They grow seeds through observation and specific investigation, discovering what makes them grow. They know that some materials can change and some are reversible, such as ice, water and steam. They investigate the body and learn about the basic functions.

98. Standards by the end of Year 6 are in line with national expectations. The majority of pupils attain the expected standards for pupils of a similar age. This is broadly similar to the national test results in 2002 for Level 4 and above, which were in line with the national average. For pupils achieving the higher Level 5, it is below the school's performance in 2002, when the results at this level were well above average. Many of the higher-attaining pupils left the school throughout last year, which has had an adverse impact on the school's results. The provisional results for 2003 are slightly lower than the figures for 2002. Pupils in Year 6 have worked intensively throughout the year to make up for the deficiencies in their scientific knowledge, skills and understanding arising from their earlier experiences. They have consolidated and extended their knowledge of properties of materials and how some of these are affected by burning, being greatly surprised by some of the results. They are able to separate different substances mixed together, explaining the processes clearly using correct scientific vocabulary. They study the planets and the solar system as well as investigating the effects of the sun on the length of the day. When studying the human body, they describe the working of the heart and teeth and have a satisfactory understanding of the effects of nutrition and exercise on the body.

99. The quality of teaching is good overall in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 - 6. No teaching was less than satisfactory. Teaching in both key stages has improved since the last inspection. Some very good teaching occurred when pupils in a Year 4 class investigated animal habitats in the school grounds. Pupils were intrigued and fascinated by the range of animal life they encountered during their investigations into three contrasting areas of the school grounds. They made notes, using relevant vocabulary, and observational drawings that were labelled using scientific equipment. Throughout the school, good teamwork with support staff and good pace help pupils to work very well in groups. Teachers plan lessons well and are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Work is well planned, ensuring that appropriate tasks are set that match pupils' needs. Teachers' planning shows that there is an appropriate balance between different strands of the subject. Pupils enjoy their science lessons. However, in some lessons in Years 3 – 6, not all the pupils are sufficiently keen and involved. Pupils in Year 6 pupils speak enthusiastically about what they had experienced in science throughout the year.

100. The use of a range of mathematical techniques and instruments, including graphs, diagrams, tables and calculators, helps pupils to extend their numeracy skills. Teachers take care in introducing appropriate scientific vocabulary at both key stages. Pupils in the younger age groups have used a digital microscope to observe how plants grow. They recorded their work using digital photographs. Teachers mark work regularly. Some good comments and advice for the next stage in pupils' learning are included in the older pupils' workbooks. This helps them to reflect further. Some marking, however, tends only to be commendatory and does not give pupils enough guidance on what they need to do to improve.

101. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The new co-ordinator has introduced a scheme of work that has ensured all the necessary areas of the subject are covered, reinforced and consolidated. A start has been made in assessing pupils at the end of units of work. This is a stronger feature in some classes than in others. Assessment of science is a priority for the next year and is included in the school improvement plan. Long-term planning is now undertaken on an annual basis, which is an improvement on the previous two-yearly cycle. This has meant that now there is a greater opportunity to plan the correct sequencing of skills and conceptual developments as well as pupils' knowledge and understanding. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching, learning, planning and pupils' workbooks, with a keen eye to raising achievement for all pupils, especially for the current Year 6 that were affected by frequent staff changes. Science is satisfactorily resourced. The school library contains a good selection of books to support learning in science.

102. Since the last inspection, standards have risen in line with the national trend, except in 2001 when there was a drop in standards. Work for the lower-attaining pupils has improved through appropriate planning and the good support of the teaching assistants and support teachers. Pupils now know how to investigate and question systematically. All teaching and learning is through the investigative approach, identified as a weakness in the last inspection. The new scheme of work is understood by the teachers who use it appropriately, translating it into meaningful activities for the pupils at the appropriate level. Overall, the school has made good progress in improving science since the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

103. Only a small number of lessons were observed in art and design. This evidence, together with a scrutiny of pupils' work on display around the school, shows that pupils' attainment in art and design by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with national expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection, mostly because of better teaching and pupils' improved attitudes. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a range of media, including paint, crayon, dough and clay. They mix colours from a restricted palette and know how to obtain different tones. They understand about sculpture and other three-dimensional work, but are not aware of any famous artists or their styles of painting. They are able to discuss their own work and talk about how it might be improved. Pupils in Year 2 are able to design patterns and then reproduce these in relief work on tiles, using a variety of media.

104. In Years 3 to 6, pupils show they can work with pastels to mix colour and create shading. They are also developing their skills in creating colour and texture. This was evident in Year 6 as pupils worked on adding colour to masks to achieve realistic texture through experimenting with different means of application. An area for development is in drawing and sketching, as there is insufficient opportunity to practise obtaining depth and perspective through shading and scale.

105. There are good links between art and other subjects, in particular ICT, English, mathematics and history. For example, in linking persuasive writing and history, pupils in Year 5 produced posters relating to World War II propaganda. A good feature of this and other work is the focus on the initial design process as well as the outcome.

106. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in most lessons are good. They concentrate well, are interested in and persevere with their tasks. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. A good feature of the teaching is the quality of the planning, which ensures that the lesson has a clear purpose and outcome. For example, pupils in Year 6 worked on masks, designing, making and decorating them for their end-of-year concert. In Year 4, some interesting work on the theme of portraying relationships contributed effectively to pupils' spiritual and moral development.

107. The provision for art and design is satisfactory, which is an improvement since the last inspection. A policy and schemes of work provide guidance to help planning and informal assessments are established. The new co-ordinator has made a good start in auditing the subject and has identified areas for development. The school has recognised the need for sketchbooks, particularly for Years 3 to 6. Resources are unsatisfactory. There are insufficient examples of the works of famous artists and not enough use of three-dimensional work and sculpture in Year 3 - 6. Additional training is required to improve teachers' subject knowledge and confidence.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with national expectations. This is an improvement on the last inspection when standards were below the expected level at both key stages. Since that time, the development of design and technology has been good. As a result, a new scheme of work, based on national guidance, has been introduced. Three design and make projects are undertaken each year and pupils' skills are being developed progressively throughout both key stages. Pupils use a wide range of tools and materials. While planning for design and technology has improved, assessment is still a weakness. Design and technology is included as a priority in the school improvement plan and resources for each unit are satisfactory.

109. No teaching of design and technology occurred during the inspection. Judgements are based on the analyses of teachers' planning and pupils' work. Pupils in Year 2 have investigated and designed moving vehicles using cardboard boxes, dowel rods and wheels. They have produced large rod puppets from carefully selected paper, fabric and wool. Their final product was a winding mechanism to lift heavy objects to a higher level. All projects had been carefully designed through labelled diagrams and some written instructions. Pupils undertook an evaluation of their final products.

110. Pupils in Year 6 show good levels of understanding and skill in designing, making and evaluating, for example, in making slippers from a range of materials, based on an animal theme. The finished products are of good quality. They also developed their design and evaluation skills through a communal project to make a crib scene for the church at Christmas. However, there are not enough opportunities to explore the use of motors and mechanisms and to use them in their own projects.

111. The analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils in the majority of classes go through the processes of designing, making and evaluating. The older pupils evaluate as they make their artefacts, amending their work as necessary. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of how to teach design and technology. In the older year groups, pupils develop greater precision in how to finish their products. Throughout both key stages, the units of work are effectively sequenced so that pupils develop their skills systematically, building on what they have previously learnt or experienced.

112. In the absence of the co-ordinator for design and technology, the subject seems to be self-sufficient because of the shared keenness and expertise of the staff. The co-ordinator had restructured the scheme of work and had ordered new resources for each unit of work. There are, however, insufficient books in the library to support learning. Monitoring and evaluation had been carried out by the co-ordinator, who identified strengths and weaknesses. These have been built into the next school improvement plan. Currently no one holds a food safety certificate. This is significant, because during food technology lessons, no protective, hygienic coverings were put on the desks. Assessment of design and technology is not an established feature, and consequently it is an area of weakness. There is a positive scenario for further development in design and technology and a potential for improvement.

GEOGRAPHY

113. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is in line with the national expectation but by the end of Year 6 it is below the standard expected nationally, similar to the time of the last inspection. Improvement since that time has been satisfactory but there are two main reasons why progress has not been better. First, after a period of some turbulence, a new geography scheme of work has been introduced this year. As a result, there has been insufficient time to fully trace the correct sequencing of skills, content knowledge and understanding. Secondly, many teachers left, with a subsequent loss of continuity.

114. Because of the school's curriculum organisation, only one geography lesson was seen at Key Stage 2. Therefore, most of the evidence is based on the analysis of pupils' work, discussion with pupils, teachers and the co-ordinator. Pupils' average attainment by the end of Year 2 is characterised by their work in comparing the local area with that of a seaside locality through the use of secondary resources. Pupils are able to describe specific features of each locality. They are aware that some activities are different in both localities and can identify those that are the same. Pupils also learn about the features and way of life on an island through the study of Struay, an imaginary island in Scotland. They are aware of the distance between their place and Struay through planning their journey. A good feature of geography is in Year 1, where pupils travel around Europe with Barnaby Bear, a good source of stimulation for these young pupils. They can describe the countries they have visited and make some basic comparisons between them.

115. At Key Stage 2, not enough time is allocated to geography and not all the classes have completed their programmes of study. As a result, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding have not been developed fully and consequently their attainment is below the standard expected of pupils at this stage. Many units of work are not taught in sufficient depth, which hinders appropriate progression of the necessary skills. Nevertheless, there is potential for improvement, as was witnessed in the work of two classes when the study units were based on field trips. These two classes were a model of good practice in these two units. One of these classes was Year 6 where the pupils were studying rivers. The pupils had been on a field trip to the River Ver with the local secondary school geography teacher. They investigated the flow, depth, flora and fauna, and uses of a river as well as becoming aware of the river processes of erosion, transportation and deposition, including the pattern of the river system. Much follow-up work was in evidence during the inspection. Fieldwork such as this around the local area and to Handall Park is beginning to have an impact on geography teaching. At both key stages, pupils' understanding and use of maps is weak. There is no clear line of progress through both key stages, with insufficient detail to what it is maps are actually showing. Titles and keys are often missed out, and colours of maps are inappropriately used. Atlas skills are also insufficiently developed. The contribution that mathematics can make to geography has not been considered. Literacy contributions are evident in pupils' workbooks as this is the preferred method of recording their work. The spirit of enquiry is missing throughout both key stages.

116. Discussions with Year 6 pupils indicate that they enjoy their geography lessons and working on specific projects such as the countries project, especially when learning is based around a field trip. However, geography does not contribute enough to developing pupils' multicultural awareness and this is a

weakness. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and make good progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language participate fully in all the geographical activities. There are no differences in attainment between boys and girls.

117. As it was only possible to observe one lesson it is not possible to comment on the quality of teaching throughout the school. In the one lesson seen, the quality of teaching was good. The lesson was a follow-up to the fieldtrip to the River Ver. It was well organised into group activities where pupils were collating and analysing the data they had collected on the field trip, and drawing conclusions to their findings. Resources such as Ordnance Survey maps, photographs, field-sketches and cross-sections were used well to reach conclusions. With the help of a local secondary school, the class teacher had planned the field trip and had increased her own knowledge and understanding of the subject. Pupils in Year 3 had also had a worthwhile experience on their field trip that led to improved standards and motivation for the pupils.

118. Leadership and management of the subject are broadly satisfactory. The current co-ordinator is a geography specialist who is 'caretaking' the subject this year. Her role includes four other areas, which is a very heavy load. A new scheme of work has been introduced this year based on national guidance, but is not yet firmly embedded. It will be reviewed and evaluated at the end of the school year to determine its success. Teachers' subject knowledge has increased through additional support. The monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' workbooks has taken place and feedback given, but is not sufficiently focused on raising attainment. Assessment arrangements are unsatisfactory, as are the resources to support the subject. There are not enough atlases for different age groups, especially in Years 1 and 2, or sufficient visual material or library books. There is no equipment for studying weather.

HISTORY

119. Standards in history are above the national expectation by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and are a strength of the school. Standards have improved in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection, when they were in line with national expectations. This improvement is due to teachers' good subject knowledge, improved quality of teaching and good links with literacy and other subjects.

120. By the end of Year 2, pupils gain a good sense of time, and understand that a historical period creates particular conditions and that things change with events. They learn to consider various sources of evidence and the validity of that information. For example, the majority of pupils in Year 2 understand and use drawings, photographs, diaries and letters to find out about the London of Samuel Pepys or the hospitals of the nineteenth century.

121. By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to describe the features of past periods and begin to make links between them. Pupils in Year 6 were able to hypothesise and deduce that the quality and value of grave goods in a ship burial suggest a special person and that the person might be Anglo-Saxon as this was a tradition of that period. Further, their depth of understanding is shown when they discuss whether this burial is late Anglo-Saxon because of the presence of silver spoons with Christian inscriptions. They are able to describe events, give reasons for results and show how they may have been interpreted in different ways. In Year 4, pupils gain an insight into the political arguments and social issues affecting the marriage of Henry VIII to Anne of Cleves. Pupils understand that Holbein's painting of Anne was intended to create a favourable view to foster links with Protestant Germany.

122. Pupils of all ages have positive attitudes and good behaviour in this subject. This is demonstrated in lessons by sustained concentration, interest and a willingness to work co-operatively when necessary. Teaching in this subject is good overall, because teachers have a clear focus to lessons and set relevant challenges. They use good questioning to develop historical thinking, analysis and hypothesis. A particular strength is the use of role play to create empathy, which has an impact on the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils. For example, in Year 2, pupils were able to understand the conditions in hospitals in the Crimean War and consider how Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole improved those conditions. The use of drama and letter writing made good links with literacy.

123. Learning is significantly enriched by the way teachers link history to other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5 learned about being an evacuee and in writing letters home, showed good understanding of the events and likely emotions. The teachers' medium-and short-term plans are effective but the school recognises a need for the school curriculum plan to be clearer.

124. The school makes good use of occasional class visits to local and other sites, which enriches their learning. Teachers give helpful advice through marking, but at times this focuses on basic skills and not on developing historical skills. Parents are informed of pupils' progress through annual reports, and there are informative class newsletters each term. Homework often relates to history and pupils show interest. In many classes, pupils bring in examples of work they have done at home or their research from the Internet.

125. The subject leader, who has several areas of responsibility, co-ordinates the subject satisfactorily. There is a policy, and schemes of work, planning and informal assessments are in place. Resources are satisfactory but the school would benefit from a wider range of resources and, in particular, artefacts that focus on the themes within the curriculum plan.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

126. Only two lessons and a short observation of Year 6 pupils were seen during the inspection. However, discussions with teachers and pupils and a scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the national expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were considered unsatisfactory.

127. Pupils in Year 2 have a sound ability to use the keyboard and control the mouse. In their mathematics work, they have formulated graphs to illustrate the birthday months of the class. They have also used the computer to plot a route to the 'Three Bears' House' and produced a 'treasure map' using co-ordinates. In work that is well linked to art, most pupils have created pictures and different-coloured shapes using shape and paint tools. They are able to save their completed work and when communicating text choose a font and letter size and correct their work using the back space. All pupils use the enter and return keys in their text and are able to insert capital letters, full stops and other punctuation marks.

128. Generally, pupils in Year 6 are confident in using new technologies and understand how this helps them carry out certain tasks more quickly. They have sound skills in bringing together text, tables and images into a multimedia presentation, for example, in their work on rivers, linked to geography. Pupils know how to use the Internet safely to find out information across a range of subjects but do not always get the opportunity in the classroom to participate in independent research owing to the limited number of working computers. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language benefit from using ICT as a practical form of learning.

129. In the two lessons seen, the teaching was good in one lesson and satisfactory in the other. Analysis of pupils' work and recent training for all teachers and support staff indicates that the overall standard of teaching is good. This indicates a good improvement from the last inspection, when the quality of teaching was considered unsatisfactory. Teachers' planning, overall, is effective and ensures that all pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding appropriate to the subject. In a Year 4 lesson, the teacher provided pupils with their own booklets for LOGO to record the commands that had been introduced in the previous lesson. She ascertained what pupils already knew before moving on to the day's topic. A good knowledge and understanding of the subject was apparent from the teacher's exposition and questioning. A laptop computer and projector were used well to ensure good progress by all pupils. A pupil with special educational needs was well supported by the teaching assistant, and two pupils with English as an additional language made similar progress to their classmates. Higher-attaining pupils, previously trained by the teacher, were used to work with small groups in order to enhance their computer skills. In a Year 3 lesson on simulation, the lesson was managed well, but a shortage of computers meant that only a few pupils could work on the computers at a time, thus slowing down the rate of learning. Pupils were given the opportunity to evaluate the programs they had been working with and to discuss with the class their understanding of the role of simulation in computer games. All teachers and support staff have undergone a great deal of training since the last inspection. As a result, their confidence has increased and pupils are making good progress.

130. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the subject and is also responsible for the Foundation Stage and humanities. She gives good educational direction for the subject. Since assuming responsibility for ICT, she has set up a scheme of work, produced an ICT folder for each member of staff to develop their expertise, arranged in-service training for all teachers and support staff, and has monitored teachers' planning and pupils' work to gauge the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Pupils are

very enthusiastic and enjoy working in the subject, particularly as they work collaboratively in pairs or small groups on computers, and this makes a positive contribution to their personal development. Accommodation is satisfactory at the moment but a purpose-built ICT suite has recently been built and is due to be opened in September. Good use is made of other elements of ICT by teachers, including overhead projectors, video cameras, calculators and audio recorders. ICT is also used appropriately in some other curriculum subjects like mathematics, geography and art, although the opportunities for all pupils to participate in independent research are relatively under-developed. There has been a significant improvement in the provision for ICT since the last inspection.

MUSIC

131. It is not possible to make firm judgements about standards in music as only one Year 3 music lesson was timetabled during the inspection. This small amount of evidence, together with the quality of singing in assemblies, indicates that standards are likely to be below the standard expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The time allocated to music is lower than average, which is also affecting the progress pupils make and the standards they attain. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding across the aspects of performing, composing and appraising, and consequently the music curriculum lacks adequate depth and breadth.

132. In the one Year 3 lesson seen, pupils explored the sounds they were able to make using a selection of percussion instruments. This was linked to their topic of exploring sound colours. The teacher used a video of a sports day to identify different sounds, which formed the stimulus for their work in the lesson. Working in three groups, pupils played a range of instruments and discussed their sound qualities and whether they reflected the sounds made on the video. Pupils were keen and interested in the work but the quality of their performance lacked sufficient understanding of how to develop and sustain a rhythmical pattern. Their skills of working co-operatively in a group and listening carefully to the performances and views of others are not sufficiently well developed. The teaching in this lesson was satisfactory overall. Through the teacher's questions and opportunities to discuss the various sounds as a whole group, pupils made satisfactory progress in developing their understanding about the different sounds instruments can make, although standards of performance remained below average. The majority of pupils behaved appropriately and were attentive for most of the lesson.

133. Pupils listen to a range of music when they enter and leave assemblies and have the opportunity to develop their singing in some but not all assemblies. Their singing is often tuneful, but lacks enough awareness of dynamics and phrasing. The reliance on taped or broadcast music to accompany their singing makes the achievement of better standards in singing more difficult. Pupils have opportunities to perform on a regular basis in end-of-term concerts and other similar activities.

134. Leadership of the subject has been in abeyance for several weeks as a result of the absence of the subject leader. Teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in teaching music are not strong and as a consequence pupils do not receive work that challenges them enough. The school is beginning to use national guidance as its scheme of work, but this has not been modified or developed further to meet the needs of pupils at the school. There is insufficient guidance to teachers to ensure that, in their planning, the learning intentions of individual lessons are identified clearly enough or to ensure that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed systemically from year to year. There is no formal system for assessing and recording pupils' progress in music over time. Resources, particularly tuned instruments, are limited and overall are unsatisfactory. Not enough improvement has taken place since the last inspection and progress overall is unsatisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is below the standard expected nationally. Standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection, when they were broadly average. However, standards in swimming are broadly average and nearly all pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the age of 11. The school places considerable emphasis on swimming, which affects adversely the balance of the curriculum and the standards pupils attain in the other required elements of the curriculum. In addition, the lack of an effective scheme of work to guide the work throughout the school, weaknesses in subject leadership and the lower-than-average amount of time given to physical education make it difficult for pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding systematically as they move through the school. As a

result, pupils do not make the expected progress or achieve as well as they might in relation to their capabilities. There is no significant difference in standards between boys and girls or pupils from minority ethnic heritages. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in lessons, enabling them to make satisfactory progress.

136. By the end of Year 2, pupils run and jump with increasing control but their awareness of the space around them is not well developed and many find it difficult to stop at the teacher's command. Their throwing, bouncing and catching skills are below average, as are their skills of evaluating their own work and that of others. Pupils are able to work together satisfactorily with a partner but only occasionally do teachers give them the opportunity to reflect on their own and others' performance to move the work forward. In addition, the teaching does not always provide pupils with appropriate activities or challenge them sufficiently to enable them to make the expected progress. For example, in a Year 1 lesson to develop batting and fielding skills, pupils worked hard in pairs rolling the ball and running to field it in the early part of the lesson but spent far too much time sitting waiting their turn in the game activity undertaken in the second part of the lesson. A more appropriate activity could have given them a better opportunity to develop their skills and helped to maintain their concentration. Pupils enjoy their lessons and remain active and involved throughout, although the lessons for the younger pupils are too long.

137. By the end of Year 6, pupils link skills, techniques and ideas appropriately but their performance lacks the precision, control and fluency expected of pupils of this age. They work well together in small groups, effectively sharing their ideas. They have a satisfactory understanding of health and safety issues relating to exercise and the reasons for warming up and cooling down at the beginning and end of lessons. In dance, they participate enthusiastically but the range of movements and creative ideas they have is rather narrow. In swimming lessons, which are taken by instructors at the local pool, most pupils have developed a satisfactory technique in the main swimming strokes and the small number of non-or weaker swimmers are generally confident in water. Pupils are developing their skills of evaluating their own work and that of others but do so in fairly general terms rather than with a clear understanding of subject-specific vocabulary. The lack of a clear scheme of work to guide curriculum planning and the lower-than-average amount of time given to some aspects of the programme of study mean that pupils do not develop their skills consistently between Years 3 – 6, although their learning in individual lessons is satisfactory.

138. The teaching is mostly satisfactory at both key stages: occasionally, it is good and in such lessons, pupils learn well. For example, in a Year 5 athletics lesson, pupils made good progress in developing their long jump and sprint techniques through the teacher's good organisation, sharp questioning and pertinent teaching points. Pupils were fully involved in measuring each other's jumps, timing their sprints and acting as coach to help their partner improve their performance. As a result, pupils made good progress and standards in this lesson were broadly average. In other lessons, although the teaching is mostly satisfactory, the activities are not always suitable for the ages of the pupils, sometimes being too challenging and at other times not challenging enough. The inappropriate selection of equipment for the activity, for example, balls that are too large or too small, does not help younger pupils to develop good techniques of throwing, bouncing and catching. Where teaching is less successful, pupils are not given sufficient help, through the use of clear teaching points or the use of good demonstrations, to develop and improve their skills. Teachers manage and organise their pupils well in the main and give them good praise and encouragement. Lessons are carefully planned in terms of the activities to be undertaken but do not always identify clearly enough the learning intentions, that is the specific knowledge, skills and understanding to be developed. This makes it more difficult to assess pupils' progress, both in the lesson and over time. Methods of assessing and recording pupils' progress systematically have not yet been established.

139. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. The subject leader, who was appointed six months ago, has had very little opportunity to influence the teaching of physical education throughout the school or to monitor and evaluate its effectiveness. This is partly a result of inexperience, a lack of understanding about the National Curriculum requirements for physical education and an unclear view of what the role of a subject leader should be. The school has received support from the local education authority adviser, which has helped to improve practice in some areas. Although some staff are using national guidance to help their planning, this is not used consistently throughout the school and this guidance has not been adapted to meet the particular needs of pupils at the school. Assessment procedures are insufficiently developed. The curriculum at present is unbalanced as the time taken for swimming, including getting to and from the baths, limits the time available for other areas, especially

gymnastics, dance and games, and also for other subjects of the curriculum. Resources are inadequate. There is no fixed equipment for gymnastics and the range and quality of small games equipment are unsatisfactory. Progress in this subject since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.