

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **ST EDWARDS RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Sheerness

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118757

Acting Headteacher: Mrs M Melton

Reporting inspector: Mrs D Wilkinson  
23048

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> November 2002

Inspection number: 247958

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	New Road Sheerness Kent
Postcode:	ME12 1BW
Telephone number:	01795 662708
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Greg Quinn
Date of previous inspection:	October 2000

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23048	Mrs D Wilkinson	Registered inspector	English Design and technology Music Physical education English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
8990	Mr D Tytler	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?
30705	Mr G Stephens	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Geography Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?
23886	Mr D McCarthy	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design History Educational inclusion, including race equality	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**

St Edwards RC Primary School has 177 pupils (91 boys and 86 girls) in seven classes from Year R to Year 6. It is smaller than the average-sized primary school, but is popular with parents and numbers are increasing although up to 50 per cent of Year 4 pupils leave at the end of the year to move to middle school. The school has difficulty in recruiting and retaining teachers, partly due to its location on the Isle of Sheppey. The proportion of pupils (15.25 per cent) with special educational needs is slightly below the national average. Three pupils have a specific statement for physical or behavioural needs and this number is around average. There are a small number of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, most of whom are fluent in English. Currently, few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and the proportion over recent years has been below average. The school is close to an industrial area where there is a high level of social and economic disadvantage. However, a significant minority of pupils come from outside the local area. The prior attainment of children entering the school is below average, especially in their language and mathematics skills.

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

This is a very good school where the whole community is continuing to work effectively towards improving the provision and standards. As a result, the quality of teaching is very good and this, together with the well-planned and interesting curriculum, helps pupils to make increasingly good progress in both their academic and personal development. The very effective leadership of the acting headteacher has created a strong team where all are encouraged and enabled to do their best in moving the school forward. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- It is a very caring school, which has worked hard to create a positive and caring ethos and an effective learning environment in which pupils thrive.
- Leadership and management of the acting headteacher and other senior staff are very good and they are particularly well supported by staff and governors.
- The quality of teaching is very good, especially for pupils in Years 1 to 6, and they achieve well. In a very high proportion of lessons seen during the inspection pupils made particularly good progress.
- The curriculum is well planned and motivates pupils well. It helps pupils to build on and extend their skills and knowledge effectively and to make good progress.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is of a high quality and, as a result, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are very good. Pupils' relationships with adults and each other are excellent.
- The school's partnership with parents, the parish and the community is very good and benefits pupils especially well.

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

- Provision in the reception class which, whilst satisfactory, is not as good as in other year groups.
- Standards in writing, especially in spelling.
- A greater range of activities to promote the progress of higher-attaining pupils.

*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 very good improvement over the last four years and since its last inspection in October 2000. This is largely because leadership and management at all levels have improved. The school is especially good at analysing its tests results and other data, and using the information to bring about improvement. As a result, both the quality of teaching and assessment in English, mathematics and science have improved exceptionally well and are very good. The curriculum for both pupils' personal

and academic development has also improved. These improvements in the provision have resulted in standards continuing to rise. Pupils are now achieving well overall, although some weaknesses remain in writing. Less improvement has taken place in the reception class, although it has been satisfactory. This is largely because of the difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff, which have meant the school has had to rely on an trainee teacher in this year group.

## 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	A	D	D
Mathematics	D	D	C	C
Science	B	D	C	C

**Key**

well above average      A

above average          B

average                  C

below average          D

well below average      E

Only a small group of pupils in the school takes the Key Stage 2 tests each year, so comparisons with schools nationally and also similar schools should be treated with caution.

Children in the reception class achieve appropriately although they do not reach the standards expected for their age, especially in their language and mathematics skills and knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because their prior attainment was below average in these aspects. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 to 6, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, is good and is continuing to improve. In the 2002 Year 2 tests, the school exceeded its targets and its results matched the national average and also those of similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards remain average for current Year 2 pupils and are also average in science. Test results show that standards have risen over the last four years in both the Year 2 and Year 6 tests and they are continuing to do so. Year 6 pupils also achieve well, although the test results do not always show this. The main reason is that many of the higher-attaining pupils leave at the end of Year 4. The above table shows that, in the Year 6 tests, the school's results were below average in English where it did not reach its target, mainly because of lower standards in writing. Standards were average in mathematics, where the target was reached, and also in science. The comparison with similar schools is the same. The standards for current Year 6 pupils continue to improve and are now above average in mathematics and average overall in English although writing is still the weakest aspect throughout the school, particularly spelling, which is below average. The school is likely to reach the appropriate targets set for this year. Achievement is good in most other subjects and good or very good progress was being made in the majority of lessons seen during the inspection. Apart from mathematics, standards are in line with national expectations in all subjects except physical education, where they are above this by the time pupils leave. There is not enough evidence to make a judgement about standards in music, or in physical education in Year 2

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good and this helps pupils to work hard and make good progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Based on a care and concern for others this is very good, both in classrooms and around the school.

Personal development and relationships	Very good overall and relationships throughout the school are excellent. Pupils willingly accept responsibility and the opportunity to help others.
Attendance	Good attendance and punctuality support pupils' learning well.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Very good	Very good

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

The high levels of very good teaching are due to two factors. Firstly, the procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching are very effective and allow senior managers to give very good advice to their colleagues. Secondly, there is an exceptionally strong commitment amongst all staff to work hard to improve the provision. This has resulted in there being a very consistent approach to teaching and learning. In the teaching observed, seven out of ten lessons were at least good and nearly half were very good. Five excellent lessons were seen. The proportion of good and very good teaching was even higher in Years 3 to 6 where nearly nine out of ten lessons were at least good and over six out of ten very good. The very best teaching was that of permanent members of staff. However, very good teaching was also seen from those experienced teachers who are new to the school or working on a temporary contract. The especial strengths are in planning, the teaching of basic skills, especially in English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy lessons, and the methods, including the use of resources, to help pupils learn. Classroom assistants provide very good support. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are also taught very well. All these strengths mean that pupils are making very good progress in most lessons. On most occasions, the needs of the higher-attaining pupils are met. However, not all lessons give them enough opportunity to make the progress of which they are capable.

The problems in recruiting and retaining staff have affected the quality of teaching in the reception class. This has meant that, for the last 15 months, the class has been taught by a trainee teacher who is unqualified. Very good support from staff currently in the school has ensured that the teaching is satisfactory and improving. However, the medium and short-term planning and assessment procedures are mainly informal and are not supporting future planning as well as they should, although the children are making satisfactory progress.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good range of interesting activities help pupils to achieve well. The provision for literacy and numeracy, and for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. The curriculum for children in the reception class is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good and well supported by the school's caring ethos. Pupils are fully included, have full access to the same good curriculum and achieve well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There is good awareness of their needs and this ensures they are met well. As a result, these pupils achieve as well as others in the school.



Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good in all aspects. The Catholic ethos of the school is evident in many areas of its work and supports spiritual, moral and social development very well. Cultural development has improved particularly well since the last inspection and helps prepare pupils well for life in a culturally diverse society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. This is a particularly caring school with very effective procedures to guide and support all its pupils. Assessment in Years 1 to 6 is very good.

The school has a very good partnership with parents. They are encouraged to play a full part in the life of the school and this benefits pupils especially well

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The acting headteacher is providing very good leadership and clear direction for all the school's work. She is supported well by the very effective subject managers and by the whole-staff team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Effectively led by the Chair, governors fulfil their responsibilities well. Hardworking and supportive, they have a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very effective systems for collecting and analysing evidence in all areas of the school's work have resulted in especially good action being taken.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning and the use of resources are satisfactory A more detailed costing of the current priorities would make future planning easier and facilitate monitoring by the governing body

The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily. There are a suitable number of teaching staff although two are unqualified and one is on a temporary contract. The well-qualified classroom assistants support learning very effectively. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall although currently the computer suite cannot be used for ICT for the morning sessions and the library area is small.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• They are encouraged to work hard and make good progress in both their academic and personal development.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Children are well taught.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information they receive about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The school to work more closely with them.</li> <li>• The extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. Children do like school and have very positive attitudes to their work. This, together with the high levels of very good teaching, helps them to work hard and make good progress. The standard of behaviour is very good, as are the relationships. The school has a very successful partnership with parents, giving them very good information about its work, including their children's progress. The number and range of extra-curricular activities is good compared to other primary schools.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Overall, pupils achieve well as they move through the school, and their achievement is now improving further in Years 1 to 6 as a result of the very good teaching. In the majority of lessons observed during the inspection, pupils' progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding was very good.
2. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good. Results in the tests taken at the end of Year 2 show that standards have improved well over the past four years, and since the school was last inspected, with standards in this year's tests being average in English, mathematics and science. The school set appropriate targets for the past two years and has exceeded them, and by a particularly good margin this year. It is well placed to maintain the improvement. Standards for current Year 2 pupils are the same as in this year's tests.
3. It is much more difficult to judge how well standards are improving in the Year 6 tests, or to make secure comparisons between the different year groups who took the tests over the past few years. This is because a large number of pupils transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, many of whom are the higher-attaining pupils. For example, the average class size in the school is 26 and in 2001 only 12 pupils took the Year 6 tests, and this year only 14. However, inspection evidence shows the Year 6 pupils' achievement is good and also improving. For current Year 6 pupils, standards are now better in English and science than they were in the tests for last year's Year 6. Standards remain the same in science
4. The very good teamwork seen in the school and the exceptionally good leadership of the subject co-ordinator has resulted in very good improvements in the quality of teaching in English. This is the main reason for the improved achievement of pupils, which is now good overall and continuing to improve. The majority of pupils in the current Year 2 class are likely to reach average standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing. In the current Year 6 class, pupils are likely to reach average standards in speaking and listening and in reading. Although they are likely to reach average standards in some aspects of writing, prior weaknesses in vocabulary and creativity in their written work means that standards in writing are below average overall. The school is focusing on raising standards in spelling. However, the current strategy is only resulting in slow improvement and standards throughout the school remain below average.
5. Pupils are achieving well in mathematics as the result of the very good teaching in numeracy lessons. Achievement is especially good in number work because of the very good focus on this aspect, and Year 2 pupils reach average standards overall. They have a very good understanding of place value and the number system and a sound knowledge of shapes, both two-and three-dimensional. They can interpret data using graphs and tally charts. Good progress continues to be made in number work as pupils move on through the school and standards are now above average in Year 6, particularly in this aspect. For example, pupils calculate accurately using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division operations. They have a clear understanding of fractions, decimals, percentages and ratio, know the properties of different triangles and can plot coordinates in the four quadrants.
6. Throughout the school, pupils' achievement in science is good and was very good in most of the lessons seen during the inspection. This is because the teaching is very good and lessons are interesting and motivate pupils well. Consequently, pupils enjoy their learning and behave very well. The emphasis on learning through practical investigations helps pupils throughout the school to make very good progress in developing their scientific enquiry skills. This helps them to make good gains in knowledge. For example, by the end of Year 2, pupils have a secure knowledge of simple electrical circuits, the differences in some physical characteristics of humans and a very good understanding of the properties of materials. Pupils build well on these skills and knowledge

as they move through Years 3 to 6. By Year 6, pupils' strengths in investigation skills help them to make very good gains in their knowledge of different topics such as the study of living things.

7. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in art and design, history, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education (PE). Achievement is also good in geography in Year 2. In design and technology (DT) and music, and geography in Year 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils achieve well because of the high quality teaching and their very good attitudes to their learning. However, the improvements in teaching are fairly recent and there has not been sufficient time to see a further improvement in standards except in PE at the end of Year 6 where they are now above average. Not enough lessons were observed to make a judgement about standards in music in Years 2 and 6, or in PE in Year 2.
8. By the end of Years 2 and 6, most pupils reach average standards in ICT. Good improvement in the provision has meant that pupils are now achieving well although the improvement has only taken place recently and has not had time to have a significant effect on standards. Pupils' skills are better in word processing where they are above expectations, but are weaker in control technology and the use of electronic mail (e-mail).
9. The broad and interesting PE curriculum emphasises the acquisition of skills and it helps pupils to achieve well. Good teaching ensures pupils make good progress and, by Year 6, the majority reach above average standards.
10. When children enter the reception class, their attainment is below average. This is especially so in their communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills. During the time they spend in this class, their achievement is satisfactory although, by the end of the year, the majority of children are unlikely to reach the overall standards expected for their age.
11. Standards in communication, language and literacy are lower because many children are slow at remembering how to write their letters and find it difficult to identify the words and letters they have learned when trying to read a book. Children's listening skills are impeded by their reluctance to listen to others or take turns in answering their teacher. In mathematics, although the majority of children can point out different shapes and count accurately to five, they still need support in applying this knowledge in other mathematical activities. The standards achieved in their knowledge and understanding of the world are impeded by the fact that the majority of children's prior general knowledge is below that of others of their age. This is largely because few have a curiosity about the world around them.
12. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress throughout the school. This is because of the school's commitment to meeting the needs of all its pupils and the high quality provision these pupils receive. Pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) are effectively supported and they make the same good progress as other pupils. In the majority of lessons, the needs of higher-attaining pupils are met at least satisfactorily. However, on some occasions, they are given the same activity as other pupils in the class and this is not challenging enough so they do not make the progress of which they are capable. This is limiting their achievement.

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

13. The attitudes, values, behaviour and personal development of pupils, which are very well supported by the school's Catholic ethos, are a strength of the school, and a major reason for parents choosing St Edwards for their children. The outstanding relationships that exist throughout the school make a very important contribution to the pupils' personal and academic development. These aspects of the school's work were not specifically reported on at the last inspection.
14. All the parents who replied to the inspection questionnaire thought behaviour in the school was good and 95 per cent said that their children like school. More than 90 per cent also thought that the school was helping their children become mature and responsible.

15. Children in the reception class are enthusiastic about school. Most are beginning to take turns and show consideration for others. Children are gaining in confidence, with a number welcoming visitors and talking confidently to adults. Most children can work and play happily together although many prefer to work independently. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are polite, friendly and courteous, talking easily to visitors and holding doors open for others to pass through. Their behaviour is almost universally very good, in classes, assemblies, around the school and when on visits, as was seen when pupils walked the mile to the town swimming pool. High levels of behaviour were sustained through the wet break and lunchtimes observed during the inspection.
16. The pupils' enthusiasm for school is evident in their involvement in school activities and is channelled into the very positive attitudes to learning which are striking features of most lessons. Pupils in a Year 5/6 PE lesson took part enthusiastically and vigorously in all the exercises and, as a result, made good gains in their learning. Even when tackling tasks which they find difficult, pupils listen and try hard to do well.
17. Pupils understand the school's high expectations of good behaviour and respond well to their teachers, co-operating with them in a partnership of learning. The excellent behaviour in a Year 2 science lesson enabled the teacher to concentrate on teaching while the pupils could work undisturbed, showing high levels of concentration. On a very few occasions in lessons where attitudes and behaviour were seen to be less than good, a minority of pupils shouted out, became restless and drifted off task. This was nearly always due to weaker teaching.
18. No incidents of oppressive behaviour were seen during the inspection and a review of school records showed that there are very few over the school year. There have been three fixed exclusions of two boys in the last 12 months. The vast majority of pupils understand the impact that their actions can have on others. In a personal, social and health education discussion period, known as 'Circle Time', older pupils participated well, confidently talking to others, knowing the consequences of their own actions and how they should respond.
19. Pupils listen carefully to each other and to their teachers, responding sensibly and thoughtfully. In a Year 4 science lesson, pupils showed the utmost respect for the feelings of others. The very good relationships in this class stem from the teacher's determination that all pupils will succeed. And they do. Throughout the school, the positive relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults enable pupils to achieve well.
20. There are many opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take personal responsibility in classes and around the school, with older pupils, in particular, carrying out tasks to support the day-to-day running of the school. Pupils in Year 6 act effectively as playground 'buddies' and as monitors at lunchtime, helping to maintain the calm orderly atmosphere the school expects. Year 3 pupils showed independence in learning when selecting their own resources in a mathematics lesson.
21. All pupils with SEN respond well to the adults that support them and try to do their best. The behaviour of pupils is very good and they have developed positive attitudes to their learning. There is effective support and advice from the local education authority pupil support service and the speech therapist who is bought in by the school for additional hours, thereby ensuring very good support and advice. Praise in small-group work is used very effectively to raise pupils' self-esteem. Adults expect that pupils will work well with one another - and they do.
22. Attendance is improving and is above the national average for schools of this type. The good attendance and punctuality of pupils make a major contribution to the standards achieved.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. The school has successfully improved the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. This is a very significant factor in promoting the good achievement of pupils and the increasingly good progress that they make.
24. At the time of the inspection, only four out of the seven class teachers were permanent members of staff. In addition, one of these teachers had only been in the school for three weeks. Of the other three members of staff, two were unqualified and the other, who was temporary, started on the first day of the inspection. Despite this, the school has maintained a high level of quality in this aspect of its work. The school is fortunate in having an advanced-skills teacher for literacy who provides exceptionally good support to colleagues, as do all the permanent members of staff who have been in the school for some time. In addition, the particularly good teamwork seen amongst all adults has led to the sharing of good practice. As a result, the overall quality of teaching is very good
25. The school's difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff has affected the quality of the provision for the reception class, which has had to be taught by a trainee teacher for the past 15 months. Currently, the teacher training institution is not providing support in school. However, both the school and the local education authority have worked very hard to ensure that the provision is at least satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in this year group and one good lesson was seen.
26. Teaching in the reception class is satisfactory because:
- the teacher has a secure understanding of the curriculum and needs of children in this year group
  - appropriately challenging activities are planned which help the children to make satisfactory progress towards the Early Goals for Learning (the standards expected for their age)
  - literacy and numeracy are satisfactorily taught
  - there is a suitable mixture of activities in which children work with an adult and opportunities for them to investigate or explore on their own or in groups
  - in most lessons, children's positive attitudes to school encourage them to learn and make progress
  - the two well-qualified classroom assistants are effectively deployed and give exceptionally good support to children's learning.
27. Some elements of teaching do not support children's learning so well. These include:
- the teacher sometimes takes a long time to organise and settle the class and lessons do not start promptly
  - on some occasions the pace is rather slow and children begin to lose interest
  - much of the short-term planning and assessment are informal and this makes it harder when planning for the next stages in learning.
28. There is very little difference between the quality of teaching in the other infant and junior classes, particularly in English, mathematics and science, where the teaching is consistently very good. Consequently, most pupils were making very good progress in their learning during the inspection. Teaching is also very good in ICT and history and good in art and design, DT and PE. It is satisfactory in geography and music. There were a few occasions in Year 1 when the organisation and management were not quite as good as in other classes. However, this was because the teacher was very new to the school and was still getting to know the pupils.
29. There are many strengths in the teaching, the most significant of which are:
- the very good lesson planning which follows a whole-school format
  - the very effective range of methods used to help encourage learning including demonstrating new skills and questioning pupils to help their understanding
  - the excellent relationships between teachers and pupils which helps the latter to behave very well and to concentrate and work hard
  - the imaginative use of resources to help pupils learn more easily

- the contribution of classroom assistants, which helps to make the teaching of pupils with SEN and EAL very good
- the quality of marking and on-going assessment and the advice given to pupils on how to improve, which helps them to make good and often very good progress in lessons.

A significant proportion of the lessons seen were excellent. These lessons contained all the above features. For example, in an excellent mathematics lesson seen in Year 3, the high quality planning was consistently followed throughout and the examples the teacher gave were particularly good in helping pupils to understand how to multiply and divide using three-digit numbers. As a result, pupils made exceptionally good progress in this lesson. Likewise, in an excellent Year 2 science lesson, the activities had been exceptionally well chosen. The methods this teacher uses to help pupils understand are of a particularly high quality and her subject knowledge is excellent. As a result, these pupils were gaining an exceptionally good understanding about the properties of different materials.

30. Literacy and numeracy are satisfactorily taught in the reception class and very well taught in Years 1 to 6. There is a good awareness of how to use ICT to support learning in many subjects. However, the impact on learning is limited at present due to the use of the ICT suite as a classroom.
31. In the majority of lessons all pupils, including the higher attainers, are challenged well. However, there are some occasions when the higher-attaining pupils would benefit from being set more challenging work, better matched to the stage at which they are working. This would help them to make greater progress and to learn as well as the other pupils in all lessons.
32. The teaching of pupils with SEN and EAL is also very good. Planning indicates that teachers match work effectively to the level at which these pupils are working, especially in English, mathematics and science. They often either plan with or seek the advice of the learning support assistants when planning to meet the needs of the pupils with SEN. Pupils often receive very good additional support from either the teacher or learning support assistant during lessons. A very good range of resources is used well to motivate and interest the pupils. The support assistants are very skilled, establish good relationships with SEN pupils and are very well briefed by teaching staff. Questioning by both the class teachers and support assistants included SEN and EAL pupils well in the lessons observed.

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

33. There has been good improvement to the curriculum since the last inspection, which now provides a wide and effective range of learning opportunities, especially for pupils in Years 1 to 6. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are included, and the curriculum meets statutory requirements well.
34. Very good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education, including sex education, and this is a good improvement since the last inspection. Not only are these taught within the context of the unique Catholic ethos of the school, but a mobile classroom, organised by a local charity, visits the school for a few days every year to develop pupils' awareness of their bodies and show them how to take care of themselves. Pupils learn about drug misuse and how to avoid this. Parents are also informed of their right to withdraw their child from sex education lessons. As well as full coverage of the National Curriculum subjects, due emphasis is given to English, mathematics and science together with religious education and the development of spirituality within the Catholic ethos of the school. The curriculum is relevant to the needs of all its pupils and particularly effective for pupils with SEN. There is a good emphasis on literacy, numeracy and personal development. However, there are some missed opportunities to extend the higher-attaining pupils in the subjects taught.
35. Curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection and it is now good. Policies reflect the Catholic ethos and values of the school well and provide learning opportunities that are fully inclusive for pupils of different ethnic backgrounds and gender. Teachers plan together for each

subject using the national schemes of work as guidance. Teachers' weekly planning is now more systematic and promotes the teaching of basic skills well. This ensures that pupils build on and extend their skills and knowledge well. These are also effectively linked to subject maps which show what pupils in different year groups will learn each term. There is a good curriculum framework, which mostly takes account of the needs of pupils with different abilities and motivates pupils well. Although it provides very good guidance for supporting the lower-attaining pupils, there is less emphasis on planning suitably challenging work for the higher attainers. This is one reason why, in a minority of lessons, these pupils, although learning appropriately, do not always progress as well as others in the class.

36. The curriculum for pupils with SEN is very good. These pupils are included well and have access to the same broad and balanced curriculum as other pupils. The requirements of the SEN Code of Practice are fully met and are reflected in a very detailed and useful policy document. Teachers and local authority staff work closely with learning support assistants to ensure that these pupils' needs are met and consequently they make good progress against the targets detailed in their individual education plans. Their individual education plans reflect appropriate learning activities matched well to the needs of these pupils, including those with statements. The provision for the small number of EAL pupils is good. There is good awareness of their language needs and they are included well in all activities.
37. Planning in the reception class, though satisfactory, is not as good as in the rest of the school. Long-term planning is appropriately based on the agreed stages of learning (Stepping Stones) for children in this age group and this is helping children to make progress and achieve satisfactorily. However, much of the weekly and daily planning is informal, as are the systems for assessing the progress children are making. This means that planning for the next stages in learning is not as effective as it could be.
38. The school has very good strategies for teaching literacy skills and has implemented the National Literacy Strategy very effectively. This represents a further improvement since the last inspection. Reading and most aspects of writing are promoted very well. There were many examples of very good extended writing in other subjects, as seen, for example, in the Year 5 history projects on famous Victorian people. However, the current programmes used to increase pupils' ability to spell accurately are not successfully helping to raise standards. Numeracy skills are also very well promoted, through the school's effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. This ensures that standards in mathematics are above average by the time pupils leave Year 6 and is another improvement since the last inspection. Numeracy is now better promoted in subjects such as PE, music, history, science and geography. The school has made a satisfactory start in encouraging pupils to use their ICT skills in their learning in other subjects, but this is affected at present by the limited time spent in the computer suite.
39. The provision for activities outside lessons is good. Due to transport difficulties, the school has made good arrangements to hold after-school clubs every Thursday. These greatly enhance pupils' learning and include such activities as the art club, Write Dance, and a games club. Strong links are maintained with the local community, which further promote pupils' learning. The parish community is actively involved in preparing pupils for First Communion, and the Parish Priest visits the school regularly. There are firmly established links with other primary schools on the island, which benefit pupils, for example, in the opportunity to compete in sporting events. In addition, these links support staff well in activities such as further training. Visitors such as the science theatre workshop, who come into the school to perform and work with pupils, and the architect who visited as part of the 'Architects in Schools' initiative, have contributed well to pupils' learning. Effective business links with the local supermarket have enabled pupils to experience the variety of jobs people do there. There are also planned visits to local places of interest such as museums. Despite this very good provision there is currently no residential trip which would enable pupils to consolidate and extend their learning in other subjects such as science, history and PE, as well as further promoting personal development. In addition, there are few opportunities for pupils to participate in field trips, which would particularly enhance learning in geography and science.

40. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now very good in all areas, with notable improvement in the provision for cultural education since the last inspection. The statutory requirements to provide a daily collective act of worship are met well.
41. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. This is based on the strong Catholic ethos and is a feature of the school valued by parents. There are many opportunities for quiet prayer and reflection in assemblies and within subject lessons. For example, in a Year 2 ICT lesson, pupils' experienced awe and wonder when they looked at how a digital camera worked, saw photographs of fireworks downloaded from it and then created pictures of firework displays using a computer program. Before lunchtimes pupils also say 'Grace' reverently and with feeling. The traditional Catholic Christian festivals of Advent, Christmas and Easter are celebrated, emphasising their spiritual importance. Other clergy from different Christian faiths such as the Salvation Army and the local Baptist minister visit the school, which promotes the idea of Christian fellowship. In addition, pupils are encouraged to learn how people of other faiths celebrate significant festivals, for example the Hindu 'Diwali'. This well thought-out inclusive approach enables all pupils to feel equally valued and to participate as equal members of the school community.
42. The promotion of pupils' moral development is very good. Staff provide good role models and pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and helped to recognise the consequence of their actions. There is an implicit expectation within the Catholic ethos of the school that pupils will be considerate and kind to one another and they are, which effectively prevents bullying or harassment of any kind while promoting very good behaviour. Very good behaviour is also effectively promoted through the reward system, which includes opportunities to earn house points. These very effective strategies encourage most pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to help each other. Very good provision in 'Circle Time' encourages pupils to respect the feelings of others and to value their contributions. These very positive features are reinforced through the use of 'Golden Rules and Golden Time' with an award being given for the 'Child of the Week' for the best-behaved and hardest-working pupil in each class.
43. Provision for pupils' social development is also very good and has been maintained since the last inspection. The school is very effective in developing pupils' self-esteem and building up their confidence as learners. This has especial benefit for pupils with SEN and those of different ethnic groups. There is a well-developed 'Buddy System' in place where the more established pupils help newer or younger pupils in school who may be experiencing difficulties. This develops pupils' maturity and promotes consideration for others. Social development is also very well promoted in lessons where there are opportunities for pupils to take turns in discussion and to share. There are also opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively in classrooms. For example, in a Year 3 art lesson, pupils worked in pairs and took turns in discussing how they wanted their partners to pose in silhouette to make miniature portraits of one another. Pupils are encouraged to work on their own without help and many pupils do, for example, in guided-reading activities. Pupils are also given opportunities for helping staff and each other, for example, at lunchtime, in taking the class lunchboxes to the hall or helping to clear away the plates and cutlery. After-school activities also promote turn-taking and sharing. Pupils are also helped to develop citizenship skills and are actively involved in fund-raising activities to support national and local charities, such as Cancer Relief and Cafod.
44. Provision for pupils' cultural development is now very good and has significantly improved since the last inspection. There are now more opportunities to experience different cultures and pupils are prepared well for life in multi-cultural Britain. Most classrooms have multi-faith items on display in the quiet areas of classrooms alongside Catholic religious artefacts. The planning and pupils' work in religious education also shows that pupils consider different faiths and religious traditions such as Islam, Sikhism and Judaism. In art, the study of the work of other artists is a strong feature, with many examples of artwork created for display in history and geography. For example, younger junior pupils worked very hard at home, producing realistic replicas of mummy's coffins, to further their understanding of Ancient Egyptian culture. Some of these could be opened to reveal wonderful bandaged replicas of mummies. Older junior pupils also made models of Medusa's heads at home as part of their history topic on Ancient Greek culture. In a Year 2 class, pupils helped to produce a most attractive display of the fictional island of Struay to promote their



understanding of life on a Scottish island. Music also promotes pupils' experience of their own and different cultures. Not only do pupils sing hymns in assemblies, but they also listen to the traditional liturgical music of Taize, Africa and India in addition to classical pieces. For example, a PE lesson for Years 5 and 6 used the theme from the film 'Chariots of Fire' to generate their own sequences of movements in slow motion in the style of various Olympic athletes.

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

45. The school provides a high level of care for its pupils, which is appreciated by parents and embedded in the school's strong Catholic ethos. Whilst this aspect of the school's work was not reported on specifically in the last inspection report, evidence suggests that there has been continuing improvement.
46. Child protection procedures are very good. The acting headteacher is the named person responsible and has undertaken recent training. She held a training session for staff and governors to ensure that all those in contact with children are aware of the procedures. The school also pays very good attention to the health and safety of pupils. The comprehensive and useful staff handbook gives guidance on effective procedures for accidents, first aid, medication, fire procedures, visits and procedures for severe weather.
47. Good arrangements to monitor and improve attendance have been successful in raising levels over the last 12 months. There are clear recording procedures, including the weekly monitoring of individuals. Parents are fully aware of the school's expectations and the vast majority take their responsibilities seriously.
48. The very good arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour underpin the very good behaviour and positive attitudes of pupils. The very few incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour are recorded carefully and dealt with quickly and effectively. Parents are kept fully informed and support the school's 'no blame' strategy.
49. The educational and personal support provided for pupils is of a high quality and enables pupils to take full advantage of all the learning opportunities that are available to them. There are very effective arrangements to support individual pupils with specific needs. There are good informal procedures for monitoring and recording pupils' personal development. Individual concerns are recorded and discussed both formally and informally. Pupils' personal development is reported to parents in the annual reports on their children.
50. The procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress are very good. The core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT are regularly assessed and the outcomes effectively used to help monitor pupils' progress. At the beginning of each year, staff use the whole range of assessment records to place pupils into ability groups for the core subjects. This helps to ensure that most work is well targeted to pupils' needs. In addition, each group is set targets, which are regularly referred to in lessons and assessed so that progress can be noted as well as the results being used to inform future planning. Whilst very good use is being made of group targets to enhance learning and improve progress, less emphasis has been placed on giving pupils individual targets. This has meant that, on some occasions, the higher-attaining pupils have not been challenged as well as others in the class.
51. The assessment co-ordinator has an effective system for tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school. This, together with a very careful analysis of the national test results and other assessment data, helps to adjust schemes of work and planning for subsequent years. This is one reason why the curriculum and teachers' lesson planning is good. Marking of pupils' work is also good. It identifies what pupils can already do and gives advice on how to improve. The school recognises that more importance should be given to pupils' response to marking and some lesson activities are being adapted to take account of this.
52. Assessment for children in the reception class is generally satisfactory. It is at least satisfactory in all other curriculum subjects and is good in art and design, DT, history, ICT and PE, where it is

supporting pupils' progress well. Most subjects are assessed at the end of each topic or unit, using a simple skills and knowledge list. This is used effectively by teachers to plan the next unit of work. In lessons, teachers are especially good at helping pupils to evaluate what they are doing. Whilst often offering good advice for improvement, teachers also encourage pupils to evaluate their own work and this helps them to make good progress as well as gaining a good understanding of what they are learning.

53. The school gives very good support to pupils with SEN. Their needs are identified and appropriate procedures exist for placing pupils on the register. The school meets the requirements outlined in the pupils' statements of special educational need. On-going assessment procedures for these pupils are very good. The school places great emphasis on including all pupils in the full range of activities offered and is very successful in this regard. There is also careful monitoring of EAL pupils including a good awareness of the progress they are making in developing language skills.

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

54. Parents are very supportive of the school and value all aspects of its work, having confidence in the education and support it provides for their children. Many help in classes, on school trips and at events, giving it generous financial support through an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Whilst this aspect of the school's work was not reported on specifically at the last inspection, evidence suggests that the partnership with parents is continuing to improve.
55. There was some discrepancy between the views expressed in the inspection questionnaire and at the parents' meeting. Whilst most parents who replied to the survey expressed positive views in all areas of the school's work, there were concerns about the effectiveness of the partnership with parents; the range of extra-curricular activities and the information they receive on the progress being made by their children. Parents at the meeting were very positive, believing that there is a very strong partnership between parents and the school and generally not sharing the concerns expressed by some in the questionnaire. Inspection evidence also showed that these concerns were largely unfounded, although the school has identified areas for improvement as better liaison with parents who do not come to school regularly, closer links with parents of children with SEN, and increased attendance at PTA meetings.
56. The information provided to parents is of high quality. There are termly consultation evenings and the school's open-door policy means that parents can easily raise immediate concerns with the acting headteacher and staff. The written annual reports are detailed and clear, explaining what children know and can do and containing targets for improvement. Parents also value the termly information on what pupils will be learning and the well-produced newsletters from the school and the PTA. The prospectus is informative and parents are welcomed to question the school about the contents. The prospectus and the governors' annual report meet statutory requirements.
57. The school works hard to establish and maintain an effective working partnership with parents and, as a result, the vast majority of parents give very good support to their children's learning at home through listening to their children read and encouraging them to complete their homework, particularly when children are involved in longer-term investigative projects.
58. Class teachers are responsible for completing the individual education plans (IEPs) for pupils with SEN and close contacts are made, especially with the parents of the younger pupils. All parents of pupils with SEN are kept well informed about progress as IEPs are reviewed every term. The class teacher and learning support assistant attend these meetings and the school informs parents of the outcomes. The school has tried to involve parents more by sending home copies of reviews for them to sign and inviting them into school - both with limited success. Plans are now in hand for the special educational needs co-ordinator to be available at a set time each term for parent consultations that can be booked well in advance. This will give parents plenty of time to make the necessary arrangements to attend.

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

59. The school is very well led and managed by the acting headteacher, who has been in post for only three and a half terms, but is rapidly gaining in confidence as she settles into the role. She is conscientious and hard working, provides very effective leadership and has established management structures that have had a very positive impact on school improvement. She provides a clear direction for all involved with the school and is well supported by the acting deputy headteacher and the senior management team, who work well together. They provide continuity of purpose in difficult circumstances, as the appointment and retention of staff is a problem for the school – a problem over which it has little control. The key issues from the previous inspection have been addressed very well, clear priorities for the future have been set and the school has the capacity to succeed in achieving them.
60. The senior management team meets weekly and is playing an increasingly active role in developments. It has focused clearly on the need to raise standards and, under the very effective guidance of the acting headteacher, has been rigorous in pursuing this goal. The role of the subject co-ordinators has also developed significantly and the core subjects, of English, mathematics and science and also ICT, are led very well by very experienced and effective co-ordinators who have had a major impact on raising standards. The regular monitoring of teaching and the useful feedback to staff is having a positive impact on teaching and learning and encouraging very positive attitudes in all staff involved with pupils on a day-to-day basis, both teaching and non-teaching. This impacts on the very good ethos of the school that pervades all aspects of its life.
61. The very effective work of the co-ordinators, together with very good procedures for monitoring and evaluating its work, has ensured that the school has comprehensive and accurate information to use in planning for future developments. For example, an exceptionally good analysis of the 2002 test results for mathematics has led to swift action and very good recent improvement in the provision. As a result, pupils in Year 6 are now attaining above average standards in the subject. In addition, as the performance management process becomes increasingly established as a key part of the school's system for improving teaching, this is also having a positive impact. Both the acting and deputy head teachers have recently attended training and all permanent staff are involved in the process.
62. The recently appointed special educational needs co-ordinator provides very good leadership. He has a very good overview of need throughout the school and has established systems and procedures that fully involve all staff and teaching assistants in writing targets on IEPs. They also monitor pupils' progress well. He ensures that the SEN register is kept up to date. He has a clear vision and plans well strategically. The SEN governor is well informed and visits the school regularly, presenting a report to each meeting of the full governing body.
63. There is a strong commitment in the school to provide for the specific needs of individual pupils. Therefore, all pupils are fully included in all that the school has to offer. The school's very good systems for encouraging good behaviour and relationships mean that racial harmony is promoted especially well.
64. The governors, well led by the Chair of Governors, have continued to develop their monitoring role and, through regular visits and the receipt of detailed reports, especially from the high quality monitoring, have gained a very good overview of the school and a detailed understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. This is a further improvement since the last inspection. Specific governors have a good knowledge of the provision and standards in English, mathematics and special educational needs. Governors are closely involved in the writing of the school improvement plan that now projects over the next three years helping them to form a strategic vision for the school. There is a good awareness of the difficulties that the school faces in recruiting and retaining staff. Both senior staff and governors have adopted a flexible approach, including employing temporary and unqualified teachers and putting in place support systems to ensure that all classes have at least satisfactory provision. The principles of best value are applied effectively with regard to financial decisions. However, governors are not giving a high enough profile to comparing the provision and standards with similar schools in order to evaluate progress and contrast costs more effectively.

65. The administrative systems to support the day-to-day running of the school are effective and good use is made of new technology to support this. The local education authority provides extra support in financial administration.
66. Financial planning is satisfactory. Sound links are made with the school improvement plan, although the costing is not detailed enough to allow easy monitoring by the governing body. The school currently has a significant under-spend, with part of the money being set aside to equip a new classroom shortly to be delivered. However, this expense had not been fully costed, leading to some funding being set aside unnecessarily. All specific grants are used well for their intended purposes.
67. Overall, the school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. However, senior management has ensured that these are used effectively to support the education of pupils
68. The school has experienced considerable difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff. This is partly due to its geographical location and the difficulties in travelling to the island caused by the lifting bridge. At the time of the inspection, apart from the acting headteacher, only three qualified teachers had been at the school for more than a few weeks. One teacher had only been in the school for three weeks and a temporary teacher started on the first day of the inspection. In addition, currently two members of staff are unqualified teachers although one has many years' teaching experience overseas. The other is currently undergoing training for qualified teacher status. Despite all these problems, the school has managed the situation very well, resulting in the overall quality of teaching being very good. There are a good number of classroom assistants and support staff. They are well qualified and very effective in supporting teaching and learning.
69. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. Displays throughout the school enhance the environment, as well as celebrating pupils' work and helping them to learn. Classrooms are of a satisfactory size for most activities. Recently, the school's popularity has increased and numbers are rising. There are now separate classes for Year 5 and 6 pupils, which meant that an extra classroom was needed. The school was promised this for September, but it has been delayed until January next year. This has led to the Year 5 class being taught in the computer suite for the morning session and in different classrooms during the afternoon. While the school has worked extremely hard to limit the impact of this, it has had an adverse effect on the access that pupils have to computers. It has not prevented pupils from developing new skills appropriately, but it has limited the opportunities for using these in other subjects. In addition, Year 5 pupils have to move to other classrooms in the afternoons. It is only due to their very good attitudes to school and the hard work of staff, that their learning is at the same good level as in other year groups. There is an appropriate number of rooms for group and individual work; however, the library is very small and not suitable for any other than small groups to use it. The outside areas are attractive and they support learning well. Good sized grass and hard surface areas are effectively used for PE lessons. In addition, trees planted by pupils as part of a conservation project, and picnic tables, help to make it a good area for work and play.
70. Resources are satisfactory in most areas of the curriculum, including an appropriate ratio of books and computers to pupils. Staff use the resources particularly well to support learning.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection. It has improved the quality of its provision and raised standards.

72. In order to improve standards further, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (1) Raise the provision for children in the Foundation Stage to the same level as that seen in the rest of the school by:
  - providing medium-term planning which identifies how children can build on and extend their learning across all areas;
  - improving the quality of teaching, especially through ensuring that lessons have clear learning objectives and identify the activities which will help children to achieve these;
  - making sure that children are encouraged to behave well in lessons so learning is not interrupted.

(See paragraphs 25, 37, 74, 75 and 77)

*(The school has recognised that provision is not as good as in the rest of the school and development is a priority in the school improvement plan.)*

- (2) Continue to raise the standard of pupils' writing, particularly the standard of spelling, by:
  - employing a range of strategies to help them learn the correct letter patterns in the words they use;
  - emphasising the importance of accurate spelling in their written work in all subjects.

(See paragraphs 4, 84, 85, 91 and 93)

*(The school is well aware of the need to raise standards in this aspect and it is a priority in the current school improvement plan.)*

- (3) Encourage greater progress of the higher-attaining pupils by:
  - having higher expectations of what they can achieve;
  - providing different work, well matched to the stage at which they are working, especially in English, mathematics and science, in order to help them reach higher standards.

(See paragraphs 12, 31, 34, 35, 50, 98, 101 and 119)

Minor areas for consideration within the action plan include:

1. Continue to seek ways to address the difficulties in recruiting and retaining teaching staff.  
(See paragraphs 25 and 68)
2. Ensure that the extra classroom is speedily put in place in order to allow full use of the computer suite for teaching and learning in information and communication technology.  
(See paragraphs 30, 69 and 128)
3. Make closer links between school development and financial planning to ensure that the budget is used to maximum effect in supporting school improvement.  
(See paragraph 66)
4. Endeavour to provide field trips, including residential visits, in order to enhance learning especially in geography and science.  
(See paragraphs 39 and 120)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	19	11	15	0	0	0
Percentage	10	38	22	30	0	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 two percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y R - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	177
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y R - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	27

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.9

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	19	11	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	17
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	27	27	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (87)	90 (87)	87 (87)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	18
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	27	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (83)	87 (87)	90 (96)
	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	8	6	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11	11	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (83)	79 (83)	93 (92)
	National	75 (75)	79 (83)	93 (92)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	12	9	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (73)	64 (82)	71 (73)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Separate statistics for boys and girls are not included because fewer than eleven pupils in each group took the tests.

**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	139	2	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	1	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	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	0	0	0

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.5
Average class size	25.3

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	128

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2
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	£
Total income	382,764
Total expenditure	360,333
Expenditure per pupil	1,991
Balance brought forward from previous year	6,183
Balance carried forward to next year	28,614



**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

177

Number of questionnaires returned

35

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	49	0	0	6
My child is making good progress in school.	43	51	0	3	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	54	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	42	3	6	9
The teaching is good.	37	57	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	56	15	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	43	49	6	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	40	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	23	51	17	3	6
The school is well led and managed.	18	62	6	6	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	54	3	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	50	12	15	6

## **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**

73. Many children start school with standards that are below those usually found in the majority of children of their age, particularly in communication, language, literacy, mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. As noted in the school's previous inspection, the provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Achievement as they move through the stage is also satisfactory, but the majority have still not reached the expected levels in these areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1.
74. The curriculum in the reception class is appropriately based on that recommended for children in the Foundation Stage and is satisfactory. However, both the medium and short-term planning and on-going assessment are informal and so future planning does not always build as effectively as it could on what the children already know and can do. This is one reason why children do not make the same good progress as pupils in the rest of the school.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

75. The teaching and curriculum in this area are satisfactory overall. However, although staff provide a stimulating environment to encourage the development of pupils' personal, social and emotional development, some lessons lack enthusiasm and pace and this impedes the progress that the children make in responding to the opportunities offered. Nevertheless, most will achieve the expected standards by the time that they enter Year 1. Ably supported by two very experienced assistants, the teacher is beginning to establish routines that promote order and consideration for others. For example, one session began with a child passing round sweets. All said thank you and waited patiently for the sweets to arrive. Children are gaining in confidence, with a significant minority developing a sense of ownership of the classroom and its contents, welcoming visitors confidently and anxious to share activities with an adult. The majority, however, still play independently despite numerous activities being set up both inside and outside the classroom. The exceptions are children working in the newly arranged role-play area, and outside in the playhouse. In these areas small groups co-operate well, sometimes using dressing-up clothes to give them clearly defined roles in their play. Staff encourage children to become independent by ensuring that they have easy access to resources. They also encourage them to change their clothes for PE with the minimum of support, using praise and encouragement well to spur the children on to greater efforts.

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

76. Children's achievement is satisfactory through the provision of appropriate learning activities and satisfactory teaching. However, standards are still below those expected when children enter Year 1, especially in early writing skills. During the inspection, few children could write their names, but most were beginning to recognise that letters make words, and words have meaning. All practised tracing their names in the cursive style favoured by the school, with most holding the pencil correctly. However, despite being shown frequently by both the teacher and assistants how to form their letters, many children quickly forget and only the minority consistently form their letters in the correct way. Children enjoy books, especially when the teacher uses a big book effectively to introduce the story of a dinner lady, linking this well to the theme of 'people who help us'. She questioned the children about pictures, linking them well with the story. Children's responses showed that they were not yet using the pictures to help them understand the sequence of events. Most recognize print, but few could not identify any letters or words. At the time of the inspection, children had not yet started taking reading books home, but had been learning simple key words such as 'and, is, it' and 'I' and they were able to read these successfully. Whilst reading books are displayed and available to children in the classroom, their presence lacks the impact to help stimulate children's interest further. Routines to encourage listening skills are being established well, but lack of a prompt start to some lessons meant that the children began to talk loudly to each other and this in turn meant that their attention had to be regained before teaching could

commence. A minority still call out for attention and have little awareness of the need to be quiet and listen to others.

### **Mathematical development**

77. The teaching and curriculum are satisfactory overall although, on some occasions, the higher-attaining children are not sufficiently challenged. However, overall children's attainment is satisfactory, but the majority do not reach the Early Learning Goals (the expected standard) when they enter Year 1. Prior to the inspection, the children had been learning to identify different shapes and over half can identify a square, triangle, rectangle and circle. However, some children are not fully secure in this concept. For example, when asked how she knew the shape was a triangle, one child said, 'because it's purple'. Learning is more successful where activities are organised to consolidate learning. For example, the teacher and an assistant modelled the writing of the numbers 2 and 3 very well, and a range of appropriate activities such as watching a short video about the numbers, making the shape in play dough, tracing it and writing it on white boards, help children to remember by practising what they have seen. Due emphasis is given to writing the shape correctly, starting on the left. The teacher also makes sure that pupils have every opportunity to recognise written numbers in a variety of settings, for example, she referred to the cardboard clocks on the wall encouraging one boy to call out "we go out to play when the big hand is on the three".

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

78. Children enter the school with below average levels of general knowledge. Both the teaching and curriculum in this area are satisfactory and children achieve appropriately. However, most do not achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. The majority of children can talk about where they live and a few willingly talk about what they do outside of school, with many excited at the prospect of watching fireworks. Some classroom displays encourage the children to handle objects such as the seeds and leaves linked to a display on autumn, and outside there is provision around the play area for seeds to be planted and plants to grow. Dry and damp sand, water and a variety of construction materials are also available, but interactive displays to further stimulate children's curiosity in the world around them are limited. Children's paintings of a baby brought into the class indicate that they have had the opportunity to observe and talk about a baby's needs. Children do not have a secure knowledge of people who live and work in their community, for example, when asked to identify a picture of a policeman several pointed to a fireman. Few children know what a chimney is, nor could they think of a word to describe a horse drawn coach or carriage in a book illustration. The daily routine sensibly involves the children eating a piece of fruit before break, although the opportunity to talk about healthy eating is missed.

### **Creative development**

79. The curriculum and teaching in this aspect are satisfactory. An appropriate balance of directed activities and activities that they choose for themselves help children to develop their creative skills and knowledge, and most achieve the expected standards when they enter Year 1. Portraits of a baby showed good observation, with facial features well drawn. Children confidently use paint and modelling materials, and classroom assistants are skilled at encouraging them to review and improve their efforts. Children's work is valued, for example, in the displays on 'bubble painting'. They carefully drew round the figures 2 and 3 and correctly chose pink, grey, black, red and blue crayons to colour them in. Children used the 'paint' program on the computer, controlling the mouse well to draw a recognisable number 2 on the screen. Further good cross-curricular links are made with mathematics when children are encouraged to print different shapes and also make pictures with them.

### **Physical development**

80. The curriculum and teaching in this area are satisfactory. Children's achievement is satisfactory and they reach the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. They enjoy physical activity and move confidently, both when playing outside and taking part in PE lessons in the hall.

The outdoor play area provides a good, secure resource and is equipped with wheeled vehicles, a covered area, a playhouse, a doll's house, a wall and areas for planting flowers at child height. The tarmac is marked with a road and zebra crossing. This area helps children to make good progress in the development of their large body skills of running, jumping and balancing. Regular practice tracing letters and numbers, painting, using scissors and model making, helps develop their fine motor control. In two PE lessons observed in the school hall, the children responded well to the teacher's instructions, moving freely and using all the available space as they stretched, ran and jumped. In the good lesson observed, they co-operated well as they played the 'island' game and were challenged appropriately by both the teacher and classroom assistant to make greater efforts in their movements.

## ENGLISH

81. Considerable improvement has been made over the last four years, and also since the school was last inspected two years ago. The main reasons for the improvement in standards are:
  - the hard work and commitment of all staff
  - a common approach throughout the school
  - very good teaching, especially in literacy lessons
  - especially good planning and implementation of the literacy strategy
  - the encouragement given to pupils to help them use their literacy skills in all subjects.
82. As a result of these strengths, pupils' achievement over time is good in all aspects of the subject. Their achievement is continuing to improve and, in the majority of lessons seen, progress was very good. Currently, the overall standards of pupils in Years 2 and 6 match the national average.
83. When pupils enter Year 1, the majority have not yet reached the Early Goals for Learning in their language and literacy skills and their attainment is below average. Good progress is made in developing their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills so that current pupils reach average standards in all three aspects. Data shows that standards in the reading and writing tests have risen consistently since 1999. In this year's tests, Year 2 pupils exceeded the targets set, with more getting to the expected Level 2.
84. It is much more difficult to make secure judgements about how well the standards of the Year 6 pupils are rising and to compare the results between different years. Nor is it possible to use national data to show how well Year 6 pupils have improved since they took the tests at the end of Year 2, as up to two-thirds of pupils, usually the higher attainers, leave before they reach the end of Year 6. In this year's tests, two pupils did not reach the expected Level 4, mainly because they did not reach the expected standard in writing. This is because the style they used and the creative element in the writing paper was below average.
85. The school's own records show that current Year 6 pupils have made good progress since they sat the tests at the end of Year 2. At that time, standards were below average in both reading and writing. The majority of these pupils are now likely to reach average standards in reading by the time they leave the school. They make good progress in writing informatively and for different purposes and audiences, and in using the correct grammar and punctuation. In these aspects they are likely to reach average standards. However, their vocabulary and style of language, especially in story or imaginative writing and the level of spelling, are both below the national average and progress in these aspects is slow. This is partly because of prior poor imaginative and vocabulary skills.
86. When they begin the National Curriculum for English, few pupils speak grammatically or have a broad vocabulary. Very good attention is paid to both these weaknesses across all year groups. This is because teachers organise very good discussion and answer activities in many lessons across all subjects. The very good behaviour and attitudes of pupils help them to listen well. In addition, pupils are expected to reply to teachers' questioning in sentences, which are grammatically correct. In all subjects, very good emphasis is placed on the acquisition of specific subject vocabulary, for example, in science. Personal, social and health education lessons (Circle Times) are also used especially well to promote speaking and listening skills. A very good

example of this was seen in the Year 5 class where pupils talked confidently and effectively about their likes and dislikes, responding well to their classmates' questions.

87. As a result of this high quality provision, the speaking and listening skills of pupils both in Year 2 and Year 6 are around those expected for their age. Year 2 pupils are expected to listen in a focused way and they do so, listening carefully and making suitable responses in increasingly more formal language. Sensitive support from adults is helping all pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, to speak confidently. As pupils move on through the school, this confidence grows. By Year 6, pupils listen well to each other and adults, concentrating hard to gain the main point, and responding thoughtfully, clearly describing their ideas and results from the work they are doing.
88. When they enter the school, a significant minority of pupils do not have a good knowledge of books and their purpose. Teachers work hard to address this by encouraging pupils to read daily and to read to or share a book with their parents. Adults in the school regularly hear those pupils read whose parents do not have time to hear them read at home. As a result, by the end of Year 2, most pupils are reaching average standards. All pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, have gained a good knowledge of how to build words up from sounds. Most pupils read accurately and use different clues to help understand what they are reading. The higher-attaining pupils read a variety of texts fluently and with good understanding. They also have a good knowledge of how to find out information from topic books. Reading skills are built on well as pupils move on up the school. By the time they leave, all pupils read accurately and expressively from a range of texts. Average and higher-attaining pupils are able to discuss the plot and characters by referring to the text, with the higher attainers becoming increasingly able to deduce what is likely to happen next from clues in the story. All pupils have a very secure understanding of how to gain information from non-fiction texts and other sources such as The Internet. Pupils are using these literacy skills well across the full range of subjects, for example, to gain information in history and geography.
89. Although pupils achieve well in developing their writing skills, their lower prior attainment means that standards are not as high as in other aspects. In particular, pupils' vocabulary knowledge is very basic and they lack imagination. However, very good strategies have been put in place to address this. As a result, standards for Year 2 are average overall. Most pupils can write in sentences, sequence a simple story and are developing a secure understanding of how to write for different purposes, for example, writing instructions. The higher attainers are beginning to write clearly and imaginatively, for example, in a description of feeling scared. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to make good progress in writing for a range of purposes. For example, they write play scripts and comparisons between the effectiveness of a novel and the film adaptation. Good opportunities are provided to use these literacy skills in other subjects, for example, in writing instructions in food technology lessons.
90. Exceptionally good thought has been given to helping pupils develop a better style in their written work and to allow them to write creatively. For example, much creative work is started with the whole class working together. A very good example was seen in a literacy lesson, where Year 5 pupils went on to write their own effective poetry. In addition, pupils' imagination is often stimulated by the stories and poetry of different authors. For example, Year 6 pupils wrote their own version of a 'Just So Story'. By the time they leave, most pupils reach average levels in their handwriting, use of punctuation and grammar and organisation of their work. Standards are still below average in the creative element. Where possible, good use is made of pupils' ICT skills to enhance their achievement in writing. This also helps to increase pupils' self-esteem, for example, when they see their poems well presented in word-processed text.
91. Across the school, the most significant weakness in writing is the standard of spelling, which is below average for all except the highest attainers. The school is aware of this weakness and has put in place a number of strategies to try and address it. However, only very slow improvement can be seen, and standards remain below average.
92. The major reason for the improved achievement of pupils is the very good provision in the subject. Teaching is consistently very good throughout the school and is successful because:
  - literacy skills are very well taught and pupils are encouraged to use these in other subjects

- teachers are particularly good at addressing pupils' weaknesses in grammar and vocabulary
  - work is very effectively planned to ensure that pupils are making at least good progress in their learning as they move through the school
  - classroom assistants make a very good contribution to learning, especially to that of pupils with SEN or EAL.
93. The quality of learning is continuing to improve and, in the lessons seen during the inspection week, it was very good. The very effective subject co-ordinator has ensured that the curriculum is also very good. This is because there is a very clear understanding of pupils' needs. The very good planning is the result of high quality analysis of the current strengths and weaknesses in the provision. This, together with the good marking and high quality assessment procedures, allows teachers to plan especially effectively to build on and extend what pupils have already learnt. Good emphasis is given to increasing pupils' accuracy in spelling although only slow progress is being made. The quantity and range of resources are satisfactory. However, the small library limits its use as an area for teaching reading skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

94. At the time of the last inspection, standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 were below average. National test results show that this was also the case in 2001 although this was for a small group of pupils. The strategies the school put in place to raise standards at the time of the last inspection are now having an impact. For current Year 2 pupils, standards are now in line with the national average and just above this for Year 6 pupils. As pupils enter Year 1 with standards below those expected for their age this means that pupils are achieving well throughout the infant and junior classes. The reasons for the improvement in standards are:
- the very effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy
  - the very good leadership of the mathematics co-ordinator
  - careful assessment of what the pupils can understand and can do at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 - influencing what teachers plan to teach
  - good teaching in the infant classes and very good teaching in the junior classes
  - effective monitoring of teaching, planning and pupils' work
  - the inclusion and support offered to pupils with SEN.
95. In Year 2, pupils have a very good understanding of place value and the number system. Regular practice ensures that they have a good mental recall of number facts to 20. The higher-attaining pupils can use different calculations to find their answers, explaining their thinking well. Most pupils correctly identify both two and three-dimensional shapes and describe their properties. They use both non-standard and standard measures, often working with a purpose, as in Year 1, when they measured carefully to make sets of paper clothes in a design and technology lesson. In Year 2, pupils are encouraged to check their calculations and are learning to recognise when an answer looks wrong. Good opportunities are planned for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects, for example, in making tally charts and drawing graphs in science. In the computer suite, some Year 1 pupils used the computer to sort shapes according to their properties.
96. By the end of Year 6, pupils' mental recall is good and they quickly calculate the answers to monetary problems. Pupils understand the relationship between decimals and percentages and relate these to fractions, ratio and proportion. Pupils understand the concept of probability and use probability scales. They can plot points in all four quadrants, explaining their thinking clearly and well. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils made good progress in learning to identify and name the properties of equilateral and isosceles triangles. In the Year 4 class, the teacher used a flexible straight edge that she bent to make various shapes, reinforcing pupils' understanding of their properties. Good thought is given to using opportunities in other lessons to support mathematical development, for example, Year 3 pupils counted up in 5's from 22 and back in 5's from 89 as they changed after a PE lesson. They enjoyed the challenge and their positive attitudes to mathematics reflect those found throughout the school.
97. Teaching is good in the infant classes and very good overall in the junior classes. Teaching is successful because:

- lessons proceed at a good pace
  - there is a regular recap of knowledge and consolidation of skills
  - planning effectively builds on what the pupils already know and can do
  - the contribution of the learning support assistants is very good, especially for pupils with SEN, who are included well in all activities
  - pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour encourage them to learn
  - marking is detailed and provides good on-going assessment.
98. In the most successful lessons, all pupils, including the higher attainers, are challenged well. Lessons are less successful when teachers' questions are not differentiated enough to demand higher-order thinking skills from the higher-attaining pupils and when extension activities are "more of the same", rather than an opportunity to enable the skills learned to be applied in a different context.
99. The co-ordinator leads this subject very well. She carries out a detailed annual analysis of the national test results, providing staff with an accurate analysis of the outcomes and suggestions for further improvement. She then monitors the curriculum and teaching as well as pupils' work to ensure that the recommendations are implemented. She has a clear vision for how the subject should be developed and is determined to continue to raise standards still further.

## SCIENCE

100. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils reach average standards. Although this is a similar picture to the last inspection, pupils are achieving well because their prior attainment is below average. As they move through the school, pupils build effectively on their skills, knowledge and understanding and continue to achieve well although the overall standards remain average by the end of Year 6. This is mainly because many of the higher-attaining pupils transfer to the middle school at the end of Year 4. Pupils made very good progress in the lessons observed during the inspection. The main reasons for this are:
- the very good teaching seen throughout the school
  - the emphasis on learning through investigation work
  - pupils' very positive attitudes to their learning.
101. Pupils with SEN and EAL are also achieving well in science because they receive very good support from classroom assistants. Teachers also support these pupils effectively by providing different tasks or resources to ensure they are fully included in the lesson and make the same good progress in their learning as other pupils. Higher-attaining pupils make at least satisfactory progress in lessons, but they do not always achieve as well as they could because, on some occasions, teachers do not extend or challenge their learning sufficiently.
102. With greater emphasis on practical investigations in science, pupils throughout the school make very good progress in developing their investigation and experimental skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils can construct simple electrical circuits using batteries to light a bulb. They investigate and record the differences in physical characteristics such as eye colour and develop a very good understanding of the properties of materials. For example, through their investigations pupils understood that wood and stone are natural materials, whereas glass and leather are man-made. Higher-attaining pupils make clear distinctions between naturally occurring wood and man-made wooden spoons. Lower-attaining pupils know that spaghetti doesn't grow on trees, but is man made. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of living things, properties of materials and physical processes. They have also improved their scientific-enquiry skills. For example, in their study of forces, pupils know how to measure upthrust, carrying out an effective investigation, accurately recording their results graphically.
103. In Years 1 to 6, teaching is very good and sometimes it is excellent. As a result, in the lessons seen during the inspection, pupils were making very good progress in their learning and their achievement was very good. This is because:
- lessons are very well planned and build very effectively on what pupils have learnt previously



- the activities are interesting and teachers provide very effective resources which help pupils to investigate scientific concepts
- in most lessons, teachers have high expectations that pupils will do well and continually challenge them to do so
- teachers and classroom assistants have very good relationships with pupils, resulting in pupils' positive attitudes and very good behaviour
- teachers ask very good questions to help pupils to think carefully. As a result, pupils have a very good understanding of what they are learning.

As a consequence, pupils' learning was very good, they responded very positively to the challenging activities, worked very well together, listened to staff and followed instructions immediately.

104. Pupils' personal development is very well promoted in lessons. For example, spiritual development was very effective when Year 1 pupils experienced a sense of wonder as the teacher showed them how an electrical circuit produced light. Social development is also supported well through the many opportunities for pupils to work well together, sharing resources and taking turns, often persisting with difficult tasks.
105. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills, especially those for speaking and listening, writing for different purposes, measuring and handling data. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 5 lesson on the properties of materials. In this lesson pupils were asked to investigate the question "Does the volume of the solid change as the shape changes?" This promoted not only literacy and numeracy, but also thinking skills well. As a result, pupils developed a very good understanding of the conservation of volume by discovering that when liquids are poured into different containers, their shape changes while their volume remains the same.
106. The curriculum is good and promotes the basic skills very well. However, although new computer resources have been purchased, they have not been used sufficiently to promote teaching and learning within science because of the restricted time available to use the new computer suite. The subject is exceptionally well led by the co-ordinator who has thoroughly reviewed the curriculum to ensure that more opportunities are provided for investigative work. Through the observation of teaching, monitoring of planning and assessment of pupils' work, she identified weaknesses in the development of pupils' scientific vocabulary, which previously limited their achievement. As a result, both the provision and achievement in this aspect are improving.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

107. Standards are in line with national expectations by the end of both Years 2 and 6, and this represents good improvement since the last inspection, where there was little evidence of pupils developing skills in sketching, painting and using textiles. The school now ensures that they develop skills in these areas, including through using sketchbooks. There was good evidence of this during the inspection, both in lessons and in the highly attractive displays of pupils' artwork in classrooms. Pupils are now achieving well in art. The improvement in achievement is also due to better quality teaching which is good and sometimes very good, and very good leadership of the subject. All pupils thoroughly enjoy their work and behave very well. Their positive response in lessons also promotes good achievement in all year groups.
108. Year 1 pupils experience different activities and media which enable them to explore and start to develop a good understanding of colour and shape. For example, they sketched, then painted their own self-portraits and used paint for printing coloured shapes on cotton fabric. Year 2 create storyboards on topics such as Bonfire Night, using coloured pastels to illustrate it. They have a good understanding of portrait and landscape layouts and use computer graphics programs to create attractive paintings of fireworks. Year 3 pupils used colour washes, combining two colours, super-imposing black paper frames to create very effective miniature portraits in silhouette, and an attractive autumn collage. Year 4 pupils develop their sketching and painting skills further, for example, in producing still-life pictures of fruit and using a computer graphics program to produce discreet changes in colour, form and shape. Year 6 pupils have also completed some good art

linked to their topic work, for example, three-dimensional heads of Medusa as part of their history topic, and paintings in the style of other artists such as Picasso and Monet.

109. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and this helps pupils to develop effective artistic skills. Teachers' high expectations for learning and behaviour encourage pupils to respond very well and try hard. Very good on-going feedback throughout lessons also helps pupils to reflect on their performance and improve their work. Teachers use pupils' artistic skills very well to enhance learning in other subjects. For example, when a Year 2 class made three-dimensional models of an island in geography.
110. Art is very well led and managed by an enthusiastic and hardworking co-ordinator who has developed very good extra-curricular activities. These include an art club to promote pupils' learning and the excellent use of a visiting artist, which enabled every pupil in the school to contribute to the production of a highly attractive 'Jubilee' mosaic of the school. The co-ordinator has improved planning for the subject to ensure wide coverage of topics and the systematic building of skills as pupils move through the school. She observes lessons and looks carefully at pupils' work, and has helped other teachers improve their teaching skills. Resources are good in range and quality, and plentiful in number. They are used very effectively to promote pupils' learning and standards.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

111. It was only possible to observe one lesson and part of a lesson during the inspection. Evidence is also taken from talking to pupils and teachers, and work on display. By both Year 2 and Year 6, most pupils reach standards that are in line with national expectations. All pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, achieve satisfactorily. As this subject was not reported on at the last inspection, it is not possible to make a judgement about improvement.
112. The Year 1 pupils are gaining a sound idea of the importance of design through activities such as making paper costumes for a 'king' and 'queen'. They know that both estimation and accurate measurement are important in their design. Pupils also recognise that, if they do not cut accurately, their costumes will not join properly. Designing and making skills are built on and extended as pupils move on to Year 2. They begin to recognise the properties of different materials, for example, which will make the most successful joins in their hand puppets. Pupils know that the puppet has to be the correct size and that decoration helps to make it fit for its purpose. They are beginning to evaluate what they have done and use this information to make their designs and models better in the future.
113. As they move on to Years 3 to 6, pupils begin to explore different materials through a range of topics planned to support their progress. In a Year 5 lesson, they were investigating musical instruments and planning how they would design and make their own. Some perceptive pupils put forward very good ideas for the materials they might use. For example, one pupil thought that plastic would make a similar sound to the skin on a drum. Year 6 pupils had designed and made hats for themselves, deciding on the shape and colour and what they might wear them for. They then completed a very careful analysis of what had been successful in the design and how it could be improved.
114. In the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching and learning were good. This is because the staff are highly skilled practitioners who know how to question pupils effectively to help them learn. Pupils' very good attitudes to school means that they work carefully, and this helps to ensure that both their designs and models are well presented. The well-organised writing in the planning and evaluation of projects is supporting pupils' literacy skills particularly well. Good opportunities for estimating and measuring also help pupils to develop their numeracy skills.
115. The curriculum is based on a national scheme of work. The topics are well planned and often related to other curriculum areas. For example, Year 1 pupils used two-dimensional shapes to print some curtains for their classroom and Year 4 pupils made buildings as part of a geography project on an African village. As each project is finished, class teachers complete an effective

evaluation sheet on the skills and knowledge pupils have acquired and this helps them to plan well for the next stages in learning. Despite managing a number of subjects, the co-ordinator is providing good leadership and support for colleagues. There is a suitable range of tools and resources which teachers use effectively to help learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

116. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, an outcome similar to the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
117. Year 1 pupils know that they live at an 'address' and can identify the permanent features that they pass on their journey to school. Year 2 pupils know some characteristics about a fictional Scottish island and can compare life on this island with life on the Isle of Sheppey. Classroom displays reflect on-going work well and show good cross-curricular links with English, for example, in letter writing.
118. Geography is taught as part of a rolling programme alternating with history, and junior pupils had just begun a new topic at the time of the inspection. Year 1 pupils were learning about local occupations and useful links were made with mathematics, as time and the distance of places of work from home were listed and compared. Year 3 pupils were identifying the continents on a world map and locating India (the focus of future study) and also the United Kingdom. Year 5 pupils toured the school noting where sources of water were found and identifying what it is used for. They then went on to consider wastage of water in the home, and through using water rate invoices considered the costs involved and the importance of dealing with and recycling the waste.
119. Teaching is satisfactory overall throughout the school and some very good teaching was seen. The best lessons were well paced and resources were used very effectively to motivate and interest pupils. There was also very good questioning of pupils, demanding more reflection and thought from the higher-attaining pupils. However, on most occasions, not enough thought had been given to setting more challenging work for the higher attainers.
120. Currently the curriculum is satisfactory and is due to be reviewed as part of the current school improvement plan. The co-ordinator acknowledges that greater use could be made of the local environment and also that the school is anxious to explore the possibility of organising an annual residential visit for pupils in order to support learning in this and other subjects.

## **HISTORY**

121. Standards in history are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6, which is similar to the last inspection. However, achievement of all groups of pupils has improved and is now good because planning has improved significantly, and the quality of teaching is at least good and often very good throughout the school. History alternates with geography in a cycle of topics, which change each half term. It was therefore only possible to observe a limited number of history lessons during the inspection. However, evidence is also drawn from the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and through discussions with pupils.
122. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed an understanding of the passage of time, plotting different events in history such as the age of the dinosaurs, The Great Fire of London, Guy Fawkes, Florence Nightingale and themselves in 2002. They look at some of the main events in history such as Remembrance Day and consider different forms of evidence as told in stories, pictures or diaries. Year 3 pupils consolidate their understanding of main historical events and sources of evidence through their topic on Ancient Egypt. They know the importance of the evidence found in Tutankhamun's tomb and how it has contributed to our understanding of Ancient Egyptian civilisation. Older pupils know what it was like to be a Roman soldier on guard duty on Hadrian's wall and they develop good research skills in using the internet and the library to locate primary and secondary sources of historical information. The Year 5 pupils used very good research techniques in an extended topic on a famous Victorian, showing a clear understanding of the difference between primary and secondary sources of evidence. By the time they leave, pupils

can provide good reasons for the causes of main events, and changes in different periods such as that of Ancient Greece

123. The quality of teaching and learning in history is very good. A wide range of topics is now taught which is having a positive effect on achievement. Teachers have good subject knowledge and provide a rich variety of activities to motivate them. Literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well in activities such as designing posters and accurate measurement of the River Nile.
124. The acting headteacher has provided satisfactory oversight of the subject since the previous co-ordinator left last term. Planning has improved to ensure the systematic development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Resources are good and include a range of artefacts, which effectively contribute to the good achievement of pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

125. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, which is a similar outcome to the last inspection. However, good improvements have taken place since that time, especially in the training of staff, the curriculum and teaching, resources and leadership of the subject. As a result of these factors, standards are beginning to rise throughout the school. These substantial improvements, have not been in place long enough to impact fully on the standards of the older pupils in the school, but Year 6 pupils, as well as those in other years, are achieving well, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' skills are now good in word-processing and in their use of applications, but are weaker in control technology and the use of e-mail.
126. The Year 1 pupils identify the main parts of a computer competently and operate a mathematics program to sort various shapes. By the end of Year 2, there is a vast improvement in pupils' computer skills. Year 2 pupils created their own images of firework displays using a graphics program, opening and closing files and saving their own work. They are also becoming increasingly familiar with how a digital camera works. Year 3 pupils combined texts and graphics well to produce party invitation cards. These were made effective by pupils highlighting, copying and pasting text, choosing different fonts and styles and importing graphics. Year 4 pupils used the computer to write in the style of a newspaper. They selected appropriate font sizes and styles to create imaginative headlines and layouts for text. Older pupils use the internet and CD-ROMs to find out information; for example, Year 5 pupils downloaded articles and graphics from the internet as part of their history topic. They also use graphics programs to generate artwork in the style of other artists. Year 6 pupils are developing their skills in various aspects of control technology, competently using a program to create and display slide-show presentations.
127. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching and learning was very good overall, and it was never less than satisfactory. As a result, pupils develop a good range of computer skills. Teachers plan a suitable range of activities for pupils and this, together with the excellent relationships seen, means pupils are well motivated, listen attentively and work hard. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and explain things clearly so that pupils acquire new computer skills quickly. Teachers set high expectations for pupils' learning often challenging them to think carefully about the processes they are working with. As a result, pupils develop problem-solving skills effectively and work out solutions for themselves. Teachers promote literacy and numeracy skills very well in the subject. There were many examples seen during the inspection of extended writing using word-processing programs and also using the computer for recording data by plotting graphs, pie charts or pictograms.
128. Teaching in the new ICT suite is often restricted because it currently also serves as a Year 5 classroom. This means that pupils only have one ICT lesson per week, which limits the opportunities for using their ICT skills to support learning in other subjects. However, effective classroom management and the good use of time ensure that resources are maximised so most pupils achieve well in the subject. They are very enthusiastic and behave very well, with their positive responses contributing to their learning. They often work productively with very little supervision.

129. The subject co-ordinator manages the provision very well and has consistently improved this so it is now good overall. He has accurately identified the main areas for improvement as the development of a school website and use of e-mail. He has also provided very good support to colleagues so that they are now much more confident in the use of ICT. Very good assessment procedures are in place and these are used well to help develop pupils' emerging computer skills.

## **MUSIC**

130. During the inspection only two lessons were observed. In the Year 1 class, pupils were learning about pitch and the lesson for Year 6 pupils was focused on singing. In these lessons, pupils reached the standards expected for their age and their progress was satisfactory. Since there was little evidence of pupils' skills in listening and appraising, instrumental playing or composition, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about standards or teaching. Nor is it possible to make a judgement about improvement since the last inspection when composition skills were found to be weak.
131. In the Year 1 lesson, pupils were being introduced to the notion of pitch for the first time. Whilst most could distinguish between the notes, only the higher-attaining pupils were secure on which was the higher or lower note. However, the good activity provided helped the majority of pupils to make secure progress in the lesson. During the hymn practice observed for junior pupils, the majority could sing tunefully in unison. In the Year 6 lesson, around a third of pupils did not sing in tune. However, this did not prevent the majority learning to sing a Hebrew folk song in two parts.
132. There is no music specialist in the school, but in the lessons observed teaching was satisfactory with some good features. This is because the staff are skilled practitioners who know how to support learning, even when their subject expertise is not comprehensive. In addition, the school has a very good scheme of work, with associated resources, which help non-specialist teachers to plan and teach effectively. As in all their learning, pupils approach their lessons enthusiastically and try very hard even when they find it difficult. This helps to ensure that they make at least satisfactory progress. No judgement can be made about the quality of teaching in instrumental work, listening and appraising and composition.
133. The curriculum is good and gives significant support to pupils' cultural development, ensuring they experience songs and music from a range of different eras and cultures. Despite having no music specialist, the school has provided good opportunities through using visiting professionals, to help pupils experience performing in a music concert. Those pupils who wish can learn to play the violin although, at present, only one pupil is doing so. The skills pupils have acquired are assessed at the end of each topic and this helps to ensure that future planning builds on and extends learning. Resources, including recordings, percussion instruments and a keyboard with an associated software program to link to the computer, are satisfactory.
134. The new subject co-ordinator has only recently joined the school, but has a secure awareness of the current provision and also plans to improve it. In addition, the school has employed a specialist teacher who will regularly work with all classes from the beginning of next term.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

135. Only one infant lesson was observed, so it is not possible to make a judgement about standards at the end of Year 2. However, in the Year 1 class, pupils are achieving satisfactorily and reaching the standards expected for their age. In Years 3 to 6, the varied curriculum and good teaching help pupils to make good progress and achieve well. By the time they leave the school, most pupils, including those with SEN and EAL reach standards which are above the national expectation. Standards in this subject were not reported at the last inspection so it is not possible to make a judgement about improvement since then.
136. In the Year 1 lesson observed, pupils were learning to plan a sequence of movements to portray the story of 'The Scary Night'. As their teacher told the story pupils moved at different speeds and

height, running, walking, skipping and hopping in different directions. Most have basic co-ordination and control and link their actions suitably. The Year 3 pupils reached a standard above that usually seen for their age in gymnastics, combining a sequence of movements, showing good co-ordination and control. The Year 4 pupils are attending the local sports centre for swimming lessons and over half are likely to swim the nationally expected 25 metres by the end of the year. Because the Year 5 class is small, these pupils are taught jointly with Year 6 pupils. The first in a series of six lessons on hockey skills was observed during the inspection. In this lesson, pupils improved their skills well and standards are likely to exceed expectations by the time they leave. Similarly, in a gymnastics lesson, the high quality teaching meant that most pupils are already working at Level 4 (the standard expected by the time they leave), showing precision, control and fluency in a sequence of movements.

137. Teaching is good overall, especially in Years 3 to 6 where some very good teaching was seen. In Years 3 to 6, teachers have very good expertise and this means that they explain very clearly to pupils what is needed in the different skills they are learning, such as movement, or ball and stick control. Lessons are very well paced and this, together with the very good attitudes pupils have, ensures they make good progress. In the Year 1 class, teaching was satisfactory. A few pupils in this lesson, mainly boys, did not concentrate as well as the majority of the class and this slowed the pace. However, the teacher's innovative ideas helped to motivate most pupils exceptionally well.
138. The curriculum, based round a national scheme of work, has been well planned under the guidance of the well-qualified and effective subject co-ordinator. Each topic of around six weeks is carefully assessed so that future work builds well on what pupils can already do. Resources are satisfactory overall and good thought has been given to ensuring that there is enough equipment for the whole class to take part when practising a new skill. There is a good-sized field and hard playing area to support learning. The large hall is suitable for PE activities; however, its design has prevented the school acquiring wall bars and other similar climbing apparatus. This weakness has been addressed especially well, with the co-ordinator devising a very good scheme of work for gymnastics floor work so that most pupils still reach standards above the national expectation in this aspect of the subject.