

INSPECTION REPORT

**ALL SAINTS CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Appley Bridge

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119497

Headteacher: Miss Jane Phythian

Reporting inspector: David Figures
10269

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd May 2003

Inspection number: 248025

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior school

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Finch Lane
Appley Bridge
Wigan

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Mark Tomlinson

Date of previous inspection: May 2001

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10269	David Figures	Registered inspector	English; science; art and design; history; music; educational inclusion	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?
1234	Tina Bradley	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 and carers?
25431	Lesley Clark	Team inspector	mathematics; design and technology; geography; information and communication technology; physical education; the foundation stage; special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a Church of England voluntary aided primary school, below average in size, with a current role of 126 boys and girls between four and eleven years of age. It serves the largely residential village of Appley Bridge near Wigan, but a number of the pupils come from outside the immediate area. About ten per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, a low proportion compared with other schools. Almost all pupils are of white European heritage. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Nine per cent of pupils have special educational needs; this is well below average. The needs include dyslexia, severe learning difficulties and physical disability. Six per cent of pupils have statements of special educational need, a proportion which is well above average. The attainment of children on entry to the school varies from year to year, but overall it is average. The headteacher, and all but two of the class teachers have joined the school within the last three years, the most recent in September 2002. The school gained the School Achievement Award in 2001.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

All Saints is an effective school. The leadership of the headteacher and governors is very strong. Standards are improving and are above average at the end of the Reception year and in English, mathematics and science. The quality of teaching, although satisfactory overall, has significant strengths and, because pupils' attitudes are very good, they want to learn. These rising standards are being achieved at an above-average cost per pupil and so the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6;
- Pupils' very good attitudes to school;
- Teaching and learning in Reception and Year 6;
- Provision for extra-curricular activity;
- The quality of leadership, with strong contributions from the Headteacher and governors; effective management;
- Nurtures very strong parental support.

What could be improved

- Standards in design and technology, geography and speaking;
- Opportunities for pupils to learn by individual research and practical activity;
- The quality and range of the curriculum, and assessment arrangements in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology;
- The application of skills learned in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to other subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since it was last inspected in May 2001, energetically tackling the issues raised at that time. Standards in English and mathematics have improved markedly, following the implementation of the national strategies for the subjects and improved assessment arrangements. Standards are also better in information and communication technology. More work is needed, mainly through curriculum development and better assessment, to improve standards in some other subjects, notably design and technology and geography. The work of the Reception class, judged unsatisfactory last time, is now good, in the hands of an effective team, and pupils are progressing well.

Pupils' attitudes to school are now very good, and the support of parents very strong: they think very well of its work. The senior management team is very effective. The governors too are very effective: the chair and vice chair have a very keen appreciation of where the school's strengths and the areas remaining for development lie, and the committee chairs are very perceptive about the areas for which they are responsible. Under this leadership, the school has the commitment and capacity to improve further.

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	E	C	A	A
mathematics	E	C	C	D
science	E	C	B	B

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

The National Curriculum test results in 2002 for pupils in Year 6 continued a trend which has been rising since 2000 in line with the national trend. There has been a marked improvement in English and science. The standards of reading and writing seen during the inspection are well above average by the end of Year 6 and in science above average. Standards in mathematics are above average, following the successful introduction of the national numeracy strategy. Standards by the end of Year 2 in reading and science are above average. In writing and mathematics, standards are close to those achieved nationally. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily during their time in Years 1 – 5 and well in Year 6, meeting appropriately set targets. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well.

Standards in art, physical education and information and communication technology are average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, representing satisfactory achievement in these subjects. Standards are below average in geography and design and technology because the relevant skills are not systematically developed. Standards in history are average by the end of Year 6 but below average by the end of Year 2. There was not enough evidence to form a judgement on standards in music.

Pupils' standards when they leave Reception and start Year 1 are above average in all the areas of learning and their achievement is good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to please their teachers and are conscientious about homework. They enjoy coming to school: their enthusiasm for school life means they learn effectively.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well because they know the difference between right and wrong and accept the high standards expected of them. They are well mannered and polite to adults and their peers. There have been no exclusions in the last two years.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are willing to accept responsibility for the minor duties they are asked to perform in school. They have positive relationships with others, respect their teachers and value their friendships.
Attendance	Very good: well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of the teaching is satisfactory. All pupils benefit from the teaching: they learn at a satisfactory rate in Years 1 – 5 and make appreciable progress in Year 6 in response to teaching of good quality: here the quality of teaching of English, mathematics (including numeracy) and science is good; that of literacy very good. There are significant strengths in the teaching of pupils in the reception class. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are taught well. More generally, the teaching of English, including literacy, and mathematics, including numeracy, is satisfactory.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the other subjects. Not enough was seen to form a judgement of the teaching in design and technology, geography, history, music or in science in Years 1 and 2 and art and design in Years 3 - 6

The strengths of the teaching include the very thorough planning of lessons. Relationships with pupils are good, and teachers value the contributions pupils make and so encourage them to think well of themselves. The management of pupils' behaviour is also strong; this ensures an orderly and calm atmosphere in which pupils can concentrate and make progress. Homework makes a powerful contribution to pupils' progress. In some situations the level of challenge to pupils is not sufficient: sometimes pupils do not have enough opportunity to work independently and find out for themselves. When this happens, pupils do not learn as well as they should.

Teaching in reception is good because the lessons are very well planned and the work thoroughly organised. Teacher and assistants work very well together as a team. This ensures pupils are challenged at their own level and achieve well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. It meets statutory requirements. It is particularly strong in the reception class and in the interesting range of activities outside school. There are weaknesses in the distribution of time between subjects and in the links between English, mathematics and information and communication technology and other subjects, which limit opportunities for pupils to reach the standards they should.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well served by the special needs assistants who work closely with them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. There are strengths in the provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development. These aspects of provision benefit from the commitment of the parish to the school. Provision for pupils' personal, cultural and social development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. The pastoral care of pupils is good. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology but they are insufficiently developed in other subjects. Attendance is monitored well.

The school works very well with parents, who have a very high regard for it.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher leads the school very well, supported by a committed senior team who have helped the school make good progress in a short time. Leadership remains to be developed in some subjects. Management is effective and efficient.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. the governors know the school's strengths and areas for development very well. They provide very good support and valuable guidance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Teaching and learning are monitored well in English, mathematics and science, leading to above-average standards. The monitoring of teaching and learning in some other subjects is underdeveloped, and pays insufficient attention to what pupils have learned.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The governors and headteacher consider expenditure carefully in terms of how it will improve pupils' standards.

The school is well staffed and learning resources are good. It occupies very good premises which enhance its work well. Educational and financial decisions are carefully considered to help the school decide whether it is providing best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
The pupils' behaviour and the progress they make; The leadership of the school and its management; Approachable teachers and information available to parents; The improvement over recent years.	Information about how pupils are getting on.

The inspection team endorses parents' positive comments. On the question of information about pupils' progress, the team notes that, although teachers are approachable and willing to discuss any pupil at any time, there is scope to report in more detail the attainment levels achieved in the different subjects and give more specific information about how parents can help improve them.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Small numbers make the analysis of national test results difficult to interpret and detailed assessment results are not published when there are ten or fewer boys or girls in an age group. Nevertheless the striking feature of the results achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 is the significant improvement in English and the marked improvement in mathematics and science standards since 2000.

2. In English, where standards of reading and writing at the end of Year 6 are now very high and compare very favourably with those of other schools, the improvement has been brought about by the careful and effective introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the quality of the subject leadership. Effective teaching in Year 6 has enabled the older pupils to make good progress and achieve well. Standards in speaking and listening are nearer the average expected of eleven-year-olds because pupils have yet to develop the confidence to speak cogently in formal situations. The standards of the present group of pupils in Year 2 are not so high, because, although many read well, standards of writing and of speaking and listening are nearer the average for the age group.

3. The above-average standards in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 are the result of meticulous and conscientious teaching in Year 6. In the case of mathematics, the recent improvement also results from the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the contribution of strong subject leadership. A good foundation is thus in place for the standards in the subject to improve further as the numeracy strategy develops in Years 1 - 5. In information and communication technology, the recent installation of a suite of computers makes it now possible to teach skills to groups of pupils. This, combined with well-judged teacher development and carefully planned timetabling (so that pupils both learn skills and then apply them in other subjects) has resulted in standards which have improved since the last inspection: pupils are achieving well.

4. In art and design, the satisfactory standards in painting and drawing are evidence of the natural enthusiasm pupils have for the subject: three-dimensional work is under-represented however. Physical education standards, in line with those expected of pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, are the result of satisfactory coverage of the curriculum, supported by good resources and extended by the good programme of extra-curricular activity. History standards are satisfactory by the end of Year 6 because although pupils have acquired detailed knowledge of the topics they have studied as a result of skilful teaching, but their history skills: the study of historical evidence, and ability to weigh up different kinds of evidence before coming to a personal conclusion, are insufficiently developed. Pupils in Year 2 have insufficient depth of knowledge, in some instances because teaching has not sufficiently focused on the historical aspects of a topic.

5. The below-average standards in design and technology and geography at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are the result of the lack of progressive development of the respective subject skills and weaknesses in the curriculum for these subjects. The intermittent teaching of design and technology over the year, for example, has meant that pupils have not built up the skills they require so that they can tackle the projects appropriate to each year.

6. Pupils with lower levels of attainment, including those with statements of special educational need, make good progress because of the quality of the provision for them. It is based on careful monitoring of their progress which in turn leads to suitable programmes agreed with them and their families. In particular, pupils are helped by the very good support they receive from the special needs assistants who work with them.

7. Building self esteem and fostering independence are features of provision for pupils in the reception class which lead to their achieving above-average standards. Their programme is very well planned, their progress carefully assessed, the total resource of the class, including teaching and non teaching staff expertise, is accurately directed at what the pupils need to learn. As a result they become enthusiastic learners, make good progress and lay down a good foundation of knowledge and skill on which to build when they go on to Year 1. It is too early to see this successful work reflected in the standards at the end of Year 2 because the provision, now in its second year, is so newly established.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' very good attitudes to school, better than they were at the last inspection, are evident in many ways. Pupils attend school regularly and are keen members of school clubs. They are conscientious, attentive in class and respect each other and their teachers. They behave well and work hard during lessons and this contributes well to their success. This helped make a reception class music lesson successful, for example. Children using instruments to tell a story handled them sensitively, waiting their turn and playing the instruments creatively. Pupils of all ages take homework seriously. They have responsible attitudes to it, often producing work of high quality which makes a very good contribution to the standards they achieve and to their developing maturity.

9. Pupils' behaviour is good because they have respect for their teachers. They behave well in the classrooms where they are often sensible and mature. They maintain good standards of behaviour in the playground although the lack of play resources during some breaks does not support constructive play. Wet playtimes are calm. Pupils play board games and enjoy the companionship of their friends. Pupils point out that bullying does take place, from time to time and recognise its effect, one younger child pointing out that 'I lose confidence if I am picked on'. However, they appreciate that if it is serious they can take their complaints to their teachers or ask their parents to speak for them. They appreciate the support of the mid-day supervisors who listen well and intervene appropriately in their disputes. More generally, when they are anxious they will speak with their teachers or the head teacher, secure in the knowledge that their problems will be dealt with fairly. No pupils have been excluded during the past year.

10. Pupils show a willingness to develop personally. Their sensible attitudes and the way in which they relate to their teachers demonstrates this. They appreciate the system of achievement points which may result in *Silver Trust Card* awards from the deputy head teacher or the *Gold Trust Cards* received from the head teacher. Pupils with trust cards enjoy choosing special break time activities such as going to the computer suite or improving their artistic skills. Older pupils responsibly undertake the small jobs they are given to do around school. They set up overhead projectors for school assemblies for example and, in Year 6, they have duties which include helping in the classroom and the school office.

11. Pupils value their friendships highly and react well to the support they receive from teachers and other staff, responding to instructions with respect: this creates a calm working environment which, in turn, makes a significant contribution to learning. Pupils understand the effect of their actions on others and value fair treatment. Their friendships are strong and

important to them. Such relationships make a good contribution to the social and personal development of all pupils in the school.

12. Attendance levels, well above the national average, reflect the enthusiasm pupils have for school and contribute well to the standards they achieve.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. Teaching is good in Reception because work is very well planned and well thought out to provide interesting activities both indoors and outside, so meeting different needs well. The well-prepared teaching assistants are part of an effective team and are skilled at working with groups of pupils, helping them to focus on the task in hand. The adults constantly talk with the pupils, prompting, explaining, encouraging and so reinforcing other learning. Their questions are well judged, ensuring pupils observe carefully and think things out for themselves so that they understand. Because relationships are strong and mutually respectful, pupils know they will be listened to and so speak confidently, discussing ideas candidly. The result is well-behaved pupils who concentrate hard and make good progress.

14. The quality of teaching is good in Year 6 also because lessons are very well planned. Thoughtful, systematic teaching which combines with pupils' willingness to apply themselves and their determination to do well, helps them succeed. For example, in an effective mathematics lesson, where the emphasis was on pupils thinking for themselves, their attitudes to the work set were exemplary and their concentration was intense. The teaching focused on developing the skills required for solving a problem, but required pupils to solve it themselves. They made good progress as a result.

15. The quality of teaching in Years 1 - 5 is sound. The strengths include well-planned lessons, with work appropriate for higher and lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs. Classes are well organised, teachers' instructions are clear and because pupils know what they have to do they settle to it willingly. Good relationships lead to well-managed classrooms and compliant, well-behaved pupils. In Years 1 and 2, lively introductions to lessons and well-chosen questions help pupils of different abilities to think for themselves. This is also apparent in Year 3, 4 and 5, where pupils are expected to use and apply knowledge they have already acquired. In some lessons the teacher's energy and obvious enthusiasm for the topic under study is infectious and pupils reflect that energy in the work they do. For example many pupils were fascinated by the different characters in the book they were studying, *Grandpa's Indian Summer*, and wrote about them with understanding. Homework is set which develops the lesson's topic in a way pupils find interesting.

16. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good quality of the teaching they experience. They receive very good, discreet support from skilful classroom assistants. Pupils with statements of special educational need are well served by their individual programmes.

17. There are, however, some areas for development which would enable pupils to do even better. In some lessons there is insufficient clarity in setting out exactly what pupils are to learn and making sure all the pupils understand what it is. Time is not always used to the best advantage. The introduction to lessons is sometimes too long: pupils spend too much time on the carpet while the teacher talks to them and do not have enough time for the activities. There is scope for allowing pupils more responsibility for deciding how to learn, and increasing it as they get older: some lessons are strongly teacher led and pupils do not always get the opportunity they need to work things out for themselves. This affects the progress of the middle and higher attainers in particular. In some classes, teachers do more

than they need for pupils, thus delaying pupils' realisation that it is important to be responsible for looking after materials and equipment. Teachers do not yet all take full advantage of the time together at the end of a lesson for pupils to articulate what they have learned and for teacher and pupils together to set new challenges for future lessons.

18. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection in that there were no lessons this time where the quality of the teaching was unsatisfactory. Teaching in Reception, criticised last time is now good. With the monitoring arrangements now in place, the school is well placed to continue to improve.

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

19. Much work has gone into developing the curriculum in the last two years to bring it to its current satisfactory level and there have been some significant improvements since the last inspection. The introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has had a profound influence on improving the standards pupils achieve in English and mathematics. The curriculum in the Reception class is now very good. Here the links between the outdoor and indoor curriculum enable children to make rapid progress in all areas of learning and attain above the level expected for children this age by the end of the year. The curriculum for information and communication technology has also improved and the way it is planned has a direct bearing on the current improvement in standards.

20. The strengths of the curriculum include the recently devised long and medium-term planning which is now monitored and adapted to suit the changing needs of the school as classes vary from year to year in terms of the combination of age groups in them. The interesting range of activities offered outside school which support what pupils learn during the day is a notable strength. Activities include a wide range of sport, dance, and clubs to enhance what is taught in school. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with a wide range of educational and physical needs have full access the curriculum. Pupils who have statements of special educational need receive good specialist assistance which includes specially designed programmes for learning, for example, or being taught with a small group if this is more appropriate. Careful monitoring of pupils' progress ensures that the curriculum matches their requirements.

21. There are weaknesses in the allocation of time to some subjects which limits opportunities for pupils to reach the standards of which they are capable. In part this reflects the changing needs of the school which are in turn reflected in the school's development plan. At present, the current organisation of curricular time favours information and communication technology and has been successful in raising standards rapidly in terms of developing pupils' skills. The generous allocation of time to mathematics, however, is not successful in all classes where sometimes work expands to fit the available time rather than pupils being required to complete work within set time limits. Similarly in science, a whole afternoon devoted to one subject does not necessarily promote optimum learning. Current timetabling arrangements mean that subjects such as art, design and technology and music are taught in short blocks of time often at the start or end of the day, an arrangement that can be restrictive in terms of what pupils can undertake practically within the time allowed. The range of learning opportunities within the curriculum is not sufficiently well planned to facilitate pupils learning for themselves. Planning in some subjects is not specifically directed at pupils' need to learn skills progressively, building on what they already know and understand. This affects attainment overall in geography, design and technology and some aspects of history and art. Curricular planning does not yet sufficiently take into account links between subjects so that what is learnt in one supports what is learnt in another. This in particular

restricts pupils' capacity to use and apply their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in a range of subjects across the curriculum.

22. The school provides satisfactorily for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. Provision for sex and drugs education is appropriate to pupils' age and stage of development. The community contributes well to their learning and links with other schools and the local nursery and playgroup are strong. The introduction of shared planning of activities between the independent nursery and the Reception class means that children follow a coherent programme of work in the foundation stage. Links with the local high school are effective in supporting pupils' learning in information and communication technology and in introducing pupils to aspects of design and technology - such as working with wood - not available to them at their own school.

23. The provision for pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Provision is good for their spiritual and moral development and satisfactory where it supports their social and cultural development. Strengths in provision include weekly worship in the local church, reflecting the parish's commitment to supporting the school's Christian ethos. Prayers at the beginning and end of the school day and before lunch place the work of the school in a context of prayer and reflection. This also contributes positively to pupils' sense of moral responsibility, assisted by the good systems in place to enable pupils to behave responsibly and thoughtfully towards others. This is all good practice. However there are comparatively few moments of wonder in lessons when pupils are enthralled by something they have learnt or that has been revealed to them. Such moments of excitement and revelation in learning are not explicitly planned for and pupils have few opportunities to discover for themselves. This also has an impact on their social education. While pupils undertake some responsibilities about the school these do not increase significantly as they grow older. For example, there is no school's council, with elected class members. This means that pupils do not learn to organise themselves to contribute to a representative body or to participate in discussion about the running of the school. While provision for pupils' cultural education is satisfactory, opportunities are missed to celebrate different cultures. The school has nevertheless made a start at including works of fiction reflecting other cultures in class and library books.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

24. The pastoral care and regard for the health and safety of pupils are good because they are given a high priority in school. The school's policies are practical and founded on common sense. For example, the risk assessments are carried out carefully and policies include guidelines to provide safety during school trips. New building work recently completed enables pupils with physical or visual disabilities to move around the school freely and participate in all learning opportunities. Attendance is monitored well because the school wants to know why pupils are not in school and whether they are safe. Likewise, the school's behaviour policy encourages effective strategies which promote good behaviour and raise the self-esteem of pupils.

25. Child protection procedures are appropriately co-ordinated and staff training is kept up-to-date. The school cares well for all its pupils with particular regard for the most vulnerable who receive extra care from all the adults in school. Pupils with special educational needs receive good quality support which is tailored to their individual needs and enriches their learning opportunities.

26. Good arrangements are in place for the assessment of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology and the information is used appropriately to plan future lessons. This is an improvement on the position reported last

time. However, assessment arrangements remain under-developed for most other subjects. For example, there is no formal assessment of pupils' achievement and the co-ordinators are not enabled to monitor what pupils have learned (as distinct from what they have been taught) and relate it to National Curriculum levels. This reduces the school's ability to inform pupils and parents about how they are getting on. It also makes it difficult to track the development of pupils' skills in the different subjects as they move through the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

27. Parents have a very high regard for the school and the dedicated work by the head teacher and staff which has moved the school forward and begun to raise standards. The partnership between school and parents is strong from the pupils' earliest years: parents are always welcome and soon begin to work closely with the school to support their children.

28. The effective Friends' Association welcomes parents and provides a social life for the school community whilst raising funds for the school. Parents, governors and grandparents come into school to help in the classrooms and they contribute positively to learning, to the social development of pupils and their understanding of community life and citizenship.

29. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted about their children's individual learning programmes and reviews, carried out regularly, are agreed with pupils and family.

30. The quality of information parents receive from school is good. Communication is strong and parents are kept well informed about school life. The school writes to parents when a child is awarded an achievement certificate; they are given early warning of any concerns. The attractive and accessible weekly newsletters give parents plenty of information about school, about forthcoming events and school club timetables. The school considers the needs of working or single parents and will e-mail or post newsletters to parents if asked to do so. The prospectus and the governing body's annual report provide parents with all the information they need on the work of the school.

31. Parents of pupils in Years 2 and 6 receive the results of the national curriculum tests and the school provides the parents of pupils in other years with standardised test scores for maths, reading, writing and spelling. Reports to parents clearly show the work pupils have covered in lessons and teachers' comments demonstrate how well they know and understand their pupils. Nevertheless, reports do not indicate in sufficient detail the attainment levels achieved in the different subjects or give information which is specific enough about how parents can help their children.

32. The influence of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good and the school enables this well. For example, parents have been better able to support their children's learning in mathematics following a calculation workshop which was arranged to brief them about teaching methods for numeracy. The school's homework policy and its consistent use by teachers, enables parents to support their children at home and help them develop good habits for independent study. Pupils of all ages regularly devote time to reading, both at school and at home and their efforts are very well recorded. Older pupils produce homework which is often well presented, creative and appreciated by their teachers. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is thus very good and makes a significant impact on the standards pupils achieve.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

33. The school is well led and well managed. The leadership of the headteacher and governors is very strong and has been instrumental in bringing about many beneficial changes in a short time. The school now has a clear sense of purpose linked to promoting pupils' academic and personal achievement. Management is effective and the school's systems enable it to function efficiently. The senior management team works well together and contributes well to the overall leadership and management of the school. The school is well placed to improve further for there is a shared commitment to succeed, building on current strengths and tackling its very well chosen priorities for future development.

34. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have confronted energetically the issues raised in the inspection of May 2001; this has resulted in improved standards by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science and in the reception class where standards were formerly below average. Much effort has been put into improving the quality of teaching and of pupils' learning by instituting the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and using these to influence the way teachers plan and teach lessons. Through an extensive programme of working alongside colleagues, monitoring teachers' planning as well as specific aspects of pupils' work such as writing or the work of pupils causing concern, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have been raised. Well-chosen training has been used judiciously to inspire teachers. The school development plan rightly identifies the next stage of monitoring to be scrutinising with more rigour how well pupils of different abilities are taught and, more especially, what they are learning in all subjects. Subject coordinators of English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and the foundation stage are particularly effective. In most other subjects, coordinators have yet to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects. Though many have made a good start on reviewing their subjects, monitoring planning and determining the next stage of development, they have yet to focus on the outcomes of pupils' learning. The leadership and management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the decision to link this role with the senior management team is effective because it maintains a high profile for their needs.

35. The quality of leadership and management provided by the governing body is very good. Governors have provided stability and a clear educational direction during a time of considerable change, showing foresight and determination to get the best for the school. While recognising all that has been accomplished in the last three years, they are well aware of what needs to be done next and have taken the lead in setting up regular meetings to look at the work of the school as a whole rather than the day-to-day details. From this they appreciate that the curriculum, while much improved, could be more creatively and imaginatively conceived and recognise that pupils need to learn more independently if average and higher attainers are to reach their full potential. The governors have also played a crucial strategic role in marketing the school and in encouraging greater parental involvement. Their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses is particularly sharp and they are keen to strengthen the involvement of key staff in the running of the school.

36. The school development plan is extremely detailed and recognises much of what needs to be done to move the school on further. It identifies key areas for improvement and sets as its primary goal the establishing of high expectations and a culture of success for adults and pupils alike. There is almost too much detail, however, to explain how the school will achieve its aims. There is a tendency to concentrate on 'input' rather than 'outcome' and so measurements of success are sometimes wrongly focused.

37. The very good quality accommodation and good level of resources are used effectively to help pupils to learn. The use of support staff is particularly effective in helping different groups of pupils to learn. Newly qualified teachers or those new to the school are given effective support.

38. The school is providing satisfactory value for money because the improving standards are achieved at an above-average cost per pupil.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

39. In order to build on the school's strengths and improve pupils' standards and achievement, the governors' headteacher and staff should:

- Improve standards in design and technology, geography, and speaking (Paragraphs: 2, 5)
- Make more opportunities for pupils to learn by independent research and practical activity (Paragraphs: 17, 21)
- Improve the quality and range of the curriculum and improve arrangements for assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics science and information and communication technology by (Paragraphs: 21, 26, 34)

improving the planning of subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology,
re-examining timetabling and the use of time in all subjects;

paying increased attention to the outcomes of pupils' learning;

- Enhance learning by strengthening the links between English, mathematics and information and communication technology and the other subjects (Paragraphs: 21, 55, 73)

Each of these issues has been identified in the school's improvement plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

29

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

51

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	10	16	0	0	0
Percentage	0	10	35	55	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 more than three percentage points

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		126
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		11

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

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

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0,1

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	12	4	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	15	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (86)	94 (86)	100 (95)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	15	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (86)	94 (86)	94 (95)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	8	4	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	12	10	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (81)	83 (73)	100 (96)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	11	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (88)	83 (88)	83 (85)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

* Results are not published where there are ten or fewer pupils.

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	125	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	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	21
Average class size	24.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	96

Financial information

Financial year	2002 - 03
	£
Total income	311381
Total expenditure	295575
Expenditure per pupil	2345
Balance brought forward from previous year	12762
Balance carried forward to next year	28568

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

126

Number of questionnaires returned

58

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	41	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	38	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	41	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	48	2	2	0
The teaching is good.	43	50	5	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	43	16	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	34	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	36	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	48	40	9	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	72	26	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	40	2	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	59	34	0	3	3

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

40. Standards are above the level expected of children the same age by the end of the reception year in all areas of learning. Children achieve well because they are well taught. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection and reflects the quality of the work the school has put into this area. A significant strength is the very well planned curriculum which is organised so that indoor and outdoor activities complement each other in meeting children's needs. The balance between formal instruction and children learning through finding out for themselves is very good; additional adult support is used very well to enable children to make good progress and attain higher than expected standards. The procedures to assess children's attainment are good and the information gained is used effectively to track the progress they make and to help determine what to teach next.

Personal, social and emotional development

41. Children come eagerly into the classroom, hang up their coats on the appropriate peg and attach their name tag to a puppet, depositing their book bags in the proper place. They are instantly busy, chatting to each other, settling down to play a game together or checking on the progress of the runner beans they planted to see how much they have grown overnight. Children play and talk together very well and concentrate for long periods of time before moving on to a different task. They all know that they have to put on their coats when they go outside and do so without prompting and without help. The teaching is good. The relationships between adults and children are good and so children express their views confidently, knowing that they will be listened to and the response will be appreciative. They are attentive to each other: when a dispute arose between two children over a construction toy, one offered 'to make one for you'. Parents are involved closely in their children's learning. They spend the last half hour of Fridays working alongside their children in class and take a keen interest in assisting with homework and helping their children to learn to read. The strong links between home and school thus contribute very well to the children's good progress.

Communication, language and literacy

42. Children communicate clearly and are articulate for their age. The good quality of teaching offers many opportunities for children to express their opinions and to learn through talking with each other and with adults. Interesting activities stimulate them to talk and often their comments reflect the way adults use talk to develop their learning. A higher attainer suggested, for example, that the pig in the story might have said: 'Oink! Oink! I might jump in if the ducks will let me,' and an average attainer commented that 'J is for Jump like Jumbo Jet'. Higher attainers read simple texts well and competently write down simple words unaided on the large whiteboard (keeping a mental tally of how many words they were writing) while average and lower attainers organise different combinations of letters to spell words, which the teacher changed letter by letter so as to focus their attention on initial and final sounds. Such skilled teaching ensures that the children concentrate and that they achieve success. Learning to read and to write is made fun. The library is used well, and stories and games and time to browse through interesting books help children to associate reading with pleasure. For example, a lower attainer helped a toy kitten to 'read' a story while it was drinking from a pretend can, part of the contents of a toy shop the teacher had used to illustrate a story. By the end of the reception year, pupils understand the use of speech bubbles to denote words actually spoken; higher attainers begin to write accurately at length while lower attainers begin to use their knowledge of sounds to help them to write.

Mathematical development

43. Children achieve well in response to good teaching. Lessons are interesting, well planned and through both indoor and outdoor activities children learn to use what they have learnt. They very much enjoyed taking turns to move the hands of the clock round to reflect the hours of the day in sequence while they listened to the story of the bad-tempered ladybird. An average attainer commented, 'It's going to be an even more bigger animal', thus appreciating the structure of the story and significance of the increase in size as each hour passed. The planning identifies key mathematical words and it is noticeable that this is used consistently by all adults in the class. When measuring the weight of different toy animals using cubes, average attainers were helped to understand a sliding scale of weights from 'light' to 'heavy'. Questioning is good and through discreet repetition children are helped to remember what they have learnt. Lower attainers explored size in relation to volume as they filled different containers with sand, and began to understand 'most' and 'least' as they counted each measure in turn, with help, writing the number with their fingertips to compare. The children co-operate well together, learning from each other as they talk.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

44. Children achieve well because they are well taught. Because higher attainers have an extensive vocabulary, they help discussions to take place on a challenging level. For example, in one discussion, a pupil explained that 'the seeds have germinated'. The teacher was then able to develop the idea by explaining about roots and shoots and the children exchanged ideas about how big the plants would eventually become. Children are encouraged to put forward their views and to speculate on what they see. Teachers' clear explanations and good demonstrations, usually in the context of a discussion with pupils, help pupils to observe closely and to understand. The very good curriculum links different aspects of subjects together so that, both indoors and outside, pupils learn through exploring and finding out for themselves. For example, the children measured round the trunks of different trees and found out that the longer the paper the wider the trunk and the older the tree. They enjoyed experimenting with different ways of transporting water from one place to another, co-operating well. They accurately talked about what they were doing, explaining the results of their actions.

Physical development

45. The children are taught well and have opportunities to develop skills in a variety of places and situations. For example, the wheeled toys, kept in the make-believe potting shed in the classroom, are used as part of well-planned play involving developing their knowledge and understanding of the world; the apparatus in the hall is used effectively to develop children's agility in climbing; and time in the computer suite is used very well to develop children's skills in using and controlling a mouse and manipulating images on screen. The children achieve well, learning to use scissors and other small implements efficiently. Lower attainers enjoyed using large paintbrushes and brightly coloured paints to practise writing big letters, developing increasing control. Well-planned activities based on clear objectives with well-directed questioning keeps the children's attention and in return they try their best. Higher and average attainers move confidently and find ingenious ways, for example, to travel through, under and around apparatus, rolling, balancing, climbing and swinging with good control.

Creative development

46. The quality of teaching is good: it is imaginative and thoughtful. The very good ratio of adults to children means that they get a lot of individual attention so that they learn well. Children mix colours effectively, knowing that the addition of another colour will alter the shade. Their paintings of fire-breathing dragons are full of life and colour, with spiky jagged lines along the spine. The teaching expects a lot from the children as shown in higher attainers' detailed circular patterns reflecting the Aztec designs they had looked at. The children respond very well to music and play instruments sensitively as they concentrate well, listening to their own and the efforts of their friends. They enjoyed following an imaginary route through the park, responding to the different images conjured by different instruments such as the bells reflecting the flowers or maracas to represent the path. Because so much of what they do is enjoyable, the children's learning comes on apace.

ENGLISH

47. Small numbers make the analysis of national test results difficult to interpret and assessment results are not published in detail when there are ten or fewer boys or girls in an age group. Nevertheless the sharp rise in pupils' results in English at the end of Year 6 is a significant improvement on earlier years and in 2002 their results compared very favourably with other schools. Work seen of the present Year 6 pupils is consistent with similarly high results in reading and writing although speaking and listening, at a standard much nearer to the average for the age-group, remains an area of comparative weakness. Their standards are above average overall and better than they were at the last inspection.

48. There are several reasons for the rising standards. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy in 2001 is one. This has provided teachers with a structure for planning English lessons and a framework in which different aspects of the subject can be coherently and progressively introduced to pupils. Another reason is the quality of the subject leadership, re-energised by the need to develop new approaches, playing an increasing role in planning and monitoring the provision and in analysing assessment information to guide future development. A third reason why standards at the end of Year 6 are rising lies in the quality of the teaching in Year 6 where a rigorous, systematic approach enables pupils to practise skills at a level appropriate to their age and make good progress.

49. The standards of pupils' writing is accordingly very high at the end of Year 6. The highest and middle-attaining pupils write very effective narrative, for example. In one, a fugitive story, pupils devised well-constructed and fast moving plots, building up tension and creating suspense well. Well-chosen vocabulary contributed to the sense of mystery: 'The shining sun caught the blade of Peter's saw and glinted into his eyes.' Paragraphing is good and dialogue is well managed. The spelling of the middle-ability pupils sometimes lapses, but their punctuation is secure. Lower-attaining pupils have good ideas, but some have significant difficulties with spelling, suggesting that some basic spelling rules are not established and that some pupils have not learned to hear the sound of the words they are trying to spell. Most pupils' joined-up handwriting is neat and legible.

50. The best pupils read very well. They enjoy books of different kinds and read fluently, easily managing unusual and complex words and, in talking about the plot and characters, also show they understand well. In the middle range of reading ability, pupils are also good readers but have less to say about what they are reading. Lower-attaining readers are not so accurate, often guessing words from the initial letter, and sometimes mistaking the sounds of letters.

51. Speaking is an area of comparative weakness because, although some converse well in informal situations, on other occasions pupils have difficulty in expressing themselves well. They generally have good ideas, but some need to add superfluous words (y'know, like, sort of). Others find reporting findings back to the rest of the class unnerving. They do not confidently convey their undoubtedly interesting ideas to other pupils.

52. Reading standards at the end of Year 2 are good. Pupils understand what they read. The best are accurate, confident and clearly enjoy books, talking about them with enthusiasm. The least successful tend to confuse words that look similar or which start with the same letter because they have not learned to look carefully at the whole word, or take into account its context or how it sounds. Higher-attaining pupils write interesting narrative which places events in a suitable sequence. Their writing of record, including accounts of science experiments for example, is logical and well composed. In their writing, most single-syllable words are spelled correctly and their attempts at new words are plausible and show that pupils are hearing them accurately. Handwriting is however, average for pupils this age: it is legible but letters are unevenly formed. Lower-attaining pupils have made good progress in writing over the year, but their letters are immature and their lines sometimes go awry on the page. English standards at the end of Year 2 are average overall.

53. More generally, pupils' knowledge of how to find books in a library and of using a book's contents and index pages to locate information is not as good as would normally be expected of pupils at the end of Year 2 or Year 6.

54. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress helped by the skilful classroom assistants. They are well served by suitably planned work, and the classroom assistants are well directed to ensure the pupils are challenged at their own level.

55. The quality of teaching overall is sound, and there are some significant strengths, particularly in Year 6 where thoughtful teaching combines with pupils' application and determination to help them do well. More generally, lessons are well planned, with work suitable for different kinds of need. Classes are well organised, teachers' instructions are clear and because pupils know what they have to do they settle to it willingly. Good relationships lead to well-managed classrooms and compliant, well-behaved pupils. There are, however, areas where development of teaching would help pupils do even better. In some cases, there is insufficient clarity in setting out exactly what pupils are to learn (as opposed to what they are going to do) and making sure they understand what it is. There is scope for allowing pupils more responsibility for deciding how to learn, and progressively increasing it as they get older: some lessons are strongly teacher led and pupils do not always get the time they need to work things out for themselves. Teachers do not yet take full advantage of the support available from the National Literacy Strategy to help them with developing pupils' skills: the use of text to help with both reading and writing, and that of the time all together at the end of the lesson for pupils to articulate (and the teacher to note) what they have learned, are two examples. Neither do teachers sufficiently plan links between English and other subjects by which learning in all of them can be enhanced.

56. Although there are areas for improvement, the subject is buoyant under its present leadership and well placed to improve.

MATHEMATICS

57. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 and in line with those expected by the end of Year 2. Standards have improved since the last inspection and are better than the most recent test results for pupils at the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 to 5. They make the most progress in Year 6 where they achieve well in response to

consistently good teaching and the high standards expected of them. The subject is very well led and managed by a very effective co-ordinator who has changed for the better the way mathematics, including numeracy, is taught throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

58. There are several reasons for the improvement in standards. The introduction of the national strategy for numeracy less than two years ago has had a big impact on what is taught and the way in which pupils learn. Through monitoring teaching, working alongside colleagues and involving extra support from the local educational authority, the co-ordinator has succeeded in changing teaching methods so that pupils learn more effectively. Because older pupils have missed out on learning early, basic skills an immense amount of work has had to be covered in a short space of time. Thus pupils in Years 5 and 6 have had to learn basic rules for setting out work neatly and systematically at the same time as learning how to carry out more complex calculations. The use of individual targets to involve pupils in challenging themselves is successful, though these vary in quality from class to class. The good quality of teacher's marking is also a contributory factor to the improvement in standards. This is particularly evident in Year 6 where there is measurable progress in response to the teacher's painstaking corrections, explanations and queries. The introduction of a 'skills tracking sheet', whereby teachers tick off each skill as it is acquired by individual pupils, contributes well to extending teachers' awareness of the progress pupils make. The information gleaned from analysing pupils' performance in optional and national tests is also used well to indicate what pupils have learnt and what they need to learn next.

59. Standards in Year 2 are close to those expected of seven-year-olds. In large measure, this reflects the size of the age-group and the abilities of pupils in the class. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Strengths include lively introductions to lessons with well-chosen questions to help pupils of different abilities and ages to think and to calculate quickly. For example, while a Year 1 pupil with special educational needs slowly calculated a simple sum, higher-attaining pupils were challenged to respond quickly to several questions involving increasing large numbers by 10. Marking is detailed and helpful in making pupils more precise in their use and understanding of mathematical terms and notation. There are weaknesses, however, in the over-long lessons and lack of appropriate time limits. Although different work is set for pupils of different abilities the teaching underestimates what average and higher attainers can achieve in the time. This slows the pace and quality of pupils' learning. Closing sessions do not involve pupils sufficiently well in explaining what they have learnt.

60. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall; it is good in Year 6. The strengths include setting work which is appropriately different for higher and lower attainers. This is evident in Year 3 and 4 where higher attainers are challenged to use and apply their knowledge and to explain what they have understood. The teaching is aimed at getting pupils to think. Pupils' targets are specific and updated regularly and are clearly linked to what pupils need to learn next. The weaknesses lie in the use of time during the daily mathematics lesson in Years 3 to 5. Lessons tend to be over-long and pupils are not made aware of how much time they are expected to spend on tasks. Although lessons begin well, the activities are not always sufficiently challenging for average attainers. The teaching does not make best use of the closing ten minutes to involve pupils in demonstrating what they have learnt or to set new challenges so they can apply their new knowledge.

61. In Year 6, the quiet, firm management of pupils, a high level of challenge and clear expectations of attitude and behaviour lead to absolute attentiveness. The concentration by pupils is intense as the teaching really makes them think. Because the lessons are so well planned, pupils are very well-motivated and the interesting, well-thought out tasks, designed to extend the capacity of the higher attainers, result in above-average standards.

Consequently, pupils quickly learn to use a set square, for example, to reflect a shape around four quadrants and move on to measuring the angles as an alternative method. The teaching is good rather than very good because the questioning is not always sharp enough and pupils are not invited to learn through posing their own questions. Throughout the school there is a tendency for teachers to talk for too long and to treat pupils as though they are much younger than they are and this limits opportunities for them to learn independently.

62. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they learn well. They receive very good quality support from skilled support assistants who are attentive and discreet in helping pupils to understand. Pupils with statements of special need are well catered for and individual programmes of work help them to achieve well.

SCIENCE

63. Small numbers make the analysis of national test results difficult to interpret. Nevertheless the sharp rise in pupils' results in Science at the end of Year 6 is a significant improvement on earlier years and in 2002 their results compared favourably with other schools, and was in line with the average of schools where a similar proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. Work seen of the present Year 6 pupils is consistent with above-average results and broadly in line with those reported last time. That of Year 2 pupils is also above average. Pupils have achieved well over their time in school. Those with special educational needs, well supported by skilful teaching assistants, have also achieved well

64. The good standards achieved by pupils by the time they leave the school are being brought about in large part by the meticulous and conscientious teaching of science in Year 6. Pupils are willing and determined to learn, and their attitudes also contribute to their good achievement. Year 6 pupils are clear about the methods they use in investigations: they know why they hypothesise, why they eliminate all variables from an experiment except one. They can set up an experiment, record observations and draw relevant conclusions, which, they accept, may or may not accord with the original prediction. The teaching which has helped them achieve good standards is strong because it is well planned and based on well presented ideas and a thorough discussion of problems and possible solutions. In one lesson, where pupils found the experiment did not run smoothly, the teacher insisted on pupils thinking out their own experiment: there was no spoon feeding or easy answers.

65. The quality of teaching in Years 3 – 5 is satisfactory because, though lessons are planned carefully, the approach is less practical, more theoretical, and pupils do not so readily find things out for themselves. Investigations are not always as rigorous as they should be. Teachers manage pupils well, but do not always encourage them to describe what they have done, thus they miss opportunities for practising speaking and listening skills and for using language in the precise way required of the subject. Pupils do not automatically record their observations, thus missing the chance to use literacy skills in a context other than English. Time is not always used to the best advantage. Adults sometimes underestimate the capacity for pupils to act safely and responsibly when tidying away at the end of lessons.

66. Pupils in Year 2 have made good progress, to the point where they carry out and record appropriately experiments they have undertaken. Pupils describe accurately what they have done, remembering the detail well. They have a good understanding of scientific method, recognising, in the case of an experiment on forces, that the distance travelled by a model car is affected by the surface it runs across.

67. The subject is developing well under the guidance of a newly appointed coordinator. The planning of pupils' work is placed on a firm footing and new arrangements for assessment helpfully track pupils' progress through the stages of the science programme. The coordinator has yet to adopt fully the role's responsibility for the standards achieved by pupils. That apart, the subject is well placed to develop further.

ART AND DESIGN

68. Standards of attainment meet expectations in art and design at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, maintaining overall the position reported at the time of the last inspection. Pupils at all levels of ability achieve satisfactorily and in some cases well, in relation to their starting points. Pupils experience working with a suitable range of art materials, although three-dimensional work is under-represented. Most pupils in Year 2 demonstrate a confident technique with paint. With help, they mix colours accurately and apply them with care – seen, for example, in their pictures of flowers in the style of Van Gogh. The quality of teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and provides opportunities for pupils of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, to succeed. As a result, they all work with enjoyment and concentration and are manifestly pleased with what they have achieved. However, because they do not clear away at the end of the session, they do not have the opportunity to learn to be responsible for their own materials and equipment.

69. Many pupils in Year 6 manage materials satisfactorily and some do it well. For example, working in the style of William Morris, they show they have looked carefully, appreciated the principles of his style and accurately emulated it. They display appropriate skills in mixing paint or managing textiles. They make good use of the Internet to collect ideas for their own work which they extend through preliminary sketches to a composition of their own.

70. The management of the subject is underdeveloped. The curriculum is incompletely planned, in the sense that the development of pupils' skills is not systematic enough, and pupils are not clear which art skills are being practised in a particular project. Timetabling art in half-hour lessons means it is difficult for pupils to practise skills and make significant progress towards completing a piece of work in the time available. There is no formal assessment of pupils' work and so no means of monitoring standards being achieved, judging them against National Curriculum standards, or of developing the curriculum in response to what pupils can do well or need to practise further.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

71. Standards are below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. This is because pupils do not develop skills systematically, building on what they know and understand as they move through the school. Although there is an outline long-term plan indicating which topics are to be taught in which term, it is hard to determine what has been taught and how well pupils achieve because of the lack of information relating to their progress. The unsatisfactory resources for learning are limited both in quantity and variety. Overall therefore, the provision is unsatisfactory, despite satisfactory work and standards in some classes. The co-ordinator is aware of the shortcomings and detailed plans in the school improvement plan show clearly the measures to be put into place to raise standards.

72. No lessons were seen and so no judgement about the quality of teaching is made. From looking at pupils' work and teachers' plans and from discussions with pupils it is clear that pupils' skills in designing and making are not developed systematically, and teachers underestimate what pupils can do. There is no agreed system for designing products; for

example initial designs take the form of a labelled diagram both in Year 1 and in Year 6. Specifications are sketchy and omit important details such as adhesive. In Years 3 and 4 pupils' designs for torches are much more detailed. Modifications in designs are well explained as in this average attainer's account: 'We had to change the whole base because our torch was too small for our battery.' However pupils are not required to explain the different processes logically and systematically; evaluative comments are incidental rather than explicitly planned. Thus an opportunity is missed to extend pupils' skills in writing factual and evaluative prose, organised under headings, for instance. Some pieces of work are of a good standard, such as a higher attaining Year 6 pupil's technical design for a shelter showing different elevations. Opportunities are missed, however, to develop pupils' own knowledge of their learning and to evaluate each other's work.

73. Links with other subjects are tenuous rather than planned to extend pupils' learning. Initiatives such as the design and technology workshops in Year 1 and 2 and the project Year 5 pupils undertook at the local high school were clearly enjoyed and pupils now in Year 6 recalled that 'sawing wood was fun'. The design and technology club revealed that pupils did not always have the skills to carry out their ambitious plans.

GEOGRAPHY

74. Standards in geography are below those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement is unsatisfactory. No lessons were seen and so no judgement is made on the quality of teaching. The co-ordinator, who took on the role at the beginning of the spring term, has identified the weaknesses in the breadth and depth of pupils' knowledge through monitoring their work. At present, teachers' planning and the way the subject is timetabled shows some lack of flexibility in teaching geography effectively through a systematic development of skills enabling pupils to build on what they know and can do.

75. Work in pupils' books is rather thin. The most recent project on weather symbols shows that high attainers have a clear grasp of these. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 understand that people live in different sorts of houses and use appropriate vocabulary to label and describe these. The work, however, is the same for pupils of different ages and abilities in this class. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 research information well using the Internet. Links with other subjects, however, are not fully explored. For example, the topic on mountains is not taught so that it complements scientific studies on the water cycle.

76. Higher-attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 write carefully considered accounts of the differences between the day to day life of an Indian village girl with that of their own. They learn to interpret the good and bad points of an area, assessing which parts might have been settled in and why. In Year 6 too there are some thoughtful responses to life in different climates: a lower attainer observing of a desert 'a lot of sand and very hot' and a higher attainer using more precise vocabulary such as 'desolate, uncultivated and barren.' So while there is much potential, pupils' skills are inhibited by weaknesses in the curriculum, a limited range of work and the opportunity to build on what they know and understand; for these reasons standards are below average overall and lower than those reported last time.

HISTORY

77. Standards in history at the end of Year 6 are in line with those to be expected of pupils this age and achievement is satisfactory despite weaknesses in some aspects of the subject. Although pupils are interested in the topics under study and have a good recall of information about them, their history skills are insufficiently developed. For example, pupils can talk with enthusiasm about the Aztecs, adding vivid descriptions of their funeral arrangements, but they have little idea about sources of historical information, of evaluating

different kinds of evidence, or of comparing one period with others. Pupils at the end of Year 2 have insufficient knowledge because teaching does not focus well enough on the historical aspects of a topic.

78. Project books show pupils assembling facts, copying or transferring information from a provided book or from the internet into their books. This is done neatly but the volume of research is low, the work has a second-hand feeling to it and there is no sense of excitement.

79. The planning for the subject is not yet fully developed. Present Year 6 pupils have been obliged to study two history topics in one half term to ensure they have covered the required ground. There is insufficient clarity about how history skills are built up progressively as pupils get older. The assessment of pupils' progress is too informal and does not supply information which will help pupils and their parents know how they are getting on in relation to National Curriculum standards or which will help teachers plan future lessons. The school's development plan, however, puts it in a good position to improve.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

80. Standards are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average and a key issue for the school to address. There has been considerable progress since then and pupils are achieving well as they rapidly make up lost ground. There are indications that younger pupils are likely to achieve more highly as already those in Years 3 and 4 have many of the skills shown by current pupils in Year 6. The subject is very well led and managed and a great deal has been accomplished in a short time.

81. There are several reasons for the improvements. The recently installed computer suite with its good resources has improved both teaching and learning. A whiteboard connected to a computer is also used well in two junior classes to demonstrate skills and techniques. Judicious timetabling so that pupils in all classes have two lessons a week, one to develop skills and the other to apply what they have learnt in relation to another subject, gives pupils purposeful practice and enables them to progress well. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject has also improved because of recent training. There is more to do: the use of information technology across the curriculum is only just beginning and is not an integral part of teachers' planning or their thinking when they devise lessons.

82. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the Year 1/2 class and although satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6 there were good features to several of the lessons and particular strengths in the teaching of Year 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 follow instructions closely. The teaching is highly structured and ensures that pupils know what they have to do. Opportunities are missed, however, to link development of skills with other subjects such as the week's literacy lessons which were based on a related topic. Similarly, when recording data from a traffic survey the opportunity was missed for pupils to use the results of their own survey - carried out on traffic - from their geography lessons.

83. Where the teaching is satisfactory, pupils are guided step-by step, listening to explanations and then following instructions, all keeping pace with each other so that no-one becomes confused. Although this works well in terms of managing pupils, it tends to slow down those who are more competent in handling the computer than others. Good features in lessons for older pupils include the teachers' expertise in demonstrating more sophisticated techniques for presenting data in different types of graphs. The pace was slick and pupils quickly grasped how some graphs gave different information at a glance from others. A higher attainer, for example, pointed out that it was 'easier to see in the pie chart that more

people have brown hair than all the other colours put together'. Technical language is used well and so pupils' vocabulary and understanding increases well. Pupils are beginning to use the Internet well to research information, looking at landscape paintings for example as a reference point for their own work. In the best lessons, pupils project their work on to a screen and speak about what they have found out, thus using their skills to help others, as well as themselves, to learn.

MUSIC

84. Pupils were involved in insufficient music to permit a judgement of standards or teaching quality to be made.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

85. Standards are in line with those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6 thus maintaining the position reported at the time of the last inspection. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the good quality support they receive. The subject is well resourced in terms of accommodation and equipment though some of the mats used in gymnastics are rather worn. The good provision for extra-curricular activities enhances pupils' skills in aspects such as dance and outdoor games and contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of the subject.

86. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory throughout the school with notable strengths in the very good relationships between staff and pupils which encourage pupils to participate vigorously in physical activity. Lessons are carefully planned. For example in a Year 1/2 lesson, this led to satisfactory attainment in travelling across the floor using different parts of the body at different heights. Years 1 and 2 pupils were taught to move equipment safely and sensibly and to incorporate this into a gymnastic routine of slow, measured movements. They behaved well for most of the time and tried their best for the teacher who praised them constructively. Occasionally, there is a tendency for teachers to become too quickly exasperated when pupils are slow to understand what is required of them.

87. Strengths in the teaching in Years 3 to 6 include a well managed initial 'warm up' which pupils in Years 3 and 4 greatly enjoy as it follows a dance routine to music. Good support enables pupils with special educational needs to join in well, encouraging those who tend to work in isolation to interact with others. The planning of lessons is good and time used well so that pupils experience a variety of activity. Pupils learn satisfactorily from watching each other's performance and their positive comments are thoughtful. Sometimes teachers are a little too eager to comment themselves when pupils would learn more by evaluating each other. There is an appropriate development of skills such as throwing and catching, both under and over arm, in Year 6 which pupils do very well indeed. Opportunities are sometimes missed to involve pupils in competitive games using rounders or cricket skills. The accommodation and resources are used well and full use is made of the playing fields despite inclement weather. As a result pupils are enthusiastic about the subject.

