

INSPECTION REPORT

**PINCHBECK WEST C of E (VOLUNTARY
CONTROLLED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Spalding

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120551

Headteacher: Miss Geraldine Houston

Reporting inspector: Fred Ward
18605

Dates of inspection: 6th - 8th May 2003

Inspection number: 248149

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Leaveslake Drove West Pinchbeck Spalding
Postcode:	PE11 3QJ
Telephone number:	(01775) 640357
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr B Chappell
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd July 2001

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18605	Fred Ward	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage English Geography History Music Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11566	Hilary Smyth	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1411	John Good	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Design technology Information and communication technology Religious education Education inclusion	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

Pinchbeck West is much smaller than most primary schools, currently attended by 59 pupils, aged four to 11. The school serves the village of West Pinchbeck and surrounding rural area. There are twice as many girls as boys in the first class (Reception, 1 and 2). Pupils start school aged four with a wide range of attainment. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average (26 per cent) covering mainly those with emotional and behavioural or severe learning difficulties; two have statements (above average). Five children are eligible for free school meals (well below average). Nearly all pupils are white British, with a few (5 per cent above average) white Europeans, who speak English fluently. The school has identified a few gifted and talented pupils in the juniors.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

After an unsettled period caused by changes in the teaching staff, the school is becoming better at what it does. The headteacher, governors and staff are now working very well together and know what needs to be done to raise achievement further. Overall, standards are average. The quality of teaching and learning is good; pupils enjoy what they do, are conscientious and generally behave very well. The school has a family atmosphere and gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well across the school in reading, information and communication technology, observation and craft skills and swimming; infants are doing well in numeracy.
- Pupils with special educational needs and the few gifted and talented make good progress.
- Pupils make a good start in reception, remain enthusiastic learners as they move through the school and nearly all behave very well; relationships are very good.
- Overall, teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils enjoy varied and interesting learning opportunities in and beyond the classroom; their moral and social development is very good.
- Pupils are very well looked after; they feel safe and grow in confidence.
- Parents are very supportive and appreciative of the school.
- The school is very well led by governors and the headteacher.

What could be improved

- Pupils' use of writing throughout the school and junior pupils' skills in solving mathematical problems, in data handling and carrying out scientific investigations.
- The role of co-ordinators in checking and developing teaching and learning.
- Ways of finding out if plans to improve the school are working and worthwhile.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in July 2001 and has made good progress in tackling the key issues raised:

- Pupils' achievement is improving in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology;
- All subjects are now co-ordinated and training is planned to develop the teachers' management role further;
- Information on pupils' progress and attainment is used well to improve teaching and learning;
- School development plans for two to three years are now being drawn up.

Over the past four years, there has been a complete change of teaching staff, including the headteacher. This has made planning for improvement difficult but now, with a stable team, there is the enthusiasm and commitment to move forward at a faster rate.

STANDARDS

The table showing the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on National Curriculum test results has been omitted, as the number of pupils is fewer than 10. Such small numbers in both Years 2 and 6 make trends and comparisons of results in national tests with other schools and over time unreliable. For this reason, judgements in the inspection are based on how well individual pupils achieve as they move through the school.

Children at present in the reception year make good progress and two thirds are on course to reach the early learning goals* by the time they start Year 1. Pupils' performance in national tests for seven-year-olds in 2002, compared to where they were on entry at four years old, shows that nearly all did not make as much progress as expected in reading, writing and mathematics. According to the teacher's assessment, just over three-quarters of these Year 2 pupils reached or exceeded the expected level for their age in science in 2002. The performance of Year 6 pupils in national tests in 2002, compared to when they were in Year 2, also shows that nearly all did not make as much progress as expected in English, mathematics and science. However, the inspection found that there has been considerable improvement in pupils' achievement this year now the staffing is much more settled. All the current Year 2 pupils have made better progress than expected in reading compared to when they started school aged four, and two thirds have done so in numeracy. In Year 6, 80 per cent of pupils are now making steady progress in English, mathematics and science and achieving well in reading. However, these pupils do not write easily in subjects other than English and are not confident in solving mathematical problems and data handling or in carrying out scientific investigations as, in the past, their learning was disrupted by staff changes; a concern expressed by parents. On the evidence available during the inspection, pupils achieve as expected in most other subjects, including religious education, and do well in using new technologies, observation and craft skills, and in swimming. The school has set suitable targets for the oldest pupils to reach in national tests in 2003 based on their capabilities.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils like school, enjoy learning and are keen to take part in activities. Sometimes, boys take time to settle in Class 1, where there are twice as many girls, and do not always finish their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Nearly all pupils behave very well and the few who do not quickly respond when asked. All are courteous and respectful.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils are helpful and considerate. They grow in maturity and willingly take on responsibilities.
Attendance	Attendance is just below the national average but there is no unauthorised absence. There have been no exclusions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, the teaching and learning of English and mathematics are good. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are seen as important but pupils do not yet write confidently to support their learning in other subjects as opportunities to do so have been increased only recently. The youngest pupils settle in quickly, gain in confidence and are enthusiastic learners because the teacher has a very good relationship with

* Early Learning Goals are the nationally accepted levels in six areas of learning that children should reach by the time they leave reception classes.

them, knows what they need to do to make progress and plans very interesting activities. In the rest of the school, teachers are also very confident and plan very well, make very good use of assistants and resources and keep a very careful check on pupils' progress. As a result, pupils are very interested and active learners, are given the support they need and generally achieve well. However, older pupils still have difficulties with problem solving in mathematics and investigation in science although they are now being given more practice in these skills. New technologies are increasingly being used well in lessons. Teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There are many interesting and exciting opportunities, with plenty of first-hand experiences, including educational visits. Links with other schools, the church, the village playgroup and local community are very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, including for the few gifted and talented pupils. Pupils' needs are identified early and they are given individual support that makes sure they are fully included in lessons and make good progress.
Provision for pupils using English as an additional language.	Although fluent in spoken English, the few pupils are given helpful guidance with written work in which they make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Spiritual provision is good and very good in moral and social development. While cultural provision is sound overall, there are limited opportunities to raise pupils' awareness about the contribution minority groups make to British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well cared for. Staff know children very well and keep a careful check on their progress in English, mathematics and science and increasingly in other subjects.

Parents and carers are kept well informed about school activities and their children's progress. Generally, they are supportive of the school and raise significant additional funds from social events.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads and manages the school very well, with very good support from staff and governors. Management responsibilities for subjects have only recently been allocated because of new staff appointments. This means that some teachers are not completely confident in their management role and teaching and learning have not been checked to the same degree in all subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very committed and interested and, through termly visits and informative reports from staff, have a very clear idea of the school's strengths and areas for development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Staff are very keen to look at ways of improving what they do and try out new ideas. However, there is no clear way of telling if planned changes to teaching and learning are working and worthwhile.
The strategic use of resources	The governing body watches its spending very carefully and works within the principles of best value.

High staffing levels have been maintained to keep three classes and give the headteacher time to carry out her leadership and management role. Resources, including new technologies and the library, have been improved considerably. The very good accommodation is well used and also provides a base for the village playgroup; facilities, including the staff room and offices, have recently been considerably improved. The playground, grounds and swimming pool are very good and well used.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children like school.• The school is well led and managed.• The teaching is good.• The school has high expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information about pupils' progress.• Links with parents.• Dealing with questions and problems.• The range of activities outside of lessons.

The inspection confirms parents' positive views. Information on pupils' progress is generally good in most but not all subjects; links with parents and the range of activities outside of lessons are both good and sometimes very good; parents' queries and problems are taken seriously and dealt with promptly.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Overall, pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 achieve as expected for their capabilities but do better in reading, information and communication technology, observational and craft skills and swimming; infants are doing well in numeracy. Nearly all pupils do not write easily to support their learning in subjects other than English; junior pupils are not confident in mathematical problem solving and data handling and scientific investigation. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

As the number of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 is small and varies from year to year, trends and comparisons of overall results in national tests do not give a reliable picture of standards in the school. For this reason, judgements in the inspection are based on how well individual pupils do as they move through the school and the achievement of pupils in each year group. Also, it is not possible to make valid comparisons about improvement in standards since the previous inspection as the size and composition of year groups are so different.

1. Four-year-old children in Reception make good progress because they quickly settle in and respond well to the consistently good teaching. Two thirds are on course to reach and a few to exceed the early learning goals* by the time they start Year 1.
2. Two thirds of Year 2 pupils are eager to communicate and reach the standard for seven-year-olds in speaking and listening. They respond enthusiastically and like discussing their views. Just over three-quarters of Year 6 pupils reach the expected standard and are responsive listeners and confident speakers, both in class and to larger audiences. Most pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are achieving as expected in speaking and listening.
3. Just over three quarters of Year 2 pupils read with enjoyment and interest but some are not very confident in using letter sounds to help them read new words. By Year 6, just over three-quarters of the group are discerning, fluent readers of fiction and non-fiction, able to use books and the printed word for a range of purposes. Around half in both year groups reach above average standards in reading. The importance given by the school to reading and the good support from parents at home help pupils achieve well.
4. In Year 2, two thirds of pupils attain as expected in writing. They use full stops and capital letters, spelling familiar words correctly. Just over two thirds of Year 6 reach the standard for their age. They can organise their writing in English lessons according to the reader but do not find writing easy when recording their thoughts in other subjects. Pupils generally achieve as expected for their capabilities in writing but presentation and legibility are sometimes unsatisfactory.
5. Nearly all pupils in Year 2 either reach or exceed the standard for their age in mathematics. They carry out mental and written calculations well when solving calculations based on practical activities. Around a half attain a higher standard, particularly in numeracy. Year 2 pupils generally have a good foundation in all areas of mathematics. Three-quarters of Year 6 pupils either reach or exceed the standard for their age in mathematics, with half attaining at a higher level. Pupils are confident in using numbers and quickly recall multiplication facts, explaining their calculations. They understand shape and measure but are less confident in problem solving and data handling. Achievement in both year groups is generally as expected but higher in the infants for numeracy.
6. In science, just under half the pupils in Year 2 attain as expected for seven-year-olds and the same number reach a higher standard. They have a sound knowledge and understanding in all aspects of science and observe carefully when carrying out simple experiments. In Year 6, a third reach the level

* Early Learning Goals are the nationally accepted levels in six areas of learning that children should reach by the time they leave reception classes.

expected for their age and a half attain a higher standard. They have a good all round knowledge and understanding of science. However, they are not confident in carrying out their own investigations. Some pupils in both age groups do not present their recorded work well.

7. In Year 2 and Year 6, around three-quarters of pupils reach the standard expected for their age in information and communication technology. This is an improvement since the previous inspection as pupils have more opportunities to use new technologies in all subjects and teachers are rapidly becoming more confident in its use.
8. Only a small number of lessons could be observed in other subjects, including religious education. On the evidence available, around three-quarters of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach the standard expected for their age in the work seen. Pupils' observation, drawing and craft skills and swimming are above the average standard. There are shortcomings in their knowledge of famous artists, their design and evaluation skills, musical composing and fluency in gymnastics. There was not enough evidence to report on pupils' overall attainment in physical education and music.
9. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and are given good individual and group support by assistants and teachers. They are generally fully involved in lessons and overall they make good progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
10. Generally, the more able pupils achieve as expected and do particularly well in reading, art and craft, information and communication technology and swimming. However, they also do not find writing easy. The school has identified a few junior pupils gifted in mathematics and talented in sports. They are making good progress because they are given additional and specialist tuition. The few pupils using English as an additional language make good progress as they are fluent speakers of English. The achievement of boys in the infants, outnumbered two to one, is sometimes affected when they take time to settle and do not always complete work. There are no other significant differences between the performances of other groups in the school.
11. The performance of individuals in national tests for seven-year-olds in 2002 as compared to where they were on entry at four years old shows that nearly all did not achieve as well as expected in reading, writing and mathematics. According to the teacher's assessment, three-quarters of this group reached or exceeded the appropriate level for their age in science. The performance of Year 6 pupils in national tests in 2002 compared to when they were in Year 2, also shows that nearly all did not achieve as expected in English, mathematics and science. The school reports that pupils' learning was badly affected by staff changes; a concern raised by some parents. However, inspection findings show that based on tests and teachers' predictions, there has been considerable improvement: all the current Year 2 pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and 80 per cent of Year 6 are making steady progress in English, mathematics and science. The school has set suitably challenging targets for individuals for 2003 based on this information.
12. Staffing is now stable and teachers know what they have to do to improve writing and pupils' mathematical problem solving and data-handling and scientific investigation skills. They have already made a good start to raising levels of achievement overall.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Pupils respond very well to their school experiences. Overall, their attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships are very good. This indicates an improvement in pupils' attitudes and behaviour since the last inspection. Attendance is just below the national average.

13. Almost all pupils like school, enjoy taking part in the enriching and wide range of activities and are very keen to learn. Nearly all are very attentive in their lessons and eager to participate; they work hard and try to do their best. This is a result of the generally good teaching and the interesting, well-prepared lessons. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson on estimation, pupils tried hard, co-operated fully and were eager to explain their methods. In the infant class, where there are twice as many girls as boys, a few boys can, at times, become restless, take time to settle and not finish their work.

14. Behaviour, in lessons and in and around the school, is generally very good; staff quickly and sensitively deal with the few times when pupils act inappropriately. The school has a family atmosphere. Pupils respond well to the school's clear routines, such as when moving from the playground into class and hall. On the playground and field, boys and girls play happily together.
15. Pupils are growing in maturity, are very courteous and polite to adults and respectful to each other. Visitors are greeted with interest and very warmly welcomed. Pupils are generally respectful of property, belongings and resources, as was seen in a Year 1 science lesson when a group of pupils handled delicate materials very carefully.
16. The atmosphere in school is very friendly, welcoming and caring, and there are no incidents of oppressive behaviour or bullying. Pupils enjoy learning about other peoples' beliefs and cultures, and can understand how others feel. The few pupils with English as an additional language from Germany are completely accepted and play a full part in school life. Pupils of all ages willingly take on a wide range of responsibilities, such as handing out and collecting resources in lessons, setting up equipment for worship and serving on the School Council.
17. Pupils form very good relationships with each other and with adults. They work very well in groups and pairs and appreciate each other's work and are very supportive. Adults in school are very good role models. The very good relationships between class teachers and support staff have a very positive influence on pupils' learning and caring attitudes. Pupils respond thoughtfully to each other and to adults during discussions. At lunchtimes, older pupils enjoy playing with and helping the younger ones.
18. All pupils identify with and feel part of 'their' school and the older pupils are developing a sense of belonging to the wider community. Pupils of all ages show initiative, such as when they support and comfort anyone upset and help others carry out daily routines. In lessons, pupils are productive, knowing what they need to do next to extend their learning, often wanting to carry on working with a topic at home.
19. Attendance is just below the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. Few pupils arrive late and no time is wasted. There have been no exclusions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

Overall, teaching and learning are good, with a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Teachers are confident, plan very well, keep a very careful check on pupils' progress and work very closely with assistants. However, teachers do not always give pupils enough opportunities to write in other subjects, solve mathematical problems and handle data, or test their own ideas in science.

20. During the inspection, the teaching and learning in nine out of ten lessons were good or better and in one in ten lessons, very good. All the teaching and learning in Reception were good. In Years 1 and 2, three quarters of the teaching and learning were good and the rest satisfactory. In the juniors, the teaching and learning in one out of six lessons were very good, in three-quarters good and in the rest satisfactory. Overall, the teaching and learning of English and mathematics are good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, as teachers are more confident in teaching literacy and numeracy and in using new technologies. Also, for the first time for over four years, the teaching staff is stable.
21. The consistently good teaching of four and five year olds occurs because the teacher has a clear understanding of how young children learn. She works very well with the assistant to overcome some of the difficulties of teaching in a mixed aged class that includes pupils in Year 1 and 2. Together, they have very good relationships with their class and, through daily checks on individuals' progress, plan activities that are very suitable in helping them learn. The infants work very well together despite the wide range of ages and capabilities, are confident learners, developing independence and generally achieve well.

22. Teachers in the two junior classes are also very confident and, where appropriate, work closely with assistants, planning interesting and very suitable learning activities. Pupils who learn at a slower rate and the more able both benefit from this attention to checking carefully what they can do and giving them work that matches their rate and stage of learning. As a result, the teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are good and the gifted and talented make good progress. The few pupils using English as an additional language are also well taught.
23. While literacy skills are taught well in English lessons, there are not enough times when pupils can use these skills in other subjects and so become confident writers. However, they are often able to use their numeracy skills well when learning other subjects.
24. Teachers have found their recent training in using information and communication technology very helpful and are using new technologies more often in their teaching. They are also more confident in trying out new ideas as new equipment, such as the electronic microscope, becomes available.
25. While teachers are introducing more opportunities for pupils to solve problems and handle data in mathematics and carry out practical scientific investigations, they are still not encouraging pupils to be adventurous enough and learn from mistakes when trying out their own ideas.
26. Not enough lessons in subjects other than in Reception, English and mathematics could be seen during the inspection to report on the overall quality of teaching and learning. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and plan well but there are aspects of art, design and technology, music and physical education where pupils are not confident.
27. Homework is used well to give pupils practice in reading and to learn spelling and number facts. Older pupils also develop their independent study skills through following up topics at home.
28. As a result of the high proportion of good teaching, pupils are being well prepared for the next stage of their education, when they move to secondary school at 11.

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

There are many interesting and exciting opportunities, with plenty of first-hand experiences. Links with other schools, the church, the village playgroup and the local community are very good. Overall, pupils' personal development is good.

29. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The programme for Reception is especially rich and varied as it gives children plenty of practical work linked to activities they enjoy. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities that extends the school's curriculum well beyond requirements. Pupils can join after-school and lunchtime clubs that cater for those interested in sporting, musical, artistic, computer or gardening activities.
30. The requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are fully met. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been sensibly introduced and staff have found the guidance most helpful. The recent emphasis on improving literacy and numeracy skills has improved pupils' learning in English and mathematics. However, older pupils do not yet have enough opportunities to write in subjects other than English, solve problems and handle data in mathematics, carry out their own scientific investigations, and design and evaluate products in design and technology. On the other hand, the infants are given plenty of first-hand experience in using number and, throughout the school, pupils are given suitable activities to develop their reading, observation and drawing skills, use new technologies and learn to swim.
31. Teachers' planning is thorough and detailed; a significant improvement since the last inspection. Good use is made of schemes of work that are regularly reviewed. The school is in the process of updating the guidance for information and communication technology and music, as this has not been looked at recently. Care is taken to avoid overlap and repetition of experience for pupils in mixed age classes as they move through the school. Staff go to great lengths to provide what individual pupils need. Those with special educational needs are well supported and this helps them participate

successfully in lessons and other activities. Good provision is made for the more able and the few with gifts and talents by providing specialist help and suitably challenging work. The few pupils using English as an additional language are given specific help when required, usually with writing.

32. Programmes for sex and relationship, drugs and health education are good. The school gives much importance to developing pupils' self-esteem and valuing their own abilities and talents. Teachers' plans show that wherever possible, personal, social and health education and other related issues are dealt with sensitively to reflect the maturity and age of pupils.
33. The school's links with the community are very good and teachers make full use of opportunities to broaden pupils' experiences, through visits and visitors. Good use is made of visiting specialist teachers and groups to support learning in art, drama, music and physical education. A local company supports the garden project and another sponsors the football kit. There are strong links with the local parish church and senior citizen groups. A local resident runs the craft club that extends the curriculum for design and technology.
34. The school has very good relationships with its partner institutions. The playgroup meets on site and is seen as a part of the school family. There is very good liaison with a neighbouring beacon primary school that has provided support for the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and agreed to share certain specialist resource materials. One of the secondary schools, to which pupils transfer at the end of Year 6, provides specialist support for teaching and learning in art and design, mathematics, design and technology and information and communication technology.
35. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Pupils of all ages are given frequent opportunities to explore their inner feelings and reflect upon events that affect their lives. For example, in an infants' science lesson, the image of a rock magnified by an electronic microscope caused great interest and astonishment from pupils. Staff make sure pupils are valued and appreciated through praise and acknowledgement in all they do.
36. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Adults in the school are very good role models. Pupils are consistently made aware of what is expected of them and the differences between right and wrong. Moral issues are brought out in lessons, especially in relation to the idea of sharing, caring and respecting others in the school community. During the inspection, there was an emphasis upon being brave and being prepared to try again, if not successful the first time.
37. Pupils' social development is very well handled. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to work together in pairs, small groups or as a class. They share materials and apparatus fairly and organise themselves so that everyone can take part. There is a very strong sense of community. Throughout the school, relationships are very good and staff and pupils enjoy one another's company. The good range of extra-curricular activities and visits offers good opportunities for pupils' social development outside of the classroom.
38. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. There are appropriate opportunities within art and design, English, geography, history, music and physical education for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures. However, while pupils are helped to have an appreciation of their local area, there are fewer opportunities to consider and celebrate the contribution to British culture from other ethnic groups.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

Overall, the school takes very good care of pupils. Staff know children very well and check their progress carefully in Reception, English, mathematics and science.

39. The school is a very friendly, caring community, doing all it reasonably can to keep pupils safe. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Staff know pupils very well and are aware of their various needs, responding to them in a positive and supportive way. This means pupils feel secure and have confidence in staff for advice and support. Pupils with specific needs are given very good support and teachers work very closely with parents to make sure that individuals can participate fully in school activities, such as the few pupils with English as an additional language.

40. The school works hard to maintain attendance levels and registers are carefully checked. Any family facing difficulties in making sure pupils attend or arrive on time is put in touch with the appropriate outside agency
41. The school is very good at making sure pupils behave well. High standards of behaviour are expected and all staff consistently reinforce this message, dealing with any inappropriate incident quickly and sensitively. The school does not tolerate bullying or racist behaviour.
42. Pupils' personal development is checked through the frequent informal contact possible with small class numbers. Personal, social and health education lessons are held weekly but guidance also forms part of the everyday life of the school. Staff are very keen to make sure all pupils feel appreciated. Their efforts, attitudes and very good behaviour are celebrated regularly in class and in assemblies.
43. In Reception, the teacher has introduced a very good way of checking children's attainment when they start school and following their progress throughout the year. This has proved to be particularly helpful in identifying individuals who need additional support with their learning.
44. The school checks pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science regularly and thoroughly. Results of national and other tests are analysed carefully and used to identify and tackle pupils' shortcomings. Teachers use this information in planning their lessons and also to set targets for individuals; these are discussed with pupils and their parents. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Checking pupils' progress in other subjects has been less reliable. A new approach has been introduced this term using national guidance but it is too soon to judge how helpful this will be in identifying and tackling pupils' difficulties.
45. Checking the progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator keeps thorough and detailed records that she shares with teachers and assistants. Targets set in Individual Education Plans are clear and say what has to be done. They are well used by staff in planning and teaching and, as a result, these pupils make good progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Nearly all parents are very supportive and appreciative of the school, kept well informed and involved in their children's education.

46. Generally, parents find the headteacher and staff very approachable. The school's links with parents are good, as shown by the high degree of satisfaction expressed by parents in the questionnaire, parents' meeting and in formal and informal talks during the inspection. The quality of the information provided by the school is good; regular newsletters keep parents informed of matters of interest. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are detailed and informative, although there are some minor omissions.
47. The school has an open door policy and parents appreciate that they can readily talk to teachers about urgent issues. Parents' queries and problems are taken seriously and dealt with promptly. Inspectors do not support the views of the few parents who feel otherwise.
48. There are two informal opportunities each year for parents to look at their children's work and discuss their progress. In the end of year written report, parents are well informed about their children's achievements in English, mathematics and science but are not always told what needs to be done to improve in other subjects. To this extent, inspection findings agree with the few parents who felt they did not have sufficient information on their children's progress. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to be closely involved with reviews of their Individual Education Plans and nearly all attend these meetings.
49. Parents make a good contribution to their child's learning, both at home and in school. The school has begun to seek the views of parents; for example, they were consulted over changes to the school uniform. There is limited but regular assistance given by parents within class. Several help on school

trips, with extra-curricular activities and with the Year 6 residential visit. Parents generally give much valuable support out of school with reading and other homework. There is a very active parent staff association that regularly raises funds to support pupils' learning through the provision of extra resources, such as the purchase of a computer and maintenance costs of the swimming pool. All this help is greatly valued and welcomed by the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

The headteacher leads and manages the school very well. Following staff changes, subject management responsibilities have only recently been re-allocated and teaching and learning in all areas have not been checked and developed to the same degree. Governors are very committed, know their school very well and spend very carefully. The development plan does not show what the school should do to check if actions are working.

50. The school is very well led by the dedicated headteacher, with very good support from an active governing body and relatively new staff. Over four years, governors and the headteacher have successfully brought the school from special measures, overcoming disruption caused by difficulties in filling staff vacancies and gaining appreciation from parents for the improvements made. They have created a caring, family atmosphere where pupils are very well looked after, feel secure and grow in maturity.
51. The headteacher and governors have also been successful in improving pupils' achievement in reading, information and communication technology, observation and craft skills, and swimming; the infants also do well in numeracy. They have started to raise pupils' achievement in writing throughout the school and to tackle the juniors' lack of confidence in mathematical problem solving, data-handling and scientific investigation but these actions have not yet had time to take effect. The teaching team is relatively new, with the last permanent member joining towards the end of the spring term. However, they are already working very well together and are keen to look at ways of doing a better job and try out new ideas. As a result of this professional approach, the school is likely to continue improving but at a faster rate than has been possible without a stable team.
52. The headteacher and teachers, two full-time and one part-time, have recently shared out management responsibilities. With such a small staff, this means each member has to cover a wide range of responsibilities. This is particularly so for the infant teacher, in her first years of teaching, who covers Reception Years, 1 and 2, special educational needs, information and communication technology and history; all tasks she does well. They recognise that the priority is to look at how co-ordinators can check and develop teaching and learning without being overloaded and also receive the necessary training and support.
53. The governing body is very active and works well through its committees. Governors take a keen interest in the school and have undertaken termly visits to be more aware of what happens in classrooms. The chair keeps in regular contact with the headteacher and feels he has a clear and comprehensive picture of how well the school is operating. The governors are also regularly given detailed reports from the headteacher and other staff. In this way, they know the school's strengths and the areas requiring attention.
54. The headteacher has regularly checked teaching and learning through classroom observation, particularly in English and mathematics. However, with the complete turnover of staff in the past four years, she has not been able to help staff develop professionally with ongoing discussions and training. Now with a full team of permanent teachers, she sees performance management as an important way of helping staff improve. However, as checks on teaching and learning have not been carried out in all subjects, staff and governors do not have a clear overall view of what needs to be done to raise pupils' achievement across the board.
55. Priorities to improve the school have generally been determined by the key issues reported following the two external inspections in 1999 and 2001. Good progress has been made: pupils' achievement in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology is rising; all subjects are now managed; information on pupils' progress is used well; and the school is drawing up a longer term development plan. The areas identified in the present plan concentrate on improving

writing, problem solving in mathematics and scientific investigation, key issues confirmed by current inspection findings. While the plan shows clearly what is important and what needs to be done over the next year, it does not indicate specifically in what ways pupils' achievement will be improved. Therefore, governors and staff cannot tell whether the actions being taken are working and worthwhile. In such a small school, the headteacher and governors are in frequent contact with parents and able to discuss future plans informally. However, on important issues, such as the re-introduction of school uniform, letters and questionnaires are used to test opinion. Pupils are also consulted on issues through the School Council.

56. Although financial budgeting supports actions to raise achievement, plans do not always show the amounts allocated. However, funds are used wisely as the governing body has to spend very carefully in order to support three classes and provide the headteacher with release time to carry out her management duties. Specific funds are used well, such as in support of pupils with special educational needs and to buy computers.
57. New staff feel they are very well supported and quickly welcomed into the school community. Assistants are fully part of the team and given similar support.
58. The administrative support in the school is good. New technologies are more widely used as staff gain in confidence, following training and the acquisition of better equipment and resources. These initiatives have helped teachers in lesson preparation and writing reports. However, the introduction of an on-line financial management program by the local education authority has caused considerable problems as specific training and support have been inadequate and there have been numerous breakdowns in service. This has been a considerable burden on the headteacher and has distracted her from carrying out the important task of supporting and developing staff.
59. The school is very well looked after by the site manager. The library is generally well stocked and used frequently. Classrooms are large with good facilities for quiet, active and practical activities. The hall is spacious and used throughout the day for lessons, assemblies and lunches. An additional classroom is rented by the village playgroup in the mornings and the infants share some of its resources in the afternoons. The staff room and administrative block have recently been refurbished and redesigned, giving staff much improved facilities.
60. The playground is large and well maintained. The grounds are extensive and include a playing field, garden and wild area, as well as an open-air swimming pool. These are all well used for the benefit of pupils.
61. There is a very good range of books, apparatus, equipment and materials of good quality, supporting pupils' learning in all subjects. The few gaps, as in resources for world religions, are in the process of being filled or, as in the case of outside robust toys and apparatus for Reception, are a spending priority when funds become available.
62. The headteacher and governors are very aware of the need to apply the principles of best value when making major spending decisions, as they have been in making permanent staff appointments and refurbishing the administrative block.
63. Children start school with a wide range of attainment and by 11, most are confident and achieve well in reading, observation and craft skills and swimming. Pupils with special educational needs and the few gifted and talented make good progress. This is as a result of the generally good teaching they receive, which means the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors and headteacher should:

- i. Improve the use of writing throughout the school by giving more opportunities for pupils to talk about what they want to record in all subjects, how their writing will best communicate what they want to say, and sharing and celebrating what they produce.

(Paragraphs: 4, 10, 23, 30, 51, 75, 118 and 120)

- ii. Develop the pupils' mathematical problem solving, data-handling and scientific investigation skills by providing more opportunities where they can express and try out their own ideas and be helped to learn from their mistakes.

(Paragraphs: 5, 6, 25, 30, 51, 82 and 103)

- iii. Help and support co-ordinators to carry out systematic checks of teaching and learning in all subjects so that they can identify and tackle shortcomings and raise pupils' achievements further.

(Paragraphs: 31, 52, 54, 79, 105, 110, 114, 122, 133, 139 and 143)

- iv. Draw up and use development plans that focus on raising achievement that include measures to find out if actions to improve teaching and learning are working and whether the efforts and funds used have been worthwhile.

(Paragraphs: 55 and 56)

The governors and headteacher may wish to include the following minor shortcomings in their action plan:

- Standards of presentation and handwriting.

(Paragraphs: 46, 76, 87 and 104)

- Pupils' skills and knowledge in aspects of art, design and technology, music and physical education.

(Paragraphs: 26, 30, 112, 113, 133 and 137)

- Celebrating the contribution of other cultural groups.

(Paragraph: 38)

- Gaps in resources.

(Paragraphs: 61, 69 and 142)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	32
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	3	25	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	9	78	13	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	59
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	6	4	10

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	6	3	9

Where the number of pupils in the year group has a total of 10 or fewer, the table showing the test and examination data for each group must not be included in the report.

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	56	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	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)	3.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.8
Average class size	19

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	38

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	177,510
Total expenditure	171,864
Expenditure per pupil	2,772
Balance brought forward from previous year	-3,050
Balance carried forward to next year	2,596

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	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	57
Number of questionnaires returned	30

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	40	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	27	3	7	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	60	0	3	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	50	10	3	0
The teaching is good.	57	33	3	3	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	30	3	27	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	17	0	23	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	37	0	7	3
The school works closely with parents.	47	20	20	13	0
The school is well led and managed.	63	23	0	13	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	43	7	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	37	10	10	7

Other issues raised by parents

Effect of staff changes on older pupils' learning.

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

Strengths

- Children make a good start to school and two thirds are on course to reach, and a few exceed, the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the time they start Year 1.
- The teaching and learning are consistently good.
- Learning activities focus on speaking and listening and personal development.
- Staff know the children very well and keep a very careful check on their progress.
- The accommodation is very good and well used.

Areas for development

- Provision of large apparatus and robust wheeled toys for independent imaginative outside play.

64. Children start school at the beginning of the year in which they are five with a wide range of attainment. At the time of the inspection, there were four children attending full-time and one coming on four mornings; they are taught in a mixed age infant class with older pupils. The good teaching comes about because the teacher is very confident with this age group and plans very suitable activities. She also works very closely with the assistant and makes very good use of the wide range of good resources. As a result, children achieve well. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in the way information about children's progress is used by staff planning work for individuals.

Personal, social and emotional development

65. Children are making good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and two thirds are on course to reach and a few to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the year. Staff are very good at helping children learn simple routines so they settle quickly and feel confident and safe. Children are interested and excited by the activities set out for them and those they choose for themselves. They work and play happily together, moving around safely and orderly. Staff set good examples showing children how to get on with each other and look after things properly. Nearly all show independence, such as when changing for physical or creative activities and going to the toilet without fuss. Those that have difficulties are sensitively helped and are able to take part fully in activities.

Communication, language and literacy

66. Two thirds of Reception children are achieving as expected for their age and maturity and are likely to reach and a few to exceed the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1. They enjoy listening to stories, concentrate for quite long periods and like talking about what they have heard and their own experiences. Drama and role-play are used well to encourage pupils to make up their own stories and develop speaking and listening skills, as they did when expressing 'sad' and 'happy' times. Reception children usually sit with older pupils for the first part of literacy lessons and then work with the assistant to develop language skills, such as linking sounds to the first letter of familiar words. Most know that print carries meaning and can recognise their own written names. Nearly all children share books with their parents and this is very helpful in starting them reading; there are also many books available in class, which pupils enjoy looking at. Most are beginning to 'write' and letters are recognisable. There are attractive displays of their work and by staff to emphasise the value and importance of writing.

Mathematical development

67. Two thirds of the children are on course to reach and a few to exceed the early learning goals for mathematical development by the time they start Year 1. They are given plenty of suitable activities to think mathematically, especially when counting or comparing things. Most understand and recognise numbers up to ten and some more able children can count to twenty. They can count 'on

and back in ones' when using objects, such as coloured bricks. Most can identify 'largest' and 'smallest' and have a good understanding of words that describe the position of things. Most children can recognise different shapes and some can name 'circles' and 'rectangles'. There are daily lessons with older pupils to learn about numbers and then do more practical work with the assistant. They enjoy singing counting songs and rhymes and also following hand exercises that help them understand repetitive sequences, such as touching 'head, shoulders, tummies and knees' in order.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

68. The programme for the infants' class is based on topical themes that are suitable for the wide range of ages and capabilities, such as 'homes', 'vehicles', 'the senses' and 'the seasons'. Much of the work is based on first-hand experience, with plenty of interesting practical work and investigations, such as finding out about 'wool'. The group chose woollen items from the 'dressing-up' box, watched a short video about sheep shearing and then role-played what it was like for the sheep when they had their 'woolly' coats taken off. They often make good use of the school grounds and local area for study. Nearly all children confidently use new technologies, such as computers and programmable toys. As a result of these activities, two thirds are likely to reach and a few to exceed the early learning goals in this area by the time they start Year 1.

Physical development

69. Two thirds of the group are on course to reach and a few to exceed the early learning goals in physical development by the end of reception. Children benefit from very good facilities at the school, including the large well-equipped hall, the swimming pool, the extensive grassed area and paved playground. As a result, they move confidently, control their movements well and are developing good handling skills, as when playing with balls and other small equipment. They have specialist lessons, along with older pupils in their class, where they learn gymnastics, dance and drama, working on their own and in teams. They gain much from following the good examples of these older pupils. In the classroom, there are many activities where children develop control and precision as when using scissors, pencils and paintbrushes. Children also enjoy making things. They use a good range of games and toys, where they need to make small and careful movements, such as with jigsaws and bricks. However, they do not have sufficient opportunities to experience independent creative play outside, as there are no suitable robust wheeled toys or large apparatus readily available.

Creative development

70. The infant classroom is large and very suitable for creative activities, enabling children to have a wide range of practical experiences. As a result, two thirds are on course to reach and a few to exceed the early learning goals in creative development by the time they start Year 1. Children are able to handle a wide range of different material, including clay, dough, cloth, sand, paper, paint and junk to create interesting models and pictures. Examples are attractively displayed to celebrate their achievements and brighten the room. They enjoyed making wall rubbings with wax crayons and, later, carefully made 'brick' prints with sponges dipped in paint and produced their own wall on large sheets of paper. Children sing familiar songs with enthusiasm, using pitched and un-tuned percussion instruments as accompaniment. Drama and role-play are often used to help children express themselves and they enjoy showing each other and older pupils in the class what they have been doing.

ENGLISH

Strengths

- Pupils generally achieve well in reading.
- Pupils with special educational needs, including the few gifted, and the few pupils with English as an additional language make good progress.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils use books and other sources, including new technologies, well to support their learning.
- Systematic checks on pupils' progress are helping identify and plan activities to tackle shortcomings.
- Observing teaching and learning is proving very useful in developing better teaching.

Areas for development

- Opportunities to use writing to support learning in all subjects.
- Standards of presentation and handwriting.
- Supporting and developing the role of the co-ordinator.

71. Two thirds of pupils in Year 2 are eager to communicate and attain as expected for their age in speaking and listening. They respond enthusiastically to questions and particularly like talking about personal experiences. Nearly all listen attentively during explanations and to each other when working in pairs or groups. Just over three-quarters of Year 6 pupils are responsive listeners and confident speakers, attaining the level expected for their age. They give their opinions with assurance and contribute to discussions in a thoughtful manner. While talking about how to reduce pollution, they considered the merits of different suggestions, giving their opinion about how likely people were to want to make the effort to recycle their rubbish.
72. Pupils generally achieve well in reading across the school as a result of the concentrated efforts of staff, well supported by parents at home. Just over three-quarters of pupils in Year 2 read with obvious enjoyment and interest. While they are able to use letter sounds to help them read new words, often they will not take risks and wait for adult prompts. However, staff are encouraging them not to be afraid of making mistakes in guided reading sessions. Pupils like reading as they find the reading scheme books attractive, interesting and at the right level of difficulty. Just under half attain as expected for their age in reading and a similar number reach the higher level.
73. Just over three-quarters of Year 6 pupils are discerning, fluent readers who read widely and with enjoyment. They understand what they read and express opinions about characters and the plot. All can find information they need from non-fiction books or other sources, including the Internet. They understand and can use library catalogues competently. Half the group read at a higher standard than expected for their age.
74. Two-thirds of Year 2 write stories that have a beginning, middle and end, using full stops and capital letters in the right place, with most spellings correct. These pupils write as expected for seven-year-olds. The more able can make their writing more interesting by having characters speak and using colourful words.
75. Just over three-quarters of pupils in Year 6 can organise their writing in English lessons, showing that they know how to write for different readers. However, they do not transfer this skill easily when writing to support their learning in other subjects. The school reports that in the past they became too reliant on completing worksheets rather than thinking for themselves. Staff are now providing more opportunities for pupils to plan, follow up and present their own thoughts through discussion, reading and writing. Overall, their writing is as expected for 11-year-olds.
76. The quality of handwriting and presentation varies considerably across the school. While most pupils write legibly and with joined letters from Year 2, many do not take sufficient care.
77. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they are identified early and given individual support or work with pupils of similar capabilities in small groups. Similarly, more able and the few gifted pupils benefit from this flexibility and are given harder work, sometimes with older

pupils. The few pupils who use English as an additional language are fluent speakers but sometimes need specific help with their writing; overall, they make good progress.

78. In all the seven lessons seen covering each year group, the quality of the teaching and learning was good. Teachers are very confident in their knowledge and understanding of literacy and have benefited from nationally initiated training. Consequently, their lessons are planned very well to include activities that are well matched to the wide range of capabilities in each class. Teachers work very closely with assistants and make very good use of appropriate resources. This makes lessons interesting so pupils join in enthusiastically, concentrate and work hard. In a Year 3/4 lesson composing poetry, the teacher had prepared pupils well in a previous session about the structure of verse, directing their attention to the way the poet used feelings and the senses. A more able girl was stimulated to remark, "*The seaside smells of fish and chips and candy floss.*" Three quarters of the class were able to produce similar evocative thoughts which they enjoyed sharing with each other.
79. These findings are a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher has been particularly successful in helping staff develop their teaching through observation of lessons. Also, the school has considerably improved the way pupils' progress is checked through looking at test results and teachers' ongoing assessment. A recently appointed teacher is taking on the responsibility for co-ordinating English and she is aware of the need to gain greater confidence in developing teaching and learning so as to raise pupils' achievement further, particularly in writing.
80. Resources, including the library, are good and well used. New technologies are increasingly helping teachers and pupils by providing more opportunities to seek, organise and communicate information and ideas.

MATHEMATICS

Strengths

- Infant pupils are generally achieving well in numeracy.
- Higher-attaining pupils are well catered for.
- The few gifted lower juniors make good progress as a result of joining older pupils for harder work.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive helpful support from their teachers and assistants.
- Teaching and learning throughout the school are good.
- Teachers make good use of suitable resources, including new technologies, to assist pupils' learning.
- The National Numeracy Strategy has been sensibly adapted to meet the school's needs and give a sharper focus to teaching and planning.
- Checking teaching and learning has helped raise standards.

Areas for development

- Junior pupils' problem solving and data-handling skills.
- Presentation of written work.

81. Just over a half of Year 2 pupils attain as expected for seven-year-olds and the rest reach a higher standard. They have a good knowledge of addition and subtraction facts to 20 and use this information well in solving mental problems. They recognise sequences of numbers and can count on in twos, fives and tens. They recognise common two-dimensional geometric shapes and in an art and design lesson, they selected the correct ones to make a tessellating pattern. Most pupils use number skills accurately to solve problems involving money, length and time. Their learning in mathematics is particularly helped by the many opportunities to carry out practical activities, that include the imaginative use of computer games and programs. As a result, infant pupils generally achieve well in numeracy.
82. Three-quarters of Year 6 pupils reach or exceed the standard for their age in mathematics, with half attaining at a higher level, particularly in mental calculations, because they have a good grasp of place value. Pupils are confident in using numbers to 10,000 and to two decimal places. They quickly and efficiently recall multiplication facts to 10 x 10 and can explain their method of calculation. They add and subtract two digit numbers mentally and three-digit by written methods. They understand the difference between a 'guess' and an 'estimate' and can round numbers to one or

two decimal places. The school has begun to concentrate on problem solving and data handling, where all but the more able have difficulty working out what they need to do.

83. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early, given work that matches their capabilities and have individual support to break their learning into easier steps. This helps them make good progress and they generally enjoy and take part fully in mathematics lessons, as they did in a Year 2 lesson ordering numbers when throwing a dice. The few gifted mathematicians in the lower juniors join the older class, where they find the work more challenging, and make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language have no difficulty with understanding what they have to do and also make good progress.
84. In the six mathematics lessons seen, covering each year group, the quality of teaching and learning was always good. Teachers have high expectations for the standards their pupils can achieve. They have very good subject knowledge and this enables them to explain new knowledge simply and in a way that is understood by the pupils. In a Year 3/4 lesson, the teacher imaginatively helped pupils discover for themselves the quickest way to add 9 or 11 to a number. Pupils enjoyed working in pairs and setting each other problems to solve. Some of the higher-attaining pupils were able to extend the technique to add 99 and 101 to a number.
85. In all lessons, pupils have good attitudes and they respond enthusiastically to the challenging tasks set by teachers. Learning is fun and teachers plan tasks that are very well matched to the wide range of abilities in their classes. All teachers are making increasing use of computer programs to consolidate and extend pupils' learning.
86. There has been good progress in improving the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. This has resulted from the headteacher's observation of lessons and the way she has helped colleagues. The school reports that training, as part of the National Numeracy Strategy, has also been most helpful to staff in giving a sharper focus to teaching and planning.
87. Pupils' work is marked regularly and, although pupils have individual targets, they are given insufficient information about how they can achieve a higher standard. The presentation of pupils' written work varies from excellent to unsatisfactory.
88. The headteacher gives a good lead to the subject. She has identified what needs to be done to raise achievement further and staff are keen to try out new ideas. Pupils' progress is regularly checked and the information is used well for lesson planning. Resources are good and well chosen to provide pupils with the right support to help their learning. Numeracy skills are also well developed in other subjects, particularly in science, design and technology, geography and history.

SCIENCE

Strengths

- In both Year 2 and Year 6, more able pupils are given suitably hard enough work.
- Pupils with special educational needs are given helpful support and make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy science lessons, particularly when they are able to plan their own investigations.
- Resources, including new technologies, are good and well used.

Areas for development

- Junior pupils' scientific investigation skills.
- Presentation of recorded work.
- The role of the co-ordinator in supporting and developing teaching in the classroom.

89. During the inspection, only two lessons of science could be seen, one in the infants and one in the juniors. This is not enough to report on the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, conversation with pupils and their teachers and scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' records shows that nearly all pupils achieve as expected for their capabilities. In particular, more able pupils are given suitably hard enough work to extend their thinking.

90. Just under half of Year 2 pupils attain as expected for seven-year-olds and the same number reach a higher standard, as they are given frequent opportunities to investigate for themselves; activities they particularly enjoy. They handle resource materials confidently for their age and give good support to one another when working in pairs or small groups. They name a range of common materials and say what use is made of them. They sort materials into living and non-living and give simple explanations for their choices. In a topic linked to art and design, Year 2 pupils made rubbings of different material on the school site and explained why the particular textures produce different patterns.
91. In Year 6, a third reach the level expected for their age and half attain a higher standard. They have a good all-round knowledge and understanding of science. They make simple electrical circuits and can explain why some will light a bulb whilst others will not. They name the parts of plants and know the life cycle of plants and animals. They understand the effect forces have on stationary or moving objects, referring to gravity and magnetism in their explanations. They understand the need for a healthy lifestyle and diet and have a good understanding of the harmful effect of some foods upon organs of the body.
92. However, junior pupils are not confident in carrying out their own investigations. In spite of the school having identified this weakness, pupils still have insufficient opportunities to plan their own experiments and select materials they need. Too often, work is chosen and directed by teachers, requiring little scientific thinking. In a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils investigated whether materials will conduct electricity. The teacher and her assistant gave out the apparatus and pupils were told the materials to use and what to do. Pupils spent more time writing and predicting than carrying out the investigation.
93. Pupils' recorded work is not always well presented. While teachers are giving a greater focus to pupils writing their own accounts of experiments rather than using worksheets, only a minority of pupils are finding this an easy task; work is still sometimes untidy and difficult to read.
94. The co-ordinator gives a good lead to the subject. Pupils' progress is regularly checked and the information used well to identify and tackle individuals' strengths and weaknesses and plan lessons. The co-ordinator knows what needs to be done to raise achievement but has not had sufficient opportunity to support and develop colleagues' teaching in the classroom. Resources are good and teachers and pupils are making increasing use of new technologies, as they did in an infant lesson looking at the surface of different materials using an electronic microscope. Overall, the school has made good progress since the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

Strengths

- Pupils' observation and drawing skills.
- Facilities for practical work and the use of good resources, including new technologies.

Areas for development

- Junior pupils' knowledge of the work of famous artists.
- Checking and developing teaching and learning.

95. During the inspection, insufficient lessons of art and design could be seen in order to make a secure overall judgement of the quality of teaching and learning. However, based on the two lessons seen, looking at pupils' sketchbooks and their work on display around the school, as well as talking to pupils and staff, generally, pupils achieve as expected for their capabilities, apart from in their observation and drawing skills, where they achieve higher standards.
96. Just over three-quarters of the pupils in Year 2 are able to use a range of techniques and materials to express their ideas and feelings. They confidently mix primary colours to form other shades and hues. In printing tessellating patterns, they worked quickly and selected the correct geometrical shape to match their design. Some of their paintings and collages of daffodils and charcoal sketches of wood bark show their good development of observation and drawing skills.

97. The work of pupils in Year 6 shows that there is good progress in developing key practical skills as pupils move through the school. Just under three-quarters attain as expected for their age but a few pupils achieve higher standards. For example, three pupils working on still-life drawings of blue bottles show particular flair and expertise. They made very good use of the oil pastel crayons in showing the effect of light and shadow on the surfaces of the bottles.
98. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy art and design lessons. They have good attitudes, work very well together and share resource materials sensibly. Teachers provide interesting challenges and give pupils considerable freedom to work at their own pace and think creatively. Talking to Year 6 pupils shows they have insufficient knowledge of the work of famous artists.
99. All teachers are making increasing use of new technologies to support pupils' learning, in addition to the wide range and good quality resources available. The co-ordinator has so far had insufficient opportunity to observe teaching and learning and does not have a clear idea of what needs to be done to raise achievement further. A recently introduced system for checking pupils' progress has not had time to provide enough information to help teachers plan more suitable activities for individuals to develop their learning further. The school has made steady progress since the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

- Junior pupils' craft skills.
- Facilities for practical work and the use of good resources, including new technologies.

Areas for development

- Pupils' design and evaluation skills.
- The co-ordinator's role in checking and developing teaching and learning.

100. During the inspection, no lessons could be seen. As a result, it is not possible to report on the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, evidence from looking at pupils' work, displays and talking to pupils and staff shows that, generally, pupils are achieving in line with their capabilities.
101. Pupils in Year 2 are better at making than designing and evaluating. Just over three-quarters successfully join card to form the body of a wheeled vehicle. They talk excitedly about the problems associated with fixing the wheels and axle to the frame. They make imaginative use of paper clips during the sticking and joining processes. Some of the finished models bear little resemblance to their original design and they do not confidently say how their products could be improved. Pupils report they had been given considerable help in making their models and had not cut out their own card or selected the tools to use.
102. Just under three-quarters of Year 6 pupils have well developed craft skills. They handle tools safely and confidently. For example, when working with nylon clay, they used a wide variety of simple tools to cut, shape, join and decorate their pots. They understand the need to design before starting to make. They have successfully used a wide range of appropriate materials to make electrical torches, bridges and pop-up books. Although they have a good appreciation of what does and does not work during the making process, they also are not very secure in describing how to test and make products fit for the purpose intended. The handicraft club gives junior pupils opportunities to work with needle and thread and a display of some of their cross-stitch work gave evidence of the very high standard they achieve.
103. The co-ordinator so far has had insufficient opportunity to observe teaching and learning to find out what needs to be done to raise standards higher. However, planning is now more thorough and meets requirements. The recently introduced procedures to check pupils' progress have not yet had time to be useful to teachers in their planning. The school has made steady progress since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

Strengths

- Pupils enjoy comparing their way of life with people in other countries and in the past.
- Good use is made of the local area and visits to support pupils' learning.
- Resources are good and well used, including the library and new technologies.

Areas for development

- Using different forms of writing to record and communicate what pupils have learnt.
- Checking and developing teaching and learning.

104. Only one joint lesson of geography and history for Years 3 and 4 could be seen during the inspection. This is not enough to report on the overall quality of teaching and learning. Evidence from this observation, looking at pupils' work, talking to Year 2 and Year 6 and discussing plans with teachers shows that all pupils are achieving as expected for their capabilities.
105. In geography, just over three-quarters of Year 2 are able to describe their route to school, using 'left' and 'right' directions and landmarks they pass. They know what makes a typical village and why certain facilities, such as shops, garages, schools and churches are important. Most can name the four countries of the United Kingdom and some places in Europe and North America they have visited on holiday. They understand that things around them can be changed for the better or worse and have views on how this can be done. For example, they knew that not leaving litter on the playground helped keep the school tidy and clean.
106. Just under three quarters of Years 6 pupils can locate places on maps and use reference books, newspapers and the Internet to find out information. They know that climate and weather are different throughout the world and this affects how people live. They understand about pollution and conservation and how they can play their part in protecting the world. They like comparing where they live with other parts of the world, as when studying the daily routines of a child in Pakistan.
107. In the Year 3/4 lesson, three higher attaining Year 4 pupils confidently used the index in an atlas to find a reference point for Plymouth and then located the port on a map of the British Isles. The teacher had prepared the class well using a large 'drop-down' map and clear explanation of how to use grid references. However, pupils of all capabilities do not easily write up their accounts, as they have difficulty organising their ideas.
108. In history, just over three-quarters of pupils in Year 2 show they have a sense of time past when related to events that have happened in their own lifetime. They refer to photographs and accounts given by older members of their families when describing important events and happenings. They realise that life was more difficult in the past, particularly for most people who were poor. They like talking about these changes and what it must have been like, particularly for the children.
109. Just under three quarters of Year 6 pupils have some knowledge of different historical periods such as the Bronze Age, Roman Britain, the Tudors, and Victorians. They realise some of the important differences and similarities of these times. They know about some important people from the past, such as King Henry VIII, Queen Elizabeth I, David Livingston and Isambard Kingdom Brunel. They know that many sources of evidence are needed to get as close to the truth as possible. They make good use of books from the library, newspapers and the Internet when studying historical topics. However, they do not organise their written accounts confidently, being over-reliant on adult direction.
110. The Year 3/4 lesson on World War II German bombing raids over Britain was thoroughly planned and followed on well from previous work. All the class were interested and involved in imagining how the lives of children must have been affected by the bombing. Nearly all were able to carry on this investigation in small groups with little help, using books from the class display and information sheets. They worked hard and enjoyed the activity.

111. As a result of staff changes, teaching and learning in geography and history have not been looked at for some time. However, the curriculum has been reviewed and now covers required areas and makes particularly good use of the local area for field trips and visits.
112. There has been satisfactory progress since the previous inspection, with considerable improvement in the range and quality of resources in history and, most recently, in geography.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

- Pupils are achieving better standards than at the time of the previous inspection.
- Throughout the school, pupils are making good progress in developing and using key skills to support their learning in other subjects.
- Teachers are more confident in using new technologies.
- Resources for the subject are good.
- Support from a neighbouring secondary technology school.

Areas for development

- The role of the co-ordinator in checking and developing teaching and learning.

113. During the inspection, insufficient direct teaching of the subject was seen and as a result, no overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching and learning. However, observation of pupils working on their own and in pairs, looking at displays and their previous work, and talking to teachers and pupils shows that standards are improving and all pupils are achieving as expected for their capabilities.
114. Just over three-quarters of Year 2 pupils attain as expected for their age. They can enter, save and retrieve work. When using a computer, they respond correctly to on-screen instructions and can work their way through the various stages of the program. In a numeracy lesson, pairs enjoyed using the computer to practise addition of numbers and demonstrated good control of the mouse in moving around the screen. In science, they were excited and stimulated to ask questions when the electronic microscope produced an enlarged image of the structure of a rock on the screen. The teacher regularly plans activities for individuals and pairs to extend pupils' understanding and skills.
115. Junior pupils are making good progress in developing basic skills as teachers are now more aware of how these can be developed in interesting and appropriate ways. They have started from a low base because they did not have access to the new facilities when they were infants. Just under three-quarters of Year 6 pupils attain as expected for their age. They made good use of the Internet to build up their knowledge on mountain ranges for a topic in geography. In mathematics, pupils with special educational needs found a computer programme helped to improve their estimating skills. They have good control of various functions and can print and save their work. Higher-attaining pupils published their work in booklets and posters. They inserted pictures in the text, used different colours to highlight important items and, competently, applied different font styles and print sizes.
116. The school has established very positive links with a neighbouring secondary technology school. Junior pupils have opportunities to experience areas of the curriculum, such as e-mail, modelling and control, that the school is unable to teach currently. The new information and communication technology suite is being used well to support pupils' learning, especially when working independently to follow up topics started in the classroom. Staff are becoming more confident and competent in using new technologies, following nationally initiated training.
117. The co-ordinator gives a good lead to the subject and has done well in helping colleagues use new technologies more in lessons by making sure appropriate resources are available and up to date. However, her role needs extending to include checking and developing teaching and learning. Also, the long-term curriculum programme is due for review. Significant progress has been made since the last inspection.

MUSIC

Strengths

- Pupils listen attentively and are responsive to a wide range of music.
- Recorder players take pride in their performance and make a good contribution to the school's music.
- The quality of percussion instruments is very good.
- Classrooms and the hall are spacious and well designed for music making and performance.

Areas for development

- Composing music and experimenting with instruments in the juniors.
- Checking and developing teaching and learning.

118. No music lessons could be seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on observations of two school assemblies and a group of junior pupils practising the recorder, as well as discussions with Year 6 pupils and teachers and examining curriculum plans. This is not enough to report on the overall quality of teaching, learning and achievement. There has been steady progress since the previous inspection.
119. Nearly all pupils in the school sing enthusiastically, with confidence and enjoyment. They are familiar with a range of songs from around the world and express their preferences, when asked. They particularly like to accompany songs with movement, such as hand gestures, with infants learning from the good example of older pupils.
120. Musical appreciation is encouraged by teachers leading assemblies and is also used to create atmosphere in lessons, as was done well in a Year 3/4 history topic to illustrate how popular songs raised spirits in World War II. The music of the week for assemblies introduced folk songs from around the world and each teacher made a point of directing pupils' attention to the different instruments, rhythms and languages used.
121. The recorder group is made up of 12 pupils representing a third of the juniors. They play competently using standard notation, with the less experienced having letters written under the notes. They take great pride in playing for assemblies, where they are the principal accompaniment to hymn singing, raising the profile of music in the school.
122. There is no specialist member of staff but teachers find published guidance helpful and they are able to plan lessons that cover all aspects of the music programme of study. However, teaching and learning have not been checked or developed recently and some areas, such as composition, are not dealt with in sufficient depth. The long-term curriculum plan is due for review.
123. The school is fortunate to have very good facilities for music making: classrooms are large and relatively sound proof; the hall is spacious and well designed; the range and quality of percussion instruments are very good. While the accommodation is well used for singing and listening to music, junior pupils report that they do not often experiment with instruments to create and perform their own music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Strengths

- All pupils can swim well and safely by 11 years old.
- Pupils enjoy taking part in physical activities, especially swimming.
- The school has very good facilities, including a large hall, a swimming pool and extensive playground and grassed area.

Areas for development

- Fluency when putting together gymnastic sequences.
- Developing teaching and learning.

124. Only one games lesson in the infants and a gymnastic session for the Year 5/6 class could be observed during the inspection. This is not enough to report on the overall quality of teaching, learning and achievement. However, pupils benefit from regular swimming lessons in the school pool during the summer, a popular activity. By the time they leave aged 11, nearly all can swim 25 metres and are aware of the principles of water safety. This shows steady improvement since the last inspection.
125. In the infant games lesson, the teacher catered well for the wide range of capabilities, carefully demonstrating good practice in controlling the direction and force when hitting a ball. Year 1 pupils worked happily with a large softball and the more able Year 2 used a small hard ball competently. The pace of the lesson was a little slow and a few older boys became restless when being shown how to improve their performance.
126. In the Year 5/6 gymnastic lesson, pupils tried hard to put together sequences in pairs involving movement and balance. The teacher was encouraging and supportive, helping individuals to concentrate on improving their performance, but many lacked sufficient control to be able to make a smooth transfer when changing speed, direction and level.
127. Generally, pupils enjoy the range of activities offered, including competitive games, dance, athletics and a biannual residential visit for Years 5/6. The school has very good facilities, including a large hall, a swimming pool and extensive playground and grassed area, which are well used.
128. The school has made sure physical education lessons cover everything they should and is introducing a more systematic way of recording pupils' progress. However, checking teaching and learning has not been undertaken for some time and there is not yet a clear view of what needs to be done to raise achievement further in different aspects of physical education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**Strengths**

- Religious education lessons help pupils with their personal development and add to the caring family atmosphere in the school.
- Teachers find the locally agreed syllabus helpful.

Areas for development

- The range of resources covering world religions.
- The role of the co-ordinator in checking and developing teaching and learning.

129. During the inspection, no lessons could be seen. As a result, it is not possible to report on the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, evidence from looking at pupils' work, displays and talking to teachers and pupils indicates that pupils achieve as expected in the locally agreed syllabus.
130. Just over three-quarters of Year 2 pupils have a sound understanding of the traditions and symbolism surrounding some of the Christian festivals. For example, they can explain the importance of Christmas in the Christian calendar. They have visited the local church and know that the vicar has a role as a leader in the local community. Pupils understand well the need to have friends and the importance of their own families. They are aware of the importance of caring for other people and the world around them.

131. Just under three-quarters of the pupils in Year 6 understand that different faith communities have special places of worship, such as a Christian church, the Muslim mosque and the Jewish synagogue. Although they have looked at videos and pictures of the artefacts that are important to different faiths and religions, the school lacks some of the resources to give pupils a 'hands on' experience. Pupils in Year 6 can recall facts about Jesus' life and can relate some of the parables. They enjoy talking about their feelings and emotions and their likes and dislikes. These discussions make a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
132. The school has made good progress since the last inspection, as teachers are more confident in planning lessons, finding guidance in the locally agreed syllabus helpful. However, the co-ordinator has had insufficient opportunity to check the quality of teaching and learning to find out what needs to be improved to raise standards higher. Good use is made of the local community, with pupils visiting the local church and the vicar contributing to lessons.