

INSPECTION REPORT

ST NICHOLAS C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Boston

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120593

Headteacher: Mrs. A. Askquith-Ellis

Reporting inspector: Heather Williams
22284

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th October 2002

Inspection number: 248159

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Woad Farm Road Boston Lincolnshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs G. Judd
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd October 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22284	Heather Williams	Registered inspector	Art and design Music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught?
13762	Norman Shelley	Lay inspector	Equal Opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21910	Gordon Longton	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?
5531	Janet Croft	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Design and technology Religious education	
120593	Malcolm Heyes	Team Inspector	Science Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Nicholas is a voluntary controlled Church of England Primary School which provides full-time education for 204 pupils aged between four and 11. There are 73 pupils identified as having special educational needs and eight pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need which include pupils with moderate learning and severe learning difficulties, emotional, behaviour, speech and communication difficulties. Both these figures are well above the national average. The school community is predominantly white, with very few coming from other ethnic origins. There are eight pupils who qualify for extra support because they have English as an additional language. Most pupils come from the area surrounding the school and the socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are below average overall. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average, but this low percentage does not represent accurately the background of the pupils. Most four-year-olds start school with levels of attainment that are low when compared to what is expected of children of this age. There has been a significant change in the teaching staff since the last inspection. The present headteacher has been in post for just over two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Nicholas Church of England Primary School is a well-respected school. It provides a good education. There is a very positive atmosphere; pupils are very enthusiastic and well behaved. Relationships within the school are very good and pupils respond well to praise. Teaching is good overall and enables the majority of pupils to make appropriate progress. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They receive good support and are fully integrated into school. The headteacher, with the support of the senior management, is providing the school with very good leadership, and they have a clear vision for the school's development. There is a very good, shared commitment throughout the school and the governing body to improve and raise standards. The governing body is supportive of the school and has a good oversight of its needs. Day-to-day financial control and management of the school are good and the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher, with the support of the senior management, provides very good leadership and educational direction.
- There is, throughout the school and the governing body, a shared commitment to improvement and a capacity to succeed.
- Teaching overall is good.
- Progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Attitudes are very good towards work, teachers and the school generally.
- Relationships and behaviour are good.
- The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good.
- There is very good use of support staff.
- The absence of oppressive behaviour including bullying, sexism and racism is very good.
- The school has built up a very good working relationship with partner schools.

What could be improved

- Standards in English.
- The role of the subject managers should be further developed so that all subjects are managed to the same degree as English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- Establish assessment and monitoring for the foundation subjects of art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education.
- Increase expectations of average and higher attainers within the reception class.
- Implement the procedures for assessment in the reception class so that continuous assessment informs plans and helps to target the next steps in the pupils' learning.
- The effective assessment procedures that have been recently introduced in mathematics, English, science information and communication technology and the Foundation Stage need to be

implemented and developed.

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 October 2000, when it was put into the category of a school with serious weaknesses. Since the previous inspection, the school has made good progress in addressing the key issues. All members of staff have received training in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and are now effectively implementing these throughout the school. Although the test results for pupils aged seven and 11 in English, mathematics and science are still below the national average, attainment is improving throughout the school. A new co-ordinator for information and communication technology has, by her outstanding leadership, raised pupils' attainment so that it is now in line with what is expected for pupils by the ages of seven and 11. Behaviour throughout the school is now a strength. The behaviour policy is consistently applied and pupils are given opportunities to take on responsibilities. Pupils are given the opportunity to work collaboratively and independently. There are effective assessment procedures that have been recently introduced and now they need time for them to be implemented consistently across all subjects. The written report to parents has changed to include the National Curriculum level each pupil is working at. The management skills of the key staff have been strengthened and the subject co-ordination for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology has been improved, including the co-ordinators' monitoring role for these subjects, so that now they are very good and a strength of the school. The governing body's role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school is now good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	E*	E	E*
mathematics	E	E	E*	E*
science	E	E	E	E*

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

very low E*

The above table shows that results in English and science were well below average, and in mathematics were very low and in the bottom 5 per cent when compared with schools nationally. When compared with similar schools, standards in all three subjects were very low. The targets set for English and mathematics in 2001 by the previous headteacher were very low. The present headteacher, on taking up her post, revised these targets so that they became more realistic and challenging. The school managed to surpass the target for English, but narrowly missed the mathematics target. The school does not appear to be on course to meet the 2002 targets for English and mathematics. Currently the standards in English are still below what is expected nationally in Year 2 and Year 6 and are unsatisfactory. During the inspection, in mathematics pupils in Years 2 and 6 are attaining standards that are in line with national expectations. The school, although it may not have attained the targets set, has improved over the year in line with the national trend.

Children's attainment on entry to the school is below that expected nationally. Progress in the reception class is sound, and pupils are on course to attain five of the six Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. The one that will not be attained is that for communication, literacy and language. Inspection evidence shows that, by the end of Year 2, standards in reading and writing are still below the level nationally expected, but pupils in Year 2 are making good progress. In mathematics and science,

by the end of Year 2, pupils are on course to achieve standards in line with national expectations. In mathematics and science, pupils are making satisfactory progress. At the end of Year 6, standards in English and science are below national expectation, and in mathematics, they are in line with national expectations. Pupils' achievement overall in Years 2 and 6 for English, mathematics and science is appropriate. In all other curriculum subjects, with the exception of physical education, standards are average and achievement appropriate. In physical education, standards and achievement are above the level nationally expected for pupils aged seven and 11. The school has set realistic, but challenging targets for future National Curriculum tests at 11-years-old.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very positive about school. They work and play together well. They are enthusiastic and enjoy what the school can offer them. They have a conscientious attitude to work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils co-operate well.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships between adults and pupils, and between pupils themselves, are very positive. Pupils make good progress in becoming mature and responsible.
Attendance	Attendance has improved since the previous inspection, and in the last year, and is now close to the national average for primary schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching overall is good and pupils' learning is good. Out of the 56 lessons or part of lessons observed, in 15 teaching was satisfactory, in 30 teaching was good, in ten teaching was very good and in one lesson teaching was excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. This is an improvement over the last inspection, where there was unsatisfactory teaching and no teaching was considered to be excellent. In the reception class, the teacher, who is new to the age group, has quickly learnt and understands the Early Learning Goals. There is a recently produced assessment procedure for the reception class but it is not yet in regular use. The teacher in the reception class organises the provision efficiently and manages children's behaviour well. Overall, the teaching for all pupils in literacy and numeracy is good. The teaching in Years 1 to 6 is effective because the teachers have very good subject knowledge that helps them to teach with confidence and to explain new concepts in a way which the pupils understand. Good teaching that promotes good learning occurs when the teachers plan work that is linked appropriately and takes account of the pupils' prior learning. The good rapport the teachers have with the pupils stimulates them and keeps them on task. Good teaching occurs when very clear instructions are given, allowing lessons to move on at a good pace. In the lessons where the teaching very effectively challenges pupils' learning and where there is good use of praise and encouragement, pupils' learning is enhanced. Good classroom management enables the pupils to learn. Excellent teaching occurs when the teacher is inspirational and the obvious delight, enthusiasm and personal interest in the subject transforms hesitant, self-conscious pupils into bright, expressive pupils, eager to participate and contribute to the lesson. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is supportive. Weakness occurs in teaching where teachers' planning does not always take sufficient account of pupils' prior attainment; when planning is minimal and interaction with pupils is infrequent; when the questioning is not probing enough to extend pupils thinking and extend their powers of expression; and the expectations of the teacher are too low to extend pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school provides a balanced curriculum that meets statutory requirements. It has addressed the issue from the last inspection for pupils to have access to enquiry methods of learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for pupils with learning difficulties. Pupils are able to make good progress against their individual targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Teachers are finding it very difficult to cater for pupils who cannot speak English and whose first language is Thai or Portuguese. They are not getting support from the Local Education Authority for these pupils and no one at the school can speak these languages.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall. The provision is embedded in the school's work and is a contributory factor to the pupils' good behaviour and effective learning. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection. Cultural development is sound, but the school has been less successful in making pupils aware of other cultures and lifestyles.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory throughout the school. This is a caring school where there are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The procedures for monitoring academic performance and personal development are satisfactory. Relationships between teaching staff and pupils are constructive and caring. Pupils feel secure and valued.

Parents' views about the school are positive and the school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents support functions that are held at school well, such as the golden jubilee celebrations, but only a few are involved in the life and work of the school. The school keeps parents well informed about pupils' progress. Most parents assist with work at home and parents co-operate well with strategies to support their own children. The school is trying hard to encourage parents' involvement in school but has not yet received the response it deserves.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The school has made rapid improvement recently. The headteacher is a major factor in the school's orderly and serene atmosphere. The headteacher and all members of staff have worked unstintingly to move the school forward. The positive ethos in school reflects the commitment of the headteacher and all members of staff to creating a positive learning atmosphere.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors support the school well and are well led by an enthusiastic chair of governors. The governors have a very good grasp of the school's strength and weaknesses and are effective in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher takes the lead in analysing the school's strengths and weaknesses and in determining priorities for development. Colleagues and the governing body are consulted on the targets identified in the school development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Day-to-day financial control and management are good. Systems have been established to ensure that the school gets best value from its expenditure and income.

The drive, enthusiasm and clear-sightedness of the headteacher have meant that the school has made good progress in the last two years. Effective systems for moving the school forward are being established. In the last two years all members of staff have received training in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and are now effectively implementing these strategies. The school is well staffed and the teaching support staff are deployed effectively. Overall, resources are satisfactory in all subjects, with the exception of physical education and information and communication technology. In these two subjects resources are good. Extensive building and refurbishment have had a very positive impact on the pupils' education and the accommodation is now good. The school is in a good position to go on to improve further. The school gives good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That their children like school. • Behaviour and attitudes are good. • That the teaching is good. • Parents feel able to approach the school if they have any problems. • They feel that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all parents feel their children receive the right amount of homework. • Parents would like to receive more information about how their children were getting on at school.

There were only 31 questionnaires returned. The inspectors agree with all the positive comments and feel that, with the annual reports and the two parents' consultation evening that are held, parents are well informed about their child's academic progress. The school had already highlighted the problem about inconsistency in homework and has drawn up a draft policy to overcome the problem.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards achieved by pupils in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, the results were also well below average. The results for teacher assessment in science were below the national average and well below average for pupils achieving Level 3 or above. Girls outperformed boys in reading and writing in these national tests.
2. In the National Curriculum tests in 2001, the performance of pupils aged 11 was well below average in English and science and very low for mathematics, and fell in the bottom 5 per cent of all schools. When compared with similar schools, standards were well below the national average for English, mathematics and science. Girls outperformed boys in English and boys outperformed girls in mathematics in these national tests.
3. Children enter school with a wide range of prior experiences and attainments. Overall, however, the attainment on entry to school is below that expected nationally. Throughout reception, the children's achievement is satisfactory so that by the time they enter Year 1, they are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals in five of the six areas. Some aspects of communication, literacy and language are below those which are expected nationally. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress.
4. Pupils' special educational needs are identified early and they receive good support. While their attainment is below average, pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are given good support. They make good progress towards achieving literacy and numeracy targets within their Individual Education Plans. The only pupils who are not making satisfactory progress are those pupils in the very early stages of learning English as an additional language, as no-one in the school can speak Thai or Portuguese and the school is receiving inadequate support from the Local Education Authority.
5. Pupils' achievement in English is satisfactory. Overall, however, standards in literacy are unsatisfactory. Year 2 and Year 6 pupils have good listening skills, but speaking skills are not as well developed. Teachers try to give the pupils as many opportunities as possible to develop their speaking skills, such as encouraging them to read their own poems in assembly on National Poetry Day, and, at the end of lessons, giving pupils an opportunity to report back to the whole class on what they have achieved during the lesson. Owing to the school targeting boys' reading and writing and an improvement in teaching, the difference in the boys' and girls' performance is no longer evident in the work seen throughout the school during the inspection. Year 2 pupils, although still below the level expected nationally, are now making good progress with their reading. There has been a clear improvement in pupils' writing over the past year, but standards are still below the national average by the time the pupils reach the age of seven. In Year 2 the higher attaining pupils are able to use dictionaries to help them understand different meanings of words, whilst the lower attaining pupils receive good support from the teaching support assistants and use pictorial help to develop and identify the different spelling.

6. In Year 6, pupils are able to listen well, and their speaking, although not so well developed as their listening, is progressing well. A group of Year 5 and 6 pupils reached a high standard in speaking as they performed a scene from 'Romeo and Juliet'. Reading has improved over the last two years. Pupils in Year 6 read fluently with good understanding. Pupils are able to retell stories in detail and make sensible suggestions as to what could happen next in the story. Pupils are able to talk about their favourite authors and what they like about certain books. Research skills are beginning to be developed with the establishment of two new libraries, one for the infants and the other for the juniors. Although they are still below the national average there are clear signs that writing standards have improved over the past year. This is due to the fact that the Literacy Strategy training the teachers have received is now making an impact on the teaching, and improving standards. With the help and support of the staff, pupils at the age of 11 are reaching levels expected nationally, but, without this help and under test conditions, pupils do not perform well. Several Year 6 pupils had their poems printed in an anthology. This was a great boost to their confidence and made them want to write more.
7. In mathematics, pupils at the end of Year 2 attain standards that are in line with national expectations. Throughout Years 1 and 2 they make satisfactory progress. They use and apply mathematics successfully in practical tasks, for example when comparing the total scores of their favourite football teams over a season. They compile and interpret block graphs. Orally, they competently count, add, subtract, halve and double numbers up to 20 and they transfer their mathematical knowledge to other areas of the curriculum such as craftwork. At the end of Year 6 standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils successfully develop the various elements of mathematics. They begin to devise their own problems and develop strategies for solving these. Pupils explain how they have solved a particular problem and they are able to look for shortcuts. Higher attaining pupils begin to handle decimal notation in the contexts of money and measurements. Many pupils use mathematical terms correctly in the course of their work. Overall, throughout Years 3 to 6, pupils make good progress. The Numeracy Strategy training the teachers have received has improved the teaching methodology and this has had a positive impact on the learning in this subject. It has also helped to equalise the performance of girls and boys.
8. At the end of Year 2, standards in science are what one would expect nationally. There is particular emphasis placed on an investigative approach and, owing to this approach, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and forces. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 identify, independently, particular animals to their young and give the correct names. Pupils in Year 2 observe, predict and record their findings effectively. By the end of Year 6, standards are below national expectations, although they are improving. Pupils have deepened their understanding of predicting, observing and recording well. In a lesson where pupils were observing and recording the temperature of water, the higher attaining pupils understood and drew inferences from observing two variables in the experiment, to ensure they had conducted a fair test.
9. Standards and achievement in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and information and communication technology, at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, are satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about music at the end of Year 2, but, at the end of Year 6, standards and achievement are satisfactory. Attainment in physical education is above what is expected nationally for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6.
10. Standards in information and communication technology are satisfactory overall. There are areas linked to other subjects that need improving, such as the use of keyboards in

music. Pupils in Year 2 are encouraged to understand the functions of the basic controls on computers, and can confidently use the keyboard, cursor and mouse. In Year 6, pupils use presentational software to create an inter-active multi-media presentation. They are able to use all the functions on the keyboard. Pupils are able to e-mail. Pupils have access to control technology as well as a video camera and digital cameras.

11. Pupils at the end of Year 2 are able to talk about Christianity and Judaism. They can describe people, objects, symbols, places and events in the religious life of Christians and Jews. They develop an awareness of right and wrong by listening to stories and linking them with moral issues encountered in daily life. By the end of Year 6, pupils talk about the Hindu, Sikh and Muslim faiths. They understand what religious leaders do and what belonging to a religion means to people. They suggest meanings for religious symbols: for example they suggest that candles may be symbolic of quietness and a place to sit and think. In religious education, pupils' attainment at both key stages is in line with national expectations of the local Agreed Syllabus.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils are very positive about their experiences in school. Their behaviour and personal development are good. There has been one exclusion in the last academic year. Attendance is satisfactory. Substantial improvement has been achieved since the previous inspection. Parents are pleased with their children's attitudes and behaviour.
13. Pupils are right to be enthusiastic about their school and enjoy it. They like almost all of their lessons and describe their teachers as kind and friendly. They appreciate the extra-curricular activities, in which many of them participate, and particularly enjoy work with computers and the several interesting places that they have visited. They have a conscientious attitude towards their work and generally conduct themselves in a responsible manner.
14. Behaviour in lessons is almost always good. Pupils co-operate with their teachers and each other and are generally polite and helpful and show interest in all that they do. Pupils confirm that there are no serious incidents of bullying and the very few instances of name-calling are silly rather than vindictive. They say also that the school effectively deals with all forms of misbehaviour straightaway. Behaviour at breaks and lunch-time is also good. Pupils' good behaviour is positively affected by the way in which the school helps them to reflect on their actions, especially when they are inappropriate.
15. Relationships between pupils are very good. Pupils are friendly towards each other, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are in the early stages of speaking English, mix very well. Pupils exercise tolerance, show interest in the efforts of others, work well together in pairs and groups, and are mutually supportive.
16. Pupils make good progress in becoming mature and responsible. They develop very well their respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others through the various out-of-school activities such as study-related fieldwork, visits to the theatre and to an outdoor centre that includes information and communication technology work. They develop a sense of responsibility, for example through the school council, by undertaking monitoring roles or by being a librarian.

17. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection, and since last year, and is now close to the national average for primary schools. The main reason for the slightly higher absence rate is the withdrawal of pupils for family holidays. Punctuality is good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching overall is good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when nine per cent of the lessons were unsatisfactory.
19. Within the reception class the majority of teaching is satisfactory, with good teaching in the area of mathematics and personal, social and emotional development, and very good teaching in communication, language and literacy. The teacher knows and understands the Early Learning Goals and plans the curriculum so that the children can attain them by the end of the year. Where lessons are good, the teacher plans effectively clear learning objectives and then focuses her teaching to enable the children to achieve these. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are effectively implemented. Children's behaviour is managed well. Where the lessons are satisfactory, the planning is minimal and interaction with the pupils infrequent. Questioning is not always probing enough to extend the children's thinking and extend their powers of expression. Expectation of what the children can accomplish is not always high enough. Sometimes the teacher is preoccupied with organisational tasks and not the learning that is going on in the classroom.
20. In Years 1 and 2, of the 14 lessons or part of lessons observed, three were satisfactory and 11 were good. In the lessons that are good teachers establish good routines. Organisation is good and the teachers have a good rapport with the pupils. Praise and encouragement are used effectively to raise pupils' self-esteem, which in turn gives them the confidence to ask questions. Instructions are good, clear and unambiguous. Skilful questioning ensures that all pupils are fully involved in the lesson. Resources are used effectively.
21. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is, overall, good, with aspects that are very good and excellent. Of the 32 lessons or part of lessons observed, five were satisfactory, 17 were good, nine were very good and one was excellent. Where teaching is good or better, teachers show good subject knowledge and understanding. They plan effectively, setting clear targets that pupils understand. Good use is made of time and lessons are conducted at a brisk pace. Support staff and resources are used effectively to enhance the pupils' learning. Both teachers and support staff in English, mathematics and science assess pupils' work and use the assessment to help and encourage pupils to overcome their difficulties. Pupil management is very good and this allows a working ethos to be established in the classrooms. In science, teachers develop pupils' understanding well through investigative work. Teachers use skilful and differentiated questioning to prompt pupils' thinking and develop their understanding of the subjects being studied. Marking of pupils' books develops the pupils' learning. The system of 'bubble and square' indicates to the pupils what they are doing well and gives them an area for development in order to take their learning forward. In physical education the teachers have the knowledge needed to develop and extend pupils' skills. They are able to give good advice and guidance that enable the pupils to make good progress.
22. In English, teachers follow the national strategy for teaching well. The teaching of literacy skills is very good and is embedded in the Literacy Strategy, giving pupils an opportunity to enjoy a well-balanced and stimulating curriculum. The three-part literacy

lesson structure is used effectively in other subjects. The structure works well and teachers are very clear about what they want the pupils to learn. Clear explanations are given and behaviour management is good, allowing pupils to remain on task. The teaching methods used enable pupils to learn effectively.

23. Overall, the quality of teaching in mathematics is good, with some very good lessons observed. In Years 1 to 6 the teaching of basic skills is very good. Lessons have an effective structure. In all lessons, objectives are shared and there is usually a good pace. Lessons always include a well-focused plenary session that evaluates and consolidates learning. Resources are used effectively to increase pupils' participation. In Years 1 and 2, work is not always so well focused on pupils' capabilities and prior attainment. For example, there is a repetition of work on shape that does not incorporate sufficient increase in challenge. Assessment is underdeveloped in this subject.
24. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. All teachers are familiar with the new Code of Practice. Pupils are identified as soon as possible in the reception class or when they begin at the school part way through their primary education. The special educational needs leader and the teachers discuss the pupils' Individual Education Plans and targets that need to be worked on. Long-term plans and short-term targets are shared with pupils. Short steps are essential to enable pupils to realise progress is being made. Class teachers work hard to help pupils with special educational needs make progress and receive good help from all support staff. However, there is insufficient help for pupils who are just beginning to learn English as an additional language. Teachers try their best to help these pupils but more specialist help is required.

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

25. As at the time of the last inspection, the school provides a balanced curriculum that meets statutory requirements. It is well planned to take account of what pupils need to learn and to achieve throughout the school. There are policies and schemes of work for all subjects and, within the school development plan, a clear timetable for their monitoring and review. The school has planned its curriculum well and appropriate emphasis is given to literacy and numeracy while ensuring that all other subjects are adequately covered. It is currently working on ways of promoting the use of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum and utilising information and communication technology more effectively in other subjects when pupils work in the computer suite.
26. The national guidance for the Foundation Stage has been implemented and the reception teacher is working hard to ensure all six areas of learning are covered. In the rest of the school, the long-term, medium-term and short-term planning for English and mathematics is securely based on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, both of which have now been successfully implemented by the school to ensure planning is continuous. For all other subjects, curricular planning is securely based on national guidance, which, in most subjects, is being adapted to meet the needs of the school. Appropriate account is also taken of the local Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Since the last inspection, the school has also addressed the issues of ensuring that all pupils have access to enquiry methods; work in groups in science lessons; and use writing across the curriculum to develop literacy across the school. The school has made good improvements to address these issues from the previous inspection.

27. There is a good programme for personal, social and health education that promotes good behaviour, effective learning, and good citizenship. For example, pupils in a Year 3 and 4 lesson were discussing the 'choices' surrounding the school rules and the consequence of not keeping them. Sex education is taught as part of the curriculum at the appropriate time, with the support of the school nurse, and pupils are taught about healthy eating and about the dangers of misusing drugs and other substances. A visiting support worker from the high school comes into school regularly to speak to pupils who find school difficult.
28. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. There is also a fully dedicated co-ordinator who ensures that New Opportunity Funding is used to provide pupils with opportunities to participate in visual and performing art activities in school. Pupils also have opportunities to undertake country dancing, modern dance, soccer, science-club activities and chess. Children in Years 5 and 6 work alongside their parents in the computer suite. The school is fully committed to equality of opportunity for, and the inclusion of, all pupils in all aspects of school life. To this end, all clubs and activities are open to all pupils. Every teacher is involved in some way in ensuring the clubs' success, so that the overall curricular provision in school is enhanced.
29. The school has good links with the community that successfully enhance the pupils' learning and their personal and social development. A number of visitors and representatives from the local community, for example a storyteller, poet, theatre group and a local historian, have shared their experiences and skills with the pupils. The local parish priest comes into school every week to take assemblies, and pupils go to the local church to take part in services throughout the Christian year. The school choir has performed at the Boston Stump, and the dance club has performed and competed in the Boston area. Pupils have received soccer and rugby coaching from the local clubs in Boston. There are also good links with other local schools and the school is part of a Networked Learning Community. Through the school's affiliation to the joint technology college, it has access to the local high school's facilities for ICT and design and technology.
30. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. This provision is embedded in the school's work and is a contributory factor to the pupils' good behaviour and effective learning. There have been some significant improvements in these areas since the last inspection.
31. Spiritual development is good. Personal, social and health education, whole-class discussions and assemblies all provide pupils with good opportunities for reflection, for example on choices in school life, citizenship, caring and respect for other beliefs and cultures. Acts of collective worship are effective spiritual occasions in which the pupils are successfully encouraged to think about issues and the natural environment around them. For example in one assembly, pupils were asked to think and reflect on a harvest for wild animals, rather than the fruits and food celebrated at a traditional harvest festival. In religious education, pupils are given insights into the Christian faith as well as the faiths of other people around the world, through studying these different faiths and comparing the festivals and celebrations in each. For instance, in the front entrance of the school there is large display on the Hindu faith, including a traditional sari. Also, other curriculum areas offer pupils the opportunity to reflect on what they see around them. For example, in a Year 1 art lesson, there was 'awe and wonder' when pupils viewed their own self-portraits and those of others in the class.

32. Moral development is strongly promoted throughout the school. Pupils are successfully taught the difference between right and wrong, and about the impact their actions have on other people. The school expects all those involved with it to follow its clear code of conduct and the staff provide good role models for the pupils. The school effectively promotes an ethos that fosters good behaviour, as well as good relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils themselves. Care and respect for property, and for each other, is an integral part of this provision and ensures that there is a happy environment existing at all times. This helps to promote an effective learning environment in which pupils can work and play free from any form of harassment or oppressive behaviour. It also has a positive effect on the pupils' behaviour in lessons, reflected in the teachers' high expectations of the pupils, and the pupils' positive responses to these.
33. Pupils' social development is also effectively fostered. Many opportunities are presented for pupils to work together during lessons, to be independent and to take increasing responsibility for themselves, for their learning and for others as they move through the school. This was clearly demonstrated in lessons observed in science, ICT and physical education. The school effectively fosters the pupils' self-esteem by encouraging them to believe in themselves and in their ability to do well. The pupils' residential visits further enhance this social development, as do the many other opportunities they have to participate in out-of-school activities. Older pupils have opportunities to take on duties as support leaders for younger pupils, on the playground, helping with their reading, in the library and during assemblies. The school council is to be re-introduced after the half-term holiday, which will further enhance provision for pupils' social development.
34. The provision for cultural development is soundly developed, but there are fewer opportunities to make the pupils aware of other cultures and lifestyles. The curriculum for religious education makes a contribution to this through the study of world faiths but the contribution from other subjects is limited. A parent has come into school and spoken about life in Africa, including showing pupils artefacts of the animals found in that continent. The school is aware that it needs to improve in this area of its provision and will introduce workshops on the lifestyles and cultures found around the world. Pupils develop an awareness of their own culture through the planned curriculum in history and geography. Also, writers, poets and theatre groups come into school, which enhances this provision.
35. The school's policy clearly states its aims to provide equality of treatment, access for all to the curriculum, and the opportunity for all pupils to achieve their potential. The school is very close to achieving its aims. All pupils have access to the curriculum and this is a good feature of the school. However, three pupils cannot fully access the curriculum owing to language difficulties. These three pupils have very limited English and are not receiving support from the Local Education Authority because it does not have teachers able to speak the language of these pupils. All pupils are treated with the same care and concern and are similarly encouraged. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported so they can work alongside their peers to take advantage of the curriculum offered. Provision for pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is good. When necessary the curriculum is carefully adapted to their needs so that their Individual Education Plans are met. The school moves quickly to take effective action when there is a need. The school has a race relations policy and it is very successfully sustains a calm and harmonious community. Support is available to families whose disadvantage may adversely affect their child's opportunity. It does its best to support those pupils whose first language is not English, but is not always able to provide adequate or appropriate linguistic support. Until the provision for pupils with

English as an additional language is improved they will be unable to understand some areas of the curriculum available to English speaking pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The arrangements for pupils' welfare are satisfactory. The procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are satisfactory. Educational and personal support and guidance for pupils are good. Improvements since the previous inspection include assessment procedures, monitoring and promoting attendance and behaviour, and attention to child protection matters. Parents are pleased with the quality of care.
37. The arrangements for health and safety are satisfactory overall but risk assessment requires further development to attempt to prevent accidents occurring. First aid provision is adequate and children who become ill or who are injured are well looked after. Supervision is good and relationships between teaching staff and pupils are constructive and caring. Pupils feel secure and valued. A survey of pupils' views of the school was taken last year and the outcome was very positive. Child protection procedures are understood and adhered to. The school uses the services of specialist education and health agencies to meet the needs of pupils.
38. Attendance registers are properly completed and monitoring is satisfactory. The school is usually successful in securing reasons for absence from parents. High attendance is recognised by the presentation of certificates. The school has not yet managed to persuade some parents to refrain from taking family holidays in term time.
39. Behaviour is very well monitored and promoted. Teachers consistently and effectively apply good class management strategies to keep pupils well occupied with their learning. The routines for managing pupils who misbehave or who find difficulty coping are effective. The school's expectations are clearly displayed and simple systems for recognising, rewarding and celebrating good behaviour and effort work very well. The school successfully minimises bullying by ensuring that pupils understand that anti-social behaviour is unacceptable, and strongly encourages them to report all incidents. The school promotes social inclusion very well by providing opportunities for pupils of different ages, backgrounds and gender to work and play together and, for example, to take responsibilities for others, thus promoting very good relationships.
40. The school does not assess, record and report specific aspects of pupils' personal development but promotes it well and includes comments about pupils' attitudes, strengths and weaknesses in the annual reports for the parents. The school provides good support for pupils' personal development through lessons relating to personal and social education, religious education, citizenship, assemblies and during circle time. Pupils are given opportunities to discuss social and moral issues. They are often required to consider the effect of their actions on others by explaining how they would have felt if the roles were reversed and then to suggest what would have been better conduct. The various trips out of school, including a residential experience, visiting speakers, competitive sports and support for charities, contribute well to their personal development. Pupils receive encouragement to be independent in the course of their studies. Most pupils have an opportunity for routine classroom responsibilities from time to time. They regularly read together and older pupils help to look after younger ones during lunch-time and undertake monitoring duties.
41. Procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' academic progress in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are satisfactory overall. The school has recently introduced whole-school assessment procedures for

English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, but they are still to be fully implemented. However, there are none in place for the remainder of the subjects. The school plans to introduce them in the next school year. In the Foundation Stage, baseline assessment is undertaken at the beginning and end of the year to reveal any 'value-added' progress by children. Optional and statutory tests are taken in Years 1 to 6, including unit analysis to identify any strengths and weaknesses. This information is used to feed into teachers' medium-term planning, and assist with weekly and daily planning. There is also tracking of individual pupils, and representative pupils of ability groups in each year group, to ensure that targets are being met in different subjects. In English and mathematics there are half-termly targets set for pupils, and, if they are met, new ones are set. The recording is systemic and is now an integral part of the school's work in teaching and learning in these subjects. It gives the school a clear picture of where individual pupils' attainment is in all classes.

42. However, weaknesses in the assessment system remain. In the foundation subjects such as history, geography, design and technology, art and design and physical education, procedures are less developed, so that teachers sometimes do not have a clear picture of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding to plan effectively for the next stage of learning. Although some useful targets are in place, it is less clear what teachers need to do in the classroom to help pupils reach their full achievements in these subjects. This lack of up-to-date, whole-school assessment procedures for these subjects means there is some inconsistency between teachers' day-to-day assessment and the effective use of this information to guide their curricular planning. The marking of pupils' work is soundly developed in school, and teachers' marking helps improve pupils' learning by explaining what was good in a piece of work and how they can improve their next one. The school follows national guidance on the use of the Internet when moderating pupils' work, and is hoping to introduce records of achievements in which the pupils' choose what they want to be put in.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents' views of the school are positive. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory overall, although few parents are involved in the life and work of the school. Some aspects have improved since the previous inspection.
44. Parents are right to be pleased with the quality of education and care that their children receive. They have good cause to approve of the many improvements that have taken place since the previous inspection. Parents express much more confidence in the school than was the case at the time of the previous inspection. Those few parents who attended the meeting with the registered inspector and responded to the questionnaire found very little to be disappointed with, although some believe that the amount of homework is a concern. The school has already drafted a new policy for it.
45. The school keeps parents well informed about pupils' progress. Meetings are arranged in the autumn and spring terms for parents and pupils together to consult with teachers; they are very well attended. Targets for improvement are agreed and progress discussed. The annual school reports provide parents with a good range of information. Teachers use National Curriculum levels to describe their assessment of pupils' current attainment in each subject and year group. Helpful information is provided about pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Teachers publish to parents an outline of what is to be taught each term so that parents can provide informed support if they wish.

46. Parents generally support their children well in their learning and most assist well with work at home. A home/school book is used effectively for two-way communication between teachers and parents. Most return acknowledgement slips, for example about reports. When the school contacts parents about a concern, they are very willing to co-operate with strategies implemented to support their own children. Parents support well the various events and productions that are organised. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are invited to attend the assessment and review meetings but some parents choose not to.
47. The school is trying hard to encourage parents to be more involved in school but has not yet received the response it deserves. The school has not been able to sustain a parents' association because of lack of support, but arranges events itself and parents attend well when invited. Very few parents are involved in the routine life and work of the school but those who are make a very valued contribution. An open literacy day attracted very few but a family literacy workshop for parents of the reception class pupils did well and two parents went on to achieve an accreditation. The lack of a parents' association makes it difficult for the school frequently and conveniently to consult parents face to face but it has begun to try to do so via questionnaires and reply slips.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. At the time of the previous inspection, in October 2000, the headteacher had only been in her post for five months. In that time she had gained the confidence of the staff, parents and the Local Education Authority. However, there were a number of key issues to be addressed. The school is now very well led by the headteacher. The inspection team considers that the school has made rapid improvement recently, so that, overall, good progress has been made. Parents also recognise that the improvements that have taken place in the school have occurred since the headteacher took up her post.
49. The headteacher is a frequent presence around the school both in and out of lessons, and is a major factor in the school's orderly and serene atmosphere. Her ready availability gives pupils confidence as well as ensuring that behaviour is sensible and attitudes are purposeful.
50. Since her appointment, the headteacher has worked unstintingly to move the school forward, very ably supported by the senior management team and all the adults in the school. She has created a united staff team which has very good commitment and capacity to succeed. The school has a positive ethos that reflects the commitment of the headteacher and all staff to creating a positive learning atmosphere in which all pupils can achieve their best. All adults who contribute to the school's work share a clear vision for what it is trying to achieve for its pupils, so that the school is well placed to improve further.
51. The school receives good support from its governing body, led by the enthusiastic Chair of Governors. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements. It has a very good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is effective in shaping the direction of the school. The governing body shares the headteacher's vision for the school and gives her very good support. For example, the Chair and Vice-Chair are frequently in school.
52. The school runs efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Its routines are clear and well understood and little time is lost in moving from one activity to the next. The school

administrator manages the budget effectively in the short term and has efficient procedures for ordering and paying for its purchases. Minor problems identified in the auditor's report have been quickly addressed. Good use is made of new technology in administration and there are good systems for ensuring that the school gets best value from its expenditure and income, including specific funding for pupils with special educational needs and to support pupils with English as a second language, although support for these pupils is insufficient for their needs. The school has recently received funding for Family Literacy Support, which will now go ahead later in the term. The school has earmarked funding for improvement to the structure of the building. At present the school is investigating the possibility of upgrading windows in the hall.

53. The headteacher takes the lead in analysing the school's strengths and weaknesses and in determining priorities for development. Appropriate targets are identified and included in the school development plan after consultation with colleagues on the staff and the governing body. Progress towards these targets is monitored, and, where necessary, new targets are set. Educational developments are supported by finance identified within the budget. Systems for identifying the school's needs and taking effective action work very well. The school development plan is a useful working document, which identifies time scales, the person responsible for an initiative, its likely cost, and how success is to be judged.
54. The leader for special educational needs is well organised. She provides very good leadership, working closely with teachers and support staff to provide the best possible service. A link governor takes a particular interest in pupils with special educational needs. Unfortunately the Local Education Authority has not been able to respond to the school's request for extra help for pupils who are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
55. The headteacher realises that school improvement will be achieved only through the effective development of its staff, so staff development is given a high priority. All teachers have management responsibilities and management roles are being developed. A key issue from the previous inspection was to strengthen the management roles of subject leaders and key staff and to develop the role of the governors in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. Good progress has been made in this regard, but the monitoring roles of the subject leaders for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology have been developed to a considerably greater extent than in other subjects. This was a significant element in the school's drive to raise attainment in these subjects, and inspection evidence indicates that it is now just beginning to be successful. The school recognises that it now needs to develop the roles of the leaders of other subjects to a similar level and has made plans to start this later in the school year.
56. The school is well staffed to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. Members of the support staff are deployed effectively to support teaching and learning. There are good systems in place to support initial teacher training effectively. During the inspection, a graduate teacher on a training programme gave valuable support to the school in music.
57. After an extensive building and decoration programme carried out by parents, Asda stores and the Local Education Authority, the accommodation is now good. There are good hard-play and grassed areas. Two new library areas have recently been created, which pupils appreciate. These are helping to improve the pupils' interest in reading and independent study. Staff work hard to maintain an attractive learning environment and

are supported well by the site supervisor and his staff, who keep the school clean and help maintain the buildings in good condition.

58. Resources are good in physical education and information and communication technology and satisfactory in all other subjects. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when resources were found to be unsatisfactory. The two new library areas are particularly attractive.
59. The drive, enthusiasm and clear-sightedness of the headteacher have meant that the school has made good progress in the last two years. Effective systems for moving the school forward are being established. The school is in a good position to go on to improve further.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve further the education provided by the school, the governing body, headteacher and members of staff should ensure that:

- (1) Standards are raised in English by:
 - providing more opportunities for speaking and discussion which allow pupils to speak at greater length and with an extended vocabulary;
 - achieving higher standards in writing, specifically in sentence structure and the use of more precise and extended vocabulary; and
 - continuing the good teaching of writing in literacy lessons and providing more ways of developing writing across the curriculum.(Paragraphs: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 71, 83 and 85)
- (2) The roles of the subject managers are further developed so that all subjects have the same standard of management as those already achieved in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
(Paragraphs: 109, 115, 121, 145 and 150)
- (3) An approach to monitoring the progress pupils make in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education is developed and the information used to inform future curriculum and lesson planning.
(Paragraphs: 109, 115, 121, 127, 132, 137, 145 and 150)
- (4) The expectations of the average and higher attaining pupils within the reception class are increased.
(Paragraphs: 19, 63, 72, 73 and 75)
- (5) The procedures for assessment are implemented in the Foundation Stage so that continuous assessment informs plans and helps to target the next steps in the pupils' learning.
(Paragraphs: 63, 72, 73, 74 and 75)
- (6) The effective assessment procedures that have been recently introduced in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and the Foundation Stage are implemented and developed.
(Paragraphs: 23, 41, 89, 93, 100 and 128)

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

- The governors and headteacher should involve more parents in the life and work of the school by continuing to encourage them and by offering them more opportunities to become involved in the life and work of the school.
(Paragraphs: 43 and 47)
- Establish throughout the school a sketchbook for art and design and one for design technology.
(Paragraphs: 106 and 115)
- Implement plans to provide a defined and secure outdoor play-area and to provide more multicultural role-play resources.
(Paragraph: 68)
- Provide more information to parents about the Foundation Stage curriculum.
(Paragraph: 66)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	10	30	15	0	0	0
Percentage	2	17	54	28	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 one percentage point.

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)	204
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	73

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	12	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	14
	Girls	9	10	10
	Total	20	22	24
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	71 (67)	79 (73)	86 (82)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	15
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	22	21	25
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	79 (76)	75 (79)	89 (91)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	20	14	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	12
	Girls	10	3	9
	Total	19	13	21
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	56 (41)	38 (47)	62 (59)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

71 (&")

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	10	8	14
	Girls	8	6	11
	Total	18	14	25
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	53 (38)	41 (45)	74 (56)
	National	72 (79)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	180	1	1
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	9	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	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	14	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)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.6:1
Average class size	25.6

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	125

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	466240
Total expenditure	439179
Expenditure per pupil	1943
Balance brought forward from previous year	36580
Balance carried forward to next year	63641

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	204
Number of questionnaires returned	31

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	32	3	0	3
My child is making good progress in school.	52	39	3	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	39	6	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	48	13	6	6
The teaching is good.	61	32	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	35	16	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	19	6	3	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	23	3	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	45	32	10	3	10
The school is well led and managed.	58	26	6	3	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	29	6	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	52	10	3	10

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

60. At the time of the inspection there were 22 children in the reception class, ten girls and 12 boys. Two children were five years old and 20 were four years old. Three children had been identified as having special educational needs, two with learning problems and one with behavioural problems. Two children had English as an additional language: one was an absolute beginner in English and the other was at an early stage of learning English; both qualified for extra support. The ethnic group of all the children was white, they all came from the area surrounding the school and the socio-economic circumstances of many of them were below average. Most of the children have attended the local nursery school for at least a year, some for longer.
61. Assessment of attainment shows a broad range of attainment on entry, from well below to well above that expected of children of this age. Average attainment is below that expected nationally. Progress through the stage is satisfactory, but attainment on entry to Year 1 is generally below that which is expected nationally in communication, language and literacy. In the other areas of learning, attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs generally make satisfactory progress and some make good progress.
62. Most children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in the personal, social and emotional area of learning. They gain confidence, independence and a good understanding of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They learn to work successfully as part of a class, sitting and listening when appropriate, taking turns and sharing fairly. They begin to understand the need for agreed values and rules for the school community.
63. The quality of teaching is overall satisfactory. The teacher's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage are sound, she organises the provision efficiently and manages the children's behaviour well. Some good teaching was seen in literacy and numeracy sessions. In these lessons, planning and preparation were effective, so that learning objectives of activities were clear and teaching was well focused on achieving these. In less good teaching, planning was minimal and interaction with pupils was infrequent. Generally, teaching lacks questioning that probes children's thinking and extends their powers of expression; expectations of what average and high attaining children can achieve are too low and the teacher occupies herself too much with organisational tasks, such as getting equipment ready. Assessment is under development and effective procedures for ongoing assessment are being introduced, but these are not yet in regular use.
64. The Foundation Stage curriculum effectively includes and promotes opportunities to notice and express wonder at the world. Children are taught the principles of right and wrong behaviour and they begin to consider the effect of their behaviour on others. They learn to work and play with others, to take turns and to share fairly.
65. Generally, the Foundation Stage provides a caring and supportive environment for children and there are good relationships between children and staff. The reception class staff welcome children warmly and provide good models of friendliness and consideration for others. Children who have special educational needs are effectively identified, assessed and supported.

66. The partnership with parents and carers is good. Before the children start in the reception class, parents are invited to spend time in the class with their children, and to attend a meeting without their children, so that the headteacher can give them a brochure and general information about the school. This does not include sufficient information about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents are invited to bring their children into the classroom and to ensure that they are settled and happy before they leave. This method of introducing the children to school life is successful. Parents have the opportunity to talk to the teacher informally and the teacher offers private appointments after school, should they wish. The teacher includes useful advice on helping children with reading in children's book bags, and communication between home and school is effectively fostered by the use of a notebook for messages to and from parents about reading. Parents are invited to help in the classroom and two come in on a regular basis.
67. There is only one teacher in the reception class and she works with one teaching support assistant. During the week of the inspection, two parent helpers came for specific sessions, one to support literacy activities and the other to undertake some baking. The teaching support assistant and the parent helper supporting literacy were experienced and they used their previous knowledge and experience in leading activities, which they did well. The other parent helper was not experienced and worked without sufficient supervision or help from the teacher. She was not clear on learning intentions and much of the potential learning was lost.
68. The accommodation is good. The classroom is a good size, light and airy, with pleasant views of the school grounds. There is good access from the classroom to an outdoor play area, but this is too large for appropriate supervision and there is no storage facility for equipment. The school has plans to fence in a specific outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage, which is a necessary development. The class has one period per week in the school hall.
69. Resources are good. There are plenty of attractive, well-illustrated books, with key characters of both genders and various ethnic origins. No harmful stereotypes were found. There is a good supply of expendable materials, construction kits, small-world and role-play equipment. The teacher has plans to buy more multicultural role-play resources, which are urgently needed.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. Children's personal, social and emotional development is well fostered and they make good progress in this area. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children are likely to achieve most of the Early Learning Goals. They show interest and enthusiasm for activities, for example in 'free choice' time. They concentrate and maintain attention well, for example in activities led by the teacher. Their confidence grows and the majority will initiate interactions with other children and known adults. They select and use activities and resources well and manage their own personal hygiene competently. Generally, they get along well together, playing and chatting alongside others in a friendly way, taking turns and sharing. When they go wrong, they accept correction and amend their behaviour. They develop a sense of being a class and they show interest in the celebrations and festivals of other communities, such as Christians and Hindus. Children with special educational needs in this area are well guided and supported and they make good progress. Teaching in this area of the curriculum is good. The teacher consistently makes clear her expectations of the behaviour and conduct required. She gives children the opportunity to choose activities for themselves and to develop talk and play with their peers.

Communication, language and literacy

71. The average standard in communications, language and literacy is below that of other children of this age, but this does not reflect progress, which is often good. Many children start in this area below the national expectation for children of their age. Higher attaining children achieve most of the Early Learning Goals, but lower attaining children and those with special educational needs do not, which is the normal pattern for children in these groups. All of the children have insufficient opportunities to develop spoken language. They are not sufficiently questioned, nor asked to explain, describe and give their opinions; consequently they do not sufficiently increase their vocabulary and powers of expression. They listen well. They hear and repeat sounds and link these with letters. Higher attaining children use their knowledge of sounds and letters to make plausible attempts at writing words. Many of the children attempt writing, for example on drawings and in lists and appointments books in role-play activities. By the end of the stage, all the children write their names, using recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. Books and reading play an important part in the daily programme and children develop appropriate early reading skills. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs in this area look at illustrations and take meaning from these; higher attaining children focus on the text, read a number of words accurately and show understanding of what they have read. Children who are learning English are satisfactorily supported, with specific lessons in English and in general classroom activities. The teaching of basic skills in literacy is good: children develop basic listening, reading and writing skills. There are fewer opportunities for children to speak.

Mathematical development

72. Children reach a satisfactory standard in mathematics and, given the below average start of many of the children, make good progress. Higher attaining children achieve most of the Early Learning Goals and a few children go beyond these, for example in number and calculating. Lower attaining children and those with special educational needs attain the majority of the Early Learning Goals. All the children have many opportunities to say and use numbers in different contexts: for example they count beads, cubes, pegs and many other things as they play. By the end of the stage, the majority count reliably to ten and recognise and order numerals to ten. Through counting games and rhymes, they develop understanding of adding and taking away one, to and from ten. Higher attaining pupils add and take away small numbers in their heads and some count in twos and tens. At 'register time', a few children can work out how many children are present and absent. All the children gain understanding of shape, space and measure in a variety of activities. For example, in craftwork they focus on the shape of containers and in water-play they focus on which holds more and less. The teaching of numeracy skills is well planned and children build up their skills in number systematically. In general activities, some opportunities to use mathematical language present themselves, but mathematical ideas are not as well developed as they should be, and higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. Children reach most of the Early Learning Goals expected of them at the end of this stage and they make satisfactory progress. Through an appropriate range of topic work and activities, they acquire basic understanding and skills upon which later work in science, design and technology, information and communication technology, history and geography can be built. Children look closely at such things as leaves, fruit and vegetables. They follow changes in the weather and seasons. They build and construct

with a good range of materials, such as plastic and wooden bricks and recycled materials. They shape such things as dough and clay, join materials like paper and textiles, and mix ingredients together to make things to eat. They use a computer mouse competently to control icons on a screen and use other technology, such as a tape recorder, to support their learning. They find out about past and present events in their own lives and those of their families. They begin to know about various cultural events and beliefs. Children show curiosity and interest, but they are insufficiently required to talk about what is seen and what is happening, so some of the potential learning in these activities is lost. Insufficient questions are presented to children. Consequently, children do not learn to ask questions themselves.

Physical development

74. Attainment in physical development is broadly typical of children of this age and satisfactory progress is made by the majority of the children. They have some time outdoors every day and one session of focused movement in the hall each week. Outdoors, they move freely, with pleasure and confidence, enjoying the space. They practise and improve skills such as catching, throwing, scooting, and jumping in and out of hoops. In the hall, they travel round, under, over and through equipment. They learn about their bodies, how to keep healthy and the part physical exercise plays in this. They use a good range of large and small equipment competently and their skills in such activities as drawing, colouring-in, cutting, threading, interlocking and shaping with their hands gradually increase. The school has plans to provide a designated outdoor area and this will enhance the provision. Teaching provides a good range of opportunities for children to acquire and develop basic skills, but children's attention is insufficiently focused on these.

Creative development

75. Standards and progress in creative development are satisfactory. Children enjoy a variety of opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form, for example in painting, modelling, printing and building. They swirl and spread paint on paper, they roll, squeeze and shape dough and they experiment with various construction kits. They use their voices to make different sounds, such as those of animals in songs and stories. They sing many songs from memory and use percussion instruments to copy sound patterns and accompany their singing. They use their imaginations in many activities, such as role play and small world, and are generally very responsive. Interaction with the teacher about their creative work is insufficient and results in children not sufficiently developing the ability to express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings. Planning for some creative activities is insufficiently developed. Organisational and instructional tasks sometimes take precedence over teaching, resulting in teaching-time and learning intentions being lost. Teaching support assistants and voluntary helpers, who are used a lot in this area of learning, are insufficiently briefed about what the children should be doing and learning.

ENGLISH

76. The 2001 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds show that the pupils' attainment in reading and writing was well below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. Girls outperformed boys in reading and writing in these national tests.

77. The 2001 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in English showed that the pupils' attainment was well below the national average, below the average for similar schools and that girls generally performed better than boys. The target set for 2001 by the previous headteacher was very low and unchallenging (32 per cent to attain Level 4 or above). The present headteacher addressed this and set the target at a challenging but realistic 54 per cent for Level 4 or above. Although this target was very narrowly missed by two per cent, it shows the improvement made by that group of pupils.
78. Until the appointment of the present headteacher two years ago, the teaching of English was not linked to the National Literacy Strategy, as staff had not been given the opportunity to attend national training. Pupils were entering school with low levels of communication and there was a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. Resources in English were of poor quality.
79. A key issue from the previous inspection was to improve standards in English. The school was also required to link assessment more effectively and to improve teaching. The school has successfully addressed these issues.
80. Inspection evidence indicates that over the past two years rapid improvement has been made in the teaching of English. The National Literacy Strategy has been firmly embedded throughout the school and is providing all pupils with the opportunity to enjoy a well-balanced and stimulating curriculum. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Work seen during the inspection shows that attainment is improving throughout the school in all aspects of literacy and the gap between the performance of girls and boys is no longer apparent. In many lessons, because of the additional skilled support for pupils and the constant encouragement provided by teachers and all support staff, pupils attained levels of work that matched the expected level for all pupils nationally. Pupils are now aware of their individual targets in literacy and are very keen to achieve them. These initiatives are beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' academic progress and have helped to close the gap between the girls' and boys' performance. A major target in the school development plan is to raise the standard of pupils' work in reading and writing.
81. The level of support the Local Education Authority is able to provide to help pupils in the very early stages of learning English as an additional language is inadequate. Teachers and pupils try hard to make them feel welcome, but, as nobody speaks Thai or Portuguese, the school has not yet been able to meet their needs.
82. The standard of listening throughout the school is now good. All pupils listen very well in assemblies. In lessons, the majority of pupils listen closely to teachers' instructions and try to respond rapidly to questions, showing that they have followed what has been said. Most pupils concentrate hard and follow explanations of their tasks, retaining what they have been told and then translating this into action for learning. However, there are a few pupils who find it hard to sustain their concentration for any length of time.
83. Speaking skills are not yet as well developed. Teachers try to give pupils opportunities to practise speaking skills. For example, pupils read their own poems in assembly as part of National Poetry Day and, in Years 5 and 6, a group of more able pupils reached a high standard as they performed scenes from 'Romeo and Juliet', after thinking of ways to improve their performance with added stage directions and improved expression in their voices and body language. Towards the end of most lessons observed, pupils enjoyed reading their work or reporting back to the whole class on what they had achieved. On these occasions all pupils listened with interest and, in

several classes, pupils applauded, which helped to boost the pupils' self-esteem and showed the very good relationships pupils have with each other.

84. In the last two years the school has worked hard on raising attainment in reading. With the help of the Local Education Authority advisors, new books have been purchased from a variety of sources and a carefully structured reading scheme has been created. This is beneficial in ensuring good progression in pupils' reading skills and teachers are always ready to move pupils on to the next stage of their reading. Year 2 pupils, although still below the level expected nationally, are now making good progress. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to make good progress in their reading. The higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 read fluently with good understanding. One pupil said that he started to read 'The Lord of the Rings', then went to see the film and started to read the book again as soon as he returned home. Pupils could retell the stories in detail and make sensible suggestions about what might happen next. Another pupil said he liked reading poetry best. Many pupils say they like reading. Pupils take books home regularly and teachers actively encourage this. The school has spent a considerable sum of money creating two new very attractive libraries for infants and juniors. These new areas are developing well as a resource which pupils are beginning to use for independent learning. As a result, pupils' individual research skills are beginning to improve.
85. There are clear signs of improvement in the pupils' writing over the past year but standards are still below the national average by the time the pupils reach the age of seven and 11. All staff are working hard to effect further improvement during the literacy hour. The emphasis is on different forms of writing, often related to texts read, or tasks set. In many lessons observed during the inspection pupils reached the levels expected nationally but, in the test conditions, where they do not have the constant help of teachers and support staff, pupils do not perform as well and do not have time to complete the tasks set. Teachers are constantly trying to extend writing in other areas of the curriculum, such as writing accounts in history. This could be further extended to other subjects.
86. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils studied words which sound the same but have different meanings. More able pupils use dictionaries to help them understand the different meanings, while less able pupils receive very good support from the class support assistant and use pictures to help them identify the different spelling. Year 5 and 6 pupils are set into three groups for literacy and this is providing teachers with an excellent opportunity to match the work set very closely to the pupils' attainment levels and build systematically on their previous learning. In one group the teacher had used the pupils' own suggestions of suitable words and phrases from a previous lesson and put them into a poem. The pupils were thrilled to see their own work in print and this captured their interest and attention and made them want to work hard to make further improvements. The school is aware of the need to improve the quality of handwriting and presentation.
87. Overall, the quality of teaching in literacy is good. During the inspection, the teaching in four lessons was good, in two it was very good and, in a drama lesson in Year 6, it was excellent. The teacher was inspirational and her obvious enthusiasm and love of drama transformed hesitant pupils delivering expressionless speech into bright and expressive actors and actresses. The teacher enabled the pupils to make very good progress. In the lessons that are good or very good, teachers show good subject knowledge and understanding. They plan effectively, setting clear targets that pupils understand. Good use is made of time, support staff and resources. Teachers and support staff assess pupils' work thoroughly and use assessment to help and encourage pupils to overcome

difficulties. The teaching methods used are very good and enable all pupils to learn effectively. Information and communication technology is just beginning to be used effectively. The management of pupils is very good. Pupils who were disruptive in the past are now managed well by their teachers and support workers.

88. As a result of the good teaching, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, acquire new knowledge and skills, develop their ideas and increase their understanding. Pupils show interest in lessons and most work at a good pace. They understand what they have to do, how well they are doing, and what they have to do to improve. These very good attitudes are a significant factor in pupils' achievement and learning.
89. The leadership and management of English are very good. Procedures for regular assessment and evaluation are in place and now need to be fully implemented. The information gathered provides valuable information on pupils' progress, which is used well in English to identify pupils who will benefit from additional support. There is a shared commitment to further improvement in the subject.

MATHEMATICS

90. By the end of Year 2, the majority of children achieve in line with national expectations and they make satisfactory progress during this stage. They maintain steady progress through Years 3 to 6 and, generally, attain the level expected of children at the end of this stage. Children with special educational needs achieve standards that are broadly in line with their capabilities. Results on the national tests at the end of the school year prior to the inspection show standards at the end of Year 6 lower than those observed during the inspection, although the end-of-stage results are the highest in the last three years. At the end of Year 2, girls performed slightly better than boys in the national tests. However, by the end of Year 6, boys outperform girls in the national tests. The results for 2001 national tests were very low in comparison with the national average and the school missed the target set by 11 per cent. The target the school was aiming for was 52 per cent of the pupils attaining Level 4 or above. These results were for a different cohort of children and there have been changes in school policy and teaching staff since that time. Additionally, the current Year 6 children are the first ones to have benefited from setting in Year 5.
91. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils use and apply mathematics successfully in practical tasks: for example they use their knowledge of patterns and shapes in craftwork. They compile and interpret mathematical diagrams such as block graphs that record the weather and the variety of their pets. In oral sessions they count, add, subtract, halve and double numbers to 20 competently. They memorise addition and subtraction bonds to 20 and some multiplication bonds, and they use these satisfactorily in solving simple problems. In written work, they represent mathematical operations with symbols and most pupils have begun to understand the place value of digits in numbers up to 100. Many pupils successfully add and subtract two-digit numbers and higher attaining pupils divide and multiply by numbers up to ten. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs generally work successfully with smaller numbers in practical contexts. Most pupils use mathematical names for common three-dimensional and two-dimensional shapes and describe their properties, such as the number of sides and 'corners'. They have begun to use standard units to measure length and weight. Within Years 1 and 2, pupils build up their knowledge, skills and understanding steadily and for most pupils the pace is appropriate. For higher attaining pupils, a faster pace and more challenge is needed. All pupils have insufficient opportunities to discuss their work and explain their thinking.

92. In Years 3 to 6, pupils successfully develop the various elements of mathematics: for example they represent and interpret data in tally charts, frequency tables, line graphs and pie diagrams. They begin to devise their own problems and develop strategies for solving these. In oral lessons, they use mental recall of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division bonds to 100 and apply these in simple problems. They explain to each other how they have solved particular problems and they look for shortcuts. In written work, most pupils add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers and higher attaining pupils begin to handle decimal notation in the contexts of money and measurements. Most pupils recognise common fractions and percentages and more able pupils successfully identify the properties of common regular two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. They accurately reflect two-dimensional shapes in mirror lines and read scales of measurement, such as weighing scales. Pupils calculate perimeters, find areas by counting squares and plot coordinates in the first quadrant. During Years 3 to 6, most pupils describe their mathematics satisfactorily and many correctly use mathematical terms in the course of their work.
93. Teaching is predominantly good, with some very good lessons observed. Since the last inspection, teachers have received the National Numeracy Strategy training and support from the Local Education Authority, and their teaching of basic skills is very good. This is having a positive impact on equalising the performance of girls and boys. In Years 5 and 6, they have begun setting children for mathematics and this enables planning that is well focused on pupils' capabilities and prior attainment. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is not as well focused on pupils' capabilities and prior attainment as in the Years 3 to 6 and this especially affects higher attaining pupils. There is some repetition of work without sufficient increase in challenge, for example in work on common, regular shapes. Teachers implement the school's behaviour management policy consistently and effectively maintain a purposeful working environment. They structure lessons well, starting them briskly and moving them on at a good pace. At the end of lesson they always include a focused plenary that evaluates and consolidates learning. This helps to inform planning and is often the source of homework, which is well used to reinforce learning and prepare for future lessons. Teachers use support assistants efficiently, briefing them about the key points of lessons, which enables effective support of pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language. They also use resources very effectively, for example 'wipe-clean' boards and number fans to increase pupils' participation in the oral parts of lessons. Assessment is under development and effective procedures are being introduced. The pupils' ongoing records now progress with them through the school and teachers can easily refer to prior attainment and progress. This is a good development that needs to be maintained. The assessment procedures being introduced help teachers to monitor the performance of boys and girls.
94. The mathematics curriculum includes all the statutory elements in an appropriate balance and it incorporates the National Numeracy Strategy. Aspects of mathematics are used and applied across the curriculum, for example graphs in geography, time-lines in history and scales in science.
95. The mathematics co-ordinator has release-time to monitor and review the subject. This enables her to build up good knowledge and understanding of the teaching and learning of mathematics in the school. She is enthusiastic about the subject, has a clear vision of future development and a good plan of action. The school is well placed to improve standards in this subject.

SCIENCE

96. By the end of Year 2, standards are what you would expect nationally for pupils aged seven. This is reflected in the recent 2002 teachers' assessments. By the end of Year 6, standards are below what you would expect in relation to the national average. Although the statutory results for 2001 were well below the national average, the most recent results reveal an improvement in relation to the national average. There is an improving trend, over the last two years, in the school's performance in both teacher assessments in Year 2 and in national tests in Year 6. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils achieve well in lessons, and make good progress over time, owing to an emphasis on an investigative approach to learning, where pupils learn from first-hand experiences in a practical and scientific way. Pupils apply their skills of scientific enquiry to gain knowledge about life processes and living things, about materials and their properties, and about physical forces. This has had an immediate impact in the infant classes of Years 1 and 2, but has not yet had time to make a full impact in the junior classes of Years 3 to 6. There are also some further contributory reasons for the below average attainment in Year 6. Pupils' reading and writing skills are below the required standard to cope with the demands of attaining the nationally expected level of attainment and the necessary scientific language associated with it. There were no differences noted between the performance of boys and girls during the inspection. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection.
97. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and forces, which are developed through an investigative approach of observing, predicting and recording their findings. This was demonstrated in a Year 2 lesson in which pupils were classifying and ordering animals to their particular young. Higher attaining pupils in the class could identify, independently, particular animals to their young and give the correct name, whilst lower attaining pupils needed some adult prompts and guidance. Pupils in Year 1 have identified and classified materials by shape and into sets. When pupils move into the junior-phase classes of Years 3 to 6, they deepen their understanding of predicting, observing, and recording well. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, pupils were observing and recording the temperature of water when sugar dissolved, and how long it took, to see if they had conducted a fair test. Lower attaining pupils needed some adult prompts and guidance to recognise the importance of recording the fall in temperature and how long it took, whilst higher attaining pupils in the class understood and drew inferences from observing two variables in the experiment to ensure they had conducted a fair test. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson, pupils were experimenting to find out the different absorbency rates of different materials. Higher attaining pupils in the class could describe the most appropriate material to soak up water would be paper towels, because the paper towels absorbed the water best. Lower attaining pupils needed some adult guidance when they were deciding which material they found appropriate to soak up water.
98. All the pupils in the school have positive attitudes towards their work in science. In all lessons seen pupils were well behaved and keen to participate in all activities offered to them. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson, when pupils worked well together when deciding which adult animal belonged to a particular young animal, and listened to other pupils' contributions during the plenary session. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' moral and social development, for example working and co-operating well in groups. This was seen in a Year 5 and 6 lesson, when pupils became engrossed in discussing and recording their findings when dissolving sugar. The development of scientific vocabulary, such as 'test', 'method' 'solids' and 'factors', and speaking and listening skills make a significant contribution to the development of literacy skills. Pupils use mathematics to support their learning in science, for example in a Year 5 and 6 lesson when pupils recorded the temperature of water. However, the

use of ICT is not sufficiently developed across the school to support learning in the subject.

99. The overall quality of teaching seen during the inspection was good, with one lesson judged to be of very good quality. All teachers have good subject knowledge and develop pupils' understanding through investigative work. They use skilful and differentiated questioning to prompt pupils' thinking and develop their understanding of a particular unit of work. This was demonstrated by a Year 3 and 4 teacher when she asked a group of pupils, "What are you going to change in the experiment to make it fair?" Lessons have a definite structure, a brisk pace with an appropriate emphasis on practical investigations and high expectations of what pupils learn in order to build on what they already know. In a very good lesson seen in Years 5 and 6, the activities were carefully matched to the needs of all pupils in the class, and questions were raised to make the pupils think like young scientists. Teachers make good use of support assistants in lessons, which helps the overall learning of pupils. Resources are used well to support learning. For example, in a Year 2 class, science books were used to help identify animals and their young, and, in a Year 5 and 6 class, pupils correctly used and read the thermometers' gauges to record the changing temperature of water. Pupils use equipment safely and with respect, and have a good rapport with all teaching and non-teaching staff. The marking of pupils' work is overall of good quality, with comments taking pupils' learning forward, when they understand a concept or idea.
100. The leadership and management of science are good. The co-ordinator, although new to the post, has been shadowed and developed by a more experienced colleague. She undertakes monitoring of teachers' planning to ensure there is an emphasis on investigative work. There are whole-school assessment procedures in place, alongside tracking procedures for both individual pupils and groups of pupils. Alongside these procedures the co-ordinator undertakes analysis of statutory tests to identify any strengths and weaknesses to assist with future planning. Resources for the subject are adequate, and they are stored centrally and are accessible to all staff. The school is hoping to improve its existing resources, and purchase information and communication technology software, which will assist with pupils' learning in science. A policy and scheme of work reflect national guidance, which the school is adopting and modifying to reflect how it approaches teaching the subject. There are good links with a local garden centre, and the school is attempting to introduce a nature trail.

ART AND DESIGN

101. Pupils' standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with those expected nationally, which is an improvement on the previous inspection. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is satisfactory, owing to their eagerness to succeed and good teaching.
102. A wide range of materials is used to represent the pupils' ideas: for example, pastels, paint, pencil, collage and textiles. They follow the Qualification, Curriculum and Assessment's schemes of work and adapt these to suit the school. They study artists such as Arcimboldo as well as living artists who come into school to demonstrate techniques such as still-life drawing. As stimuli for their own design, pupils use the artistic work of the Vikings when they design their shields.
103. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have looked at themselves and have drawn their self-portraits. They have extended this theme by using the medium of collage. Pupils in Year 2 chose items from catalogues and magazines to compile a self-portrait to give insight into their personality and likes. The stimulus for this activity came from the picture 'Spring',

where a person's portrait was made up of spring flowers. The idea was very good but due to the 'busyness' of the items chosen from the catalogues and magazines, the pupils began to lose the definition of the main facial features such as the eyes. A few pupils realised the problem and solved it by making the actual face a neutral colour and added the jewellery or cakes for the facial features. Pupils were able to discuss their work and explain what they were intending to do and why. In Year 1, pupils used the same starting point, the photograph of the painting 'Spring', but they concentrated on producing self-portraits using colour and texture.

104. By the end of Year 6, pupils can look at both fruit and vegetables and make good observational drawings using blending and shading to give depth. They have looked at the human figure to try and draw a figure showing movement. Although some of the drawn figures still lack necks and hips the majority of pupils realise that shoulders develop from the neck and that legs do not come straight from the waist. During the inspection, Year 6 visited the local church, St Nicholas, and made detailed drawings of two symbols in their sketchbooks so that in their next artwork, they can use these drawings to compile a large still life picture. Pupils produced satisfactory drawings, showing great care over detail.
105. In Years 3 and 4, pupils looked at the artwork of the Viking period. One class chose to highlight features of this period's artwork in their sketchbooks and to use the features as a basis for decorating their Viking shields. The results were very successful. The other class approached decorating the Viking shields in a slightly different manner. The pupils looked at how the Vikings used lines to decorate their swords and other weapons. They then tried to replicate the designs on their shields. Great care was taken during this lesson and the pupils tried very hard with the challenge set them.
106. The pupils' sketchbooks and examples of work from last year show that there is satisfactory progress throughout the school. Self portraits developed from a circle representing the face and the hair appearing as though it was stuck onto the circle, to the face having shape, with the features being in the correct proportions and the hair no longer as an add-on but integral to the face. In Year 6, shading is used to add depth to the features. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make the same progress as others in art and design. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 used the media of printing, collage painting and weaving to produce attractive pieces of art and design. In Years 3 to 6, pupils used art and design across other subjects such as when they designed a postcard from an imaginary place they were visiting and the religious symbols in the church to produce a still life. There is limited range of artwork, sculptures and textiles in three-dimensions and a lack of graphic artwork on computers owing to the computer suite having only recently been established and still having teething problems. At the moment, pupils are not experiencing the full range of opportunities they should in order to cover the National Curriculum, but now that the school has received funding for arts through the New Opportunity Funding and having artists come into school on a regular basis, this should soon be rectified. Sketchbooks are being used in Years 3 to 6 but not in Years 1 and 2. Every year a new sketchbook is used instead of using it as a record of progress from year to year.
107. Pupils' attitudes towards art and design are good and they behave well. They share equipment well and are enthusiastic about their work. They are willing to help one another and show an obvious enjoyment of the subject.
108. Teaching observed was good overall. Teachers explained the objective of the lesson well and what they wanted from the finished product. Lessons were well organised, with good support from the teaching support assistants. Good stimuli were used.

Where teaching was satisfactory, the teacher overdirected the lesson a little and lacked confidence.

109. At the moment there are no portfolios of pupils' work, so moderation does not take place yet to assist with assessment of pupils' work. There is no assessment for this subject, although it is planned for the next academic year. The co-ordinator has received no specific training and has taken on the role of co-ordinator as she has an interest in the subject. The co-ordinator realises that some teachers need training and support and is hoping to invite a visiting artist to demonstrate a lesson. The co-ordinator has some release-time, but not on a regular basis in order to monitor teaching and learning. Budget and resources are adequate for the basic curriculum, but more resources are needed for enhancement activities.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

110. There were no lessons in design and technology taught during the inspection period. In Years 1 to 6, teachers plan work in this subject in blocks and they had all just finished a block of one month's work. Judgements were made on evidence gathered by talking to children and teachers about their work and plans and looking at previous work.
111. At the end of Years 2 and 6, the majority of children attain standards that meet expectations for this age group. They make satisfactory progress through the stages. The practical nature of the subject enables children with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, to make progress, which is always satisfactory and often good.
112. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils use their experience of equipment, materials and techniques to help generate ideas. For example, they use their knowledge and understanding of plastic interlocking materials and anchoring with plasticine when producing models of playground equipment. They use drawings to develop and communicate their designs and average and higher attaining children label these with materials to be used. Pupils begin to understand what works well and what doesn't and many can reflect on their ideas and suggest improvements. For example, when one pupil's model fell apart, he suggested using glue instead of adhesive tape to secure a joint. They begin to be concerned with finish and make choices according to preferences, for example for wood to be left natural or painted.
113. In Years 3 to 6, children generate a number of designs for products. These are generally clearly labelled with materials, tools and processes to be used. Some have step-by-step instructions. As their knowledge of materials and processes and their skill in using tools increase, their work becomes more detailed and effective: for example, their models of fairground rides move without falling apart. They evaluate their work well, detailing what is difficult and easy and suggesting what they will do next time. Some products require measuring and marking out and the pupils learn the importance of accuracy, for example in making banners that hang straight and putting permanent motifs on T-shirts in the centre. Pupils increase the range of techniques that they use, for example adding stitching as a means of joining and decorating. They make products that are useful and require a good quality of finish, for example costumes and scenery for the school production.
114. The design and technology curriculum includes all the statutory elements in an appropriate balance. It follows the structure of units provided by the Qualification, Curriculum and Assessment Schemes and is well linked to other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils are required to measure and mark with increasing accuracy; they use and apply their scientific knowledge of such things as materials and

battery-generated energy; they make things like shelters, linked to geographical work, and masks linked to historical studies. All pupils have equal opportunities to participate and succeed in the subject. For the pupils with special educational needs and for the majority of pupils who are learning English as an additional language, appropriate support is given.

115. The subject leader has been in post for four weeks. She has a good knowledge and understanding of art, craft and design in the school and has plans to broaden this to include design and technology. She has already written a development plan that includes monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the subject. This needs to include assessment, which does not currently take place and is urgently needed in order that pupils reach the standards and make the progress that they should. Design books are used, but an opportunity to monitor progress is missed owing to a new design book being given to the pupils every year. Accommodation is satisfactory; each cluster of classrooms has a shared activity area with workbenches and sinks. There are adequate resources, which are well supplemented by recycled materials.

GEOGRAPHY

116. There was no teaching of geography taking place during the inspection. Judgements are based on an analysis of teachers' planning, pupils' work and displays around the school. Standards of attainment are now similar to those found nationally. This is an improvement on the previous report, when standards were found to be unsatisfactory.
117. The geography curriculum has been reorganised to take account of the latest national guidance. There has been an improvement in the standard of teaching overall and resources have been improved. The majority of pupils attain an appropriate quality of work in relation to their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have full access to the geography curriculum and make satisfactory progress in gaining the key knowledge and skills in the subject.
118. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the geographical concepts that are taught in their units of work. Pupils experience exploration of places, and acquire, use and extend geographical skills and vocabulary. They compare Boston with seaside resorts and, as a result, have an increasing awareness of the physical and human features of places near and far off. The travels of Barnaby Bear provide interesting discussions, and pupils write about where they would like to take Barnaby Bear and why. Pupils also visit the local area, making a study of houses, and think about how best to control traffic.
119. By the age of 11, pupils contrast life in Boston with that in other countries of the world, such as St Lucia. They study world-wide weather and carry out an investigation into place names to make an important link with their historical research on the Vikings. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are familiar with grid references and ordnance survey symbols on maps. They collect geographical data to help them decide where they would like to go on holiday and are challenged to explain why they have made their choice. Older pupils take part in a residential visit to Kingswood in Norfolk, which not only enhances their geographical knowledge and skills, but also develops their personal and social skills.
120. As the pupils' information and communication technology skills improve, they will find them very useful topics in their geographical research. In fact, some pupils say they already use information and communication technology at home to help with their homework.

121. The subject manager has only recently taken responsibility for the subject. The school makes satisfactory use of the National Curriculum programmes of study. This forms a detailed and helpful guide to teachers, with clear identification of what pupils are to learn by the end of each unit of work. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school is conscious of the fact that assessment systems in geography are not fully in place because of the school's emphasis on improving literacy and numeracy skills during the last two years.

HISTORY

122. By the ages of seven and 11, pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally. This is an improvement on the standards found at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress in most lessons. In the development sections of lessons, pupils with special educational needs are given tasks well suited to their prior knowledge and they too make satisfactory progress. Pupils at a very early stage of learning English as an additional language are unable to join in lessons because, at present, there is nobody in the school who can help them.
123. In the infants, pupils learn about the passage of time by designing a time line based on different ways pupils used to write on slates, to the present day when computers are in use. They look at where people used to live and trace the development of homes from a cave to a bungalow or semi-detached house. They learn about famous people such as Florence Nightingale, and important events on their own history. Year 2 write about how The Great Fire of London started and know the reasons why it burned for so long. They decide where they would like to live, in a castle or an ordinary house, after learning what life was like in a castle. During the inspection, every pupil in Year 2 brought a toy to school. Sitting in a circle, each pupil told the others what the toy was, what it was made of and whether it was old or new. This provided pupils with an opportunity to develop their speaking and listening skills.
124. By the time pupils reach the age of 11, they have covered a wide variety of topics in the National Curriculum. During the inspection, Years 3 and 4 studied invasions and settlements, using the Vikings as a good example. They used a video, pictures and text to research into the Viking way of life. Years 5 and 6 carried out their own enquiry into what changes occurred to the way of life for British people from 1948 to the present day. Pupils were challenged to find what the changes were and when they happened. Teachers create a pleasant working atmosphere in all classes and give very clear instructions at the beginning of the research so that pupils know what they have to do and can begin their work with confidence. Working in pairs and small groups, pupils settle quickly and co-operate very well in a friendly way to help each other. This was a feature of the work in all classes observed. Extended writing opportunities are provided for pupils to practise their literacy skills. Although presentation of work was good in some books and many pupils take a pride in their work, other pupils' presentation is below the standard expected. Information and communication technology is becoming more frequently used as pupils become more skilled in its use. As part of their homework, pupils are encouraged to interview parents and grandparents as part of their history projects and Year 2 pupils brought toys from home so that all the class could decide whether they were old or modern.
125. The teaching in the five lessons observed was always good. Teachers plan interesting activities and this helps pupils enjoy their learning. Skilful questioning challenges pupils to think and make sensible suggestions. Very good classroom management contributes significantly to the quality of pupils' learning and they behave very well.

126. The relationships between pupils and teachers are very good, the teachers being particularly effective in creating an atmosphere in classrooms in which pupils are eager to learn. Pupils say they enjoy history, demonstrate keen interest and readily talk about their work.
127. The subject leader has recently taken responsibility for the subject. She has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom, but collects and checks teachers' plans and samples of pupils' work. Resources are satisfactory which is an improvement on the previous report. Assessment is at an early stage of development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

128. The previous inspection report indicated that standards and pupils' achievement in information and communication technology were below those expected nationally. Since then, standards have improved and are now in line with those found in schools for pupils at the ages of seven and 11. The very good leadership of the subject co-ordinator has brought about this improvement. The school now has a computer suite with 15 net-linked computers and a Power Point teaching aid. The co-ordinator has been instrumental in giving all members of staff in the school the confidence to use all the equipment in the suite to teach all pupils in the school effectively. She co-ordinates the subject very well and has observed lessons and fed back to staff on development points for the next lesson. There are now effective assessment procedures in place, alongside tracking sheets for individual pupils. All these developments have had a positive impact on pupils' learning and performance in the subject. They now all achieve well in lessons and make good progress over time. The school has made good improvement in addressing the issues from the previous report.
129. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was judged to be good. All teachers have good subject knowledge and use all equipment in the computer suite with confidence. They use the Power Point facility effectively in making a learning point, or reinforcing whether pupils have understood a particular point. This was demonstrated in a Year 3 and 4 lesson when the teacher demonstrated to pupils how to use the cursor and backspacing key. Teachers also attempt to introduce other areas of the curriculum in to their lesson planning: for example, in a Year 5 and 6 lesson, pupils were using haiku poems in their multi-media presentations, but cross-curricular links with other subjects are currently underdeveloped. Lessons proceed with good pace and effective use is made of all the resources in the suite. Planning of lessons is good and all members of staff have a laptop computer to help with schoolwork and develop their skills in using them.
130. All pupils learn how information and communication technology can affect their lives and is linked to 'real-life situations' such as compiling a list of information, similar to that in a shopping list, as observed in a Year 2 lesson. They are encouraged to understand the functions of the basic controls on computers, and can confidently use the keyboard, cursor and mouse. Higher attaining pupils in a Year 3 and 4 lesson can use the delete key and move the cursor forwards or backwards independently. Lower attaining pupils needed some adult guidance and prompts on how to proceed to the next operation in the activity. Older pupils in the junior-phase classes experience using presentational software to create an inter-active multi-media presentation. In a Year 5 and 6 class, pupils were using all the functions on the keyboard, such as 'double clicking' on an icon to include another item in their presentation. Higher attaining pupils could work independently whilst lower attaining pupils needed some adult help and guidance to move onto the next operation.

131. In all lessons observed the pupils treated all the equipment in the computer suite with respect and care, and their behaviour and attitude to the subject were good, with a genuine desire to learn and increase their skills. The school is linked to the Internet, and pupils can send e-mails, with an appropriate 'closed system' in operation to protect the pupils. The school has set up an e-mail link with a school in Boston, in the United States of America. Pupils also have access to working with all aspects all control technology. A video camera and digital cameras are available for pupils to use. The school is also addressing the issue of updating its software to ensure that all areas of the curriculum can be accessed when the pupils work in the computer suite. The policy and scheme of work follow national guidelines, and are being modified to take account of the specific needs of the school.

MUSIC

132. The structure of the timetable during the inspection meant that only three lessons in the juniors and a recorder group formed from pupils in Years 3 to 6 could be observed. In addition, singing was heard in assemblies and in a lesson for Years 1 and 2. No other evidence, either written or on audio or videotapes, was available in the school. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence for an overall judgement on attainment and teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2.
133. The standards of pupils by the end of Year 6 are satisfactory. This is an improvement on the previous inspection report, where standards at the end of Year 6 were below those expected nationally.
134. In the Years 1 and 2 singing lesson seen, pupils sang tunefully well-known nursery rhymes. They sang with obvious enjoyment but the material was undemanding. The pupils were able to put action to songs and still continue to sing.
135. By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to sing in tune and retain a complicated rhythm pattern when three other rhythm patterns are introduced. Pupils can clap rhythms to a given pulse. They can discuss knowledgeably pitch, duration and timbre. They are able to put forward their own suggestions about rhythm, pitch and timbre successfully. Pupils understand what crotchets and quavers are and can clap accurately a given sequence written on the board or on a card. They are able to work out how many beats there are in a bar when given a time signature and are able to put the bar lines in the appropriate places. Pupils with special educational needs were supported well when they played given rhythms on untuned percussion instruments and they were able to hold their rhythm steady whilst three other rhythms were being played. Pupils learning the recorder are able to read from musical notation and play as a group without too much overblowing. The Year 6 pupils were able to accompany the piano and pupils in assembly singing 'Colours of Dawn'. This small group of pupils played well.
136. Attitudes to music are good, both in class and in assemblies. Pupils have the confidence to perform to different audiences and the choir has taken part in a choral competition and gained second place. Pupils have the opportunity to go out into the community and perform at different venues and at different times of the year. Some of the engagements come from recommendation. The pupils' behaviour is good in lessons. It is because the pupils listen attentively and behave so well that they have managed to perform pieces in four parts with very complicated rhythms.
137. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed ranged from satisfactory to good depending on the musicality of the teaching support staff. Where the teaching was

good, the support given enabled the teacher to succeed in getting the pupils to play and keep complicated rhythms going when the other rhythms were added. The teaching support staff, who was a confident musician, enabled the teacher to keep a steady pulse going as other rhythms were added and enabled a complicated 'train' song based on different rhythmic sounds to be performed very successfully. In the satisfactory lessons the teacher had greater difficulty maintaining a steady pulse as other rhythms were added and did not manage to perform the complete 'train' song, but only one section. The teaching of technical language is good and is well established in Years 5 and 6. The use of information and communication technology is not yet sufficient. For example, it is not used to audiotape performance and compositions to stimulate discussion and appraisal by the pupils of their work and a music software program is little used. This means also that there is no evidence of work previously carried out by pupils. As a result, the work of different classes and years cannot be compared, in order to analyse the amount of progress being made by pupils. There is no written assessment being currently carried out. The school uses the Qualification, Curriculum and Assessment schemes, which are adequate whilst a musician is delivering the music lessons.

138. The temporary co-ordinator of music is raising the profile of music in the school by offering the choir and recorders to perform for different functions in and out of school, such as at the local supermarket around Christmas time and taking part in the local choral competition.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

139. As in the previous inspection, standards are above what you would expect at the ages of seven and 11. Throughout the school, pupils of all abilities achieve well in lessons, and make good progress over time. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection.
140. Only games lessons were seen during the inspection of physical education in both infant and junior classes. Discussion with the subject co-ordinator, teachers and pupils, and a scrutiny of teachers' planning, indicate that over the year the school provides a balanced programme, which meets national requirements.
141. The school benefits from having a large hall and playing field, as well as having two playgrounds, which enable pupils to play team games, to participate in athletics, gymnastics and to respond to music through dance and movement. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 take swimming lessons for two terms out of three at the local pool, and, by the end of Year 6, most pupils can swim at least 25 metres. All pupils have the opportunity of undertaking adventurous activities as part of residential visits organised by the staff. Older boys and girls can attend extra-curricular activities, such as soccer, country dancing and modern dancing, and school teams participate in local league matches, tournaments and competitions.
142. Pupils make good progress in lessons because of the good teaching. The teachers' have good subject knowledge and confidence in how to develop and extend the pupils' skills. This means that the pupils perform with increasing competence as they are praised, encouraged and told how to improve their performance. A common feature of the teaching is the constant stream of advice and guidance to pupils as they work. When Year 2 pupils were asked to appraise the demonstrations of their classmates, they used similar phrases to the teacher, such as, 'and throwing as hard as I can into the hoop', to highlight effective throwing of a beanbag.

143. The pupils respond enthusiastically to advice. Year 5 and 6 pupils successfully refined their sequence of passing and receiving skills using a hockey stick and ball. Higher attaining pupils in the class knew and understood the need to move into space, when the skills were being used in a small-sided game. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were responsive to one teacher's advice on how to throw a ball up and catch it. The majority of pupils in the lesson did this well, using effective movements and balances when they caught the ball.
144. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are good. Lessons begin and end in an orderly manner and pupils are aware of the need for appropriate warm-up and cool-down activities. The teachers provide good role models by dressing appropriately and by showing enthusiasm themselves for physical activity. This adds to the subject's positive contribution to the pupils' moral and social development. Pupils co-operate well in teams and show a good awareness of fair play alongside a competitive spirit. They also show an appreciation of the achievements of others and they behave well when getting ready, as well as in lessons. A strength of the teaching is the good opportunities for pupils to express their own opinions when evaluating others' performance. In all lessons seen this was an integral part of the pupils' learning.
145. The leadership and management of the subject are soundly developed. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning on a half-termly basis, but has not yet undertaken any lesson observations. The policy and scheme of work reflect national guidance but the teachers' assessment procedures are not consistent through the school. The school is well resourced with both large and small equipment to provide an interesting curriculum.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

146. At the end of Years 2 and 6, the majority of pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected of pupils of this age and, for the majority, progress through the stages is at least satisfactory, and, at times, good. For pupils with special emotional and behavioural needs, the close links of the subject with personal development are helpful and they make good progress in dealing with their emotions and developing understanding of right and wrong. For pupils whose special needs are in the areas of speech, reading and writing, and for a minority of pupils who are learning English as an additional language, the challenge in some of the tasks set is too great and progress is impeded.
147. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn about Christianity and Judaism. They talk about and describe people, objects, symbols, places and events in the religious life of Christians and Jews. They draw and write briefly about some of these and make models, such as peace doves (linked to the story of Noah) and Torah scrolls. They show good interest in the subject, they listen attentively, think about what things mean and make sensible suggestions about this. They also learn from religions, identifying good and bad characters in religious stories and linking this with moral issues encountered in daily life, such as good and bad behaviour in school. They develop their awareness of right and wrong.
148. In Years 3 to 6, pupils take their study of Christianity further and they learn about the religions of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. They develop their understanding of what religious leaders do and what belonging to a religion means to people. They suggest meanings for religious symbols. For example, they suggest that candles may be symbols of quietness and of a place to sit and think. They also increase their understanding of how religions give people structures by which to live and they relate

this to themselves following rules in the community of school. The majority of pupils participate well in lessons and gain confidence from their contributions being respected and valued by others. Where pupils with special needs in language acquisition are given adjusted tasks and specific support, they also learn and make progress. However, occasionally, when these pupils are expected to undertake the same tasks as pupils with higher ability and greater command of English, frustration is high and learning is unsatisfactory.

149. The quality of teaching is good overall and at times it is very good. Teachers plan lessons well and use visits, visitors, illustrations and artefacts to engage pupils' attention and stimulate interest. They tackle the difficult areas of values and beliefs sensitively and they show respect and appreciation of pupils' contributions to lessons. They have a tendency to talk too much themselves and questions are at times insufficiently demanding and do not probe pupils' thinking or extend their powers of expression as well as they might. They manage pupils' behaviour well.
150. The curriculum includes all the statutory elements and incorporates the local Agreed Syllabus. It is well linked to the PSHE syllabus and also links to aspects of other subjects, such as literacy, geography and local history studies. It contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The subject leader has a good understanding of teaching and learning in religious education across the school, although she has no release-time as yet and there is no assessment in place. She has attended relevant training, and supports the other teachers well. There are some good resources, especially illustrations and artefacts.