

INSPECTION REPORT

TAVERHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL

Norwich

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121062

Headteacher: Mr G N Beacock

Reporting inspector: Mr G D Timms
21038

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 March 2003

Inspection number: 248221

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Middle deemed Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	8 - 12
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Taverham Road Taverham Norwich Norfolk
Postcode:	NR8 6SX
Telephone number:	01603 867740
Fax number:	01603 262452
E-mail address:	office@taverhammiddle.norfolk.sch.uk
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss C Gordon
Date of previous inspection:	13 October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21038	Mr G D Timms	Registered inspector	Art and design Physical education French Educational inclusion	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve? The school's results and pupils' standards. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9399	Mr R Watts	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Staffing, accommodation and resources.
11419	Mrs J Underwood	Team inspector	Religious education Geography Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
27292	Mr J Calvert	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology	Financial management
19774	Mrs M Docherty	Team inspector	English Design and technology English as an additional language	
23453	Mrs C Cressey	Team inspector	Mathematics History Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

PBM Inspection Services Ltd
PO Box 524
Cheadle
Staffordshire
ST10 4RN

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33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

With 470 pupils (224 girls and 246 boys) on roll, Taverham is bigger than average for middle schools nationally and has grown significantly in recent years. The school takes children in the September of the year they are nine until they are twelve when they move on to local high schools. It serves the village of Taverham and the surrounding area, including the development of Thorpe Marriott. About six per cent of the pupils are from mixed ethnic backgrounds. A few of these pupils speak English as an additional language, and while they have experience and competence in their heritage languages, their English language acquisition is strong and they are able to take a full part in classroom learning. Attainment on entry to the school in Year 4 is mixed but there is an above average proportion reaching the expected level in the Year 2 tests in reading and mathematics. In writing, attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with that expected. Seventy-six pupils have special educational needs, a proportion that is below the national average. Nine of these have statements of special need and the main needs are speech and communication difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and specific learning difficulties. A below average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides an effective education for its pupils. They achieve well and standards are largely above or well above average by the time they leave the school. The quality of teaching is mostly good with a significant amount that is very good, especially in Year 7. The school is very well led and managed with all staff and the governing body making a significant contribution to the school's success. When all factors are taken into account, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are well above average in mathematics and science by the time that the pupils leave the school. They are above average in English, information and communication technology, and religious education. Standards are well above those typically expected in design and technology in Year 7, and above those expected in art and design, French, history, music and physical education.
- The quality of the leadership and management is very good and the headteacher and senior staff members provide a very clear educational direction for the work of the school, while maintaining a positive and supportive ethos.
- The quality of the teaching is largely good throughout the school, with a significant amount of very good in Year 7.
- The curriculum is very good and provides a rich range of learning opportunities, with very effective links with the community and other schools. The enrichment of the curriculum through extra-curricular activities, visits, and visitors is excellent.
- The school has a very positive climate for learning; the provision for pupils' personal development and their social and moral development is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes towards their work are good; their personal development and the relationships between them are very good.
- The quality of information provided for parents is very good, and they are very positive about the work of the school.

What could be improved

- A small proportion of the teaching is characterised by unclear learning objectives, unhelpful marking, and a lack of subject knowledge.
- The presentation of pupils' work is too often untidy; it is poorly stored, and does not reflect the evident pride they show in their achievements.
- The accommodation contains too many temporary buildings that are too small, with poor control of heat, a lack of space and water for practical activities.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection was in October 1997. Since then the level of improvement has been good, and the many positive aspects of the school have been maintained. This has been achieved through a period of great change due to the growth of the school over the last four years. The key issues from the last inspection have been fully addressed and the strengths found then have been maintained. In addition, the national strategies, including that for Year 7 and other changes to the curriculum, have been introduced successfully. The information and

communication technology resources have been improved and teachers have received further training in using them effectively.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Since the last inspection in 1997 standards have improved and at a rate broadly in line with that found nationally. Although there is some inconsistency in standards, particularly in English, from year to year, this largely reflects differences in the cohorts and high levels of mobility in some year groups. The evidence of the inspection is that achievement is at least good, and often very good in Year 7, and the school is well placed to improve standards further.

The national test results show that attainment in English and mathematics was above the national average while in science, attainment was well above average. When compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, standards were below average in English, average in mathematics and above average in science. The dip in English results has been carefully analysed by the school and measures have been taken to improve results. In mathematics, underachievement among girls was recognised by the school and has been addressed with a positive impact already visible in the standards achieved and the progress made by them. The very good use of 'booster' groups in Year 6 has also helped address the underachievement in English and mathematics. The targets set by the school are based on the evidence of their prior attainment and are sufficiently challenging.

The current standards in the school, and those likely to be achieved by the end of Year 7, mostly match or are higher than those shown in the tests last year. Standards are well above average in mathematics and science, and above average in English. They are higher than those expected in all other subjects except geography where they are broadly in line with those expected. All of these have been maintained or improved since the last inspection. Given the pupils' attainment on entry, this represents a good level of achievement.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy being challenged. Most of them take a full part in all aspects of school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Nearly all of the pupils are well behaved and show a good level of respect for school rules and routines.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are given very good opportunities to show initiative and to develop their independence.
Attendance	Excellent. The attendance is very high when compared with similar schools nationally.

In a few lessons, particularly where the teaching is less successful in motivating pupils, some of them lose concentration and drift off task. However, the overall picture of attitudes is a very encouraging one and this has a positive impact on their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 4 – 6	Year 7
Quality of teaching	Good	Very good

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

The quality of teaching is good in English and science, and very good in mathematics and in information and communication technology. Literacy and numeracy skills are well taught and regularly used in other subjects. The strongest teaching is characterised by very good relationships between teachers and pupils, resulting in very good attitudes towards learning and a genuine desire to achieve well. Tasks provided are sufficiently challenging and designed to move learning forward. They are appropriately based on prior attainment. Where the teaching is less successful, occasional challenging behaviour is less well dealt with, the marking of pupils' work does not make clear how they can improve and insufficient emphasis is given to the presentation of pupils' work. On occasion, teachers' subject knowledge is insecure. The teachers work very hard to overcome the difficulties caused by the excessive provision of temporary classrooms. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and the school effectively meets the needs of all pupils. The good and very good teaching helps create a culture in the school that celebrates success in all aspects of school life and focuses on the positive aspects of pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. There is a very good range of broad and balanced learning opportunities appropriate for the ages and abilities of all pupils. The needs of the Year 7 pupils are well met and an appropriate curriculum is well planned for them.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Tasks and activities are well matched to meet the specific needs of pupils who learn at a much slower rate than their peers. Support is organised in such a way that pupils are able to excel in certain subjects such as art and design, and design and technology.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. These children are well supported and benefit from the strategies for grouping pupils within classrooms, which require collaboration and encourage the development of speaking and listening skills.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Pupils' personal development is very good. The provision for their spiritual and cultural development is good and the provision for their social and moral development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school works hard to ensure pupils' welfare and individual pupils are known to staff, who are aware of their personal and academic needs.

The extra-curricular provision, through trips and visits, as well as after school clubs, is excellent. There are many opportunities for pupils to extend and enrich their knowledge, skills and interests in a wide range of areas.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The management structures are very well developed and effective given the size of the school. Teachers with subject leadership roles carry them out very effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors offer the school good support but they need to develop further their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school analyses test results in detail and when underachievement is recognised it is investigated and addressed.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Grants are used appropriately and spending is clearly linked to the school's identified priorities.

There is a good level of staffing, with a range of experience and expertise. The resources available are good but the accommodation, especially the number of temporary classrooms, is unsatisfactory and this has a negative impact on the quality of learning. The headteacher provides strong leadership and the senior staff are at the forefront of the positive culture which is developing in the school. The school effectively ensures best value in its work.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Standards are high. • The school helps their children become more mature and responsible. • They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. • The teaching is good and the school has high expectations of their children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework their children receive. • The school does not work closely enough with them. • They do not feel well enough informed about how their child is getting on.

The inspection findings agree with the parents' positive views. The homework provided is broadly typical given the ages of the pupils. The school involves parents to a good degree, through helping in school, helping with their children's work at home and in occasional information meetings about aspects of the school's work. The information provided for parents in the annual pupil reports, and for those with children with special educational needs, is good but the school needs to ascertain what other forms of information parents see as useful to them. The very good pupil planners provide a very effective means of communication between school and home, as well as helping develop pupils' independence and learning skills.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The standards attained by pupils entering the school, as shown by their national test results at the age of seven, have improved over recent years and are above average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels is much higher than it was four years ago. However, the standards on entry of the present Year 6 and Year 7 were not as high as they are now, and the above or well above average standards evident are an indication of very good progress and a good level of achievement in most subjects. The progress made from when pupils start in Year 3 to the end of Year 7 shows that the level of achievement in English, mathematics and science is above that usually found.
2. The special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special needs. This enables most pupils to achieve well and make good progress against the targets set for them in their individual education plans. A significant number of pupils with special educational needs achieve standards close to those expected for their ages. Standards achieved by bi-lingual pupils in school are generally good. They benefit from teachers' clear explanation and good use of visual resources, particularly in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
3. The national test results for Year 6 pupils in 2002 were maintained at the same level as 2001. They were well above average in science and above average in English and mathematics. The inspection evidence shows that these standards have been improved upon further in Year 7 and by the time they leave the school, the present pupils are likely to have well above average standards in mathematics and science and above average standards in English. The good standards achieved in the end of Year 6 tests are due to the good teaching they receive throughout the school, but also to the specific 'booster' type classes provided in Year 6 to help those pupils who have been identified as underachieving to make an appropriate level of progress. These are running again this year and are having a similar impact on the present Year 6 pupils, who are likely to attain similar levels to the previous years, although the attitudes towards learning of a minority are less positive than has been the case in the past.
4. When compared with schools that take pupils from similar backgrounds, the standards in the Year 6 tests in 2002 showed attainment to be below average in English and average in mathematics. It was above average in science. The reason for the low result in English was that a significant minority of pupils failed to attain the expected level. This also resulted in this group of pupils making less than expected progress from Year 4 to Year 6. The school analysed the reasons for this and teachers are working hard to address them this year. When compared with similar schools in the local area, the results achieved over the past three years have been very good.
5. The current position, as shown by the inspection evidence, is that standards have improved since the last inspection in mathematics, science, and in design and technology, where they are now well above those expected. They have also improved in history, music, physical education and religious education, where they are now above those typically expected. They have been maintained at above average levels in English, art and design, and French, and at a broadly typical level in geography. Standards in information and communication technology have risen from below those expected to above those expected by the time the pupils leave the school.
6. The current standards in English are above average in Year 6 and in Year 7. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. This is due to the consistently good teaching they experience and the recent higher focus on spelling and other writing skills evident in their work. In mathematics, current standards are above average in Year 6 and well above average in Year 7. These high standards are due to the consistently good teaching and a well-planned curriculum, which places an emphasis on problem solving and investigation and well planned opportunities to apply mathematics across the curriculum. Although the standards girls achieve are above the national average, overall they do not achieve as well as the boys in the school or as well as they do in English and science. The school has carried out a rigorous examination of test results and pupils' learning styles, and this has highlighted a lack of confidence in a significant number of girls that adversely affects their performance in standardised tests. As a result, the school has implemented a range of strategies to improve the performance of girls and this is beginning to close the gap between them. The school is at an early stage of identifying more able and gifted and

talented pupils, and providing appropriate work for them. However, the inspection evidence supports the view that these pupils are making progress at least in line with their peers.

7. In science, current standards are above average in Year 6 and the present Year 7 are likely to attain well above average standards by the time they leave the school. The high standards in Year 7 are due to very good teaching in that year group and the very good attitudes of highly motivated pupils. The climate for learning, and the planning and organisation of lessons, are very good. Pupils of all abilities are consistently challenged in investigative work and opportunities to make decisions independently or collaboratively have increased.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils have good attitudes towards school. The vast majority of parents say that their children enjoy coming to school. Pupils start enthusiastically in the morning and very few are late. In most lessons pupils are motivated well, display keenness to participate and enjoyment of challenge. They work hard and conscientiously even when they are not closely supervised. In some lessons, however, where the teaching is less stimulating, some pupils are inattentive when the teacher is talking. When asked to work independently, they lose interest in the work set or work at a leisurely pace. This impedes their learning. Most pupils display a pride in their work and are keen to show it to outsiders, although the quality of the presentation varies. Pupils with special educational needs are positive about their learning, fully integrated into school life and are accepted by their peers. Those pupils taking part in the wide range of well-supported extra-curricular activities respond eagerly. Pupils' with English as an additional language have good attitudes towards school. They are fully involved in tasks and work hard. They are willing to talk about what they are doing, and happy to discuss what they like about school and their favourite subjects.
9. Generally, the behaviour of pupils is good. In most lessons, pupils do as they are asked. They are disciplined in putting up their hand to answer questions and refrain from interrupting others. On the few occasions where admonishment is required, they respond obediently. Pupils behave well as they eat their lunches and when they play together on the fields or hard play areas. In assemblies, pupils are attentive, listen to the speaker and participate in the singing. They are polite and considerate to other pupils and adults as they move around the school between lessons. No examples of bullying were seen and, in discussion, pupils said that this was not a problem. There are few minority ethnic pupils but they are well integrated into school life and no racial harassment is evident. There was one, fixed-term exclusion last year.
10. Personal development and relationships within the school are very good. Pupils have respect for the beliefs of others. They treat staff at the school with respect and the rapport between teacher and pupil is very good. In the best classes, a relaxed yet disciplined atmosphere allows all to get the most out of the lesson. Occasionally, this relaxation goes too far and the pace of work suffers. Relationships between pupils are very good and they work well together, sharing resources and showing awareness of the needs of others. Pupils have many opportunities in class and around the school to show initiative and take responsibility, which they accept and fulfil well. Pupils run the school council with efficiency and maturity; even the youngest members participate and show how seriously they regard their responsibilities.
11. Attendance is very high compared to the national average; there is little unauthorised absence and virtually no lateness. This excellent attendance contributes to the good progress that children make.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. The overall quality of teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 is good. There is also a significant amount of very good teaching. In Year 7 the quality of the teaching is very good. Overall, the teaching is satisfactory or better in 95 per cent of lessons. The teaching is good or better in 73 per cent of lessons. It is very good in 26 per cent and excellent in five per cent. These figures reflect a good level of improvement since the last inspection when only 10 per cent of the teaching was very good or better. The improvements are due to changes in staffing, very good professional development having a high profile in the school, and improved teaching and resources in subjects such as information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy.

13. The good quality teaching results in learning that is more effective and this supports the good progress made by the majority of the pupils. The teachers work very well together, particularly in year group teams, ably led by year group leaders who co-ordinate the planning and support the delivery of the curriculum within their teams. In addition, the very good support offered by subject co-ordinators has also helped raise the quality of the teaching and learning since the last inspection. The teaching assistants are used effectively, usually to support less able pupils, and their work enables these pupils to make progress that is often in line with that of their peers.
14. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils are a major strength. The headteacher and staff have a clear vision for the creation of a culture where learning is a positive thing to do and working hard and being successful are things to be celebrated. The parents share this vision and it is having a clearly positive impact on the pupils' learning, as they show pride in their work and respond enthusiastically to the tasks given them. Teachers have begun to look more closely at their practice and to consider which methods suit which pupils best, and to take on some of the aspects of accelerated learning techniques, such as the availability of water, and frequent breaks in learning to keep pupils focused, alongside exercises designed to develop different parts of the brain. Although at an early stage, where these are used appropriately they clearly have a positive impact on pupils' concentration spans as well as making learning more enjoyable for them.
15. The best lessons are characterised by clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils so that they understand exactly what is expected of them. The lessons have a good pace and are appropriately challenging. Although the planning is completed as year groups, the best teachers adapt the plans for the needs of their pupils, and to suit their own teaching styles. Where the teaching is excellent, the teachers' confidence with the subject is evident; the lessons are challenging but exactly matched to the needs of the class and result in very good learning by the majority of the pupils. For example, in one lesson in information and communication technology, pupils made tremendous gains in their knowledge and understanding of how to create a multi media presentation.
16. In some of the less effective lessons, the learning objectives were not the focus of the lesson; the learning veered into different and less well planned aspects of the subject. On a few occasions, the teaching suffered through a lack of subject knowledge of the teachers' part, and this made it difficult for them to teach the agreed planning, especially where someone else had drawn up the plans. The marking of pupils' work is good in places but inconsistent and does not always make clear to pupils what they have done well and what they need to do to improve.
17. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans show a good awareness of individual needs. Detailed plans include specific strategies to support pupils' progress towards their stated targets. Targets are reviewed regularly and modified to match pupil's progress. This ensures pupils are constantly challenged to improve their work and achieve the standards they are capable of. Relationships are very good and staff members manage pupils in a calm and sensitive manner which instils confidence and assists them in settling to their tasks and achieving a feeling of success and self esteem. The teaching assistants who provide additional support for children with special educational needs are effectively deployed. As a result, pupils' understanding of tasks, their concentration and their progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans are good. Additional lessons at the start of school are particularly effective in targeting pupil's needs and helping them make progress in basic literacy and numeracy skills. Those pupils who have a full statement of special educational needs are provided with a teaching assistant and make good progress. Class teachers and specialist literacy and mathematics teachers have a good knowledge of pupils with special educational needs and are keenly aware of their individual targets. Staff members work very closely together to ensure that the teaching and learning targets are met. Marking of pupils' work is often very good and includes specific comments on whether pupils found the work difficult or how much support was needed. Teachers and teaching assistants are well qualified and have undertaken additional training to improve their skills of working with pupils who have special needs.
18. The pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds also benefit from good teaching throughout the school. Assessment procedures allow teachers to recognise what all pupils can do, and acknowledge their achievement. This means that pupils whose attainment in English is below average for their age, because of the level of English they have attained, can be identified and supported appropriately. In most lessons, there is a high focus on speaking and listening, collaboration with more experienced English-speaking classmates and work with subject-specific resources. Teachers explain tasks well and understand when to intervene to help pupils make progress.

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

19. The school provides all pupils with a balanced, broad and relevant curriculum, through a very good range of learning opportunities. All statutory requirements are met and the scheme for religious education is based appropriately on the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum has been fully reviewed to take account of recent changes, and policies and schemes are in place for all subjects. The provision was criticised in the previous inspection because some foundation subjects needed further development in schemes of work and teacher guidance. All curriculum issues have now been addressed well.
20. The curriculum is well planned with teachers working together in year teams to produce medium term plans. These are based on a long term plan showing the range of topics in each subject area to be covered. The teams draw up these plans half termly but meet weekly to discuss the lessons for the following week. Planning is shared between the teams so those with expertise or interest devise plans for the others to use. This ensures similar coverage across each year group. All teachers use a standard format for short term planning. All lesson plans have clear and relevant objectives although these are not always the focus of the lesson delivered. Themes are planned to provide as many cross-curricular links as possible. For example, a topic on India includes Indian music, art and stories, as well as the geography of the area.
21. The numeracy and literacy strategies have been implemented effectively and there is much evidence of these skills being used. For example, literacy skills are used in religious education, history and science; numeracy skills are effectively developed through science and geography, and in design and technology as pupils measure and draw designs for hats.
22. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school maintains an appropriate register of pupils with special educational needs and this complies with the national code of practice and meets statutory obligations. Tasks and activities are well matched to meet the specific needs of pupils who learn at a much slower rate than their peers. Support is provided in small withdrawal groups or in class and is organised in such a way that pupils are able to excel in certain subjects such as art and design, and design and technology. This good provision has a positive impact on the pupils' progress. Statements are implemented fully and effective support enables such pupils to have full access to mainstream education and to achieve well.
23. The provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent. The range is extensive and includes a number of sporting clubs, music, recorders, orchestra and choir, art, cookery, computer and chess. These clubs are very well supported and pupils are enthusiastic about participating and representing the school through matches or singing within the community. There are opportunities in Year 6 for pupils to take part in a residential experience locally. The school's links with the local community provide a very good enrichment to the curriculum. These include links with the local church and vicar, various business links, old people's homes and supermarkets. There are visits to museums, a pizza café and the Cathedral. All these opportunities help to enhance the pupils' curriculum by giving them a wide range of experiences.
24. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. Lessons are planned and pupils discuss relevant issues during circle time or during timetabled sessions for health education. Policies for sex and drugs education are in place. Sex education is taught throughout the school within science. In Year 6 and 7, more specific information is given, usually in gender groups. The drugs policy has recently been implemented. Younger pupils learn about "Stranger Danger" and stealing, whereas the older pupils discuss smoking, alcohol and drugs. The community policeman provides much of this input.
25. Liaison with the local feeder schools is very good. Subject co-ordinators meet regularly to discuss what they are teaching, to provide continuity in the learning.
26. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection. The provision for their spiritual development is good whereas before it was satisfactory and the provision for both moral and social development are now very good, having been judged to be good in the previous report. The provision for pupils' cultural development has been maintained at a good level.
27. The provision for spiritual development is found in all areas of the school's work as teachers seek to boost the pupils' self-esteem through praise and encouragement. Circle time gives pupils the opportunity to understand, appreciate and value the thoughts and opinions of others. This reflects the ethos of the school and the published aims. Religious education lessons provide a context for pupils to learn about the beliefs and values of other people. Assemblies add another dimension, although there is insufficient

time to reflect on the theme. However, one class assembly based on a story about a leopard taking revenge lead to some very thoughtful discussion: reflection in this assembly enabled pupils to focus on how their actions could have an impact on others.

28. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. There are clear expectations of behaviour and attitudes laid out in the behaviour policy. The school finds ways of reinforcing and rewarding examples of appropriate behaviour. For instance, rewards in the form of house points or merit certificates given for good work, effort or behaviour have a positive effect on promoting the pupils' attitudes towards learning and behaviour. Celebration assemblies are held weekly. Personal, social and health education lessons provide a good opportunity for pupils to discuss and formulate class rules and to talk about bullying.
29. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. The relationships between pupils, and between staff and pupils, are very good, and they, together with the caring atmosphere found throughout the school, provide a good basis for pupils' development. Opportunities for the pupils' to act as monitors promote their social development. The class of the week has the responsibility of performing a variety of jobs around the school. The school council meets regularly, allowing pupils the chance to air their views. The older pupils take responsibility for the pastoral care of the youngest pupils when they first arrive in school by playing with them during break, taking them to lunch and listening to them read. This helps to ensure a smooth transfer from the first school. In many subjects, pupils are expected to work collaboratively, sharing ideas and resources. Examples can be found in science, geography and music. Pupils raise money for charities and are made aware of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. Commitment to attending clubs and being available for matches also helps pupils develop an understanding of how important it is to attend practices and games especially as others rely on you. Visits and residential trips add another dimension that enhances pupils' social development.
30. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. They are made aware of cultural differences through religious education, celebration of festivals, history and geography. Where appropriate, pupils talk about their faith and what it means to them. Music and art provide another aspect of cultural development as they are linked to topics such as Australia and the aborigines, or India. They study the local area and identify changes and customs. There are close relations with the local church, as a place of Christian worship, and Norwich Cathedral. The vicar regularly leads assemblies and occasionally other Christian groups contribute. The school does not celebrate the first languages or heritage cultures of all pupils sufficiently. This is a lost opportunity to enrich the learning of all pupils. A notable exception to this was when one pupil made a useful contribution to the study of important events in the Islamic faith calendar.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. There are good procedures for ensuring that pupils are safe and well looked after. The school is characterised by a very strong, supportive ethos. Appropriately trained staff look after pupils who are ill or who have accidents at school. When accidents occur they are recorded correctly. The school has adopted local child protection procedures and the designated teacher is trained, as are other staff. In personal and social education lessons, teachers discuss measures that pupils should take to protect themselves. Health and safety procedures are in place and equipment and premises are checked. Most issues identified concern the 'mobile' classrooms. However, the responsibilities of the health and safety manager are not clear and procedures for recording and tracking action taken are not rigorous enough.
32. Attendance is very high and the school has good procedures for maintaining that level, although it has not totally implemented the recommendation to improve pupil security by contacting parents early in a day when pupils are not in school and no reason has been given. The school has made a concerted effort to improve pupil behaviour, with carefully researched and thought out procedures for praise and reward, backed up by a system of sanction when required. These are generally effective and pupils respect them. However, they are not always consistently applied and in a few lessons attitudes to learning are not as positive as they should be. Pupils are taught to be aware of the effect of their actions on others and earlier this year had a whole day discussing bullying and how to prevent it. This was backed up by a survey of all pupils and appears to have been effective. Pupils now say that bullying is very rare and that they know how to deal with it. This also applies to racism.
33. Procedures for monitoring academic and personal development are good. Children are assessed when they start in Year 4 in addition to knowledge gained from assessment records passed on by the first schools. Pupils' attainment in mathematics, science and English is formally assessed at the end of

each year and recorded in on-going records. These results are also used to place pupils into groups according to what they know in the main subjects. Additionally, teachers record each pupil's success in learning at the end of key topics in these subjects. Other subjects are monitored in a similar fashion, though in less detail, and teachers assess progress at the end of the year. Teachers use ongoing assessment in lessons to modify plans for subsequent lessons. They are starting to look at the success or otherwise of what pupils have achieved by the end of the year and then modify the curriculum or teaching methods accordingly. Staff members use their good knowledge and relationships with pupils to record personal development on the pupil's annual report which is passed to the teacher for the following year. The assessment of pupils with English as an additional language follows the same principle as the effective assessment of all other pupils, but with a focus on language in the context of how long the pupil has been learning English.

34. The school gives good educational and personal support to pupils. This process begins in the classroom, where pupils are encouraged to assess their own performance and are set targets to improve. These targets are recorded in their 'pupil planners' so that they can be shared with parents. Time is allowed for pupils to complete these and discuss progress with their teacher. This process also enhances the value of setting homework. Many teachers also regularly assess written work and use 'prompt marking', which sets the pupil a goal to raise their attainment to a higher level, but this is inconsistently applied.
35. Standardised school tests, diagnostic tests and teacher assessments are used well to help in the early identification of pupils with special educational needs. Detailed individual education plans, which describe the school's strategies for supporting pupils' progress towards clearly stated, specific and appropriate targets, are drawn up for all pupils requiring them. The staff's support for pupils with special educational needs ensures that most pupils make good progress and most successfully achieve their specific learning objectives, which enables the school to remove some pupils from the register. However, some targets are too general and continue for too long with insufficient evidence of progress. The school's system for tracking pupils' progress towards the National Curriculum attainment levels is sufficiently rigorous in measuring pupils' rate of progress in small enough steps. Links with agencies, such as social services, speech therapists and other services are very good and their expertise is valued.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. Parents are satisfied with the school and the education, support and personal development of their children. Views from the questionnaire sent out before the inspection show that virtually all parents think that their child likes school and they feel comfortable approaching the school with questions. Their children are expected to work hard and helped to become more mature. They have minor concerns about how closely the school works with parents, the amount of information given about their child's progress and the amount of homework. At the parents' meeting, attitudes were likewise largely positive. Parents think this is a good, caring school with high standards. Some concerns were also expressed then about the amount of homework and, whilst they were pleased with the content of pupil reports, a few were unhappy about the arrangements for parent consultation evenings. They felt that they were insufficiently private and that there was no opportunity, on these occasions, to view their child's work. They also had concerns about the accommodation, the large number of mobile classrooms and the state of some of the toilets.
37. The inspection supports the positive views of parents. Teaching is good; pupils behave and achieve well. Their personal development is very good. As for those areas of some concern, the amount of homework is appropriate and information on pupil progress is very good. The accommodation does impose limits on the curriculum and the toilets and cloakroom areas are too small.
38. The school has effective links with parents. It holds meetings to introduce parents of the new pupils in Year 4 to the school, which virtually all attend. Thereafter, parents are kept well informed in regular newsletters about aspects of school life of interest to them. The pupil planner is a very good tool for keeping parents up to date with work their child is doing in school and the progress they are making, as well as telling them when homework has to be done. It also provides a very good self-evaluation tool for pupils. The school has held meetings to discuss new developments such as the teaching of computing skills and the National Numeracy Strategy; these were well attended. Whilst informal contacts for individual parents are good, the school does not do enough to seek parental views, for example, to consult them on the further development of the school or how, in application of best value principles, it

can best meet the wishes of parents. Some parents, who might feel insufficiently confident to ask individually, would like a formal time to look at pupils' work and the school needs to consider ways of achieving this

39. The annual reports of pupil progress are good. They have been designed through a working group of parents and teachers and have an interesting combination of tick boxes showing attainment and effort, with personal comment. They meet statutory requirements, and give good detail, particularly in the main subjects of English, mathematics and science. They are written about individuals and discriminate well between differing abilities; pupils are given appropriate targets for development. Parents of pupils sitting the national assessment tests in Year 6 have the opportunity to talk to the teacher about the process. The prospectus is well presented and gives much useful information, but the governors' annual report to parents has been compressed to the extent that it no longer meets statutory requirements, missing several of the required elements.
40. Parents play an effective part in the life of the school and in their child's education. Many support them with homework and comment in the pupil planner. This helps to raise standards generally. Almost all parents attend consultation evenings. Most have returned their home-school agreements and the school keeps unauthorised absence very low because parents are very co-operative in giving reasons and sending their child to school regularly. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved in all aspects of the special needs process and reviews. In conjunction with the class teacher, they are active in helping their children with work at home. They and their children contribute to the targets in the individual education programmes. This has a good impact on their children's self esteem and progress.
41. Several adult volunteers help regularly in the school, giving much valued assistance, for example, with hearing pupils read, running the library and practical activities. The parent, staff association enthusiastically raises funds, mainly through family social events and is well supported by many helpers. Such events are well attended by parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. The leadership demonstrated by the headteacher and senior staff is very good and has been sustained at this high level since the last inspection. They provide the school with a clear educational focus for its work, while supporting the need for an enriched and challenging curriculum through planning, the quality of teaching and learning, and the detailed analysis of pupils' test results. This represents the fruits of a lot of very hard work due to staff changes and the rapid growth of the school over the last four years.
43. The management structure of the school is well planned, effective and appropriate for its size. There is very effective communication between staff, very good levels of year group planning and very good delegation resulting in year leaders who have a clear understanding of their role, and who are carrying it out successfully. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide very good role models for all staff with management responsibility, offering encouragement and support but also challenging staff to achieve even more.
44. The performance management policy has been adapted to fit with the school's own appraisal systems, particularly the annual job description meeting at which priorities for teachers' management roles are agreed. The success of the professional development provided for teachers is evident in the numbers who have left the school due to promotion. A great deal of monitoring of teaching, planning and pupils' work has been carried out and this has had a positive impact on the management of the subjects. The school has worked hard to provide sufficient non-contact time for almost all subject co-ordinators to enable this to happen and the observation and monitoring forms clearly show where useful advice and the spread of good practice has occurred.
45. Further evidence of the school striving for improvement is to be found in the recent work on accelerated learning. This has involved staff learning to use techniques intended to keep pupils focused and on task and to make their learning more evident to them. Although at an early stage, this has had a positive impact in, for example, art and design lessons where music playing quietly helps pupils concentrate on their own work, and in longer literacy and numeracy sessions, where a small amount of exercise can help re-focus minds when they start to drift. Water for drinking has been made available during lessons and the majority of the pupils have accepted this in a very mature manner.

46. The school development planning process is very effective in providing opportunities for the audit of progress made and for the setting of objectives for the future. The staff members have a lot of involvement in developing priorities and discussing the content of the plan. The governors' involvement is growing and the development plan is a very important method for them to monitor the work of the school. Every meeting has a report on the progress made towards addressing the priorities in the plan, so it provides a year-long agenda for improvement in the school.
47. The governing body provides the school with a good level of support. Those governors spoken with during the inspection have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and of areas for future development. In the chair, the governing body has a strong and capable leader who has a clear strategic view of the direction the school needs to take. At present, too few governors are involved or able to visit the school during the day on a regular enough basis to be able to act sufficiently as critical friends. The school has attempted to address this through a very successful, annual governors' day when they can all spend time in the school and classrooms, getting to know pupils and staff. This has been a very positive innovation.
48. The school analyses data in some detail to identify any areas where they can improve. For example, they compare their results with other schools of similar size in the local authority. They analyse test results to identify weaknesses such as those found in girls' mathematics results, and they use this information to set targets and address any weaknesses found. This is already proving to have a positive impact in mathematics and a detailed analysis of aspects of English has been produced following a disappointing test result last year. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good leadership and management. Administrative procedures are good and meet statutory requirements.
49. Financial planning systems remain at the very good level found at the time of the last inspection. This represents a lot of hard work as it has been a period of continued rapid increase in the school population. The school has endeavoured to maintain an appropriate carry forward for contingency purposes. The school ensures that the principles of best value are upheld when making purchases and placing contracts so that spending decisions are of benefit to the pupils. Money identified for specific development is carefully spent and closely monitored. The governing body is fully involved, very understanding of the school's developing needs and works alongside the headteacher to ensure financial planning and school development planning are closely linked to ensure standards rise and overall quality of education offered improves.
50. The very good financial and administration procedures are very well managed by the finance secretary, who in addition to producing monthly reports, meets regularly with the headteacher to discuss on-going financial matters. The school's systems, which make very effective use of modern technology, ensure the school runs very smoothly.
51. The school has a good number of teachers who are deployed well in small to average sized classes. There are sufficient teachers to enable pupils to be divided into smaller groups for specific tasks, like the 'spelling attack' programme in Year 4. This has a positive impact on their standards. Specialist teachers are used well at the upper end of the school to raise standards in subjects such as design and technology and French. Teaching assistants give good support in many classes and their commitment has been raised by inclusion in the performance management scheme. Teaching resources are good, with no subjects having inadequate resources. The library is well stocked and is a pleasant learning environment.
52. Although the school has sufficient classrooms and several ancillary teaching areas, such as the science room, overall the accommodation is unsatisfactory. Nearly half the pupils are normally taught in temporary classrooms outside the main building. These are often cramped, restrict movement by teacher and pupils, and lack basic amenities such as water, which hinders subjects such as art and design. Because they have no toilets, time is wasted as pupils cross to the main building. The toilets in the main building are inconveniently located and become unhygienic because of over-use. The cloakroom areas are too small to accommodate pupils' coats and bags tidily.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. In order to continue the good level of improvement since the last inspection, the governing body, headteacher and staff should, in addition to addressing the issues raised in the school development plan:

- ❑ improve the consistency of the teaching and spread the very good practice that exists by:
 - improving the planning so that learning objectives provide the main focus for the lesson;
 - improving the marking of pupils' work to ensure they know what they did well and how they can improve in the future;
 - improving the presentation of pupils' work;
 - providing training for teachers in subjects where their expertise is weak.
(Paragraphs 8, 16, 60, 71, 93)

- ❑ continue the efforts to improve the accommodation through the replacement of the temporary classrooms. **
(Paragraphs 36, 52, 79, 90)

*** The school has recognised this weakness and has plans to address it.*

- ❑ In addition to the above key issues, the governing body should consider including the following minor issue in their action plan:
 - clarify responsibilities for health and safety and ensure they are appropriately monitored.
(Paragraph 31)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	88
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	23	37	19	5	0	0
Percentage	5	26	42	22	6	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	470
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	20

Special educational needs	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	76

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	6.1

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.3

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 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	63	43	106

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	51	54	60
	Girls	36	35	42
	Total	87	89	102
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (91)	84 (85)	96 (98)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	53	55	59
	Girls	35	36	42
	Total	88	91	101
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (95)	86 (90)	95 (98)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll
445
0
4
3
0
6
2
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
2
2
6

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
1	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y4– Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	21
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	26

Education support staff: Y4 – Y7

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	251.5

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	904,689
Total expenditure	923,018
Expenditure per pupil	1,964
Balance brought forward from previous year	38,301
Balance carried forward to next year	19,972

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	16

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	470
Number of questionnaires returned	165

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	41	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	42	52	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	58	2	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	53	12	3	2
The teaching is good.	42	50	1	1	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	50	16	1	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	39	3	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	44	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	28	48	15	3	7
The school is well led and managed.	42	48	1	1	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	52	1	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	48	4	0	3

Other issues raised by parents

A significant number of parents showed concern at the number of temporary and mobile classrooms, and that these are small, lack water and make it difficult for the teaching of practical activities. The inspection findings support this view.

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

ENGLISH

54. Standards are above those expected nationally at the end of Year 6, and pupils have made good progress since they joined the school in Year 4. This is a similar picture to the last inspection. In Year 7, pupils achieve good standards and make good progress. This is due to the consistently good teaching they experience in Year 7 and the tighter focus on spelling and other writing skills evident in workbooks. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress, particularly when supported by teaching assistants and a senior member of staff in “booster” classes. Currently, the few children who are learning with English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress. These children are not newcomers to English and their English language acquisition is well established. For this reason they are able to take full part in classroom discussions and in reading and writing tasks when required to do so.
55. Results of the 2002 national tests, which all pupils take at age eleven, showed that standards in writing were significantly lower than those achieved in reading. This is explained, in part, by pupil mobility, with four children of lower attainment arriving at the school just before the national tests. There was also a significantly higher percentage of pupils in that cohort with special educational needs and key staff were absent. Those pupils are making good progress in both reading and writing because of the good teaching and the school's awareness of the need to provide some extra support. A range of strategies has been implemented, such as that targeted at spelling and on the study of different text types to allow children to write more confidently for a range of purposes and readers. For example, during the week of the inspection all Year 6 pupils tackled an old test paper about a myth, coming to understand the conventional features of this kind of writing, its mysterious content and the way meaning can be inferred through close study of its content.
56. Pupils' speaking and listening skills develop well and, by the time they are eleven, standards are good. Teachers encourage children to listen carefully and to contribute to discussions and, when they are studying a particular text, to give informed answers by referring back to the details in the text to argue their case. For example, all Year 6 pupils discussed a folk-tale and they expressed ideas about the mysterious circumstances in the tale and challenged each other appropriately in discussion. In Year 7, pupils demonstrated an understanding of how personality and characteristics can be shown through facial expression and body movement as well as through words. They collaborated well in class when preparing a two-minute drama in which they explored their ideas. They listened to each other's suggestions and refined their work to take account of another point of view. Later they evaluated each other's work in a helpful way. Each pair set the context for their play with clarity and good detail. A pupil with emotional and behavioural difficulties was given good support, which allowed him to fulfil his part in the paired drama successfully.
57. Standards in reading in Year 6 are good. Pupils read well with good expression, which they achieve from close attention to the punctuation of the text. They demonstrate in their reading their understanding of the difference between speech, description and the linking story-line. They bring expression to the dialogue as they read, drawing on their understanding of the whole story and knowledge about particular characters' attitudes and motivation. They understand authors' techniques for building up tension and how they are able to bring order and emphasis to their writing by adding connecting words of cause and time in sentences. Higher attaining pupils are able to understand the meaning of complex sentences and the impact of a single word. In Year 7, good reading standards are maintained. Pupils read accurately, with consistently good expression and fluency. They are able to summarise the stories they are reading well and, from their knowledge of the story type, predict the likely outcome. They are coming to understand the motivation of characters and developing personal preferences in their reading choices. In work on the poem “The Charge of the Light Brigade” they show sympathy with the doomed soldiers.
58. Standards in writing are good. By the time they are eleven, children are able to communicate with readers well, offering them personal asides and detail as they write. They use paragraphing well, demonstrating an understanding of when to start a new paragraph to present new ideas, new developments in the story or the introduction of an interesting character. A display of pamphlets with information from a science project on “the planets” demonstrate that they are able to use the conventions of non-fiction writing with confidence such as, for example, clear explanations, annotated diagrams and bullet points to summarise ideas. Pupils confidently change the format to use persuasive

- writing to encourage the reader to, for example, try an amazing holiday on Mars, with all the linguistic skills and strategies of a seasoned sales-person. In Year 7, pupils develop their skills in writing, calling on knowledge of different text types to complete given tasks. Pupils write in play-script format with skill, using stage-directions to convey additional meaning. The choice of vocabulary matches the situation well and presents an understanding of the literary style of Shakespeare and growing confidence with written language.
59. Pupils' attitudes to learning make strong contributions to the overall standards, and pupils are generally eager to work hard to achieve the learning objectives. Pupils rise to challenges well, and older pupils are mature enough to listen to evaluations from their classmates with good attention, refining and improving the overall impression of finished work. Year 7 pupils work within a tight time-scale, and collaborate well when required to, and, in the lessons, seen rehearse and practise to improve their work.
60. The quality of teaching is good overall and is sometimes very good, particularly in Years 6 and 7. There is, however, some inconsistency in teaching in some year groups, particularly Year 5, where unsatisfactory subject knowledge and the over-generalised standard planning leaves inexperienced teachers unable to support pupils' learning satisfactorily. Teaching overall, however, is challenging and encouraging, with most tasks planned to motivate and engage pupils' interest, and with high expectation. Most teachers are clearly aware when pupils are ready to make progress and intervene with a well-chosen question to challenge their thinking and to keep them focused on the learning objectives. For example, in a very good Year 5 lesson, pupils were learning about features of an explanatory text. Through the teacher's clear explanation and her use of enlarged texts to identify features, the children came to understand that conventionally an explanatory text opens with a statement to introduce the topic, uses the present tense until the explanation is complete, and presents ideas in logical steps. Teachers work with groups to help them make progress at whatever attainment level they are working within. For example, one lower attaining group produced an effective explanatory text on how a giraffe is born. They read from appropriate non-fiction books, scanned the text and made notes. The group then expanded their notes into an explanatory text. In Year 7, teachers manage the class well and ensure that pupils' obvious excitement does not have an adverse effect on learning. Teachers keep pupils highly motivated by providing purposeful and encouraging feedback, showing appreciation of pupils' efforts. Most teachers encourage pupils to assess their work at the end of each session. Teachers' marking is inconsistent.
61. Leadership of the subject is good. The school is aware of the need to raise standards, particularly in writing, and has specific targets to help with this task. Assessment of pupils' work is used well to track progress and plans effectively draw on the National Literacy Strategy's teaching framework, amended to suit the school's needs. Planning is monitored routinely and samples of work checked to ensure pupils are achieving the learning objectives. During the week of the inspection, however, both Year 4 and 5 were studying explanatory text at a similar introductory level. This does not match the overall plan in the school's curriculum documents, and compromises continuity and progress in pupil's learning. The school has analysed its performance in national tests which all pupils take at eleven. From this they are taking appropriate steps to improve pupils' levels of attainment, for example, the introduction of a structured spelling scheme and the proposed purchase of class readers. Currently, the school does not give sufficient emphasis to guided reading, which, if fully exploited, will allow pupils to use their knowledge about written language to express informed opinions and write with more confidence. During the week of inspection, the approach known as "whole-class reading" did not achieve enough of this kind of investigative reading and left some children making little progress in the session.
62. Resources are good. Teachers deploy support staff well and there is a good range of fiction and non-fiction texts to support the learning objectives. There are not enough thesauruses and dictionaries in some classes to avoid pupils marking time as they wait their turn to use this resource. The library is spacious and well set out and presents a real invitation to young readers. The computerised system for issuing books allows teachers and pupils the opportunity to see which books individuals have read over time. The part-time librarian assists this work and supports pupils well, though the school plans for pupils to develop such library skills for themselves. Pupils are being trained to access the library's catalogue and the school is identifying appropriate web sites for particular topics to aid pupils' access to this important resource for learning.

MATHEMATICS

63. The standards achieved by pupils aged eleven are above those expected for their ages in all areas of the subject. Inspection findings are similar to the standards reached in the 2002 tests, which were above the national average and comparable to those of similar schools. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress over time and achieve well. Learning is built on very well in Year 7 and a significant number of pupils are working competently within Level 6, which is well above the expectations for their ages.
64. The high standards, which have improved since the last inspection, are due to the consistently good teaching a well planned curriculum which places emphasis on problem solving and investigation and well planned opportunities to apply mathematics across the curriculum.
65. Although the standards girls achieve are above the national average, overall they do not achieve as well as the boys in the school or as well as they do in English and science. The school has carried out a rigorous examination of test results and pupils' learning styles, and this has highlighted a lack of confidence in a significant number of girls that adversely affects their performance in standardised tests. As a result, the school has implemented a range of strategies to improve the performance of girls and this is beginning to close the gap between boys and girls.
66. The rate of achievement across the school is good. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 make good gains in their knowledge and are becoming increasingly competent in applying the four rules, order fractions and know the connection between multiplication and division. By the time pupils enter Year 6, they have made good progress in understanding multiples, factors and place values and are accurate when using the four rules with four and five figure numbers. Pupils of all attainment levels use their knowledge of tables, fractions and doubling particularly well to solve challenging problems. Higher attaining pupils in Year 7 confidently use percentages, fractions and decimals when solving challenging problems. All pupils in Year 7 learn to simplify equations as they develop their understanding of algebra. Numeracy skills are used effectively to develop pupils' understanding of data handling. By the age of eleven, most pupils interpret graphs, charts and diagrams very well to explain findings and results.
67. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from a wide range of well-planned activities and experiences, which support very effectively their learning in work involving shape, space and measures. Higher and average attaining pupils in Year 6 show a good understanding of co-ordinates and understand how to calculate perimeters, area and volume using formulae accurately. All pupils apply their knowledge well to solve problems in practical situations.
68. All teachers place considerable emphasis on ensuring pupils understand and use precise mathematical vocabulary when answering questions or discussing their work. Problem solving is given a very high profile and most lessons contain an element of pupils using their mathematical skills to solve a problem using mathematics in real situations. Pupils have very good opportunities to use, consolidate and extend their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, in design and technology Year 7 pupils used their knowledge of nets and measurement to help them achieve a high level of accuracy when designing hats. Pupils use their skills in data handling to record the patterns of climate and weather around the world. The use of information and communication technology to help pupils' learning is very good. In one lesson, pupils in Year 6 used a laptop computer and projector to improve their skills in estimating and measuring angles. As a result, pupils' progress accelerated and good gains were made in a short time.
69. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes towards the subject are good. Most pupils work for extended lengths of time, enjoying the challenge of difficult tasks and responding with an eagerness and enthusiasm to the complexities of mathematics. However, the pupils presentation of their work is not always as good as it should be and there is a lack of rigour in teachers' expectations of how pupils can improve the way they set out their work. Such approaches have a very positive effect on the progress and standards pupils achieve. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support from teachers and support staff. This support enables them to take a full part in mathematics lessons and to make good progress.
70. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and often very good. Over 80 per cent of the teaching seen was good or better and good teaching was seen in each year group. Very good teaching was a regular feature of lessons in the upper school and this has a positive effect on the standards pupils achieve at the end of Years 6 and 7. The teachers are implementing the National Numeracy Strategy with rigour and enthusiasm and believe the structure and precise learning which the strategy

affords has a very positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning. They use a variety of methods to teach mathematical skills, including very effective whole class mental sessions and fast moving question and answer sessions, which assess the pupils' understanding and extend their thinking. This is used very effectively in booster classes in Year 6 to improve the confidence of less secure learners. Lessons have a good pace and challenge pupils to complete difficult tasks in good time and to a high standard. Relationships are good and encourage pupils to 'have a go' and learn that to be wrong is an acceptable and important part of learning. This is particularly successful in helping girls become more confident mathematicians. The best lessons leave pupils enthusiastic about mathematics and excited about what the next lesson will bring.

71. The work is well planned to take account of pupils' different levels of attainment. Assessments are built into the planned work and annual targets are set for pupils. However, the school does not use its good assessment system to level pupils' work and to track progress sufficiently to identify whether pupils are making the progress expected of them. The marking of pupils work is variable and does not always include sufficient detail to help pupils identify what they need to do to improve their work even further and to reach higher levels.
72. Management of the subject is very good. The subject leader has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and pupils' achievements and has identified appropriate areas for development. Careful attention is given to analysing statutory test results to identify areas that need to be improved to raise standards further. For example, a focus on raising the attainment of girls through adopting different teaching styles is having a positive effect on the confidence and achievement of girls. There are very good opportunities for the monitoring of teaching and learning across the school. Aspects of mathematics are regularly discussed at staff meetings so that all teachers have a good understanding of the subject. The lesson planning is consistent throughout the school and ensures that there is appropriate progression from year to year and consistency between the parallel classes. The ability grouping for Year 6 enables teachers to match the work closely to the needs of the pupils. The specialist teaching which occurs in Years 5, 6 and 7 is very effective in developing teacher expertise and this has a positive effect on the standards pupils achieve. The curriculum enables all pupils to have equal access to the subject. It is effectively resourced and allocated an appropriate amount of time. The content of the work meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.

SCIENCE

73. Standards have improved since the previous inspection in Year 6; they remain above average. The present standards are likely to be above average at the end of the year as pupils continue to make very good progress. Standards in Year 7 are well above those expected of pupils of that age. The most recent national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 showed attainment to be well above average. The high standards in Year 7 are due to very good teaching in that year group and the very good attitudes of highly motivated pupils. The climate for learning, and the planning and organisation of lessons, are very good. Pupils of all abilities are more readily and consistently challenged now in investigative work and, since the previous inspection, opportunities to make decisions independently or collaboratively have increased. Resources for teaching and learning are now very good, although at times there can be limitations on their use due to the small size of temporary classrooms and limited access to the science room. The school has introduced new curriculum guidance and this has improved the use of information and communication technology in science. Increased staff confidence and knowledge, and much better information and communication technology resources, have contributed to the much improved use and effectiveness of computers in the subject. All pupils, including those with English as an additional language or those who have special educational needs, achieve very well, because they are well supported and fully integrated in practical activities.
74. Younger pupils in Year 4 demonstrate that their knowledge and understanding of how electrical circuits work is well developed by selecting from a range of materials to conduct electricity, devise a switch to turn light bulbs on and off and provide a suitable choice of insulator. They are able to analyse and adapt their circuits for efficiency. Similarly, Year 5 pupils who have previously planned and carried out an experiment into investigating the hardness of materials, know they will draw conclusions and begin to ask questions and share opinions about why things happen. They understand the importance of fair testing. Pupils' skills of scientific enquiry are well developed because the teachers encourage a range of research methods and different ways of recording and explaining outcomes confidently, articulately and successfully.

75. Older pupils are able to demonstrate an improving knowledge and understanding of the subject. They are able to draw upon previous learning to describe key features in experiments carried out in Year 6, where pupils learn the importance of gathering accurate evidence and that to produce accurate results they need to follow the principles of fair testing. They begin to recognise the value of repeated measurements to provide data, which can then be used with more confidence scientifically. Pupils can transfer results to draw a line graph using both good scientific understanding and good mathematical skills. Highly motivated Year 7 pupils continue to benefit from opportunities to work in a well-resourced environment where they are actively encouraged to exercise a purposeful degree of choice and ownership, which is clearly beneficial to developing their scientific thinking. They show very good speaking and listening skills and explain their findings to others in class. In turn, they approach the recording of their findings in ordered and organised ways, linking their conclusions to their hypothesis. Throughout the school, pupils' understanding develops very well as a result of careful questioning by teachers and the provision of activities that challenge and extend their knowledge. Although information and communication technology was not extensively used in lessons seen, there is evidence from the analysis of pupils' work and from discussion with staff that information and communication technology supports teaching and learning well. For example, pupils experience data logging and can monitor and control the temperature in different parts of the school. In Year 7 pupils search a website to enhance their study of solutions. In Year 6, the teacher uses technology in the form of a projector and laptop to focus the pupils' understanding of collecting and analysing results, and transferring the data to a line graph.
76. The quality of teaching is good overall. Where the teaching is good or better, teachers have very good subject knowledge and clear learning objectives, which they share so that pupils know what they are to learn by the end of the lesson. They are aware of the teachers' high expectations. Lessons are well resourced and pupils are grouped to maximise learning as they cooperate very well with other members of their group. Generally, teachers use time in lessons to very good effect, intervening as appropriate whilst providing pupils with opportunities to share their own ideas and predictions and ask a good range of questions to reinforce and further challenge the pupils' scientific thinking. Teachers place a strong emphasis on the use of appropriate scientific vocabulary. Marking is inconsistent but with some good practice, that challenges pupils' thinking and guides them to the next stage of their learning. Pupils of all abilities are supported and fully integrated into the activities of the very well structured and very well managed lessons.
77. Although assessment is in place in each year group at the end of each study unit, the school does not yet have a consistent and formal arrangement which will serve to inform, guide and measure pupils' attainment and progress from Year 4 to Year 7. Such a system would enable the school accurately to monitor progress through the National Curriculum levels and to set realistically challenging targets for individuals or respective groups of pupils. The use of day-to-day assessment to inform planning is good.
78. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and committed to further improving standards. The school benefits from the close working relationship with its neighbouring schools and they are working towards a common planning format to ensure continuity and progression. The co-ordinator has identified the advantage of establishing a portfolio of pupils' work, for which teachers will agree National Curriculum levels. Presently, there is no homework policy, although pupils engage in research and complete written work at home.

ART AND DESIGN

79. Standards are above those expected in Year 6 and by the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 7. These good standards have been maintained since the last inspection and they represent a good level of achievement in difficult circumstances as most pupils are housed in temporary classrooms, which make practical activities difficult due to the lack of space and, in some rooms, of water. Throughout the school, pupils have good opportunities to experiment with different media and materials, and they are taught a range of skills. In addition, they know about the lives and styles of many well-known artists.
80. In Year 4, pupils experiment with drawing pencils of different grades of softness, and learn to create depth to a drawing through shading; higher attaining pupils produce some particularly effective work. They have created some imaginative Celtic style designs for jewellery and patterns in the style of Australian aborigines. Pupils have collaborated to make very effective collages to illustrate the story of the Iron Man. In Year 5, pupils produce good colour washes as backgrounds to silhouettes of shapes and pictures. They learn about Kandinsky and produce good work in his style using appropriate

computer software. In their sketchbooks, pupils in Year 6 create very good patterns in the style of William Morris. Earlier work shows good versions of portraits in the style of Tudor miniatures, as part of a history topic. In one very good lesson, pupils used a wide range of materials to create a frame for their pictures and they show a very good understanding of the richness of the court dress worn in the Tudor period.

81. In Year 6, pictures in the pointillist style give a very good idea of the colours of autumnal trees. Pupils use charcoal to create pictures of Victorian scenes. Following a topic on pop-art, pupils create very good collages and pictures in the style of Roy Lichtenstein, following earlier work about Warhol and Rauschenberg. They make very good use of the available resources to create very effective works, and they appreciate the techniques and motivations of these artists. In Year 7, pupils study the colours used by Lowry, and reproduce them as an exercise in colour mixing. Higher attainers can produce pictures of tables in the style of Van Gogh that cleverly capture the distorted space and perspective of the originals. In the lessons observed during the inspection, pupils worked hard to produce very imaginative and effective representations of their years in the school. They demonstrated many of the skills they have learned over time to a good level.
82. Throughout the school, pupils have very good opportunities to use clay to create a range of imaginative and practical objects. They are supported in their work and very well taught the basic skills by an instructor who has very good personal expertise, who the pupils clearly respect and with whom they enjoy working. In Year 4, they learn correct terminology and a range of techniques, such as how to join clay. They produce good models, decorative wall plaques and door numbers. Year 5 pupils make very good decorative dishes in the shape of flowers with more than one row of petals. In Year 6, pupils make imaginative heads while in Year 7 they have created some complex clay castles.
83. The pupils' attitudes towards their work are very good. They work sensibly and with real concentration, especially where the accommodation makes it difficult for them. They show pride in their work and a growing understanding of how art can carry meaning beyond the literal. For example, in Year 7 more than one pupil was able to explain how their designs represented their time in the school.
84. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and show awareness of a range of different periods and styles of art and design. They provide pupils with challenging tasks designed to enable them to extend their skills and resulting in very good learning being made by Year 7. Teachers' question well, especially to get pupils to self evaluate their work, and improve and alter it as they proceed. Growing use is made of information and communication technology through computer art software and the use of digital cameras. The use of background music during practical sessions often helps create a calm working atmosphere, but this is not yet fully developed and the choice of music is not always appropriate.
85. The subject co-ordinators have worked hard to maintain the standards found at the last inspection. They support teachers well in planning their work. There is good liaison and sharing of resources with the high school. Pupils are provided with very good sketchbooks but these are not used as fully as they might be to support their experimentation with different techniques and media, or to record or collect information about art and artists they like. Very good use is made of visits to museums and art galleries, and the school has a close link to a local gallery that they use regularly for visits. There is little evidence of much work based on other cultures, apart from historical ones, or of opportunities for printing.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

86. Only four lessons could be observed in the week of inspection, and judgements are also based on work in books and on display and from teaching plans. By the time children are eleven, standards are good and this level of attainment is maintained in Year 7. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be satisfactory overall. The strong subject expertise of the curriculum leader has led to the subject's high profile, and this, together with good planning, ensures that pupils combine their designing and making skills to complete a wide range of projects, using different materials, components, ingredients and techniques. Pupils are encouraged to use appropriate vocabulary to discuss and evaluate their work. They work conscientiously to measure, mark, cut and join accurately, building structures, products and packaging to a design specification. Initial work is characterised by a review of commercially available products. Pupils are encouraged to understand the essential elements, the way structures are assembled and the function of packaging, including engaging the interest of prospective customers. Pupils are also encouraged to raise questions about materials,

how structures are joined together, and details of appearance and style. Those with special educational needs achieve good standards where the practical and visual elements of the subject and the collaborative working practices often allow them to attain levels of achievement and success not always as evident in other areas of the curriculum.

87. Standards are very good overall and progress is good. By the time they are eleven, pupils demonstrate the importance of marketing a product as they design a package for crisps. For this work, they carry out research to test the market using questionnaire data transferred to graphs and spreadsheets to identify the products which will sell best. In Year 6, pupils also looked at the workings of a torch to prepare for designing their own torch, to include bulbs and reflectors, and drawing on their scientific knowledge of circuits and simple bulb and switch mechanisms. Work in books includes closely observed diagrams of bulbs and reflectors and circuits. In Year 7, pupils design a folding chair to meet specific design criteria. They research similar products to identify, understand and assemble the complex structure before attempting a prototype to demonstrate their technical knowledge and skills.
88. Pupils make good progress from the generally satisfactory standard achieved in Year 4. Cross-curricular links allow pupils to draw on and consolidate a wide range of skills from other subjects. For example, in graphics work in Year 6, pupils demonstrate very good measuring and drawing skills in joining points accurately to produce a high quality design. In Year 4, for example, they design labels for the tins in which their product will be sold. They understand that their baked potato filling will be in competition with other such products. They work hard to achieve an attractive logo and graphics that will promote their product above others on a supermarket shelf. They understand their potential customers' needs and give details on the package to encourage them to buy. In Year 5, pupils design a shoe suitable for a specific purpose and, in food technology, a pizza. They are supported in this task by visits to a shoe factory and a pizza restaurant. Work in books and in lessons demonstrates a high level of self-evaluation. Pupils are encouraged to review the work they have done and speculate how it might be improved in future projects.
89. The quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers plan lessons well to ensure that the full range of different processes is covered and pupils have opportunities to use a range of tools. The school has a curriculum plan which identifies a specific design-and-make project each term in Years 4, 5 and 6, and two per term in Year 7. This ensures that pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding progressively without missing out any essential elements, and with due regard to opportunities from other subjects. From work in books and lessons observed, teachers' subject knowledge is well demonstrated in the choice of activities and the opportunities to review, disassemble, and compare products before making their own to an informed design specification. There is a good emphasis on pupils planning their own work after considering products already in the market place. In an excellent Year 7 lesson, pupils worked hard to generate ideas before making a hat for a specific purpose. They have looked at a range of hats and produced a prototype, with due attention to the way hats fit together and the quality of the finish. This was also an important element in a folding-chair product, where they made sure that the pieces of wood were treated, joints were concealed, and fabric, where used, was the final attachment.
90. Pupils' attitudes are very positive. They work hard, and make good use of their previous learning, technical knowledge and evaluation skills in their newly identified topics. They talk confidently about what they are making and for whom. Subject leadership is very good. Other teachers benefit from the co-ordinator's expertise and the good range of resources available. The food technology room allows this element of the subject to be taught outside the rather small classrooms, some of which are without water.

GEOGRAPHY

91. In Year 6 and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 7, standards are in line with those expected. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Year 4 pupils explore the features of an Australian island and begin to develop appropriate skills for comparing and contrasting two areas. Older pupils discuss the arguments for additional building in the local area, showing some insight into the problems it would cause. Year 6 pupils study France and use geographical and mathematical skills to work out distances between towns and villages. They know how to calculate actual distances using the map's scale, and can confidently read a map, recognising the difference between a road map and a tourist map. Year 7 pupils learn about the weather, accurately recording rainfall and temperature in India and Norwich in graph form; they are amazed at how much rain falls during the monsoon months especially when they see how little Norwich has by comparison. In order to show their understanding of

what causes the monsoons and their effects, pupils design the front page of newspaper telling the story of the monsoons.

92. Progress across the school is satisfactory as pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of geographical enquiry. The majority of pupils enjoy geography and, where the challenge is appropriate, they remain focused on the task. They collaborate well to produce a newspaper article about monsoons, or thoughts about whether a local building development should go ahead. They respond with enthusiasm to teachers' questions and listen carefully to their peers. Pupils are confident to share their thoughts and opinions, knowing their views will be respected by their peers and teachers.
93. Overall, teaching is good but the quality varies considerably across the school. Where lessons are very good or good, and teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic, pupils are developing their geographical skills and are well motivated to achieve. These teachers use questioning effectively to explore geographical skills and to extend pupils' knowledge. Suitably challenging tasks are set and children remain well focused. Lessons are well planned and the objectives clear. However, in less successful lessons, the objectives are not adhered to and pupils do not gain any further understanding of the area of study. The presentation of pupils' work is varied.
94. The co-ordinator is relatively new to the role but since taking it on has revised the schemes, audited the resources and checked the planning. The subject is adequately resourced except when more than one class has a lesson at the same time, when resources are limited. An example was seen in Year 7 where two classes were designing the front page of a newspaper about the effects of monsoons. There were clearly insufficient resources to go round, particularly photographs to help the pupils visualise what the effects of a monsoon would be. A range of first hand experiences is organised for the pupils: a river study, beach study and a study of the local environment. All these help to enhance the pupils' understanding of geography.

HISTORY

95. Due to the school's timetabling arrangements and the timing of the inspection, only a limited number of lessons were seen. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils.
96. Standards have improved since the last inspection. The majority of pupils make good progress and in Years 6 and 7 achieve standards that are above those expected for their ages.
97. The curriculum is imaginative and well planned to motivate pupils' interest in people and events of the past. A considerable strength of the teaching and learning is the emphasis placed on developing pupils' interest and curiosity of past life through studying a wide range of sources and developing their understanding that there are different views and opinions of what happened. As they move through the school, pupils become increasingly skilled 'historians' and use a range of artefacts, photographs, the Internet and books to gain knowledge and understanding of past times. Year 4 pupils examine how the inventions of Celtic tools improved the quality of life for ordinary people. Year 5 pupils show a very good understanding of the impact of Henry VIII's desire for a son and the implications for religion and politics. They examine the evidence and reach informed opinions on the rights and wrongs of Henry's actions discovering that there are differing views as to his character and actions. Year 6 pupils use a wide range of historical sources such as the Internet, CD ROMS, archaeological sites, museums texts and graveyards to research Victorian England. By Year 7, pupils have a very good understanding of how people and events in the past can have a radical impact on the way people live as they study the life and death of Thomas a' Beckett and what life was like for communities during the Black Death. Pupils study the Battle of Hastings and can say why the Normans were successful.
98. Through their study of a wide range of topics including the Romans, Vikings, medieval England, Tudors and Victorians, the pupils gain a good range of factual knowledge. Imaginative teaching encourages pupils to get under the skin of characters from the past and to imagine what life was like for an Anglo Saxon peasant, a Roman soldier or a child in Victorian England. Drama and visits are particularly effective in deepening pupils' appreciation of the past and its impact on the present.
99. Pupils' understanding of chronology is very well planned and pupils are expected systematically to increase their understanding of dates and sequences as they move through the school. Older pupils in

Year 7 confidently order the Egyptians, Romans, Tudors and Victorians and can name the different Kings and Queens and characters from different periods of history.

100. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen and two out of three lessons observed were very good; the sample is too small to give a judgement about teaching overall. Teachers use effective strategies for managing lessons and organising pupils and resources. Staff show considerable enthusiasm for the subject and this is conveyed to the pupils in the way activities, visitors and visits are well planned to motivate pupils to want to learn more about the past. For example, a 'Roman Centurion' in full regalia and sporting a number of artefacts from the Roman era, had recently visited Year 4 to kindle pupils' interest in the Roman conquest. Very effective teaching led pupils to consider what evidence they might wish to leave future generations to tell them about life in the 21st century. Teachers in Year 5 created a 'class dig' and pupils became 'archaeologists' discovering Ancient Greek urns, coins and jewellery. Pupils exhibited considerable independence and enthusiasm as they used specialist tools to unearth their finds. They discussed with each other the authenticity of the artefacts as they carefully brushed away mud and soil. Teachers encourage pupils to record their findings in a variety of different ways including posters, accounts, stories, and letters. Links with other subjects are very well planned and add meaning and context to pupils' learning. Dance, music, art and drama are all used very effectively to add meaning and context to the learning. An example of this is the way pupils scripted, choreographed, set and performed their own drama prompted by the poetry of William Blake.
101. The subject is very well led by an enthusiastic and skilled coordinator and makes an important contribution to the aims of the school. The schemes in place effectively ensure there is progress and continuity across the school and provides teachers with a very good structure for teaching and learning. Resources are good. Visits to museums, Roman sites, the local cathedral and Victorian schools are well planned and co-ordinated to enrich pupils' learning. The school follows national guidelines for assessing pupils' work and the coordinator collects samples of work to ensure that teaching is well matched to pupils' levels of attainment. A planned programme of lesson observations has focused on different aspects of the teaching and has been effective in raising the quality of the teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

102. Standards are above average overall and have made very good improvement since the last inspection when they were below those expected. The school has increased the number and range of opportunities to involve pupils in the subject and this has resulted in improved skills. This is a reflection of the effort and commitment made by the school to improve and raise standards. Many pupils use information and communication technology confidently and competently. Overall, pupils at the time of leaving the school in Year 7 achieve very well and pupils throughout the school demonstrate a very good attitude to the subject. Those pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because they are supported very well in lessons. They often work with a partner so that they can help each other gain in confidence and competence. There is also good use of specialised software to support pupils with special needs.
103. In Years 6 and 7, standards are above those expected for the pupils' age. Pupils are highly motivated to use their improving skills as they are able to select from a variety of resources to support learning in other subjects such as mathematics, science, art and design, music, geography and history. They enjoy and recognise the advantages of using modern computer technology, where they are able to produce an interesting and original range of quality presentations. Pupils bring experiences of information and communication technology from outside school and willingly share them with other class members. They are confident users of computers and demonstrate very good basic skills.
104. Pupils in Year 4 use digital cameras to take photographs, which they insert on the page of the brochure they are creating for First School pupils. They alter the size and location of the picture as they merge it with the text. Older pupils in Year 5 know how to transfer data to create a pie chart. They interpret the graph in order to make comparisons and choose their own summary statements. Year 6 pupils enjoy manipulating images as they change colour and shades to create a picture in the style of Andy Warhol. They learn to use painting tools to change the effect of a picture. Pupils create their own databases. They are able to change data in a spreadsheet and learn that spreadsheets can be of greater value and use in everyday life wherever numbers need to be processed accurately. In work linked to science and mathematics, pupils are able to interpret data to produce a line graph showing how the length of an elastic band is affected by differing weights.

105. Year 7 pupils use the Internet confidently as they search and download information about sport, famous people and the answers to Internet trail questions. They are able to control and monitor temperatures around the school. In one excellent lesson, pupils used presentation software to create images and sound onto a page. They planned the presentation for Year 4 pupils, based upon their previous evaluation of a multi-media page for good characteristics regarding an intended audience.
106. The overall quality of teaching is very good. In the lessons observed, teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and an understanding of the pupils' needs. In other subjects, staff members demonstrate a willingness to embrace information and communication technology in their teaching. Where the teaching is good or better, pupils have the opportunities to learn from each other. Time and resources are used effectively. Where the teaching is very good in Year 4, pupils appreciate the value of using information and communication technology for accuracy and efficiency, as they change and re-draft their work with speed and ease. In the one Year 7 lesson, pupils made excellent progress due to the high expectations and challenging task, and their attitudes to learning were excellent. Learning objectives were very clear. The pupils responded to learning opportunities provided by the teacher, as they became immersed in the task, working well together, negotiating and managing the project with growing knowledge and skill. Teachers manage their pupils well.
107. Each class is timetabled for at least one session in the information and communication technology suite each week, designated for the direct teaching of information and communication technology skills. The information and communication technology suite is a very good facility and is very well used, although the lack of effective ventilation makes the room unpleasant to work in at times. Teachers maximise opportunities for pupils effectively to use the available number of computers and space by planning, organising and managing their activities very well. Planning meets the full range of activities in the National Curriculum programme of study.
108. The subject is very well led by a very experienced, enthusiastic and knowledgeable coordinator, who provides very good support for the staff. The co-ordinator informally monitors the subject's performance and development well. He has provided facilities, resources and support, which encourage staff confidence and expertise to grow. The school has an excellent website which provides a wide range of very useful and relevant information for parents and other interested parties. It is updated regularly with pupils' work and information, and is well used by parents who can, for example, receive reports, know important dates and events well in advance and can receive school newsletters. The school intends to develop opportunities for pupils to use the website as a learning tool. The detailed scheme of work meets the pupils' needs and incorporates national guidance for the subject. Assessment takes place at the end of each study unit. The school is establishing good working relationships with partner schools. The school enjoys a good reputation with the local education authority for its forward thinking in information and communication technology through, for example, the introduction and developing use of the digital video camera. The co-ordinator recognises the need to extend the computer network in order to maintain a suitable number of computers and laptops to meet the demands of an increasing number of pupils on roll. Similarly, it is planned to add to the already very good range of software resources to provide further opportunities for information and communication technology to support teaching and learning in all other subjects.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

109. The teaching of French is now well established throughout Year 6 and Year 7. Standards are above those normally expected in Year 7 and this has been maintained from the last inspection. The school has decided to teach the language in Year 6, although it is not required to do so, as well as in Year 7. This is clearly of benefit to the pupils and means they make good progress building on the early start to the subject.
110. In Year 6, pupils develop a good basic vocabulary and can recognise, for example, the words for colours and numbers. They know the names of some common pets. At the start of the year, they learn basic greetings and by half way through the year they know the days of the week, linking these to school events. They know the months of the year. Year 7 pupils can speak and answer questions in sentences. For example, they can say where they live. During one good lesson, they learn ways to describe people's characteristics with a good, developing level of vocabulary. They are confident when naming body parts correctly. Year 7 written work builds on the word work in Year 6 to the writing of longer sentences. In a good link with numeracy, pupils complete a graph on eye colour in French.

111. The teaching is good, overall, especially in Year 7, although more variable in Year 6 depending on the teachers' subject expertise. In most lessons, it builds effectively on prior attainment and work. The best questioning in oral work develops pupils' skills in answering in different ways. For example, instead of just recognising a colour, they are asked to hold up one of two colours, demonstrating a more detailed knowledge of the vocabulary. However, the teaching does not always fully involve sufficient of the class in oral responses. At times, teachers do not insist on sufficient attention when others are speaking. In Year 7, good use of teacher expertise is made and this has a positive impact on the standards achieved.
112. The planning is based appropriately on the National Curriculum and this is delivered through a good commercial scheme and some effective specialist teaching in Year 7. There is also effective liaison with the high school to ensure the Year 7 curriculum is appropriately linked to that in Year 8. The teachers of the Year 6 pupils base a lot of their teaching around cultural aspects of France. Computers are used to research facts about France on the Internet. A very good lunchtime club for Year 4 pupils introduces the language to those interested through a range of games and activities. This also gives older pupils, who help with the club, opportunities to practise their skills.

MUSIC

113. In Year 6 and by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 7, standards are above those expected. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were in line with those expected. Year 4 pupils explore tuned and untuned percussion as they devise a piece of music in a similar style to Peter and the Wolf. Instruments are used to portray different animals such as birds, buffalo, cheetahs and gorillas. The sounds the pupils compose for each animal are very effective. For example, they use glockenspiels, triangles and a flute to represent the birds, drums and cymbals are used to represent the cheetahs and as pupils play this part the tempo increases as does the loudness so that it is easy to imagine the cheetahs chasing its prey and the cymbal clash as it pounces. Practical music making is experienced across the year groups. Year 5 pupils are learning songs from a short play "Jack and the Bean Stalk" and adding relevant accompaniments to the songs. Although not yet complete, the initial effects are good.
114. Year 6 pupils were exploring cyclic patterns in an Asian style. They had success in repeating the cycles but found the "off-beat" rhythms a little confusing and difficult. However, the overall sound each group produced was effective and showed a developing understanding of Gamelan music. The oldest pupils were exploring opera. They had listened to parts of Carmen, in particular the Prelude and were asked to compose their own prelude, following a similar musical pattern relating it to their own story. In addition, they had to make up a conversation in the style of an opera conversation to introduce their storyline. The results were very good and most of the pupils' preludes and conversations clearly and effectively portrayed their stories. All pupils put a great deal of effort into this activity and were rewarded with some success. Pupils are beginning to use graphic scores and some are using standard notation. The singing in the lower school, Years 4 and 5 was good. The pupils made a pleasant sound; words were clear and, apart from the higher pitched notes, in tune. During a singing assembly, pupils were able to sustain a two part round. Little singing was heard in the upper school, except on a tape. Year 6 pupils made up interesting and effective Victorian street cries, a link with their history topic. Across the school pupils make good progress as they develop relevant skills that help them understand musical elements and appreciate a range of music.
115. Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy working together, sharing ideas as they compose their music. All participate and are keen to respond to teachers' questions. They listen carefully to each other's efforts and have learnt to be critical in a positive manner, praising or giving helpful suggestions for improvement.
116. The quality of teaching overall is good, with some excellent teaching in Year 7. Where teachers are interested, enthusiastic and provide a range of practical experiences, pupils are motivated and achieve well. Questioning is used effectively to extend or reinforce pupils' knowledge. Opportunities are given for pupils to appraise the work of their peers. As relationships are very good, pupils are confident to perform their compositions for their peers. Lessons are well planned. Pupils are given a free choice of instruments when they are composing. Occasionally opportunities are missed to develop appropriate vocabulary.
117. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, a competent pianist and has worked hard since taking up the post to raise the profile of music. Standards have risen because of her efforts and subject knowledge. The number of pupils enjoying instrumental tuition or participating in extra-curricular activities has also risen.

Lessons are available for woodwind, brass, strings, guitars and keyboard. The choir meets regularly and sings carols at Christmas in the cathedral and for old people within the community. Various productions take place throughout the year. Visitors come to school and perform a range of other styles of music. This enhances the pupils' understanding of music and develops their cultural awareness.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

118. Standards have improved since the last inspection and are now above those expected in Year 6 and Year 7. Activities observed during the inspection included dance, games, athletics and fitness work. In addition, pupils swim regularly and achieve the expected level by the time they leave the school. Standards are good for all pupils, and many of those with special educational needs are able to succeed at physical activities.
119. The planning shows that the full National Curriculum is covered appropriately. In addition, the provision of extra-curricular activities is excellent, as is the interest shown by pupils in taking part in clubs and teams. There are clubs for a range of sports such as dance, gymnastics, girls' and boys' football, netball, cricket and cross country. Teams also take part in matches or tournaments in athletics and swimming. Hockey has recently been taught by coaches from a local club. The pupils' enthusiasm for the subject is matched by that of a number of the staff and the headteacher, who all have an interest and belief in the importance of exercise and team sports for moral and social as well as physical reasons.
120. During the inspection, Year 4 pupils were learning traditional country dances. They demonstrated a good level of skill in following the music, working in pairs and larger groups to perform dances such as the Virginia Reel. They know moves such as skipping, galloping and using cross-hand holds. During the lessons, they practise and improve on these skills and are able to dance back-to-back and promenade. In one excellent lesson, pupils learned a new dance from scratch to performance level, and this is an indication of the very good progress evident. Year 5 pupils have good skills in modern dance, devising a range of movements to music and covering themes such as the sea, cats and circuses.
121. In Year 6, pupils show a satisfactory level of ability in pacing their running between hurdles and in passing a baton in a relay race. Others take part in throwing and jumping activities. In hall lessons, pupils take part in a range of activities designed to improve their fitness and teach them about the effect of exercise on their bodies. They are able to take their pulse before taking part in the activities, and again at the end, thus illustrating how it speeds up. Year 7 pupils show good netball skills, with good passing, catching and positional sense. They demonstrate basic compass skills in tracking a route around the field.
122. A feature of many of the lessons, especially the Year 4 dance lessons, was the evident enjoyment shown by the pupils when taking part in activities. Groups of pupils work well together and this supports their learning. In Year 5 dance, and in Year 7 orienteering activities, they co-operate well and work together to achieve the expected objective. Behaviour in the lessons is mostly good, although in a few lessons, teachers allow excessive noise from pupils.
123. The quality of teaching is good, overall. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding is good and has improved since the last inspection. This is illustrated by the warm up and cool down sessions, and the way teachers ensure pupils have a good understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies. Teachers make good and appropriate use of video to record pupils' work and to provide them with good opportunities to evaluate their own performance. A small number of parents showed some concern about this and the school needs to ensure that parents are aware of the purpose of this practice.
124. The subject coordinator has very good subject knowledge and expertise. She is enthusiastic and has a good understanding of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. She has improved the school's planning to ensure that the pupils' learning builds appropriately on their previous experiences. She has monitored teaching and learning in each year group and this has helped develop the teachers' enthusiasm and expertise to its present levels. The monitoring of swimming standards has resulted in a change to the provision to ensure they are raised.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

125. In Year 6 and Year 7, standards are above those expected when compared with the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have improved since the last inspection. The Year 4 pupils know about the Bible and its importance to Christians. They have thought about their favourite place and how the church is a special place for Christians. The Creation story, as told by Christians, Muslims and Hindus, has been compared and pupils can highlight the differences. However, too much work is recorded on prepared worksheets in this year group. In Year 5, a similar theme is looked at: the Creation story. These pupils appreciate that the Torah is a special book for the Jews and what it contains. They are aware that Moses was an important person and that the Seder meal is a celebration of the Passover. Again, pupils' own recording is limited. Work scrutiny of Year 6 books shows how pupils have approached questions such as "Why does God allow suffering?" their view of heaven and special people. Their feelings are expressed through some very thoughtful writing. They are beginning to appreciate the importance of religion and how it affects the lives of those who follow it. Year 6 pupils are encouraged to write at some length and this helps to develop their literacy skills. During this year, the topic focuses on the impact and implications of religion to its followers. Year 7 pupils develop this theme further, looking specifically at how Christianity affects the lives of those who follow it. Further links with literacy are evident as pupils write a modern version of The Good Samaritan as a play script. When asked to choose their hero one pupil talks about Martin Luther King.
126. Pupils make good progress, particularly in Years 6 and 7, as they begin to understand the importance of religion to its followers and the impact it has on their lives. Pupils enjoy learning and respond well to teachers' questions. Because of very good relationships pupils are prepared to discuss very sensitive issues and to share their thoughts, knowing they will be valued and respected. Pupils are mainly well behaved and listen carefully. Occasionally, where tasks are insufficiently challenging, pupils lose concentration.
127. Although few lessons were observed during the inspection, the overall quality of the teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection. In the best lessons, teachers discuss sensitive issues with great care, giving the pupils the confidence to share their thoughts and feelings. Lessons are well planned with appropriate objectives. Teachers use questioning effectively to extend or reinforce pupils' knowledge. Where lessons are satisfactory, pupils have limited opportunities to express what they know or to think about how others might have felt. When talking about Palm Sunday, pupils are asked in one class about how the crowd might have felt when they saw Jesus. In the satisfactory lesson, the question was not asked. Much lesson time is spent on discussing relevant topics but often pupils do not record the outcome so there is insufficient recording to support and consolidate the oral work. This is an area for further development.
128. The co-ordinator is well qualified and enthusiastic but has only recently been appointed to the role and has had little time to develop it. However, her first priority was to amend the scheme as there were examples of repeating themes in different year groups. Presently the scheme is based on the locally agreed syllabus, which is due to be updated in the near future. There is a range of artefacts that pupils use effectively as they study different religions. The local vicar is a regular visitor, leading assembly and answering pupils' questions. The pupils visit the church as a place a worship and school services are occasionally held there, such as Harvest, Christingle, Easter and the Year 7 leavers' service. There is limited opportunity for pupils to visit other places of worship or to meet people of other faiths. This is an area for exploration and development.