

INSPECTION REPORT

OLD STRATFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Old Stratford, Nr Milton Keynes

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121892

Headteacher: Dr S C Goodall

Reporting inspector: Eileen Chadwick
19115

Dates of inspection: 9 – 12 June 2003

Inspection number: 248299

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11 Years
Gender of pupils:	Dr S C Goodall
School address:	Willow Grove Old Stratford Milton Keynes
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Holton
Date of previous inspection:	19 January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19115	Eileen Chadwick	Registered inspector	Design and technology Music Science Educational inclusion Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
19743	Ann Taylor	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2866	Bob Battey	Team inspector	Art and design English Information and communication technology Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?
8534	David Price	Team inspector	Geography History Mathematics Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an average sized primary school, mainly serving the local community and also attracting pupils from further afield. There are 201 pupils, including the 30 full time pupils in Reception, and there are slightly more girls than boys. There is an average proportion, 32 pupils, with special educational needs although the proportion with statements of need, two pupils, is below average. Pupils' difficulties are mainly related to literacy or behavioural difficulties. Few pupils are from ethnic minorities and all pupils are fluent in English. An average proportion of pupils, at 19 per cent, is entitled to free school meals, although this is below average in Reception and Year 1. The overall take up of free school meals is very low. Pupils' overall attainment on entry is average when that of late entrants is included. Yet, on entry to Reception, children's attainment on entry is above average, overall. Since the previous inspection, the school has grown by a third in size. This has led to high rates of pupils entering later than Reception and, in the current Year 6, one third entered directly into the juniors. Pupils' mobility is now low. Since the previous inspection, the school has gained several national awards for curriculum development, including an Arts Mark Gold award for its provision in the performing arts.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Old Stratford Primary School is a good school with areas of excellence. Most pupils achieve very well because of much good and very good teaching. This results in well above average standards in English and mathematics and very high standards in the performing arts, particularly music, by the time pupils reach the age of eleven. The headteacher has a very clear vision for improving the school and this has resulted in some excellent curriculum initiatives in music, ICT, sport and drama for all pupils. However, the quality of teaching for children in Reception is unsatisfactory and, as a result, these children make unsatisfactory progress. Overall, the school is effective and it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards which are well above average in English, mathematics and history, through good teaching in Years 1 and 2 and very good teaching in Years 3 to 6.
- There are excellent opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to develop their musical talents and this leads to excellent standards in music by Year 6.
- The school offers a broad and rich curriculum in Years 1 to 6 with exceptional opportunities for junior pupils to take part in after school clubs. As a result, pupils develop a broad range of interests and talents, including in drama, sport, music and art.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is very good and this leads to pupils' very good attitudes to work, their very good behaviour and a happy environment where learning can flourish.
- The innovative leadership of the headteacher and good management systems ensure the school has the vision and the systems in place for continued improvement.
- The very good links with the community and with the local secondary school greatly enhance pupils' learning and their ease of transfer to secondary school.

What could be improved

- The unsatisfactory progress made by children in Reception because of weak teaching.
- The consistency of the provision for gifted and talented pupils.
- The development of some aspects of pupils' independent enquiry skills in science.
- The development of co-ordinators' monitoring roles in some subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998. Since the previous inspection standards have improved well by Year 6 in English, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and many other subjects. There have been excellent improvements in music. Standards in Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and in science are similar to those found at the previous inspection. The key issues for action from that inspection have been very well addressed for ICT, music and for improving the use of the library. In Reception, there have been improvements in the accommodation but the provision and the quality of teaching for children has further declined. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved well since the previous inspection and this has led to the school maintaining high standards by Year 6, despite the high number entering late with special educational needs in recent years. Overall, improvement has been good and the school's capacity to improve in the future is very good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	A	B	B
Mathematics	A*	A	B	B
Science	A	A	A	A

Key	
Very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The results of last year's end of Year 6 national tests were above average in English and mathematics and well above average for science compared with all schools as well as similar schools. These standards were lower than the consistently high standards reached previously, especially in 2000 in mathematics when standards were in the top five per cent compared with all schools. In 2002, nearly a half of the Year 6 pupils were later entrants to the school and, amongst these there were a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. This had an adverse impact on overall standards. The rate of improvement over the last three years has been below the national trend. The inspection findings show an improvement. There are fewer late entrants with special educational needs in the current Year 6 than in 2002. Pupils in Year 6 are now reaching well above average standards in English, mathematics and history and above average standards in all other subjects except music, where standards are excellent, and in religious education where standards are in line with the agreed syllabus for Year 6 and Year 2 pupils. Pupils make very good progress overall in Years 3 to 6.

The results of end of Year 2 national tests last year showed standards were average in reading, writing and mathematics compared with all schools and not as high in writing and mathematics as the standards that pupils reached in 2001. Standards in reading have been only average for the past three years. Over the last three years, whilst boys have reached consistently below average standards in reading, girls have consistently reached above average standards. The inspection findings show, supported by the early indications of the results for national tests in 2003, that standards have risen in English and mathematics for Year 2 pupils this year. The school believes this is due to the effective use of the additional literacy strategy at an early age and there were fewer late entrants with special educational needs in the current Year 2.

Inspection shows that for Year 2 pupils standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics, science, ICT, design and technology, history and physical education and average in other subjects,

although there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement in music. Pupils make good overall progress in Years 1 and 2. In Reception, children make unsatisfactory progress and reach average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and in all other areas of learning. These standards are not high enough compared with their above average attainment on entry.

Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in Years 1 to 6. The progress of gifted and talented pupils is inconsistent although, sometimes, there is very good provision in English, mathematics, music and sport. Pupils' investigative skills in science do not always develop systematically.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Many are very keen to learn and are very proud of their achievements and the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils often behave very well in the classroom, at play and during lunchtimes. They are well mannered and polite to adults and each other. They move around the school in an orderly way.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good and contribute to the quality of work in lessons and the happy school atmosphere. Pupils can successfully work in small teams and make joint decisions.
Attendance	Attendance is excellent and pupils arrive at school on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has significantly increased the amount of good, very good and excellent teaching. However, the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching is higher due to the high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in Reception. Teaching is always at least satisfactory in Years 1 to 6 and mainly good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. There is some very good or excellent teaching in most classes in Years 1 to 6. High quality teaching from Years 1 to 6 raises standards. When lessons are very good or excellent, teachers have very good subject knowledge and lessons are very interesting and inspire pupils to learn. In these lessons pupils of all abilities learn very well, including more capable pupils, because teachers have high expectations and plan well matched work for all pupils. The quality of teaching of music is often very good or excellent and this leads to very high standards. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very good in Years 3 to 6 and good in Years 1 and 2. However, the teaching of literacy and numeracy in Reception is unsatisfactory because the teaching of reading, writing and numeracy lacks rigour and children spend too much time on colouring activities. Lesson planning is weak in Reception and expectations are too low. Weaker elements of the lessons that were only satisfactory in other year groups related to a slowing of the pace of learning during group work or lack of challenge for more capable pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good overall in Years 1 to 6 with very good opportunities for extra-curricular activities. In Reception, the curriculum is too narrow.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good in Years 1 to 6 where pupils are well supported during class lessons and during specialist teaching time. In Reception, not enough time is spent on teaching reading and work is not matched closely enough to children's needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, provision for pupils' personal development is very good. There is very good overall provision for spiritual, moral, social development and cultural development. The impressive range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities to perform in musical performances greatly enhance provision.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good procedures for child protection and pupils are well cared for. Assessment procedures are good for English and mathematics. However, they are not as well developed for other subjects. There are weaknesses in identifying gifted and talented pupils and monitoring their progress.

The broad and rich curriculum gives pupils many opportunities to develop their creativity, practical and sporting skills as well as their academic abilities. ICT and drama are used well to enhance learning. The school's links with parents are effective and the school works hard to develop these.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher has a very clear vision for improving the school. Management systems are good, however some subject co-ordinators' monitoring roles are underdeveloped. All staff are dedicated and work very well as a team, constantly sharing a quest for improving standards and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors fulfil their statutory duties and understand the strengths and weaknesses in assessment data. However, their monitoring of the curriculum is not as thorough and they rely too much on the headteacher.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school uses assessment data well to effectively assess and improve its own performance. However, the limited monitoring of teaching by some subject co-ordinators prevents the rigorous development of some subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Staff are valued as the school's best resource and there is much emphasis upon subject training. Financial planning is linked well to priorities and careful planning has enabled the school to carry out a number of major improvements to the building in order to provide for the increase in numbers.

Careful consideration is given to major planning and spending decisions to ensure best value. The current teaching staff are mainly well deployed. Resources are good overall. Improvements in computer facilities

are leading to rapidly improving standards in ICT. Specialist teaching of music and in physical education is greatly enhancing provision. Accommodation is good overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The very good leadership of the headteacher, who knows every child.• The good progress their children make.• The high quality of teaching.• The high quality of provision in the creative arts.• The family atmosphere of the school and their children's eagerness to learn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Home/ school reading records do not give enough information about the progress their children are making, or targets for success.

The findings of the inspection team reflect the parents' positive views. The team agrees that pupils' reading records do not provide enough information about the teaching of reading, pupils' progress and targets.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. By the time the pupils leave the school in Year 6, the achievement of most pupils is very good, and their achievement in music is exceptional. Pupils' good progress in Years 1 and 2 enables them to catch up after they make unsatisfactory progress in Reception. Pupils' very good progress in Years 3 to 6, through very good, and sometimes excellent, teaching raises standards still further and ensures pupils are very well prepared for their secondary education.
2. Children begin school with overall attainment that is above average. About one third are at least above average and a small number are well above average in the key skills of literacy and numeracy. The children's assessments made on entry to the school show that a very high proportion of them reach at least average standards in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Very nearly all have had pre-school education.
3. In the Reception class, the lack of a suitable curriculum and of rigour in the teaching of literacy and numeracy means that most children make unsatisfactory progress, and the progress of very able pupils is poor. As a result, standards are mainly average on entry to Year 1, although a minority of pupils have not made a secure start in learning to read. There were weaknesses in children's progress at the time of the previous inspection when higher attaining children were underachieving. Standards cannot be compared directly for the current Year 2 pupils with those reached at the end of their Reception year, as records have not been kept. The teaching staff have not changed in Reception although there has been a complete change of teaching staff in Years 1 and 2 this year.
4. In the 2002 national tests and assessments for Year 2, standards were below average compared with similar schools in reading and mathematics and average in writing. In 2002 standards dropped significantly in writing and mathematics compared with the standards reached in the previous two years. In 2000 and 2001, standards in reading were lower than standards in writing and mathematics, suggesting less effective teaching of reading than writing and mathematics in these years. In 2002, the impact of the lower attainment of late entrants to the school depressed standards still further. One third of all pupils in this cohort joined the school late and many had high level special educational needs. This cohort is now in Year 3 and they are catching up to average levels because of strong teaching and rigorous support for pupils with special educational needs.
5. The impact of late entrants, however, is minimal on the overall performance of the pupils in the current Year 2. The school has worked hard and successfully to improve pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2. The school's provisional results for the national tests for this year group indicate a significant rise in standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science and inspection standards indicate that all of these subjects are now above average. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are making good overall progress because of effective literacy and numeracy teaching. However, in Year 1 the programme for hearing pupils read is only satisfactory and not rigorous enough to raise standards given pupils' significant underachievement in Reception. Pupils apply their literacy skills to their work in other subjects well. In science, pupils make good progress overall, although higher attaining pupils underachieve in investigative science through too few opportunities to learn at higher levels.
6. In 2002, more pupils Year 2 pupils reached the higher Level 3 in national tests in English than the teachers predicted in their assessments. This indicates that teachers underestimated the capabilities of higher attaining pupils and this also happened with speaking and listening as very few reached Level 3. The inspection finds that the current Year 2 pupils reach above average standards in speaking and listening and a substantial proportion reach higher levels. Over the last

three-year period, girls outperformed boys in reading, writing and mathematics. This difference was particularly marked in reading where boys' performance was below average

whilst that of girls was above average. No significant differences were observed during the inspection between the performance of boys and girls for the current Year 2 pupils, although girls were seen to achieve better than boys in Reception in literacy and numeracy.

7. Inspection evidence shows that the pupils' very good overall progress in Years 3 to 6 is leading to high standards by Year 6 in English and mathematics. By Year 6, in English, pupils reach well above average standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Pupils' ability to write for a wide range of purposes, for example in science and history, is good. Over a three-year period, there were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls in English, mathematics or science and none were observed during the inspection.
8. Pupils' progress in science is good overall in Years 3 to 6, however pupils' progress in developing investigative skills is only satisfactory. This is because pupils' progress in developing their ability to design and make their own tests is inconsistent and higher attaining pupils do not have enough opportunities to reach higher levels in investigative science. Pupils' progress is very good in ICT throughout the school. Standards are rising rapidly as a result of consistently high quality teaching. Pupils' overall achievement is good because the school's very good ICT facilities have been put in place fairly recently. Pupils' progress is good in history and physical education throughout the school. In all other subjects progress is less consistent. In design and technology pupils' progress is good in Years 1 and 2 but only satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 because aspects of designing still need to be improved. Pupils' progress in art and geography is only satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 whilst it is good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' progress in music is excellent in Years 3 to 6 although there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement in Years 1 and 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education through the school.
9. Pupils' application of numeracy to other subjects is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. However, the use of mathematics in science is only satisfactory through the school as opportunities for higher attaining pupils to use more advanced mathematics are inconsistent. Pupils throughout the school apply their ICT skills well to other areas of work.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress overall as a result of very good teaching. There is a strong emphasis on improving pupils' reading and literacy skills, as well as meeting their numeracy, emotional, social and behavioural needs.
11. Higher attaining pupils generally make good progress, apart from in investigative science throughout the school and in Reception, when their progress is unsatisfactory because much of the teaching is aimed at the average children and planning for their needs is weak. Opportunities for gifted and talented pupils are inconsistent. They are good in English, music, physical education and ICT in Years 3 to 6 when subject teaching is rigorous and extra-curricular activities support the development of the gifted and talented. However, gifted and talented pupils are not identified early enough and provided with enough support. For example, they make unsatisfactory progress in mathematics because they are not identified early enough in the infants and provided with enough challenge. They generally make satisfactory overall progress in English and history in Years 1 to 6 but their progress in design and technology, art and design, science, geography and religious education is unsatisfactory through the school. The school recognises there is not a consistent policy for addressing the needs of the gifted and talented.
12. Since the previous inspection, the school has made good overall progress in improving standards. Standards achieved by 11-year-olds are higher in English, mathematics, physical education, ICT, art, design and technology, geography and far higher in music and history. By Year 2, standards are similar in English, mathematics, geography and art and higher in ICT, physical education, design and technology and history. Standards are similar in science by Years 2 and 6 and in religious education by Year 2. However, standards are lower in religious education by Year 6. Children's progress in Reception has declined since the previous inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning, their very good behaviour and the presence of high quality supportive relationships are all important school strengths. These help pupils to take full advantage of their education. This was the almost the same picture at the time of the previous inspection, although behaviour has in fact improved and is now often very good.
14. Attitudes to learning are very good and pupils enjoy coming to school. This is shown in the excellent attendance rates, which are very high compared with national averages, a picture which has improved since the previous inspection. The very high numbers that have volunteered to learn a musical instrument typify pupils' very good attitudes. Many are members of the acclaimed school orchestra. Pupils rise to the challenge of learning for themselves by working on their own projects at home. In one class, they have made memory boxes, intricately decorated to reflect their own individual taste, for example piano playing and skiing. Each box contains to prompt their recollections of special times. Pupils show their initiative by bringing in things that will help the class to appreciate and enjoy a particular topic, such as the Mary Rose jigsaw, for history, being patiently completed in Year 3.
15. They are given a good deal of responsibility for finding out things for themselves in the library and often go with a friend to research specific topics or to use the computers. Pupils rise to the challenge and enjoy learning for themselves. They can be trusted to be sensible. Their thirst for learning was summed up, when, having asked older pupils how they would improve the school if they could be the headteacher for the day, they said they would buy more library books, more equipment for experiments and build a science laboratory.
16. Pupils behave very well indeed. As a result, they make significant progress in lessons. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and enjoy Golden Time at the end of the week, which is awarded for their very good behaviour. During this time on Friday afternoons, they can choose an activity to pursue. Pupils are accustomed to showing respect for other people's property and are polite and trustworthy. Bullying or oppressive behaviour is rare and handed well by staff. The headteacher is proud that he has never had cause to exclude a pupil during his 16 years at the school.
17. Relationships within the school are very good and pupils make very significant progress in developing their social skills. In many cases, there is a good sense of shared humour. The oldest pupils nominate each other for an OSCAR each week- in this case, standing for Old Stratford's Cute Adorable Rogue!
18. Pupils contribute enthusiastically to the life of the school and community. They readily accept responsibility for routine classroom jobs, which they carry out with care and pride. Year 6 pupils have a good amount of extra responsibility, as befits their status. As librarians, they are responsible for checking books in and out and reading stories, as a treat, to the younger ones. Everyone involved looks forward to this. Some jobs are very far from routine. Year 5 have positions as team manager, coach, reporters, and display co-ordinator, connected to their work in physical education. Pupils compiled their own display showing the extent of their responsibilities, partly by taking photographs with a digital camera.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The overall quality of teaching is good but inconsistent. Teaching is very good overall in Years 3 to 6, good overall in Years 1 and 2 but unsatisfactory in Reception. Overall, 92 per cent of lessons were satisfactory or better, including over three-quarters that were at least good. Of these, just over a third of lessons were very good or excellent. All of the unsatisfactory teaching was found in Reception. Most of the very good or excellent lessons are found in Years 3 to 6 and in the specialist teaching of music. The teachers in Years 1 to 2 are new to these classes this year whilst there has not been a change in Reception for many years. There are plans, already in place before this inspection, to change this situation in Reception from September 2003. There

were two changes of teaching staff last September, when a senior member of staff was promoted to headteacher and another senior teacher has been seconded for a year to a deputy headship. The two recently qualified teachers, appointed in September, have settled well and are providing good quality learning experiences for the pupils.

20. Since the previous inspection, the school has made satisfactory progress in improving the quality of teaching despite the decline in Reception, because the proportion of good teaching is higher and the proportion of very good or excellent teaching is far higher. The headteacher is achieving his vision for enabling teachers to teach in a range of teaching and learning styles. This allows pupils to learn in their preferred style and also to adjust easily to different styles of teaching and learning. The implementation of this, along with his focus on developing teachers' strong subject knowledge and the use of subject specialists, for example in music and physical education, has led to the very good increase in lessons judged to be very good and excellent. In very good or excellent lessons all pupils learn rapidly, including the high and very high attaining pupils. However, despite much support, the quality of teaching in Reception has not improved and declined even further from the broadly satisfactory judgement found at the time of the previous inspection.
21. In Reception, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory and poor for higher attaining pupils. Planning for the areas of learning has not improved, despite training. Relationships are good and children are emotionally secure, children's learning is not well organised, for example during the low level play activities provided, children are left too much to their own devices and the level of adult intervention to promote learning is poor. The work provided is often aimed at the average, for example initial letter sounds, when many higher attaining children already a good understanding of these on entry to the school. There are too few stimulating activities for the children to learn through talk, practical enquiry and purposeful play. Focused whole class and group class teaching is not of a sufficiently high quality and expectations are low. There is not enough class teaching of the basic skills of reading and numeracy, or opportunities for children to read to adults in school. Children gain most of their reading practice at home. The implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies is unsatisfactory. These are not gradually introduced throughout the year. The National Curriculum is not planned alongside the areas of learning to ensure children with high ability can learn within the early levels. The development of children's vocabulary, thinking, reading, writing, mathematical development and their personal and social skills are all unsatisfactory. Assessment and recording are weak and not used to plan well-matched work.
22. The five excellent lessons were seen in the specialist teaching of music or class lessons in ICT in Years 2 and 6. In these lessons teachers' very strong subject knowledge was apparent in the rigorous way in which they taught subjects. Lessons inspired pupils and raised their eagerness to learn. There was excellent progression of skills and knowledge and high involvement of all pupils in these lessons. The use of high quality resources and teachers' class management skills were excellent. Teachers' very high expectations of all pupils were skilfully put into practice and no time was lost due to organisational matters. In an excellent music lesson in Year 4, the specialist teacher also had excellent presentation skills and empathy with the pupils. Her very good ability to use on-going assessment enabled her to adjust her teaching to fit the needs of all the pupils. She gave high level instruction and questioning, providing opportunities for the pupils to learn through listening, watching and reflecting, as well as by practical exploration, problem solving and practice. These rich practical experiences enabled all pupils to learn basic notation and apply this when creating their own sounds.
23. In the very good physical education lessons in Years 5 and 6, lessons had a brisk pace. The teachers' very good subject knowledge enabled them to provide high level skills teaching of skills and to realise their high expectations, including providing enough challenge for talented pupils. A key factor in both lessons was that lesson plans had very clear purposes, indicating the skills to be developed, which were shared with pupils. There were very good opportunities for pupils to evaluate and improve their own performance. In the Year 5 lesson, the teacher used pupils very well as role models when pupils acted as coaches to different groups. There are some excellent opportunities for pupils to develop team skills in physical education lessons.

24. In the few lessons that were only satisfactory in Years 1 to 6, weaker elements related to the slower pace of learning during group work, or insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils. For example, in a satisfactory religious education lesson in Year 6, when pupils retold a religious story, there were not enough opportunities for higher attaining pupils to develop more advanced thinking during the group work. In a satisfactory science lesson in Year 5, there was not enough planning for extension for higher attaining pupils during group work. In a satisfactory history lesson in Year 2 and a satisfactory science lesson in Year 1, the pace during group work was leisurely and pupils did not always settle to hard work immediately.
25. Evidence from examining pupils' work, observing lessons and hearing pupils read shows the teaching of English and the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy are good overall in Years 1 and 2 and very good overall in Years 3 to 6. The successful implementation through the school raises attainment in both key stages. The very effective provision for pupils with special educational needs has also been an important factor in raising standards in Years 1 to 6. Teachers' subject knowledge is often good. Strong subject knowledge underpinned very good literacy lessons in Years 5 and 6 where all pupils were challenged, including the very capable pupils. In Years 1 and 2 teachers plan and manage time well during the literacy hour. The teachers use 'Big Books' to teach reading and phonics well and spelling and writing skills are developed systematically. Group work is often well managed with good opportunities for learning both reading and writing. However, in Year 1, systems for hearing pupils read regularly are not rigorous enough to make up for the pupils' slow start in Reception. Pupils' home reading records are unsatisfactory because they do not show the pupils' stages of reading, how well they are progressing or their targets for success.
26. The teaching of mathematics and the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy are good in Years 1 and 2 and very good overall in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2, lesson planning is good overall and shows suitable plans for most ability groups. However, very high attaining pupils are not always being sufficiently extended. These pupils are not identified early enough in Reception or when they enter the school at other times. Pupils are given many opportunities for practical work and to apply mathematics to daily life. The teaching of mathematics is very good overall in Years 3 to 6. Expectations are often high for all ability groups and pupils' work is often very well matched to the range of ability. For example, Year 3 pupils practised division sums, which were carefully graded to match their prior attainment, including that of the higher attainers. High and very high attaining pupils were given very good opportunities for problem solving in this lesson.
27. There is a systematic programme for teachers to improve their subject knowledge and recent training in ICT has led to very good and some excellent teaching throughout the school. However, there are still some gaps in some teachers' knowledge in some subjects, for example in the best way to develop pupils' independent enquiry skills in science. Gifted and talented pupils benefit from rigorous subject teaching when teachers have very strong subject knowledge, as in music and physical education. There is an excellent project "Bridge Builder" which consists of Year 6 and Year 7 teachers (from the local secondary school) working together to design a project in English, mathematics, science and art. This project begins to be taught in Year 6 and continues into Year 7. This was found to provide enhanced opportunities for rigorous subject teaching for Year 6 pupils in English and mathematics as opportunities were provided for pupils to learn within the Key Stage 3 (secondary) National Curriculum. The school is introducing more specialist teaching in physical education from September 2003. Teachers' subject knowledge in other subjects is often good.
28. Throughout the school, teachers have very good relationships with pupils and usually manage their pupils well, although class organisation and management and organisation are not as good in Reception. Planning is mainly good and the lesson purpose is often shared with pupils and used to evaluate their learning. Pupils' learning often builds successfully during each lesson and from one lesson to the next. Teaching and learning are most effective during group work when time deadlines are given.

29. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good overall. Teachers, with very good levels of assistance from support staff, appropriately modify teaching methods and resources for pupils with special educational needs. This enables them to progress at their respective levels in subjects such as English and mathematics. As a result of this effective support, together with the good levels of teaching they receive in class, pupils with special educational needs learn well alongside their fellow pupils and very well when supported by support staff when they are withdrawn from the classroom in small groups.
30. Marking is satisfactory. However, although it often encourages pupils it does not always give pupils exact information on how to improve their work. Homework is satisfactory although limited by the lack of information for pupils and parents in the pupils' home/school reading records.

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

31. The school offers a broad and rich curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6. The range and quality of learning opportunities in Year 1 and Year 2 are good and are very good in Years 3 to 6. Learning opportunities in the Foundation Stage are poor and do not provide the range of activities across the recommended areas of learning for children of this age. All the required subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and the requirements are met for religious education. The time allocation for subjects is generally appropriate, more time is given to mathematics and less to English than is the average as shown in national data, but the high standards attained by the pupils in these subjects, indicate that this is sufficient. Additional support is provided for lower attaining pupils across the school as well as "booster" classes for higher attaining pupils.
32. There are suitable policies for all subjects. The school has made appropriate use of national guidance in putting together its medium-term curriculum plans, which also include religious education. The school has very successfully incorporated the main elements of the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies into its planning of English and mathematics. Teachers ensure that pupils use ICT fully in other subjects, including for researching information when using the Internet.
33. All pupils have equal access to learning opportunities including those with special educational needs. Some talented pupils have the opportunity to develop their skills through extra-curricular activities, such as those of acting, music or sport. However, there is a need to develop the curriculum further to meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils. The school provides very well for pupils with special educational needs, implementing its good policies for equality of opportunity and for special educational needs well. Provision is mainly within classes. Individual plans suitably target the pupils' special educational needs.
34. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good and is given adequate time. Good arrangements are made for sex and drugs education. Emphasis is placed on pupils developing their understanding of citizenship through discussions about rules, responsibilities and community.
35. The provision for extra-curricular activities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is excellent. A high priority is given to out of school hours' activities. At lunchtimes and after school, there are clubs covering such diverse activities as drama, Irish penny whistle, orchestra, art, pottery, walking, rugby, football, tennis, cricket and basketball coaching. As a result, the school has received awards for drama, is an Arts Mark Gold winner and has a certificate of distinction for after school clubs provision. The school participates in sporting fixtures with other schools in the area. Pupils also have the opportunity to perform in musical and drama festivals. However, there are few activities for younger children.
36. The school also enriches the curriculum by visits from artists, historical acting groups, archaeological society members and members of families who come in and tell pupils about their

life and experiences. Pupils learn more about the world by taking part in residential visits to places such as Llandudno.

37. The school has very successful links with the local community, which make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. For example the local fire service sends personnel to the school to explain their work and encourage pupils to think of safety issues. There are links with a local business which, for example, sponsors medallions for all Year 6 pupils as they leave the school. There is a particularly strong link with the local secondary school through the 'bridging project' as described in paragraph 27.
38. The overall provision for pupils' personal development is very good. There is very good provision for their moral and social development and good provision for their spiritual and cultural development. Pupils gain insights into the beliefs and values of Christianity and other world religions in religious education lessons. Contributions are made to pupils' spiritual development through assemblies. In one assembly, pupils' thoughts were turned to the wonders of nature as they heard the account of how a robin built a nest in a box on the shed wall in a garden and the female sat on the eggs. In one religious education lesson, pupils were amazed at the size and beauty of a Jewish prayer shawl. Spiritual development is promoted very well by music, with many opportunities to reflect on its meaning and beauty, for example, that created by the pupils to evoke the feelings and sounds of a summer afternoon and to help them visualise music. However, there is still scope to plan for spiritual development in other subjects of the curriculum.
39. Principles that distinguish right from wrong are promoted very well, and this particularly pleases parents. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour both in class and around the school. As a result, most pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong and the effect their actions have on others. Teachers and support staff are very good role models for behaviour towards others. The personal, social and health education programme provides very good opportunities for pupils to discuss moral issues.
40. Provision for social development is very good. Visits from outside agencies, such as the fire service, successfully develop pupils' awareness of safety and environmental concerns. Work in pairs, teams and groups, particularly in physical education, also contributes well to social development on a daily basis. Fund raising opportunities greatly increase pupils' awareness of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. The meaning of citizenship and its application in society is another very useful opportunity for pupils' social development. Older pupils learn about democracy and the use of ballots in their study of the Ancient Greeks. Residential visits and the many activities additional to lessons give further opportunities for pupils to work and play together outside lessons. Older pupils have added responsibilities, for example in helping younger pupils by sharing books with them and in undertaking jobs around the school.
41. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good overall. Provision for pupils to appreciate their national heritage and culture, particularly through lessons in geography and history is good. Many visitors, such as the historical enactment group, musicians, artists and theatre groups also support pupils' cultural development very well. In subjects such as geography, history and religious education and in assemblies, pupils have adequate opportunities to learn about the traditions and customs of people from various faith backgrounds and from different parts of the world. Nevertheless, there could be more opportunities across the curriculum to develop pupils' awareness of the rich diversity of multi-cultural Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school provides a good level of pastoral care for its pupils, within a rich stimulating learning environment. This was very much the picture at the time of the previous inspection.
43. Procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety are good. Staff and governors have a good awareness of these kinds of issues. For example, every member of staff has received basic life saving training, especially vital as the school has its own swimming pool. The person with overall responsible for child protection procedures is experienced and ensures staff have a good

awareness of what to do if they have a concern. Teachers are mostly aware of, and sensitive to, the personal and home circumstances of each pupil.

44. Procedures for ensuring pupils behave well are very good. Teachers are experienced in encouraging pupils to behave well and because lessons are interesting they are of a good quality, managing behaviour is achieved quite naturally and with minimum fuss. The very good relationships, within the school, create a positive atmosphere and this encourages pupils to behave well. A clear Code of Conduct is displayed around school. This is partnered with an established discipline policy setting out the school's thinking on behaviour. The headteacher takes a firm lead in setting the tone, and in talking to those pupils who fall short of expectations. The school takes a firm line on any bullying kinds of behaviour. Pupils spoken to during the inspection were happy that this rarely happens and that, if it does, teachers help them. Inspection evidence confirms this.
45. Overall, the school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. In Years 1 to 6 these are good for English, mathematics, ICT and physical education. They are very good in music and satisfactory for other subjects. The results of national tests, including the optional tests taken between Years 3 and 5 are analysed. They are used to forecast future levels of attainment and determine where there is a need for additional support for pupils through such interventions as "booster classes", additional literacy support and "Springboard" support in mathematics. In addition, a number of on-going assessments are made in reading, spelling and mathematics. In other subjects, assessment is informal and not always sufficiently well developed. Baseline assessment is carried out in Reception and helps to identify pupils with special educational needs. Further assessments are not linked well enough to the targets in the curriculum for these children, and information is not used sufficiently to plan work that is well matched to their needs.
46. Apart from in Reception, the use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning is mostly good. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, assessment information is used effectively to predict potential National Curriculum levels for each pupil by the end of Year 2 and again for the end of Year 6. Assessment information is analysed to determine what support pupils need to achieve their maximum potential or to overcome identified weaknesses in English and mathematics. The use of assessment information to adjust curriculum plans for other subjects is satisfactory overall with strengths in music, physical education and ICT. However, in geography and religious education more work is needed to ensure work is matched to the learning needs of all pupils.
47. Pupils with special educational needs receive good levels of support in classes through the use of the school's good assessment procedures. It effectively uses test results, target setting and concerns expressed by class teachers, as well as the good records kept by support staff, to decide where extra support can be introduced.
48. Teachers do not always sufficiently record pupils' developing reading skills as they occur. For example, all pupils' reading records do not have sufficient detail on what skills the pupils need to acquire next to aid their progress. Assessment information is suitably used to group pupils according to their respective abilities. Reviews of individual education plans and statements are supported well with the good involvement of outside agencies.
49. A system for identifying gifted and talented pupils is not fully developed, although the school is moving towards this. Where talents have been identified, as in music and sometimes in physical education, assessment is used well in planning future work.
50. There are satisfactory procedures for checking on pupils' attendance. Most parents hold education in high regard and ensure their child attends very regularly. The school has relatively small amount of administration to do, to ensure attendance figures remain very high. However, there are efficient systems in place to follow up on any absences which are causing concern.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. Parents have a positive view of the school. It is a popular choice in the area and well respected within the community. Many of the positive elements of the school's partnership with parents have been successfully maintained since the previous inspection, with one or two exceptions explained below.
52. Just over a quarter of parents returned their questionnaires and a loyal group of parents attended the meeting with inspectors. Those parents who replied were positive about most aspects of the school's work. These included feeling comfortable about approaching the school, the good behaviour and teaching, good leadership and management and being pleased with the high expectations teachers have of the work pupils do. Inspectors support parents' views.
53. A minority of parents who replied had concerns about homework, the information about progress, and the extent to which the school works closely with them. Arrangements for homework are satisfactory and similar to that seen in many primary schools. The headteacher urges any parent who feels their child is not getting enough, or too much homework, to contact the school directly. Information about progress is satisfactory overall, although there could be more liaison and information about reading. The school does work hard to communicate with parents, and is generally successful in its aim.
54. Parents at the meeting with inspectors praised the school, with special mentions for the strengths of the creative arts. Some expressed concern about the quality and usefulness of reading records sent home with books and the absence of two-way dialogue about reading between home and school. Inspectors agree with parents that reading records are not very useful in helping them to help their child, or to understand how the reading system works. There is no systematic information about each stage of reading, what pupils are achieving, and targets for success.
55. Parents are well informed on the progress of their children with special educational needs. The targets the pupils are trying to achieve are fully shared with pupils and parents. The school makes good contact with its parents. These are usually informal and are initiated by either staff at the school or by the parents. The school does not send letters to parents informing them of their concerns when they think their child may have special educational needs. It does inform parents by letter when there is going to be a review of individual education plans, inviting them to attend if they wish, and informs them on the outcomes.
56. Annual reports about pupils' progress are satisfactory. The school tried a new idea last year, following the format used for younger children, under headings such as creative development, mathematical development, communications, language and literacy, in order to provide more uniformity. Informal feedback from parents was positive. Within these headings, each subject is given a mention, detailing progress made over the year. Some are more informative than others and comments for English and mathematics are detailed. The layout, however, could be clearer. Reports do not often explain areas pupils need to improve.
57. There is a good relationship between school and home. The Old Stratford School Association (OSSA) newsletter provides helpful general information and contains an interesting governors' section. A new parents' noticeboard, whilst containing a good amount of relevant information, is not best placed to catch parents' attention whilst they deliver and collect their child. The school makes good use of any parents who have an expertise, in order to add interest and variety to the curriculum. For instance, a parent from the armed services, another who is an artist, fire fighter, and steam engine enthusiast have all been into school to speak with pupils. Courses for parents, such as the recent 'keeping up with the children and homework', run in association with the local college, are held at school providing there is sufficient interest. Systems for consulting with parents are only informal.
58. There is a good deal of parental involvement in school life, especially through the work of the OSSA, who are having an extremely busy and most successful year. They are currently working to purchase new outdoor play equipment. Their efforts are really making a difference by allowing

the school to obtain items of equipment they would otherwise find it hard to afford. A dedicated group of parents help in class and there are systems in place which allow the school to call together a parents' working party, to discuss relevant issues, such as the Parents' Code of Conduct, when the need arises.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The headteacher provides very good leadership and gives the school very clear direction. The headteacher, through his own personal commitment and energy, has worked very well at supporting staff in maintaining a high quality of education for the pupils through a time of rapidly increasing numbers of pupils in the school. He has ensured that later entrants to the school, including those with special educational needs, have been well supported for their inclusion into the school and pupils have continued to achieve well by the end of Year 6. He has ensured that management systems have successfully developed from that of a smaller school to one that is now average in size. The accommodation has also been extended and improved and this too has been managed very smoothly.
60. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has continued to give a strong emphasis to the professional development of all staff. The success of this was seen in September 2002 when two of the senior teachers left the school for promotion. The headteacher has also innovated in several key areas and has applied much thought to the development of the curriculum, how pupils learn best, the importance of specialist subject teaching, different ways in which pupils can be gifted and talented, improving equal opportunities and enriching extra-curricular provision. This has had a positive impact in improving the school since the previous inspection and put the school at the forefront of curriculum development in several areas.
61. The school has relevant plans for further developing the roles of curriculum co-ordinators and applies a good strategy for appraisal and performance management to support the professional development of staff. Since the last inspection it has recruited teachers of a high quality and has continued to develop the quality of most of the existing staff. In order to develop the school, from time to time the headteacher has to take on many management responsibilities. He successfully manages these responsibilities, which at the time of the inspection included the co-ordination of science, religious education and history.
62. The headteacher's extensive investigations of how children learn have led to the development of a very balanced curriculum that meets the different learning styles of the pupils. He reviews the development of the senior management team and ensures the structure of the senior management team successfully adapts to the needs of the school. Under his very good leadership, he has developed a strong team of teachers and other staff who have a very good shared commitment to improvement. However, the support provided by outside agencies and the school for improving teaching and provision in the Foundation Stage has not been effective enough. The school recognises this and has taken steps to improve these through recruitment.
63. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities in a satisfactory manner. There have been changes in personnel and governors have made good use of training to acquaint themselves with their responsibilities. They are well informed of the school's strengths and weaknesses and take an active part, under the very good guidance of the headteacher, in shaping the future direction of the school. Through formal and informal contact with staff, parents and pupils, supported by the work of their committees, governors have a good understanding of the school's future needs. Together with the good oversight of the headteacher and the school secretary, they are involved well in financial planning and support the headteacher in managing spending effectively. The headteacher asks subject leaders to bid for funds. These are prudently and well used and allocated. This leads to the overall good provision of learning resources to support the taught curriculum. The school has had an agreed deficit budget with the local education authority for the past academic year. This has been due to the need for the school to engage in a building programme and to purchase extra resources in order to accommodate the large growth in the number of pupils in the

school. The school expects this deficit to be wiped out, with an appropriate amount to carry forward as a contingency fund at the end of this academic year.

64. Governors have started to monitor the curriculum and generally have a satisfactory awareness of provision. However, they have not allocated governors to cover every curriculum subject. Few governors visit classes to gain an oversight into curriculum subject provision and, too infrequently, they invite curriculum co-ordinators to inform them on the development of the curriculum.
65. Subject co-ordinators' roles are well developed in English, mathematics, ICT, physical education and music. However, there is a need, in most other subjects, for co-ordinators to develop their monitoring roles. However, there is no co-ordinator for gifted and talented pupils. The school development plan identifies the need for co-ordinators to have more time to perform their roles. This plan clearly identifies the appropriate priorities for development. Nearly all areas identified for improvement on this inspection have been prioritised for development. There are clear priorities for developing the Foundation Stage, for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, as well as personal, social and health education, and citizenship. Teachers and support staff have been well supported for relevant training for their roles and this has enhanced their mostly good match to the demands of the curriculum. Whole school developments are well planned and arise out of discussions involving staff and governors. These are appropriately costed and deadlines are set for their completion.
66. Support staff are very well managed and make a significant contribution to the very smooth day-to-day running of the school. The very good team approach between teachers and support staff makes a very positive contribution to the achievement of the pupils. Support for newly qualified teachers is good. The school makes good use of new technology.
67. The management of special educational needs is very effective. The very good team approach amongst staff supports the overall very good levels of provision for identified pupils. Funding for special educational needs is prudently and well used and funding for other specific grants is used effectively for its designated purpose. Accommodation for the disabled is good, but information on facilities for these pupils is not reported, as required, in the governors' annual report to parents.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

68. In order to improve the pupils' quality of education further, the governors, headteacher, senior managers and staff should:

(1) Improve children's progress in Reception by ensuring they are well taught by *:

- Planning a balanced and worthwhile curriculum based on the areas of learning, and, where appropriate, for high attaining children, the National Curriculum.
- Ensuring assessment and recording procedures on entry, and through Reception, are rigorous and used to plan for the ability range.
- Ensuring children are given balanced opportunities to learn through relevant whole class and focused group teaching as well as challenging purposeful play.
- Ensuring children develop their intellectual, creative, practical and physical skills fully and take some responsibility for some of their own learning.
- Ensuring there is a very regular and structured programme for teaching reading and children are heard to read regularly. Ensure extra time is allowed in Year 1 to enable children to catch up.
- Rigorously monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning where it has been found to be weak and taking prompt effective action to address any weaknesses so all pupils are consistently challenged and make the expected progress.
(paragraphs 2,3,19-21,31,45,69-83)

(2) Improve the consistency of provision for gifted and talented pupils by *:

- Implementing a thorough assessment and monitoring system to identify very high attaining pupils in English, mathematics and science, and for talented pupils in sport and the arts, so that these pupils are identified and provided for from the earliest days in school.
 - Continuing to develop opportunities for teachers to develop their subject knowledge to high levels and increasing opportunities for younger pupils to have some specialist teaching.
 - Appointing a co-ordinator for gifted and talented pupils.
 - Carefully monitoring the progress of these pupils and ensuring these pupils have ample opportunities for problem solving and independent research and enquiry.
- (paragraphs 11,26,27,33,35,49,69,101,103,111,118,123,149,150)

(3) Improve some aspects of pupils' independent enquiry skills in science by:

- Ensuring pupils systematically develop their ability to suggest ideas and to design and make their own tests through the school.
- Ensuring higher attaining pupils have consistent opportunities to learn at higher levels, including in applying mathematics to science, and teachers' plans show this.
- Ensuring pupils gradually take more responsibility for managing their own learning in investigative science and older pupils make selections from a range of apparatus.
- Ensuring there is a whole school curriculum map for guiding teachers on the steady development of investigative science and enough time is allowed.
- Providing training for teachers so they can increase their subject knowledge.

(paragraphs 5,8,9,24,27,103-110)

(4) Improve the development of co-ordinators' monitoring roles in some subjects by *:

- Increasing opportunities for them to lead by example and to monitor the quality of teaching in their subjects.
- Providing opportunities for them to systematically analyse pupils' work, compare this with National Curriculum levels and to set targets for pupils and teachers.
- Allocating funds to enable these things to happen.

(paragraphs 5,8,65,110,117,122,127,154)

In addition, governors should consider the following for inclusion in the action plan:

- Ensure that pupils' home/school reading records provide more useful information for parents including the key reading skills to be learned, the children's own targets and the progress they are making.
(paragraphs 25,93,48)
- Ensuring governors take more of a lead in monitoring curriculum provision in practice and their annual report to parents includes information on facilities for the disabled.
(paragraph 64)

* where marked, the school has already identified this as an area for improvement.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	12	20	7	2	2	0
Percentage	10	25	42	15	4	4	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	201
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	38

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	32

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	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	16	12	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	14
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	26	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93(85)	93(100)	93(96)
	National	84 (84)	86(86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	14
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	26	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (96)	93(96)	93 (96)
	National	85(85)	89 (89)	89(89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	17	13	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	16	17
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	27	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (89)	97(89)	100(100)
	National	75 (75)	73(71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	16
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	24	26	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (83)	87 (89)	97(100)
	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	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	165	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.8
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	195

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/3
	£
Total income	467,260
Total expenditure	467,260
Expenditure per pupil	2,360
Balance brought forward from previous year	-2,500
Balance carried forward to next year	-2,500

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.8

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	201
Number of questionnaires returned	67

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	39	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	57	39	1	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	37	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	48	12	1	1
The teaching is good.	54	43	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	45	12	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	27	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	28	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	36	50	13	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	61	36	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	34	7	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	31	6	0	10

Other issues raised by parents

Overall, parents are very pleased with the school although some would like more information about children's progress in reading and the standards being achieved.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

69. Children are admitted into Reception in the September of the school year in which they are five years old and all enter full time after a short settling in period. Children make unsatisfactory progress in all areas of learning because curriculum planning is weak. The children are not being provided with a suitable curriculum for meeting the areas of learning and the National Curriculum is not planned alongside the areas of learning in order to meet the needs of a significant number of potentially high attaining children. The overall quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. On entry, most children have had pre-school education and children's overall attainment on entry is above average. A significant minority are above average in the key skills of communication, language and literacy, numeracy and in their personal, social and emotional development, including a few who are well above average. By the time they enter Year 1, their attainment is only average in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. Children with special educational needs make unsatisfactory progress whilst the progress of gifted and talented children is poor.
70. Since the previous inspection, the school has made unsatisfactory progress in improving provision in Reception. It has made satisfactory progress in addressing one of its key issues, which concerned the need to improve indoor and outdoor accommodation for Reception. However, the school's progress is unsatisfactory in ensuring children are provided with a broad range of learning experiences, challenge and a steady progression in the development of knowledge and skills. Despite considerable training and support, the quality of teaching has declined further since the previous inspection, when it was satisfactory with weaknesses.

Personal, social and emotional development

71. By the time they leave Reception, children's attainment is average. Children behave well and have good relationships with each other and all staff. They are often keen to learn but rarely develop their natural inquisitiveness because of the lack of stimulating experiences provided. They are not developing their enjoyment in learning, or their ability to learn in a balanced range of ways, including through class, focused group teaching and through exploratory play. This is because most teaching centres on whole class or over-directed group teaching and, when play happens, it lacks challenge. Children often attend well, even during over-long lesson introductions, and are keen to answer the teacher's questions. However, during group work, which too often is tracing or writing, children are passive and rarely try their own approaches, always waiting for the approval of an adult and learning at a slow pace. They are too dependent on adults in their learning and do not suggest or develop ideas adequately. During the low level play activities provided, children do not develop their capacity for sustaining concentration, and too many, boys in particular, flit from activity to activity or spend too long engaged in unchallenging play. Children learn to co-operate, share and take turns in speaking when working in a whole class.
72. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Staff develop children's sense of security and their good relationships. Children are encouraged to think about their own actions and the effect of these on others. However, planning for this area of learning and the monitoring of children's progress is unsatisfactory. Routines are not well organised so the children can learn through a range of teaching approaches.

Communication, language and literacy

73. Children make unsatisfactory progress. Standards are above average in speaking and listening and average in reading and writing. Children listen carefully to instructions and can often speak in detailed sentences, using a wide range of vocabulary. However, the lack of planning for a high quality curriculum, based on rich practical experiences, prevents the children from developing their

subject vocabulary, for example in knowledge and understanding of the world, and their capacity for thinking and solving problems. When children learn through role-play, the lack of stimulating settings and adult intervention prevents the children from creating stories. When making a collage from litter, such as crisp bags, children do not develop their vocabulary or scientific thinking because there is a lack of adult questioning and guidance.

74. Children are making unsatisfactory progress in learning to read. Most children have their own reading books and know initial letter sounds at the beginning of words. However, higher attaining children, do not have enough phonics knowledge, given their high ability, and do not confidently use end of letter sounds, and combinations of sounds to work out new words. These children are making poor progress, as on entry to the school, many higher attaining pupils knew their initial sounds. Average and lower attaining children recognise initial sounds but are not moving fast enough in their ability to learn more steps in phonics and to apply these to reading and writing. Children are not making enough progress in their writing. Although their handwriting is good, because of much practice, they do not write for a wide enough range of purposes and lower attaining pupils make poor progress when they copy words they cannot read, for example from a class poem. Children are not given enough opportunity to spell, read and write word patterns.
75. The quality of teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Little time is spent on class teaching of reading skills, for example when reading a Big Book along with the teacher. In an unsatisfactory lesson, there was no class instruction in reading when individual children told the class their news. During group work many spent too long drawing or in undemanding play, unrelated to developing literacy. At this late stage of the term, the literacy strategy is not in place and children are not being adequately prepared for the full literacy hour when they enter Year 1. Children do not read regularly enough to adults in school and this also limits their progress. Lower attaining pupils are not systematically taught key words before they progress to reading books and this limits their success at the early stages of reading. The development of writing is unsatisfactory. All pupils are often given the same task and there is far too much tracing and colouring of initial letter sounds. Children are too dependent on adults for writing tasks. Assessment is weak.

Mathematical Development

76. By the end of Reception, most of the children achieve average standards. Most children can count, read and write numbers to ten and higher attainers are aware of numbers to 20. Most can recognise simple two-dimensional shapes and higher attainers recognise simple three-dimensional shapes. Higher attaining children are beginning to add and subtract. However, children are not developing their capacity for solving practical problems. There are not enough opportunities for practical activities and too little time is spent on mathematics over a week and in individual lessons. Children can order numbers but are less familiar with working out number patterns. Children spend far too much time on colouring activities and writing numbers when they need to develop their mental skills through practical work and talking and thinking about numbers.
77. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Class sessions do not offer a wide enough variety of practical activities or enough challenge. Class sessions are often too brief and not enough time is spent on mathematics during the course of each week. Group work is too loosely related to the development of numeracy, as too many children are not engaged in numeracy tasks during group work. Children's play, for example, does not have enough mathematical purpose. There is not enough attention to developing mathematical language. Planning for the range of prior attainment is weak; all pupils are making unsatisfactory progress but that of potentially very high attaining children is poor as, too often, all children are given the same level of work.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

78. Children make unsatisfactory progress and standards are only average by the end of Reception. Most children have a well-developed knowledge of their own environment, which is often developed well at home. Children have satisfactory ICT skills, although the computer is not used regularly enough in school. Children are aware of some of the jobs of people in the community, for example the firefighter and the clothes these people wear. Children are not developing their scientific

investigative skills or scientific knowledge well enough. For example, they do not investigate materials adequately and decide whether they are suitable for some purposes and not others. The development of children's investigative skills and designing and making skills is unsatisfactory. There is not enough practical work and, when it is provided, it is at too low a level. For example, follow up activities after the firefighter's visit, consisted mainly writing about the visit, drawing or colouring. Several boys spend far too much time in play, which lacks purpose when they play noisily with toy fire engines. When pupils observe and draw newts from the school pond, they make satisfactory progress. However, examination of previous work shows that children spend far too long on colouring activities, for example identifying basic fruits and colouring in worksheets. The children's understanding of the physical world, including structures and moving parts is very weak. There is little evidence of designing and making with a range of materials or with construction kits.

79. The quality of teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Children can observe carefully, for example when they closely observe newts, however this is not developed into comparing similarities and differences. Children are not encouraged to ask questions and find answers to them through practical investigative work. An unsatisfactory lesson was observed when the teacher showed a long video about the job of a firefighter. The teacher did not stop the video at key points and question the children on their understanding. This resulted in the children sitting passively during the video and they did not develop their thinking. Children are not given a rich range of experiences, including those of a scientific, technological, historical and geographical nature. Planning is weak and there is no planning for how play will develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

Physical Development

80. Children make unsatisfactory progress in this area. Children attain average standards but these are not high enough, given the ability of many children. Children competently use scissors, pencils, wax crayons, play-dough and glue although they do not manipulate a wide enough range of materials or construction equipment. The materials provided are often basic and do not develop adequately from those used in pre-school. Children develop the ability to climb and balance when using the outdoor area, although there is not enough adult supervision of this and the development of key skills is missed. There are not enough soft landing mats under the slide.
81. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. The management and use of the outside area is unsatisfactory and the teacher and assistants do not provide enough support and teaching of skills during outdoor play or when children use the practical area. Planning for this area is unsatisfactory and there is not enough record keeping for ensuring all children have equal access to outdoor play and the practical area. However, evidence from children's previous work shows children are being taught how to use crayons for drawing skilfully although children are not being given access to a wide enough range of materials. Play activities do not support the development of children's practical skills adequately. There are regular opportunities for children to learn to swim although judgement cannot be made on the quality of provision because of insufficient observation due to the inspection timetable.

Creative Development

82. Children make unsatisfactory progress and reach average standards by the end of Reception. Children work confidently and competently with a narrow range of media. They are able to draw what they see or imagine with skill and creativity, for example when creating fish pictures for their class collage using crayons and paint for a wax resist technique. Children do not know the names of enough artists or produce pictures in their styles. Children do not create with a wide enough range of media. Independent activities such as making collages or making shapes with play-dough are very basic and do not develop the children's skills and creativity adequately. Children have very regular opportunities to learn music because there is specialist music teaching. However, this was not observed because of this specialist teacher's absence. Opportunities for role-play are very basic and unsatisfactory. Role-play is not developed through topic areas and the

settings provided do not develop the children's imagination adequately. Sand play is unsatisfactory as it is at the same level as usually found in nurseries.

83. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. Adults do not use every opportunity to extend children's ability to express ideas and provide rich experiences where creativity can flourish. Group and role-play activities are poorly planned and there is limited adult teaching or intervention during group work or play. The children have been taught well how to observe and draw with crayons. However, there is not enough teaching of a range of practical skills, with time for all children to practise and create. Planning and management of learning are weak.

ENGLISH

84. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average and, by the end of Year 6, standards are well above average. The recent 2003 national tests for Year 2, as yet unconfirmed, support the inspection findings and show that standards have risen for the current Year 2 pupils and are now above average in reading and writing. Since the previous inspection the school has made good overall progress in improving standards. It has maintained above average standards for Year 2 pupils whilst standards for Year 6 pupils have risen from above to well above average. No significant differences were observed during the inspection in the attainment of girls and boys. Standards are higher for the current Year 6 than those obtained by Year 6 pupils in their 2002 national tests. In the 2002 Year 6 class, nearly a half of all pupils had joined the school in the juniors and a high number of these pupils had special educational needs. This had an adverse impact on standards by Year 6. Inspection finds that due to the very good overall provision for pupils with special educational needs, supported by the very good teaching which meets the needs of all its pupils, standards in Year 6 are now well above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing.
85. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and very good progress in Years 3 to 6. Gifted and talented pupils make good progress throughout because there are consistent opportunities for extension work for these pupils. For example in Year 6, the Year 6/7 "Bridge Builder" project for bridging the gap between the primary and secondary schools enables Year 6 pupils to learn within the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum requirements and for pupils to learn within Level 6.
86. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are well above average overall. By Year 2 pupils listen very carefully, articulating very clearly what they want to say. Many have a detailed vocabulary and can vary their responses to meet the needs of different listeners, for example other pupils or their teachers. By Year 6, pupils show increased levels of confidence in discussion and in making their reasoned responses, with some attaining excellent standards. This was seen in an exceptional drama production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" performed by pupils from Years 3 to 6. Here many pupils attained exceptional levels where they structured their speech clearly using structures and styles in a variety of contexts, modifying vocabulary and expression confidently.
87. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading are above average. Pupils make good overall progress in Years 1 and 2. Pupils often read a range of texts fluently with interest and expression and show a good understanding of the significant ideas, events and characters in a story. They have good understanding of phonics and also use other approaches when working out new words. Most self-correct when reading and comprehend well what they have read. Pupils are beginning to understand alphabetical order for finding information. However, in Year 1, although pupils have relevant opportunities to read during the literacy hour, the system for hearing reading is only satisfactory and not sufficiently rigorous to raise standards.
88. By the end of Year 6, pupils read very well with high levels of confidence and accuracy, understanding their texts and deducing what will happen next. Standards in reading and the pupils' good interest in books are further supported by the good, well-stocked school library. The pupils make very good use of the library, exchanging books and organising provision. Year 6 pupils have regular duties in the library where they use the library computer system for its organisation. Pupils write book reviews and the Year 6 pupils have pupils from younger classes in the library to read stories to them and talk about books and their reading interests. This impacts

very well on the high levels of interest that pupils, across the school, show in books.

The dramatisation and musical performance of classical literature, including ancient Greek drama and Shakespeare's plays, develop a very good understanding and thirst for high quality literature.

89. By the end of Year 2, standards in writing are above average. This is because many reach average standards whilst a small minority are above this. Pupils' handwriting is good; their letters are well formed, even in size and are neat. Pupils spell well and can write successfully for a range of purposes in English and in their subjects, including poetry as well as factual accounts in science.
90. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average. Pupils can construct and write a letter, reporting a description of a family incident, very successfully. They translate and convey meaning in a formal manner, for example from the perspective of a social worker involved in the incident. Pupils write stories, letters and poems organising their work into paragraphs with an appropriate grammatical structure and use of punctuation. They produce a good range of free and creative writing in different styles. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 develop the different styles of letter writing very well. Pupils start to write persuasive letters in Year 5 after previously reading and evaluating letters from newspapers. They reach well above average standards in their varied and interesting writing for different audiences, conveying meaning clearly in both formal and informal forms. Their learning is supported very well by the teacher encouraging them to plan using bullet points for the letters' content, organising the paragraphs under relevant headings and to draft and re-draft until they attain a suitable persuasive letter. With this very good input from the teacher, the pupils are able to write a letter to say why the school should be entered in a competition to win £10,000 and what it would do with the money. The pupils take great care with the presentation of their work.
91. Standards of handwriting are good across the school. This is because there is a consistent approach to teaching handwriting. Younger pupils regularly practise forming their letters correctly and older pupils develop their own personal style. Pupils have spellings to learn and many have acquired a good standard of accuracy for their age. Pupils are sufficiently encouraged to use dictionaries to aid their spelling and classes have a good range of dictionaries to enable them to do so. Opportunities for writing for different purposes across the curriculum are very good in Years 3 to 6 and good in Years 1 and 2. The opportunities for pupils to use ICT for word processing and developing their work are good throughout.
92. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good overall in Years 3 to 6. Teachers plan effectively and conduct their lessons at a good pace, managed very well. They have a high expectation of what their pupils should learn and challenge them well. Pupils' needs are well informed by good assessment procedures that indicate their levels of attainment. Assessment is often used well to inform what pupils should learn next. Pupils show very good attitudes towards their tasks, working at a good rate with very good levels of motivation and enthusiasm. Very good examples of high quality teaching are seen in the Years 5 and 6 classes. Here, due to high expectations, very good applied subject knowledge, the high level of challenge, very careful thoughtful planning matched to the discerned needs of the pupils, the teachers enabled pupils to write in different styles very well. Marking is satisfactorily developed across the school. It always rewards effort, however, it does not always indicate what the pupils should do to improve. Pupils sometimes follow up by correcting their mistakes and by re-drafting to a higher degree of accuracy.
93. The school gives pupils relevant opportunities to read to teachers, support staff and helpers. Pupils' reading books are carefully graded to their level of attainment. Resources for reading are good. All pupils have gained very good attitudes towards reading. Through the use of reading diaries that are sent home, parents are suitably involved. However, these diaries and teachers' records do not sufficiently record the skills the pupils are attaining or record what they need to do to make further progress. The records kept by support staff on the progress of special educational needs pupils are well kept. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good.

94. Pupils are given very good opportunities to practise and apply their literacy skills in their written work. This development is supported by a very good scheme of work. Pupils have a very good range of opportunities to use their developing writing skills. Pupils' spelling mistakes are corrected but pupils are not given enough encouragement to assimilate this learning. Pupils are encouraged, however, to use words learnt in spelling in their writing and they do so with a clear understanding of their meanings.
95. The school is just starting to recognise gifted and talented pupils. However, the ways it plans and develops the taught curriculum already often for these pupils to attain at higher levels in English, for example in the drama production described earlier. The subject co-ordinator manages the subject very well. She ensures there is very good planning to support teaching. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject are effective. Target setting, shared with the pupils and forward planning is doing much to support the good achievements of the pupils and their improving standards. The provision of resources is good. The deployment of the very good support staff is very well organised to support the needs of pupils at their respective levels.

MATHEMATICS

96. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils attain above average standards after making good progress in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 6, the pupils attain well above average standards after making very good progress in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' overall achievement by the time they leave in Year 6 is very good given the impact of many late entrants to the school. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained standards for Year 2 pupils whilst standards have improved well by Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and very good progress in Years 3 to 6. Standards are higher in the current Years 2 and 6 than in the National Curriculum tests in 2002. This is because there are far fewer late entrants to the school in the current Year 2. In Year 6, although the impact of late is high far fewer had special educational needs on entry than in 2002.
97. By the end of Year 2, pupils use mathematics in various classroom activities, for example in shopping role-play. The majority of pupils count, order, add and subtract numbers to 100 competently. They understand addition, subtraction and multiplication bonds and use these well in oral problem solving. Pupils solve simple division problem by sharing, for example 'if there are 8 children playing football in 2 teams, how many would there be in each team?' They represent mathematics findings in such things as block graphs and tables of results. In one lesson, pupils sorted sweets by shape and colour, made a tally chart and from that, recorded their findings in the form of a block graph. Pupils are able to explain their thinking using appropriate mathematical terms. They are beginning to solve number problems such as 'if there are 26 cherries and 15 are eaten how many are left?' They understand how to solve such a problem by setting down the figures in terms of subtraction and using the appropriate symbols. They readily recognise common two-dimensional shapes and describe their properties. They understand the concept of angles and how a right angle can form a corner. They are also aware of the properties of some familiar three-dimensional shapes. Pupils are familiar with and use standard measures.
98. By the end of Year 6, pupils readily select from all four number operations to solve problems. For example, in one class pupils find the area of the classroom through multiplication of two sides and the area of tables in the room by the same method. Knowing the number of tables, they work out the total area of tables. By subtraction they discover the area left for other items of furniture. Emphasis is placed on investigations in mathematics. For example, in handling data, pupils use plastic 'matchsticks' to form rows of equilateral triangles and as the number of triangles increases they record the number of 'matchsticks' used. They record their results using double function machines to express relationships and patterns. From the results, they are successful in writing down a formula to describe the relationship between the number of triangles formed and the number of 'matchsticks' used. Higher attaining pupils developed this further by finding the formula for squares and pentagons. Higher attaining pupils are undertaking multi-step operations independently and confidently.

99. The majority of pupils are confident in the use of large numbers, such as the addition and subtraction of up to eight-digit numbers. Most pupils have developed their knowledge of number tables and can record patterns from such tables as eight and nine. They successfully write explanations of how they discovered these patterns. They are confident in their use of fractions, decimals and percentages. In their study of two-dimensional shapes, pupils understand and use correct terminology such as scalene, isosceles and equilateral in relation to triangles. In solving problems, pupils are familiar with all the standard measures of capacity, length, time both analogue and digital and weight. In handling data, pupils understand the language associated with chance and the likelihood of particular events. In one class, pupils study and write their own weather forecasts, using terms such as certain, unlikely, high and low risk.
100. Mathematics is often used successfully in other areas of the curriculum. There is the use of timelines in history. In geography, pupils produce bar charts and pie charts as they investigate the environment and look at leisure activities. In one class there is a good link between literacy, ICT and mathematics as pupils use different fonts to write and print mathematical poems. However, in science in Years 1 to 6 there are too few opportunities for higher attaining pupils to use more advanced mathematics.
101. Teaching is good overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Planning is based on a published scheme linked in with the National Numeracy Strategy. All attainment targets are well covered throughout the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure that all pupils use correct mathematical vocabulary and terminology and provide very good opportunities for pupils to explain their methods and practise what they know. Teachers motivate pupils very well and ensure good progress in Years 1 and 2 and very good progress in Years 3 to 6. They do this through ensuring that the majority of pupils, including most higher attaining pupils, have suitably demanding tasks. Pupils with special educational needs are catered for well in teachers' planning with suitable tasks and very good additional support. However, gifted pupils are not identified early enough and opportunities for them to reach very high levels are inconsistent. For example, very able pupils mark time because they have not been formally identified in need of support. Too often these pupils are only given work at a higher level and not the very high level that they need.
102. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator is very keen to raise standards and seeks every opportunity to do so. She analyses the results of national assessment tests question by question, identifying weaknesses and discussing strategies to overcome these with teachers. The subject co-ordinator provides medium-term plans, which cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum, for each class, and from these individual teachers draw up their own detailed lesson plans. Assessment procedures are good and used to track the progress of all pupils. Assessments are often used well for future planning. However, there is a need to identify very able pupils, systematically provide for them and to monitor their progress systematically from their earliest days in school. The curriculum leader has not yet observed teaching or systematically analysed pupils' work, although teaching has been monitored by the headteacher. Resources for the subject are good.

SCIENCE

103. By the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are above average. Standards observed during the inspection are not as high in the current Year 6 as those reached by Year 6 pupils in their 2002 national tests. This is mainly because aspects of pupils' investigative skills are underdeveloped. The majority of pupils make good progress overall in Years 1 to 6. However, there are inconsistent opportunities for pupils to reach higher levels in investigative science throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress through teachers' high expectations and very good support to enable many of them to reach average standards. However, gifted pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. The school has made satisfactory progress in improving science since the previous inspection as standards and the quality of teaching are similar.

104. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards average standards in investigative science and above average standards in their knowledge and understanding of science. Pupils' understanding of properties of materials is good, for example they can predict which materials are suitable for insulation and understand some properties. They have a particularly good understanding of the creatures found in different habitats in the school grounds. In investigative science by Year 2, pupils show curiosity and respond to suggestions of how to find things out and use simple equipment to find answers, for example when they weigh ice cubes to measure possible changes as ice melts. However, higher attaining pupils do not have a good understanding of fair testing, they do not suggest ideas for making their own tests or always use mathematics rigorously enough for recording and searching for patterns in results.
105. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach above average standards. This is because of the high proportion of pupils reaching at least the standard expected for this age, Level 4, and a significant minority reaching the higher Level 5, in their knowledge of science. However, pupils' investigative skills are average. Pupils' understanding of physical processes and the properties of materials is particularly good because of consistent opportunities for more capable pupils to reach higher levels. Pupils have good understanding of the wide variety of living things, including bacteria. They know some conditions that cause bacteria to grow and the harmful and beneficial effects of different bacteria. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of experimental procedure, including fair testing, and can design and plan an experiment to test which toothpaste is the best. However, there is little evidence of pupils working at the higher level in any aspect of experimental science. For example, when planning experiments, pupils do not select from a range of apparatus well enough or rigorously use mathematics for collecting, recording and analysing results. Pupils do not always work fully independently when carrying out their experiments. Pupils' prediction and concluding skills are mainly average.
106. Pupils often record their work neatly, although, occasionally, in Year 2, there is an overuse of worksheets. The use of mathematics is mainly suited to the needs of average attaining pupils and rarely rigorous enough for higher attainers. The use of ICT in science is good overall and in Year 2 pupils used ICT very well when finding out information about the growth of plants.
107. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6. This judgement is made after examining pupils' previous work, as well as lesson observations. Class organisation is good and teachers often provide good opportunities for pupils to learn through practical work, ensuring their learning is relevant to their daily lives, for example when Year 6 pupils examine the grip on their training shoes and their effect on different surfaces. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound, although expectations are not always high enough for investigative science, indicating this is a weaker area.
108. In a good lesson in Year 4, pupils applied their previous learning well about circuits, conductors and insulators, when they designed a safety poster " Keeping Safe with Electricity". The teacher challenged the pupils to think deeply and assessed the impact of previous practical work on pupils' understanding about conductors and non-conductors. The teacher's high level questioning, during whole class and group work, encouraged the pupils to think scientifically and she provided thorough instruction when pupils were unclear about some facts. In this lesson there was particularly good planning for the pupils of different abilities, including higher attaining pupils. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher made very effective use of drama to engage pupils' interest in the processes of pollination after they had researched "A Pollination Adventure" on the Internet. During this lesson the pupils took on different roles, including those of researchers investigating the parts of the flower and the bee involved in pollination. However, occasionally, throughout the school, lessons are only satisfactory when the pace of learning slows during group work.
109. The school uses the nationally recommended guidance. However, teachers need more guidance in selecting the units they will use, as there is not enough emphasis on the steady development of investigative science, including the gradual development of pupils' ability to design and plan their own tests. Additionally, there is not enough planning for how higher attaining pupils will consistently learn at higher levels. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall but not detailed

enough for investigative science. Gifted pupils are not adequately identified and provided with challenging work. Teachers do not always show plans for higher attaining pupils on their lesson planning.

110. The co-ordinator is currently on a secondment and an acting co-ordinator is managing science. The acting co-ordinator has monitored some teaching. However, there is not a systematic programme for this, or for thoroughly examining pupils' books. The school is aware that these areas need improvement. The school has strong links with the secondary school and, with the local cluster of primary schools, is involved in a continuity project later this term. This involves primary and secondary teachers planning together so that the taught project begins in the primary school in Year 6 and continues into the secondary school. The school believes this is boosting standards and provides opportunities for rigorous subject teaching in Year 6. There has not been any recent subject training in science and teachers' understanding of how to teach investigative science is a weaker aspect. Science resources are satisfactory. However, in some projects there are not enough resources for pupils to all undertake the same practical project, which limits the rigour of some class investigations.

ART AND DESIGN

111. During the inspection, because of the timetable, teaching was observed only in Years 3 and 6. Judgements are based on these observations, the analysis of pupils' work throughout the school, discussions with pupils and teachers and on the school's planning and records. On the basis of this evidence, by the end of Year 2 pupils attain average standards after achieving satisfactorily. By the end of Year 6, they attain above average standards and most achieve well. Pupils with special needs make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 to 6. The progress of talented pupils is unsatisfactory as they are not identified and consistently provided with opportunities for higher level work. Standards have remained the same since the last inspection for Year 2. Due to good teaching and a wider range of opportunities for two-dimensional and three-dimensional work, standards have improved by Year 6. Overall the school has made good improvement since the previous inspection.
112. Teachers make effective links with other subjects, such as history where pupils have designed Tudor- style portraits and drawings of Greek persons and artefacts. Pupils in Year 4 have designed computer patterns and patterns associated with their graphs in mathematics well. Pupils in Year 2 have successfully completed pattern work associated with their studies of a Jewish wedding ceremony. In Years 2 and 6, there are some good links between art and design and technology in textile work when, in Year 6, pupils undertake a successful textile project on designing and making hats. Year 2 pupils design glove puppets from textiles. This makes effective use of curriculum time.
113. By Year 2, pupils use paint, pastel and crayons skilfully for their work to show what they see and imagine. When designing and making glove puppets from felt, pupils make creative use of fabric scraps and trimmings, such as ribbon and sequins, for showing faces on their puppets. Pupils evaluate and improve their work. However, opportunities for pupils to work with a wide range of media, including three-dimensional work are more limited in Years 1 and 2.
114. By Year 6, there are increased opportunities for pupils to use a wider range of media and opportunities for creating three-dimensional objects increase. There are many good examples of work in clay, with models of figures, and small clay pots. Standards are further enhanced by the use of a self-built outside kiln where pupils are successfully introduced to what happens to clay when it is fired. Pupils use pen and ink very skilfully when they make drawings of the local community. Pupils use sketchbooks appropriately for a good range of observational drawing. Standards are well supported through the visits of practising artists and members of the local community who have an interest in art and design. For example, an artist has visited to introduce the pupils to portraiture. A grandmother has shown pupils in Year 4 her technique involved in watercolour painting. Samples of pupils' work following her lead illustrate above average standards

in the control and use of watercolour. Across the school, when pupils draw illustrations in their books or are working at observational drawing, they achieve well. They add the relevant features carefully, and are aware of proportion as they get older using tone and texture effectively. In Year 3, some good work was seen when pupils painted portraits showing King Henry VIII and Queen Anne Boleyn.

115. However, through the school pupils have too few opportunities to develop a style of their own influenced by their previous studies of the work of a famous artist. The school is starting to address this need through the recent purchase of books on the work of artists. There is also a limited range of opportunities for pupils to examine art and design of cultures other than our own.
116. During the period of inspection, no lessons were seen taught in Years 1 and 2. The quality of teaching by the end of Year 6 is good. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils drew a series of pictures to show the movement of the human figure very successfully. Working in pairs one of them took up an action pose whilst the other pupil drew this. Working with high level of interests and motivation, at a very good pace, most of the pupils managed to draw at least three pictures illustrating different stages of movement. They show good pencil control and how to express movement through a progressive series of sketches. This work took place on the school field where they showed excellent levels of behaviour and attitude towards their work. On return to class, many pupils made the connection of the work they were doing with animation. Some pupils show a good awareness of one of the most famous animators, Walt Disney.
117. Classrooms and displays across the school are very wellorganised. There are many good displays that support and celebrate well the range of work covered by the pupils. The subject co-ordinator, however, has not taken on her leadership role sufficiently to support staff in the development of the subject. She does not have a sufficient over-sight of the subject's planning and delivery to discern why standards vary across the school. Some teachers are more secure with the subject than others. It succeeds because of the motivation of each class teacher to teach the subject to the best of their ability and the good management by the headteacher to ensure the subject is adequately resourced. There is not a consistent approach towards assessment. The use of ICT is good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

118. During the inspection, because of the timetable, teaching was observed only in Year 5. Judgements are based on these observations, the analysis of pupils' work throughout the school, discussions with pupils and teachers and on the school's planning and records. This evidence shows that standards are above average by Years 2 and 6. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, their achievement is good. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. The progress of talented pupils is unsatisfactory. They are not identified and provided with consistent challenge. Since the previous inspection, the school has made good overall progress in improving design and technology as standards are higher by Years 2 and 6 and the key issue from the previous inspection has been mainly well addressed. However, more rigour is still needed in the development of aspects of pupils' designing skills in Years 3 to 6. A strength of the subject is the way pupils apply their art skills to design and technology.
119. By the end of Year 2, pupils' ability to generate and represent ideas and their practical skills are above average, whilst their ability to evaluate and improve their work is average. When designing and making puppets from textiles, pupils have many ingenious ideas for the purpose of their puppets, for example various animal puppets. Pupils successfully try out their ideas by making paper patterns, and where needed, improve their design if it does not fit their purpose. Pupils' practical skills are good and they take great care when cutting and shaping fabric and stitching their end products. Some good work was also seen in Year 1 when pupils designed and made homes for a small toy pet. Once again, pupils showed very creative ideas. Their ability to design for a purpose to meet the needs of the toy was very good in this project. Pupils also applied their knowledge of moving parts, (hinges to make doors move), very well and showed good craft skills.

Pupils develop their understanding of different products and apply this successfully when designing and making.

120. By the end of Year 6, pupils design and make products with a suitable range of materials, including wood strip, textiles and food. A very strong feature is pupils' understanding of a wide range of products and their ability to apply this knowledge when designing and making. When Year 6 pupils design and make hats for a particular purpose from textiles, the pupils have a very good understanding of hats for different purposes and the reasons for different designs. They take this information into account very well when designing. Pupils have very creative ideas. However, at the initial stage of designing, pupils do not clarify the criteria for success so well by researching people's needs and preferences. This limits the rigour of designing for a purpose and the evaluation process. Pupils produce effective step by step plans, although their communication of ideas by drawing, prior to this, is not as good. Pupils' craft skills are good, across a range of materials and pupils apply art skills well when designing and making. When designing and making moving fairground models, pupils' ability to try out ideas and model ideas when using mechanical construction kits are good. Pupils apply science well to this project. However, science is not so well applied during food technology and pupils do not research users' needs rigorously enough during food technology.
121. Examination of the pupils' previous work shows that the quality of teaching and learning is good overall in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory with good features in Years 3 to 6. Teachers' subject knowledge is mainly satisfactory. In the lesson observed in Year 5, when pupils evaluated different musical instruments, the quality of teaching was very good. The teacher used an excellent range of musical instruments, including many from other cultures, for building the pupils' product knowledge. She provided excellent opportunities for the pupils to handle the instruments and to learn in different learning styles. These included learning through high quality instruction, questioning, exploration and discovery. The teacher's very effective questioning ensured the pupils formed their own ideas and drew on their previous knowledge, for example in science when the pupils considered the reasons why some materials were used for string instruments. In Years 1 and 2, teachers have good subject knowledge for both designing and making. In Years 3 to 6, teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory although not all teachers fully understand the importance of developing pupils' ability to take users' needs into account when designing and making. This particularly limits the effectiveness of food technology projects.
122. A suitable range of materials is covered, including textiles and food, and mechanical projects are also included in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6. Long-term plans are mainly sound, although more guidance is needed for teachers on how they might enable pupils to investigate users' needs and develop their ability to communicate design ideas by drawing. In Year 3, there is not enough emphasis upon designing. The co-ordination of design and technology is satisfactory. The co-ordinator checks subject planning and reviews pupils' work although she has not yet had an opportunity to monitor teaching. Until recently there has been much specialist teaching in the school. Assessment is satisfactory overall although not all teachers are familiar enough with the National Curriculum level descriptions and they do not use a uniform recording system. The use of ICT is satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

123. During the inspection, because of the timetable, teaching was observed only in Years 5 and 6. Judgements are based on these observations, the analysis of pupils' work throughout the school, discussions with pupils and teachers and on the school's planning and records. This evidence shows that standards are average at the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. This is an improvement overall on the standards reported in the previous inspection in that, by the end of Year 6, standards were said to be in line. The progress of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Progress in Years 3 to 6 and for special educational needs pupils is good. However, the progress of gifted pupils is unsatisfactory. Pupils have a sound range of knowledge about environmental issues and natural hazards and display sensitive attitudes towards these aspects. The use of ICT is satisfactory in geography.

124. By the end of Year 2, pupils demonstrate awareness of localities beyond their own as they consider nearby places such as Milton Keynes. They know many geographical features of the locality. They know the streets and roads near the school and the areas in which they live. They can draw the route they take to school. Pupils gain an understanding of physical features, such as rivers and mountains, as they place drawings of such features on the outline map of an island. From this same work on islands, they understand that the points of the compass can be shown as directions on a map. Pupils consider the wider world picture as they send Barnaby Bear on his travels.
125. By the end of Year 6, pupils' skills in using maps have developed well. For example, pupils can use an atlas to find and record the names of countries in Africa that are suffering with drought. This work enables pupils to discuss the reasons for the problems of drought in Africa and suggest some solutions. Pupils have a good understanding of differences between life in their own area and life in a contracting region of the world as they study a village in India. They know of how location affects the way people live and how people can either help or damage the environment and of natural disasters such as earthquakes and tornadoes. Pupils continue to develop their understanding of physical features, such as coasts and coastal settlements, as they study photographs of Llandudno, prior to a residential visit. Other pupils consider how rivers have evolved, as they trace the flow of a river from its source to its mouth. They use appropriate geographical vocabulary well, such as erosion, valleys and tributaries. There is good use of extended writing in this subject. In one class, pupils study in some depth how mountains are formed and what effect these have on rainfall, including an explanation of the "rain shadow".
126. As no lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, it is not possible to make a firm judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. Lessons are well planned, with clear teaching objectives, and teachers make sure that pupils understand what they should be doing. Work is generally matched appropriately to the needs of the pupils of different ability with the exception of the very highest attainers, where more challenge is required. Pupils demonstrated good levels of concentration and responded well to the teachers' good management and organisation. They worked at a good pace. Those with special educational needs make good progress as they generally receive good additional support from teachers and classroom assistants.
127. The subject co-ordinator produces medium-term planning sheets which are under-pinned by units from national guidelines. Teachers use these for developing their shorter-term planning. The overall coverage of the National Curriculum requirements is good. The subject co-ordinator is not given additional time to monitor teaching, systematically analyse pupils' work or generally evaluate how the subject is developing.

HISTORY

128. Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and are well above average by the end of Year 6. This is a marked improvement on standards reported at the previous inspection in that, by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards were only in line with national expectations. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, overall.
129. By the end of Year 2, pupils compare their own homes with those of Tudor and Victorian times. They learn about historical sequence as they work through the events of the Great Fire of London, a study in depth with a good link to art and design as pupils make and paint houses of the time. A good link with literacy is seen as pupils write diary entries, having discussed the diaries of Samuel Pepys. Pupils compare toys from the past with what they have now. Pupils' drawings of whips and tops from the 1920's are displayed alongside a drawing of a modern play station. They compare and contrast ways of transport as they look at pictures of old and modern day bicycles and cars. They learn about famous historical characters such as Florence Nightingale and her work as a nurse in the Crimean War. Some pupils produce good writing as they recall the story of Guy Fawkes.

130. By the end of Year 6, pupils study the Ancient Egyptians, in some depth. They write quite extensively on the way in which the people lived, thinking particularly about agriculture and the need for water from the River Nile. They carry out investigative work by looking at objects and deciding on their use. They look at the leadership of the country, the Pharaohs and their method of burial. In studying the invasion of Britain by the Romans, pupils enjoy the visit of an historical enactment group. This enables them to dress up and act out the parts of Romans and Celts. Pupils show a good understanding of the difference between Invaders and Settlers as they trace the history of Britain from the fall of the Roman Empire to the time of the Norman Conquest. There is very good coverage of Victorian Britain. Pupils show a good understanding of the conditions in which young children had to work down mines and in factories at that time. They learn and write of the work of people such as Doctor Barnardo in helping poor and destitute children.
131. In other classes, pupils study the Second World War and this is made very relevant to them as they hear from a grandmother of her life as an evacuee. Pupils record her story in very good extended writing. In looking at Britain since 1948, pupils are producing very good group books considering changes over each decade under the headings of events, work, leisure and transport. To encourage their historical research some pupils have enjoyed working with the visiting historical enactment group on archaeological 'digs'.
132. As only one lesson was seen in Years 1 and 2, it is not possible to make a firm judgement on teaching and learning. The standard of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is overall good. Lessons are very well planned with clear learning objectives. Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain the objectives clearly at the start of the lessons and make good use of open-ended questions to reinforce previous learning and to ensure that pupils understand exactly what they need to concentrate on. Pupils are managed very well and, consequently, they have good attitudes to their work and concentrate sensibly. ICT is used well to support pupils' learning in history.
133. The subject co-ordinator is an effective co-ordinator. The medium-term planning is based mainly on national guidelines and it ensures very good coverage of the requirements of the National Curriculum. The curriculum leader is very keen to ensure pupils get as much hands-on experience as possible and to this end encourages visitors, such as members of the Northamptonshire archaeological society bringing artefacts for the pupils to see and handle. Apart from books in the library, pupils are encouraged to use the Internet for research purposes. The leader is always seeking to obtain more artefacts.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

134. This is a subject where standards are rising rapidly. This is due to the very good provision of resources, the very good subject expertise of the subject co-ordinator, her good leadership and management and the very good quality of teaching. These impact on the pupils' learning and ensure above average standards across the school. Overall, pupils' achievement is good. There has been a very good improvement since the last inspection. Standards and the quality of teaching and learning have improved together with the provision of resources. The key issue mentioned at the last inspection has been very well met.
135. Pupils have a very good range of opportunities to develop their ICT skills with the use of the computer suite and the provision of computers in classrooms. The extensive range of relevant software purchased allows them to use ICT to support their studies in most areas of the curriculum. There is good evidence of pupils using ICT for word processing, the collection and analysis of data and to access and exchange information. Opportunities for control technology are also good.
136. Pupils by the end of Year 2 are able to save data, retrieve and use it appropriately. They are able to produce, organise, amend and present ideas using ICT. For example, in a Year 2 lesson the

pupils successfully accessed the software to find out a range of information on how plants grow, the Great Fire of London and Samuel Pepys. Having done this they understood what they saw and successfully word processed answers to questions and made up their own stories. The software being used provides an excellent example of how cross-curricular links can be established in subjects such as science, history and English.

137. By the end of Year 6, many pupils are starting to choose information required for a variety of purposes, check accuracy and prepare in a form for processing. They use ICT successfully to organise, improve and present information for specific purposes and audiences in various forms and styles. Many exchange information using e-mail. This was seen in e-mails they had sent to a firm requesting information. In a Year 6 lesson, all the pupils were fully independent when successfully logging on to a programme about Llandudno. Here they had the responsibility of evaluating the content and layout of the programme and suggesting ways it could be improved. They decided successfully how information on people who work in Llandudno, information on public services, shops, and tourist features could be better presented and made more 'user-friendly'. The high level of challenge set by the teacher enabled the pupils to learn how to select, analyse information and to evaluate difficulties and problems of the layout of the disc. Through their very good understanding, they suggested improvements, short cuts, and the usefulness of the disc as a learning tool.
138. Due to the high levels of support teachers receive from the subject co-ordinator and the training they have all received, the quality of teaching is very good, overall, and sometimes excellent. An excellent lesson, in Year 5, showed the teacher illustrating the use of a range of sensors and monitoring equipment to her pupils. The pupils responded in an excellent manner, asking a range of searching questions and answering the teacher's questions with well-reasoned answers. Pupils were asked to decide on a hypothesis that could be tested, using one of the sensors and to draw a graph that predicted the outcome of their hypothesis. They showed a very good understanding of how sensors can be used to monitor and measure external events, clearly understanding the probable outcomes and how to present data by means of a graph.
139. The school has made a very successful investment in ICT and has supported its entire staff for training very well. This is paying dividends in the high standards many pupils are now achieving.

MUSIC

140. Music is given a very high status throughout the school and by Year 6 pupils have made excellent progress. As no music lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, because of a specialist teacher's illness and the inspection timetable, a judgement cannot be made on standards by Year 2. However, lesson planning, systematic and regular opportunities for high quality specialist teaching and pupils' singing in assembly indicate these pupils are provided with an enriched curriculum. Several members of staff, as well as the music specialists, have very good musical expertise and exert a strong influence on the quality of work in the school. There is outstanding provision by visiting specialists for singing, orchestra, instrumental tuition and extra-curricular activities. In Years 3 to 6, eight out of ten pupils learn a musical instrument, including brass, woodwind, stringed and percussion. Pupils in this school are being inspired to love music, by the examples set by teachers and specialist musicians, and their choice of musical activities for engaging pupils' interest in music.
141. The school has made excellent progress in improving provision in music since the last inspection, a full judgement was not made on standards then, although standards were only average in performing and now this aspect is excellent. Since the previous inspection the school has gained Arts Mark Gold for its music and drama performances. Since the previous inspection, the school has addressed its key issue for action very well in improving opportunities for teaching composition and strengthening teachers' subject knowledge. There is now an excellent range of instruments to enable pupils to compose music. Opportunities for all pupils in Years 3 to 6, regardless of musical ability to perform in public, for example for the local Arts Festival Concert and the school's musical performance of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" are excellent.

142. Throughout the school, many pupils control their voices very well and sing joyfully and tunefully. By Year 6, pupils sing together with a very good ability to adjust their own performance to fit the needs of the group. They understand how key musical elements and structure help to produce the mood in music and they respond very sensitively to changes in mood by adjusting their own performance, for example when singing in harmony during rehearsals for "A Midsummer's Night's Dream." Pupils successfully play a very wide range of instruments, including the Irish penny whistle, and have an excellent ability to understand notation and play beats in different times. Pupils listen to European and non-European composers and music from past times with very good appreciation and understanding of music, ranging from steel bands to the classical music of Vivaldi. Curriculum planning, lesson observations and recorded work indicate that pupils now have good opportunities for composing and Year 3 pupils reached high standards in a lesson observed when composing music for showing the musical picture of "A Summer Afternoon". When composing, pupils use their understanding of notation with ease because of the rich practical experiences they are given for learning to make music.
143. The quality of teaching is excellent. The specialist teachers have excellent musical knowledge, infectious enthusiasm and are very skilled in encouraging pupils' interest and talents in music. Staff select imaginative and exciting pieces of music and appropriate activities which inspire pupils to learn. Planning is excellent and well grounded in a high quality scheme of work. Expectations are very high for all pupils and encourage high quality performance. The very well developed programme for music teaching ensures progression in pupils' learning.
144. The excellent opportunities for extra-curricular activities and very high levels of individual tuition ensure that all pupils experience considerable success. This is shown by the high level of commitment and competence of the pupils in the large school orchestra and in the musical productions. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 are eligible to join in the musical productions and, once pupils reach a basic standard of competence, they may all join the orchestra. Opportunities for pupils to have equality of opportunities for learning are very good. Pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress, whilst opportunities for talented pupils are good. Since the previous inspection, the school has created a very well equipped specialist music room. Opportunities for ICT are satisfactory, pupils use programmes for helping them to compose music, although there are no computerised keyboards at present. Assessment is used very well to provide for the range of ability.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

145. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils attain standards that are above average. They achieve well, working very hard at their tasks with very good levels of motivation and behaviour. Standards across the school have improved well since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs play a full part in lessons and achieve as well as their classmates. Across the school, pupils have very good opportunities to learn swimming through the use of the school swimming pool.
146. Pupils know the importance of regular exercise to keep fit and healthy. On most occasions pupils are good at remembering their kit and are smartly turned out for lessons. They know why lessons begin with a warm-up and end with a cool-down. Pupils understand the importance, for their own health and safety, of the teacher's 'stop' command, responding immediately.
147. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils show good control and co-ordination in throwing balls and other objects. For example, in a Year 2 lesson the pupils throw and catch a ball accurately over a distance and aim accurately a beanbag at a target. This lesson encouraged pupils to apply their numeracy skills very well. When the beanbag landed on a number they quickly mentally added up a series of numbers such as 50+25+5. The very good organisation of the lesson by the teacher enabled pupils to learn successfully a range of ball skills. Many showed high levels of accuracy when shooting a ball through a basketball ring. This lesson illustrated the good level of resources in the school where, for example, the basketball ring and backboard were at a suitable height for pupils of their age. These pupils when swimming show above average levels of

competence with eight out of the 30 pupils having achieved a certificate for swimming 50 metres or more and nine others are able to swim a width of the pool with no arm bands. Most of the other pupils show a very good level of confidence in the water and are starting to develop some swimming strokes successfully.

148. By the end of Year 6, pupils build successfully on skills taught previously. Most are able to choose and combine skills, techniques and ideas. They use these appropriately in activities showing consistent precision, control and fluency. When pupils in Year 5 use a wide range of throwing equipment, they show a very good ability to organise and lead the activity. Here the pupils take turns in playing the role of a coach, recording their achievements and seeing if they can beat their best achievement. The good use of a video camera aids the pupils' evaluation of their own performances.
149. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Standards are rising due to very good subject management by the subject co-ordinator, advising teachers on curriculum planning and delivery very well. She is starting to develop further the adopted scheme of work. The good level of resources, and the excellent range of extra-curricular activities for Years 3 to 6, supported by the teaching of professional sport coaches, for example, for cricket, football rugby and tennis, and persons from the community, with high levels of competence in their respective sports, further raises standards. Pupils' high levels of interest and talents for the subject are being developed very well. There are good opportunities for talented pupils to develop their skills in Years 3 to 6 because this is enhanced through the use of rigorous subject teaching by professional coaches. However, pupils' talents are not systematically identified from an early age and their progress is not monitored. The school has plans to develop more specialist subject teaching throughout the school from September 2003 in order to develop all pupils' talents more rigorously.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

150. Lessons observed during the inspection week and a scrutiny of the work done in the past year indicate that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards overall are in line with the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils learn about religion and they learn effectively through religion. This contributes to the very good relationships fostered within the school. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. In the last inspection, standards were recorded as being in line with expectations by the end of Year 2 and good in relation to expectations by the end of Year 6. Standards are not as high in Year 6 as at the time of the previous inspection. Evidence from examining pupils' previous work and lesson observations also indicates the quality of teaching is now satisfactory, rather than good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress through high quality support. However, progress of higher attaining pupils is inconsistent and unsatisfactory for gifted pupils.
151. By the end of Year 2, pupils think about the journey through life and the stages that they will pass through as they grow older. In one class, pupils sort stages of life labels into the correct order beginning with baby and ending with old age pensioner. They are beginning to explore different religions and cultures as they look at religious artefacts such as a Jewish prayer shawl and pictures of Hindus celebrating their Festival of Lights. In Year 2 pupils find out how Jewish children, at the age of 13, are welcomed into their synagogue and celebrate their Bar Mitzvah. They study stories from the Christian Bible, such as Noah and his ark and David and Goliath. They look at the birth, life and death of Jesus and think of His resurrection at the time of Easter. Pupils are aware of places of worship such as a church. They think about the people who go to church and what roles they have such as vicar or churchwarden.
152. By the end of Year 6, pupils have broadened their understanding of Christianity. They know about the major festivals of the church such as Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent and Easter. They study the teachings of Jesus and record, in some detail, parables He told such as the Good Samaritan. Some pupils produce good extended writing as they reflect on, for example the story of Mother Theresa and her faith in God. They have looked at how Christians seek to help other people as they consider the life of William Booth and how he founded the Salvation Army. Pupils develop their understanding of other world religions. In their studies on Islam, they write of the life of Muhammad and how followers of that faith worship in a mosque and that their holy book is the

Quran. They also study Sikhism and record the life story of Guru Nanak, understanding that Sikhs worship in a Gurdwara. In their study of Hinduism, pupils think about special festivals such as Holi

153. Evidence from examining pupils' work and the three lessons seen indicates the quality of teaching is mainly satisfactory. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives, which set a clear focus for what is to be learned. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and manage and motivate them very well so that they are involved in and enjoy their learning. However, pupils are usually set the same task, and there are missed opportunities, especially for higher attaining pupils, to develop independent learning.
154. The headteacher is presently acting as the subject co-ordinator. He recognises that there is a need for this subject to be developed further, especially with regard to monitoring and assessment procedures. The medium-term plans, which show good coverage of the requirements of the local agreed syllabus, are used successfully as the basis for teachers' short-term planning. The teaching of religious education is greatly enhanced by the collection of artefacts and this is being constantly built upon. Religious education makes an important contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development and to the teaching of citizenship. The use of ICT is satisfactory.