

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Burton Latimer

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 122015

Headteacher: Mrs M Wood

Reporting inspector: N A Pett  
17331

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> June 2003

Inspection number: 248314

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Street Burton Latimer Kettering Northants
Postcode:	NN15 5RL
Telephone number:	(01536) 722757
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Pykett
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17331	Mr N A Pett	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	Standards: the school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
14756	Mr J R Lovell	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
12641	C Grove	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Religious education Educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
12394	C May	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics History	
25203	R Cooke	Team inspector	Science Music Special educational needs	
32021	A McClean	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Geography Physical education	

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>8 - 10</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>10 - 11</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>11 - 13</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>13 - 15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>15 - 16</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>16 - 17</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>19 - 23</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>24 - 39</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated in the established town of Burton Latimer, to the south of Kettering. It caters for boys and girls aged between 4 and 11 years of age and the majority of pupils come from the immediate area. There are 279 pupils on roll and it is larger than other primary schools nationally. The number of pupils eligible for free school sandwich meals is below the national average, although a significant minority of pupils experience both social and financial disadvantage. Their ethnic heritage is mainly white European, and the proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is low. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is above average; these are mainly for moderate learning, and emotional and behavioural, difficulties. The number of pupils holding statements to address their specific needs is below the national average. Children's attainment on entry is very broad and is below the expectations for their ages overall.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a good school in that it has a good learning environment and cares very well for its pupils within its Christian values. Results are showing an increasing percentage of pupils achieving the national average in National Curriculum tests and results at the higher levels are good. Teaching is overall of a good standard, but whilst many pupils are making good progress, achievement overall is only satisfactory. The school is well led and managed and gives satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Has good expectations, and makes effective provision for pupils' attitudes, behaviour, values, personal development and relationships.
- Provides very well for the Foundation Stage children.
- Teaches effectively to promote the sound progress of the large majority of pupils.
- Gives good support to pupils with special educational needs.
- Is developing the procedures for assessment well.
- Provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.

#### **What could be improved**

- Consistency in the standards being attained so that all pupils achieve well and develop their potential.
- The quality of presentation in pupils' work.
- The quality of teaching and learning in a minority of classes, especially in Years 3 and 4.
- The provision for information and communication technology to meet statutory requirements.
- The quality and range of learning resources.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Improvement has been good since the last inspection in 1998. The development plan is now fully strategic, although the financial planning is not always sufficiently defined in the plan. The leadership skills of subject co-ordinators, several of whom are new in post, are now satisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved. The pupils' progress and standards have been improved well by the end of Year 2 and standards have been raised in design and technology and in information and communication technology by the end of Years 2 and 6 and in history by the end of Year 6. The overall progress that pupils make has been recognised by a national award for improvement in standards. There has been a significant improvement in the accommodation which is now good. Even with these positive changes, the school recognises that it has to raise standards still further and the potential to achieve this exists.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	B	C	C
Mathematics	D	C	D	D
Science	C	C	C	C

**Key**

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 were below average in reading, average in writing and well above average in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science were average. Results in 2002 at the end of Year 6 were average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Taken over the past three years, results at the end of Year 6 have been broadly in line with the national average and in comparison with similar schools, although attainment in mathematics has been below average. The year group contained a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the progress of some pupils had been hampered by their moving schools. The trend for improvement during this time has been broadly in line with the national trend. Targets for the percentage of pupils reaching the national levels were not met, although many pupils achieved better than would be expected for their prior attainment. Standards in the Foundation Stage are above average overall and children achieve very well in the Early Learning Goals. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in mathematics and broadly average in other subjects. Most pupils generally learn well. Standards for the pupils currently in Year 6 are broadly average. Gifted and talented pupils often do well and those with special educational needs and the minority of pupils who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. However, the school recognises that it needs to concentrate support for below average pupils to improve their learning and achievement.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The majority of pupils enjoy coming to school, work hard and show very good attitudes. They maintain their interest and are proud of their achievements and their school but a minority of pupils do not respond well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well although there is a small minority who experience difficulties and their behaviour can be challenging. Pupils generally play well together at breaks and lunchtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Most pupils enjoy very good relationships although there are occasions when these breakdown. Older pupils often display a good sense of responsibility for their work and understand the impact of their actions on others.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Both authorised and unauthorised absence are broadly in line with the national average for primary schools, showing improvement in the past year.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching has improved well since the last inspection and taken overall it is good. Several teachers have only been in post this year and their improved teaching styles have yet to impact fully on raising standards. During this inspection, the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory in well over nine out of ten lessons, good or better in two thirds and very good or better in four out of ten. It is very good in the Foundation Stage and good in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 5 and 6, promoting pupils' effective learning. However, in Years 3 and 4, teaching varies too much. There are examples of very good teaching in these year groups, but it is only satisfactory for a significant number of pupils. This is because some teachers' expectations are not high enough and work set is insufficiently challenging. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good overall. In the best lessons, the teaching raises pupils' standards well and good links are made in other subjects to support pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Most lessons are well planned and, where teachers set work which meets pupils' differing needs, achievement is good. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well through the effective partnership between teachers and learning support staff.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The provision for the Foundation Stage is very good and that for Years 1 to 6 is broad and balanced and promotes a good range of learning opportunities. The National Curriculum requirements for information and communication technology are not fully met. Extra-curricular activities are good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is good and effectively supports pupils' progress through the good partnership between teachers and support staff. There is appropriate individual and group support. The significant number of pupils with moderate learning difficulties are making good progress. Statutory requirements are met.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory provision is made for the very small minority of pupils and this leads to their gaining a sound command of English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. The opportunities for personal development are good and pupils enthusiastically accept opportunities for posts of responsibility. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is good and reflects the school's Christian status.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good, as there is an effective approach to assessment and pupils are well known and cared for. Their academic and personal development is well monitored.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides clear direction for the school and manages well. There is a supportive partnership with the senior staff and most subject co-ordinators operate effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and their role in monitoring the standards and quality of education is satisfactory. They fulfil the large majority of their statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Analysis of tests results is carried out and there is effective monitoring of teaching and standards which has contributed well to school improvement.



The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school seeks to provide the best opportunities for its pupils and operates the principles of best value. Financial records show that prudent budgeting and very successful submissions for bids to support planned works has led to a considerable level of contingency. Whilst much of this money is earmarked for staffing and maintenance costs, the strategic demands are not always clearly designated. Thus, the school is giving satisfactory value for money.
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Through the effective school development plan, priorities are identified and action plans are appropriately carried out. This effective management is leading to the overall school improvement, although it must continue to be rigorous if standards are to be raised further. There is a good pupil: teacher ratio. The staff have appropriate qualifications and experience to teach the age range and the curriculum. Subject expertise is good overall. The accommodation is good. Learning resources are only satisfactory, but are used well. The very good displays add significantly to the learning ethos of the school.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases them most	What they would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That their children like school and are helped to mature and show responsibility and that behaviour is good.</li> <li>• The good quality of teaching.</li> <li>• The good progress made by their children.</li> <li>• The high expectations set by the school.</li> <li>• How well the school cares for its pupils.</li> <li>• The school is easily approachable and is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well they are informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The way in which the school works with them.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside of lessons.</li> </ul>

These are the views of the small minority of the parents and carers who attended the pre-inspection meeting and returned the pre-inspection questionnaire. Inspectors firmly agree with all of the points that please parents and carers most. Inspection evidence does not support the views about the lack of information on pupils' progress and there is a good range of extra-curricular activities. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about how well the school works with parents and carers.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Results in the National Curriculum tests and assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2002 were well above average in mathematics, average in writing and below average in reading. In teacher assessments for science, results were average. The percentage of pupils who gained the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics was well above average and was above average in teacher assessed science. In comparison with similar schools, results were well above average in mathematics and below average in reading and writing. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
2. At the end of Year 6, results in the 2002 tests were average in English and in science, but were below average in mathematics in comparison with all schools nationally and in relation to similar schools. Taking these three core subjects together, results were below average overall and below average in relation to pupils' prior attainment at the age of seven. Boys performed better than girls in mathematics and science and there was little difference in results in English. Targets for the percentage of pupils reaching the national levels were not met, although many pupils achieved better than would be expected for their prior attainment. Within this cohort of pupils a significant minority had moved schools, exerting an adverse effect on their progress and there was a larger than usual number of pupils with special educational needs. Taken over the past three years, results at the end of Year 6 have been broadly in line with the national average and in comparison with similar schools, although attainment in mathematics has been below average. The trend for improvement during this time has been broadly in line with the national trend. Comparisons with similar schools based on free school meals is affected because as the school only provides a sandwich lunch some parents report that they do not take up their eligibility.
3. Records show that there is a broad spread of prior attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage and it is below average overall. Most children make good progress, with examples of very good progress. Standards, when they move into Year 1, are above average for their age in personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy, mathematics and physical development and average in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Standards being achieved by the end of Year 2 are above average in mathematics and average in English and science. Standards are above average in music and physical education and average in all other subjects including religious education. Standards being achieved by the end of Year 6 are average in all subjects except music and physical education; here they are above average. Pupils are generally making satisfactory progress although the majority of average and most of the pupils with above average prior attainment are achieving better than pupils of lower prior attainment, especially in the core subjects. The school recognises this fact and has begun to implement changes which consist of booster groups and springboard activities to raise standards overall. Insufficient time has elapsed to gauge the full benefit of this activity. Overall, pupils are achieving well in the Foundation Stage and satisfactorily in Years 1 to 6 with signs of improving achievement through effective teaching.
4. Standards in literacy are at least average overall and, for a significant proportion of pupils are above average. Many pupils speak fluently and clearly, making good use of technical vocabulary. This reflects the efforts put in to raise standards. The majority of pupils listen well. Standards in writing are satisfactory by the end of Year 6 and the school recognises that it needs to continue to work rigorously with its strategy of extending writing opportunities across all subjects to improve standards still further. Many pupils read well, with confidence and expression. Standards in numeracy are average overall, although strong enough for most pupils to meet the demands made in other subjects. Basic skills in information and communication technology are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, but below average in the application of the skills in other subjects. In Year 6, the potential exists for standards to become above average in information and communication technology as even more use is made of the improved resources.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of appropriate individual and group support and they achieve well in relation to their learning difficulties. This is because they are

identified at a very early stage and their individual education plans (IEPs) and their targets are clear. Support staff keep careful records of work done by individual pupils and information is routinely exchanged with class teachers. Examples of good progress can be seen in the development of fine motor skills in learning to hold a pencil correctly, writing on lines and recognising simple word shapes. A majority of pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties and a significant number are making good progress. The small minority of pupils identified as having English as an additional language are given appropriate support and are achieving well. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and there is good provision for them. Overall, pupils of all levels of attainment are fully included in support for their learning.

6. Since the last inspection, standards have been broadly maintained and improved for the above average and average pupils but not sufficiently for below average pupils. Planning is beginning to address this shortfall and the improved quality of teaching has the potential to quickly remedy matters. The progress of pupils has been recognised by a national award and analysis of pupils' progress shows that many achieve better than would be expected for their prior attainment. A degree of pupil mobility has an adverse effect on national comparisons.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

7. Overall children and pupils have very good attitudes towards school and work and enjoy very good relationships. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged as being satisfactory. Combined with good standards of behaviour and a good response to those opportunities for personal and social development, these characteristics make a positive contribution to their attainment and progress. Most parents state that their child likes school. Pupils talk very positively about their school and are proud of their achievements. There is a strong sense of a Christian community.
8. By the end of the Foundation Stage, standards in children's personal, social and emotional development are above average. Children make very good progress in developing self-confidence and self-esteem and respond very well to the staff's high expectations that they will take care of their own needs and join in what is going on. Children settle in very quickly as they soon gain confidence from knowing the routines and pattern of the sessions. Children come happily into their classes and learn to share and take turns. They are polite and friendly towards one another and make good progress in understanding and respecting the rights and opinions of others because of the very good role models set by the adults. The children's behaviour is excellent. They concentrate well when engaged in tasks that interest them. For example, when playing in the 'hairdressers' or 'café' they play very well with their friends for a long time without tiring, or disagreements occurring. The quality of the role play is enhanced by the provision of very good resources and the fact that the role play areas are based on local shops that are well known to the children.
9. The attitude of pupils to learning in Years 1 to 6 is generally good. Pupils respond well to teaching in the significant majority of lessons and occasionally their response is very good and excellent. In those classes where the pace of the lesson is good and teachers' expectations are high, pupils are well motivated, interested and responsive. For example, in a literacy lesson for the oldest pupils, which was very well structured to use time effectively and stimulate all pupils to reflect on an article about, 'why kids are turning into couch potatoes,' they were able to develop ideas in small groups and express opinions which they often justified using personal experiences. During this lesson, pupils were very enthusiastic and remained focused on their work, enabling them to make very good gains in their knowledge and understanding. Pupils generally work well in pairs and in groups, sharing resources with one another, co-operating and increasingly collaborating well, as they move through the school. Where the pace and challenge of lessons is less demanding, concentration and focus sometimes lapse after short periods and pupils need constant encouragement to continue to apply themselves to their work. Pupils ask and answer questions appropriately and willingly join in discussions, but their ability to undertake independent research is insufficiently developed.
10. Behaviour is good. Pupils move around the school in an orderly fashion, with a minimum of supervision. They are courteous and trustworthy and show respect for the school's and other pupils' property. There is no evidence of vandalism, graffiti or litter in or around the school. They generally behave well in class, although there is a small minority of pupils who experience difficulties. This

minority can display challenging behaviour and sometimes fail to respond to instructions. However, behaviour is generally well managed so that the adverse effect on their learning, and that of others, is kept to a minimum. Pupils do not express any concerns about bullying or oppressive behaviour and are very confident that if they have any worries about bullying or relationship breakdowns, they may take them to staff or the headteacher and they will be resolved. There have been no exclusions in the current year and this rate of exclusions is static.

11. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and all adults working in the school are very good. Pupils have great respect for each other's feelings, values and beliefs. There is an ethos of respect for others so that pupils at all levels of attainment are encouraged to speak with confidence, to answer questions and to express their opinions. In a good Year 5/6 personal and social education lesson, they responded very well to discussions on how people can live together in harmony. The pupils responded very well to this opportunity for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. During breaks, they play well together and enjoy each other's company, mixing well across the different age groups and genders. They are supportive and considerate of each other and generally ensure that nobody is excluded. This applies especially to pupils with special educational needs who participate well in group work. There are very good relationships between the pupils and the adults who support them. There are very good relationships between the pupils themselves.
12. Throughout the school pupils warmly welcome visitors and are confident in showing and discussing their work. Even the youngest pupils seek to explain their work to visitors and involve them in activities. Pupils respond well to visiting speakers who help them to develop a very good awareness of the needs of others, as seen when a visitor spoke about life in the Caribbean. They identify and support a range of charities such as a local night shelter for the homeless and the Children's Society.
13. Throughout the school, pupils undertake tasks within the classroom. They keep their own areas tidy and assist in handing out books and resources. As they progress through the school, pupils have increased opportunities to undertake whole school responsibilities and help younger pupils. When opportunities are provided, pupils respond well as they assume responsibilities and they often volunteer to undertake duties. The newly instituted School Council provides a forum for the discussion of issues of morality and behaviour. One pupil from Year 3 testified that her class representative had taken suggestions for good behaviour and ideas for improving behaviour generally, to the School Council. Such pupils are confident that any reported instances of unacceptable behaviour are appropriately dealt with by teaching and support staff.
14. Attendance is broadly satisfactory and the majority of authorised absences occur as a result of illness and medical visits with some absence for holidays. It has been maintained since the last inspection. Staff and pupils arrive in classrooms punctually and sessions begin on time. These levels of attendance have a satisfactory effect on pupils' learning and attainment.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

15. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was at least satisfactory in well over nine out of ten lessons, at least good in seven out of ten and very good or better in four out of ten. This shows a very good improvement since the last inspection when teaching and learning were judged as being satisfactory overall. Several teachers have only been in post this year and their improved teaching styles have yet to impact fully on raising standards, but a minority of teachers do not have high enough expectations.
16. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are very good. There is a wide range of well-planned activities ensuring the children achieve very well. Most children make good progress overall, with examples of very good progress. All of the Early Learning Goals of personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy, mathematics and physical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development are very well covered. A very small minority are learning English as an additional language and there is good support with additional advice from external services. The staff place the highest emphasis on personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Classroom and external space is used very well to provide sufficient time for both taught lessons and for children to initiate their own activities.

17. Classes are often arranged by mixed age. In Year 1 and 2, the overall quality of teaching is good but in Years 3 to 6 there is too much variation. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 are consistently well taught but in Years 3 and 4 there are some shortcomings. In these two year groups there are examples of very good practice and pupils learn very well, but in other lessons, teaching is only satisfactory and occasionally unsatisfactory. The school's monitoring of teaching and learning has made it aware of this issue and appropriate steps are being taken to improve the provision.
18. Teachers generally have good subject expertise. They plan lessons well drawing on National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies for English and mathematics as well as other national guidelines in all subjects and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Literacy and numeracy skills are generally well taught and appropriate work for different levels of attainment is set. In most other lessons, higher attaining pupils are given tasks which challenge their understanding; in a minority of lessons, lower attaining pupils are given similar tasks to the rest of the class, which, despite adult support, are not always appropriate to their learning needs.
19. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers are responsible for setting individual targets and for writing pupils' individual education plans. The pupils themselves as well as support assistants are involved in the target setting process so that they are aware of their own achievements. In oral parts of lessons teachers ensure that questioning involves pupils of all levels of attainment. Good use is made of learning support staff to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are appropriately supported by the targeting of groups by teachers and support staff or by teachers circulating and giving individual advice and encouragement. In some lessons such as in science in Years 3 and 4, teachers provide printed word lists to help the pupils with special educational needs to record their work. However, the lack of variation in the tasks provided for pupils of different levels of attainment in some lessons reduces the opportunities for pupils to work independently at tasks that are especially designed for them. Lower attaining pupils do not always learn as well as other pupils and this is a key issue for the school in raising standards. Pupils with English as an additional language are given sound support.
20. In the best lessons, teachers' enthusiasm is often transferred to the pupils and this leads to enjoyable lessons in which pupils work hard and their learning is good. The learning objectives are shared with the pupils, enabling them to know what they will be learning. They are often referred to again in the summary sessions when pupils consider whether they have achieved their learning goals. Teachers use opportunities within lessons to assess pupils' learning, often through working with a focus group or individuals. Opportunities for assessment are also taken during discussions when good questioning helps teachers to gauge pupils' learning and understanding, for example, by asking for explanations or for a recap of previous learning. In some lessons very good questioning asks for detailed answers which extend pupils' literacy skills and help to develop pupils' own understanding of their learning. Pupils are made to think.
21. Where teachers have good expectations, particularly in Years 1 and 2 and the majority of classes in Years 3 to 6, pupils are well managed, leading to good standards of behaviour and the opportunity for pupils to work independently or in groups with the minimum of supervision, even at the earliest ages. For example, a Year 3 numeracy lesson where pupils learning about money was very well managed. Time and resources are used well. Increasing use of the new computer room is developing opportunities for independent research and learning. The use of information and communication technology in subjects across the curriculum is being developed as a learning tool and pupils enjoy these opportunities. All these factors make a strong contribution to the improved levels of pupils' learning. The quality of marking is variable; some is very good but there are instances, especially in the foundation subjects, where it does not show pupils how they might improve their work. Homework is used effectively and encourages pupils to take further responsibility for their learning although there is some inconsistency in ensuring it is set regularly enough.

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

22. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. All of the early learning goals of personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy, mathematics, physical

development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development are very well covered. Learning opportunities are enhanced by the very good accommodation which enables both indoor and outdoor activities to be effectively developed.

23. The range and quality of learning opportunities in Year 1 to Year 6 are good. All the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and religious education is effectively covered through the teaching of the locally agreed syllabus. The time allocation for English and mathematics is significant to enable the national strategies to be taught and time in other subjects is broadly satisfactory. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies form the basis for teaching English and mathematics. The learning opportunities provided by the strategies ensure that pupils progress in the skills of reading, writing and mathematics as they move up through the school. To match work closely to pupils' attainment, pupils are placed in sets for their literacy and numeracy work. Booster classes are offered to Year 6 pupils, some of which take place in school time and others after school. An Easter school is also offered. Information and communication technology is taught as a subject in its own right in an appropriately equipped computer room. National Curriculum requirements are not met for control technology and sensing in the information and communication technology syllabus for Year 3 to Year 6. The extent to which information and communication technology is used to support the teaching of other subjects is unsatisfactory and the school acknowledges this as an area for development.
24. There are appropriate policies for all subjects and suitable action plans to provide for medium-term development. Joint planning for parallel classes takes place and this is frequently effective, although planning is not always entirely consistent. In art and design work for older pupils, for instance, differences exist between classes in terms of the opportunities provided. Innovative features of the school are the 'Curriculum Weeks' when teachers and pupils focus for more extensive periods of time on a particular theme, for instance, the Victorian era or the Golden Jubilee. In order to support those children whose circumstances are not conducive to the satisfactory completion of homework, the school has started to offer an after-school homework club.
25. Very good attention is paid to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the learning opportunities provided. The school rightly sees itself as being inclusive and inspection evidence confirms that it provides very well for the involvement of all pupils. Apart from occasions when pupils are withdrawn from class for specific support programmes, pupils with special educational needs take part in all class and playground activities. Most support is geared to helping pupils in classrooms so that they access all aspects of the curriculum. The extensive provision of support staff is a major indication of the commitment to supporting pupils with particular needs. Matching work to pupils' needs, for instance through the grouping arrangements in English and mathematics in Year 3 to Year 6 enables all pupils to make satisfactory progress. Booster provision is offered to all pupils in Year 6 and not just to those in borderline categories. Pupils' attainment is analysed in terms of their performance by gender, racial origin and special educational needs. Where a pattern emerges, this leads to changes. For instance, the recognition of weaker reading standards in boys has led the school to buy reading material which is likely to be of greater interest to boys. The introduction of the School Council, where pupils' perceptions of their experience in school are discussed, is seen as a further aspect of the school's commitment to social and educational inclusion. Where visits take place, for instance the residential visit to Wales in Year 6, the school arranges support for those children who might not otherwise be able to participate.
26. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. A good spread of activities for both younger and older pupils is on offer. Opportunities range from music, where there are two choirs and clubs for instrumentalists, to sport, including football, and also to board games, knitting, cycle training and an information and communication technology club. Team games are played against neighbouring schools and younger pupils sing with a nearby infant school. The extra-curricular homework club is not currently as well subscribed as the school would wish and further efforts are to be made to reach those pupils who would benefit from this provision. The curriculum is enriched by visits to Woburn Safari Park, Bedford Butterfly Park, theatre visits and historical sites such as Rockingham Castle and the Black Country Museum. Such visits serve to support learning across a number of subjects. The residential visit to Govilon in Wales for the oldest pupils provides opportunities for experiences beyond the work of the school.

27. Since the last inspection, its provision has been strengthened through improvements in the Foundation Stage, in schemes of work for design and technology and information and communication technology and through better equal opportunities. The provision for special educational needs and for extra-curricular activities is now good.
28. The overall provision for personal development is now good, showing effective improvement since the last inspection. Many activities contribute to pupils' personal development and notably whole-school assemblies, religious education lessons, the personal, social and health education programme and the recently instituted School Council. There is very good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE). A high priority is given to this work and to Circle Time when pupils discuss social, moral and citizenship issues. As part of the PHSE programme, effective arrangements are made for sex education, which involve the school nurse and for drugs education. Within the last year, the school has gained the Healthy School Award at silver standard.
29. The contribution of the local community to learning is good. There are good links to the parish church which pupils visit on occasions and where services are held at important festivals, and with the local Methodist and Baptist chapels. The school nurse is involved in the teaching programme and the local policeman in road safety issues. The fire service discusses fire and safety issues with pupils. The school regularly plays host to student teachers as part of their preparation for the teaching role. Satisfactory links exist with other schools and partner institutions.
30. Good attention is given to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and satisfactory provision for their cultural development. This represents an overall improvement since the last inspection in terms of overall provision. The provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development and the quality of acts of collective worship will be reported on by the Section 23 inspector appointed by the diocese. The school is strong in its conviction that positive approaches are taken to pupils' skills and talents. Spiritual perspectives are developed through the PHSE programme, when pupils learn, for example, how people can live in harmony with one another. The programme of visits and visitors supports development in pupils' spiritual perspectives. Elsewhere in the programme, pupils are encouraged to speak about their own experiences and opportunities are given to them to consider their own thoughts and concerns. Pupils also have opportunities to empathise with people in history, when learning about life in ancient Athens and Sparta, or in music when Year 5 and Year 6 pupils learn to improve on their own and on others' performances. The behaviour policy, and in particular the positive approach adopted towards behaviour, provides an important basis for pupils' moral development in terms of their understanding of right and wrong. Pupils are taught to care about themselves and others, which is a major aspect of the positive ethos of the school. The newly instituted School Council provides a forum for the discussion of issues of morality and behaviour. Circle Time provides good opportunities to promote respectful relationships between pupils and their teachers and among pupils themselves, adding to the moral and social provision. For example, in one Circle Time lesson, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils listened intently to their classteacher, as she described occasions when she was able to demonstrate a talent to others and they paid similar attention to other pupils who gave their own detailed examples.
31. The provision for social development is good. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn to develop socially, especially in Circle Time sessions. Lunchtimes and The Breakfast Club are well organised and provide good opportunities for pupils to mix together. The wide range of visits and extra-curricular activities give good opportunities for social development. Similar opportunities are offered when older pupils serve a meal to staff as part of the Healthy School initiative and when pupils hold parties for local pensioners. A 'Crazy Hats Day' provided the focus for fund-raising for a local cancer charity, which adds to pupils' awareness of their moral responsibility.
32. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall. There is good provision for pupils to learn about their national heritage and culture, for example through theatre visits and visits to the Black Country Museum and places of historical interest. Subjects such as religious education give pupils satisfactory opportunities to learn about some cultural traditions and aspects of different faiths. Pupils' attention is drawn to the circumstances of people who live in the local Night Shelter. Some opportunities occur for pupils to learn about aspects of the cultural diversity of modern Britain through assemblies conducted by the local multicultural advisory service, and a Caribbean visitor who contrasts life in Jamaica with life in Burton Latimer. The Punjabi Liaison Officer and an Indian Music

Group have also visited the school. However, opportunities are missed in art and music to develop pupils' awareness of the diverse cultures within Britain today.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

### ***Assessment***

33. Procedures in the Foundation Stage are good. Arrangements have recently been made to receive information from the playgroups which many children have attended to better inform initial assessment. As soon as this assessment is made, the information is very well used and detailed records of children's progress are then kept. Assessment is used well to plan future lessons, ensuring that all children make significant progress. The differing needs of children in relation to their ages and stages of development are well recognised in the way they are grouped for short sessions in literacy and numeracy.
34. Assessment procedures for pupils from Years 1 to 6 are good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Information from the Foundation Stage is built on well in the core subjects of English and mathematics. National Curriculum statutory and optional tests are carried out, as well as regular reading assessments. Results of these tests are recorded for each pupil and analysed by the headteacher and assessment co-ordinator. Conclusions are communicated to subject co-ordinators and individual teachers to highlight areas of strength and areas to be developed. From this, teachers modify planning and teaching strategies; pupils' learning is analysed in literacy and numeracy each half-term to set pupils' their targets in these areas. A new system of target-setting for individual pupils is being introduced for English, mathematics and science. It has the potential to improve the existing process to give continuity, as well as strengthening pupil self-assessment, which is in its infancy. Regular staff meetings are held to review assessment procedures. Moderation of English, mathematics and science work is carried out regularly to arrive at a whole school understanding of National Curriculum levels in those subjects. Assessment in information and communication technology and in religious education and the foundation subjects is less well established; pupils and staff benefit from a whole school system of recording pupil progress in these subjects against programmes of study and key concepts. This progress is yet to be systematically analysed to provide evidence which enables teachers to modify planning, teaching and learning.
35. Use of assessment data, including the use of modern technology to produce whole school trends, is particularly strong when used to highlight pupils who make significant progress or those pupils needing extra assistance. Progress of ethnic minority pupils is monitored and results analysed. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language have literacy and numeracy targets as well as behavioural ones if required. These are regularly updated and reviewed. Classroom assistants are aware of these and provide good assistance for these pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language are identified and supported from an early stage in the school. Due to this support and regular consultation with outside agencies and parents, these pupils have access to a full curriculum and take part in all school activities. Management of assessment is very good. Senior managers regularly review processes within the school. They record and analyse progress in lessons and in tests, they ensure that all such information is communicated to teachers, pupils and parents, resulting in as much assessment information being used to improve both teaching and learning.

### ***Support and guidance***

36. Procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' personal development are generally good and have improved since the last inspection. The school's ethos, the good provision for moral development and the overall high expectations of teachers and adults are successful in promoting pupils' good standards of behaviour in and around the school and during lessons. The school has an effective behaviour policy, which is consistently applied by staff and well understood by pupils, who value praise and recognition from staff. They readily recognise that staff are fair and feel a responsibility to behave well. Neither pupils nor parents identify bullying as a problem and the ethos of the school promotes a sense of community with which pupils identify. The good role models provided by teachers promote good relationships in a school that is generally free from oppressive behaviour. Pupils are confident that if they take concerns, including those about friendship difficulties, to any



member of staff, they will be listened to and the issues will be addressed sympathetically and effectively, involving parents fully when necessary. The effectiveness of the strategies employed and the close monitoring of personal development ensure that the good standards of behaviour, overall absence of oppressive behaviour and very good personal relationships, have a positive effect on both attainment and progress. Outside agencies and education specialists provide good support and advice for pupils.

37. Procedures and arrangements for child protection are satisfactory and meet requirements. The policy is underpinned by the local area protection committee policy. The designated child protection officer has undertaken appropriate training. Staff are given appropriate guidance and child protection is included within staff induction procedures. They are aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of any concerns and are vigilant in fulfilling their role. There is an appropriate policy, supported by guidelines, in place for intervening on those occasions when there is a risk of a pupil harming themselves or another pupil/adult.
38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are satisfactory and parents are made aware of their responsibilities. Aggregate holidays in excess of 10 days are only authorised in exceptional circumstances. Whilst most parents report absences to the school on the first day, there are a minority who fail to do so, and they are contacted by the school office staff. The education welfare officer provides satisfactory support.
39. There is a satisfactory policy for health and safety, which is operated in conjunction with the LEA policy. There is generally a good awareness of safety throughout the school and teachers promote safe practice in lessons. The headteacher, who has responsibility for health and safety, has not undertaken any appropriate training in respect of this work. Although risk assessments are completed in respect of visits, there is currently only a limited portfolio of risk assessments and this is being developed. Teachers are successful in ensuring that pupils understand the need to behave and act sensibly for the safety of themselves and others. The school carries out regular safety checks and when defective equipment is identified it is taken out of use. The arrangements for providing first aid are good. Accident records are very good and regularly checked by the headteacher to ensure that any potential risks are identified. Parents are notified immediately in the event of any concerns.
40. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs, employing eight full-time support staff. One of the support assistants is employed as a behaviour support assistant. Individual education plans are well structured and targets are regularly reviewed. There has been good progress in adopting the new code of practice and in maintaining appropriate strategies and structures to support pupils with a range of needs. The support for pupils with English as an additional language is effectively targeted to meet their needs in acquiring effective command of the language.
41. Links with playgroups for pupils entering the Foundation Stage are good so that children are well prepared for their education. Similarly there are effective links with secondary schools which help to inform pupils and parents about transfer arrangements.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

42. The effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents is satisfactory and since the last inspection, parents have continued to make a satisfactory contribution to the life and work of the school and their children's learning. The school works hard to involve parents in supporting their children's learning and the school community. This partnership is reinforced by a home/school agreement which has been signed by most parents and children. Although overall support, by parents, for children's learning is satisfactory, many parents provide good support for their children's learning, encouraging them to develop good study habits, for example, by reading regularly at home.
43. A small minority of parents provided the inspectors with their views of the school and the education it provides. These are positive views. Parents are particularly positive about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching; the high expectations of the school; the good standards of behaviour; the ease with which they, as parents, feel that they can approach the school with any questions or problems attitudes towards school; the help and care that the school provides children to become mature and responsible and parents state that children like school. A small minority of parents would like improvements in the information which is provided about pupils' progress, a closer working

relationship with parents and a more interesting range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors firmly support the positive views of parents. Inspection evidence does not support the views about the lack of information provided to parents and there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about how well the school works with parents whilst noting the apparent conflict in views about the school being very approachable but not working closely with parents.

44. The quality of information provided to parents is good overall and pupils' annual reports are supported by consultation evenings which are attended by the majority of parents and those who are unable to attend are offered alternative arrangements. In addition, a strength of the partnership between school and home is the accessibility of staff to parents. Regular newsletters provide good information about the life and work of the school and encourage parental involvement, by detailing key dates.
45. The role that parents play in the life and work of the school, and the support which they provide, is satisfactory overall. It is valued by staff and pupils and makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and to their personal and social development. About 12 parents regularly provide effective assistance within classrooms or by undertaking administrative tasks and preparing resources. Other parents help with the supervision of pupils on visits. Parents are supportive of fundraising activities organised by the parent-teacher association.
46. Parents are appropriately informed and consulted with regard to the progress of all pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans and the pupils' targets are shared with parents on two parents' evenings each year, with the option of an additional meeting with teachers in the summer term if required. Parents know the kind of support that pupils with special educational needs are receiving and are informed of any change in that support. Parents are routinely involved in annual reviews and are offered copies of the pupils' individual education plans.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

47. The school's aims, which are well based on its Christian values, are shared by all involved with the school. They centre on providing pupils with an environment that supports their faith, personal development and develops their learning potential. These aims are clearly visible in the daily life of the school. The personal standards achieved by the pupils are good and the aims are well met. In relation to standards, pupils' progress is sound overall and the school recognises that it needs to give more attention to the below average pupils.
48. The school is well led by the headteacher; she has a clear educational vision and gives effective direction. She plays a distinctive role in the life of the school through her commitment to the staff and pupils. She was in post at the time of the last inspection and since then she has initiated good improvement, working effectively with her senior colleagues and governors. There is now an effective whole school approach to monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by senior staff. The leadership skills of subject co-ordinators show variation and several are new in post, but there is some good practice. For example, in the core subjects they are regularly involved in the monitoring of teaching, results and the impact of staff development on classroom practice, but there is inconsistency in the quality of the monitoring of other subjects. This limits the overall awareness of the staff and their involvement in ensuring that initiatives are always cohesively managed. There is effective management of special educational needs throughout the school. The co-ordinator receives a limited amount of release time for monitoring teaching and learning and has used it effectively to monitor the work of pupils. This is good, effective practice. The co-ordinator has identified appropriate areas for future development. Procedures for assessment, especially in the core subjects, have been very well developed and the overall approach to assessment is good. Pupils' standards and progress have been improved by the end of Year 2 and standards have been raised in design and technology and in information and communication technology by the end of Years 2 and 6 and in history by the end of Year 6. There has been a significant improvement in the accommodation, which is now good. Even with these positive changes, the school recognises that it has to raise standards still further and the potential to achieve this exists.
49. The governors are appropriately involved in the management and leadership of the school. They receive good reports to enable them to monitor the standards and quality of education and to inform their decision making. Statutory requirements are generally met although not for ensuring that all the

curriculum requirements are met for information and communication technology. This good partnership between the headteacher and governors is effective in promoting the good learning opportunities throughout the school. Whole-school policies are in place and there is a process for review to ensure that they contain sufficient structures for guidance, monitoring and evaluation. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is well informed about procedures and about the pupils with particular needs and the support that they are given.

50. The whole-school development plan is strategic in that it covers four years; it is a comprehensive approach for development, although success criteria are sometimes difficult to assess. It is well linked to financial demands. There is a considerable amount of money held as a contingency budget. This balance has been accrued because in the 1998/9 financial year governors decided to assume responsibility from the local education authority for all maintenance, including major capital works, in return for an increased budget allocation. Monies received have been reserved by governors for major works, such as boiler replacement and pipe-work renewal, identified within the costed asset management plan. Maintenance works have extended the life of this plant but current professional advice indicates that replacement will be necessary within two years and costs are estimated to exceed £80,000, which will be funded from the contingency funds. During the same period, the headteacher and governors have very successfully submitted bids to support planned initiatives that were within the school improvement plan. A significant amount of the accrued surplus is being used to support a strategy of protecting class sizes and the current level of learning support over the next two years. This strategy has been assessed as costing £80,000, including normal salary increments and increased National Insurance and superannuation contributions. In the next two years, if potential plans are fully implemented, the contingency will be reduced to less than five per cent of the budget. Taking into account pupils' good personal development, the good quality of teaching and good learning opportunities, but that standards and achievement have some shortcomings, the school is giving satisfactory value for money.
51. The school is appropriately staffed, and there is a good match of experience. Because of the governors' decision to use its funds to maintain staffing there is a good teacher: pupil ratio. Staff development and induction procedures for new staff are good and procedures for performance management are in place. There has been a rise in the number of pupils with special educational needs since the time of the last inspection and the number of support staff has been appropriately increased. Learning support staff, many of whom have undertaken effective training, are well involved in planning and through their work enhance the learning opportunities of the pupils and children. Administrative and caretaking staff make a sound contribution to the day-to-day running of the school.
52. The accommodation is good and has been very well developed since the last inspection to cater for the number of pupils and to meet the needs of the curriculum. The main building is adjacent to the High Street and within the confines of the space available there has been a very good extension to the original small building. Other original buildings are spacious and good use is made of smaller areas in which individual pupils or small groups can receive support. Access for physically disabled pupils is generally good although in one area it is difficult because of the staircase. Good benefit is derived from the dedicated music room and there is an appropriate library space, although it is not well organised. Recent modifications have enabled the construction of a good computer room; there are now good facilities for outside work for the Foundation Stage. The school hall provides appropriate accommodation for the teaching of physical education and for assemblies. The grassed and hard play areas provide satisfactory space and facilities.
53. The overall quantity and quality of resources are satisfactory. Library books have recently been increased but more are needed. The ratio of computers to pupils is now average following the recent increase in resources, both of hardware and software. Displays generally enhance the learning environment and help to raise pupils' self-esteem and are used effectively to celebrate pupils' work, activities and success.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors, headteacher and staff now need to:

- i. bring about more consistency in the standards being attained across the curriculum so that all pupils, and particularly the lower attainers, achieve well and develop their potential;

*(Paragraphs 1 - 6, 18, 19, 21, 48, 74, 75, 79, 81, 103, 110 and 113)*

- ii. improve the presentation of pupils' work and opportunities to extend their writing;

*(Paragraphs 4, 78, 79, 90, 96, 104, 112 and 133)*

- iii. improve the quality of teaching and learning in a minority of classes, especially in Years 3 and 4;

*(Paragraphs 17 - 19, 48, 85, 86, 98, 103, 109, 115, 120 and 123)*

- iv. meet statutory requirements for information and communication technology; and

*(Paragraphs 23 and 117 - 121)*

- v. improve the quality and range of learning resources.

*(Paragraphs 53, 77, 88 and 116)*

Other aspects which warrant consideration:

- developing the procedures for assessment consistently across the foundation subjects; and

*(Paragraphs 21, 34, 99 and 105)*

- extending the opportunities for pupils' cultural development.

*(Paragraphs 32, 98 and 123)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	3	19	17	14	2	0	0
Percentage	5.5	34.5	31	25.5	3.5	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	279
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	74

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	28
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6

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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	25	25	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	18	23
	Girls	21	21	24
	Total	40	39	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (82)	78 (82)	94 (91)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	22	23
	Girls	20	24	22
	Total	38	46	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (85)	92 (91)	90 (100)
	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	25	27	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	18	25
	Girls	19	19	23
	Total	39	37	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (83)	71 (74)	92 (94)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	21	22
	Girls	20	21	23
	Total	39	42	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (69)	81 (69)	87 (77)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

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

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
239	0	0
0	0	0
9	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	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)	12.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.8
Average class size	25.2

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	239

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	610,425
Total expenditure	563,917
Expenditure per pupil	2,068
Balance brought forward from previous year	123,760
Balance carried forward to next year	170,268



**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	279
Number of questionnaires returned	59

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	39	51	5	3	2
My child is making good progress in school.	42	58	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	61	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	69	10	0	0
The teaching is good.	46	53	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	47	10	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	44	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	37	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	19	64	14	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	41	44	3	2	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	54	7	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	39	22	2	8

These are the views of the small minority of the parents and carers who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire. Inspectors firmly agree with all of the points that please parents and carers most. Inspection evidence does not support the views about the lack of information on pupils' progress and there is a good range of activities. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about how well the school works with parents and carers.

## **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**

54. The good quality of provision reported in the last inspection has been improved upon and it is now very good. The good ratio of very effective staff to children, good organisation of space and thoughtful use of good quality resources give children a very good start to their school career. The very good teaching and wide range of well-planned activities ensure the children achieve very well. Records show that there is a broad spread of prior attainment on entry and it is below average overall. Most children make good progress overall, with examples of very good progress. Standards, when they move into Year 1, are above average for their age in personal, social and emotional development, mathematics, physical development and creative development and average in communication, language and literacy and in knowledge and understanding of the world.
55. The induction of pupils is managed well. It includes visits by staff to the home, to pre-school groups, visits to the classroom for children prior to starting school and visits and evenings for parents where the curriculum is explained. Parents are kept very well informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum and advised of ways in which they can help their children at home. At the time of the inspection, there were 32 children in two reception classes and a significant minority were still aged under five. No children have been identified as having special educational needs. A very small minority are learning English as an additional language and there is good support with additional advice from external services. There are two teachers and a full-time support assistant. Appropriately, all members of staff place the highest emphasis on personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. The activities provided for all six areas of learning are very carefully planned to challenge the children and extend their learning. Classroom and external space is used very well to provide sufficient time for both taught lessons and for children to initiate their own activities.
56. Approaches to assessment are good overall. A positive development is the recently agreed strategy whereby information from pre-school groups about children's prior attainment is to be received. This has the potential to assist teachers to assess children's levels and to more accurately match early work to their individual needs. Once a base-line is established, detailed records of children's progress are kept and assessment is used well to plan future lessons, ensuring that all children make significant progress. The differing needs of children in relation to their ages and stages of development are well recognised in the way they are grouped for short sessions in literacy and numeracy.
57. Although the co-ordinator does not officially take over the role until September 2003, the Foundation Stage is led and managed well. The staff are very knowledgeable about the way in which young children learn best. They work very well as a team and have attended appropriate training about the curriculum and record keeping, attending local support groups to keep up to date with new developments. Nevertheless, on moving into Year 1, the small number of children who have not completed the early learning goals are not given time to do so but are moved immediately onto the Key Stage 1 curriculum. This shortcoming, and the use of pre-school assessment data, is recognised and the school has very good plans to address these issues.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

58. By the end of the Foundation Stage, standards are above average. Children make very good progress in developing self-confidence and self-esteem because of the very good provision and teaching. Children rise to the staff's high expectations that they will take care of their own needs and join in what is going on. Children settle in very quickly as they soon gain confidence from knowing the routines and pattern of the sessions.
59. Children come happily into their classes and learn to share and take turns. They respond very well to the staff, they sit quietly and listen when required. They try very hard to follow the teacher's instructions and interact very well both with one another and with adults, taking their cue from the very good role models set by the staff. As a result they learn to help each other, say 'please' and 'thank

you' and are polite and friendly towards one another. Children make good progress in understanding and respecting the rights and opinions of others because of the very good role models set by the adults. The children's behaviour is excellent.

60. By the end of the reception year the children can concentrate well when engaged in tasks that interest them. For example, when playing in the 'hairdressers' or 'café' they play very well with their friends for a long time without tiring, or disagreements occurring. They help one another put on aprons and share out the roles, taking turns to act as customers or staff. The quality of the role play is enhanced by the provision of very good resources and the fact that the role play areas are based on local shops that are well known to the children.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

61. The quality of teaching and provision is very good. The teachers and support staff structure their teaching very well to develop children's spoken language. They talk to the children as they work and encourage them to comment on their own activities by asking questions that make the children think hard and talk in sentences. Through the daily class and group activities the children learn to join in rhymes, songs and familiar stories. All these activities help children to practise speaking and to increase their vocabulary. The activities ensure that each child makes the very best progress possible and by the end of the reception year standards in speaking and listening are better than average.
62. Reading and writing are taught very well. Adults read stories to the children and encourage them to discuss the pictures and listen to taped stories in the book corners. Pupils are encouraged to read both their own names and those of others in the class. They are taught to recognise letters and sounds in games played on the playground and in the classroom. Work in the daily literacy lesson helps the children to read words that occur frequently in their reading books and to use sounds and letters to work out new words. Standards in reading and writing are as expected by the end of the reception year. Most of the reception class children can write their name and form letters correctly and make good attempts at writing. The teachers use good strategies to help all children to learn to write. A writing table is set up in the play areas which all reception children have access to and children write regularly during their play as they 'place orders for stock', write down customer's orders in the café and book appointments in the hairdressers.
63. In a very good lesson, drama and role-play were used very well to develop the children's speaking, listening and reading skills related to a well loved book, 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'. All children were very eager and keen to answer. They co-operated very well with one another and most made very good progress, including those whose mother tongue is not English, due to the teacher's probing questions.

### **Mathematical development**

64. By the end of the reception year most children exceed the early learning goals because of the very good quality of the teaching and provision for learning. The teachers make learning fun in children's free play, as when playing in the 'café' setting out the correct number of places and cutlery. They take the customers orders and become familiar with different coins. In formal lessons, children are provided with just the right amount of challenge to move their learning forward whilst still ensuring success. In an excellent lesson, the whole class practised their skill in working with numbers to 20. Half the class were then given a variety of high quality self- chosen activities whilst the rest worked with the teacher and teaching assistant solving challenging problems in a practical context. The work was very well planned with clear, focused teaching. The tasks exactly matched children's needs so that all made the maximum progress possible during the lesson.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

65. On entry, many of the children have limited general knowledge. The very interesting activities provided, coupled with very good teaching, ensure that the children make very good progress in making sense of the world. By the end of the reception year, most children achieve the standard expected for their age.

66. Very good use is made of the school grounds to explore and recognise features of living things so that children can look closely at similarities and differences. The garden area is an excellent resource enabling children to study seasons, plants and wild life. Very good use is also made of the immediate local area to help the children become familiar with historical and geographical ideas. During the inspection children went on a walk around the town. They were encouraged to use all their senses very well to observe and recall their experiences. In class, the children were then able to help the teacher create a simple plan of the route taken and place photos of the houses and shops passed in the correct places on the map. Throughout the lesson the teacher made sure every child developed their observational and speaking and listening skills very well by asking each child to tell her something about the building in the photo they had chosen before placing it on the map. Children described patterns seen on roofs and the sizes of windows and how they were placed - 'small at the top and big at the bottom'. One child remembered that 'the very old house' was built in 1898. Children's learning was extended and consolidated through the wide range of play activities available, such as in the café and hairdressers where they can learn about the adult world of work by taking on roles of staff and customers. They also extended their skills in designing and making as they created models of the buildings they had observed using cardboard boxes and construction toys.
67. Knowledge of the everyday uses of technology, including computers, is fostered very well indeed. In another excellent lesson, the teacher combined many aspects of the curriculum to ensure that the children had maximum opportunities for learning. Whilst becoming familiar with the functions of the tape recorder and the use of the microwave oven, the teacher managed to include speaking and listening, reading, mathematics, science and creativity whilst all the time promoting very high standards of personal development. In all the activities described, all adults in the reception classes worked as a team ensuring that the children had the maximum possible contact with the knowledgeable, experienced and well qualified staff all of whom know exactly how to move pupils' learning forward.
68. Children learn about their own culture through hearing traditional stories and taking part in traditional songs and rhymes. The school's Christian ethos is promoted well through participation in the daily acts of worship and through leading school assemblies. Other cultures are promoted appropriately through celebrating a variety of other festivals, such as Divali, and through having a meal in a Chinese restaurant and trying to use chopsticks. The practical way in which these experiences are provided help children to effectively develop respect for cultures different from their own.

## **Physical development**

69. In this area of learning the children make very good progress because of high quality provision and skilled teaching. By the end of the reception year children exceed the standard expected for their age. From the earliest days in school children are encouraged to put on their own coats and art aprons. Because this is expected of them on a daily basis, the children rise to the challenge and succeed. In their play outside, they learn to throw and catch, ride bikes and use climbing apparatus.
70. The children have formal lessons both in the school hall and outside in the large playground. In a very good lesson using bats and balls, the teacher's enthusiasm and subject knowledge and understanding of the children's skills ensured that they were very well motivated. They worked hard and responded very well to the teacher's clear explanations and instructions. This led to very good progress in improving the control of their movements and in understanding about the changes that happen to their bodies when they exercise. With the teacher's help they are beginning to appreciate and praise the work of others and strive to improve their own performance.
71. Both inside the classroom and when playing in the covered outdoor space children have plenty of opportunity to practise and refine their fine motor skills using a wide variety of resources across all areas of learning. Outside, they use the large white board to draw and write and pour water from small to large containers during free play and when learning about capacity. Indoors, they use thick and thin pencils, brushes and felt tips, learn to cut out carefully and use staplers and hole punches. By the end of the reception year they have above average hand control and form recognisable letters and words.

## **Creative development**

72. Pupils make very good progress and achieve above average levels of achievement. Adults in the Foundation Stage plan together to provide a wide range of experiences matched to the children's level of capability. The adults are all very skilled at encouraging children to talk about what they have done and how successful they have been. The teachers take great care to show the children how to use the equipment and resources effectively. Through discussion about colour and shades of colour, pupils grow to be more discriminating in their choice and to think about their work very carefully so that high standards are achieved.
73. Through daily class and group lessons, the children learn to listen to and join in rhymes and songs and to play percussion instruments. By the end of the reception year children are beginning to understand about using loud and quiet sounds for different effects and how to make a fast or slow sound and can remember the words of a wide range of songs and rhymes. Children are encouraged to dress up and act out stories heard in the wide variety of role-play areas available to them.

## ENGLISH

74. Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 were below average in reading and average in writing, and below average in comparison with similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was well above average in both reading and writing. At the end of Year 6, test results were average in relation to all schools and in comparison with similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level was above average but the overall attainment in relation to prior attainment for all pupils was below average. This partly reflects the fact that within this cohort of pupils a significant minority had moved schools, exerting an adverse effect on their progress and there was a larger than usual number of pupils with special educational needs. Girls performed slightly better than boys. Results were better than those achieved in mathematics and similar to science.
75. Standards attained by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average overall, maintaining the overall standards achieved at the time of the last inspection and reflecting previous test results. Attainment in reading for pupils by the end of Year 2 has improved since the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress and generally achieve well, including those pupils with English as an additional language and identified as having special educational needs. The use of booster groups and general support structures support pupils' progress and the school recognises that it needs to address the progress of lower attainers more rigorously to raise their overall achievement. Higher attainers achieve and attain very well.
76. Standards in speaking and listening are average overall and show that pupils can talk lucidly about their learning across the whole curriculum, with clear diction, whole sentence answers and a wide range of vocabulary. In a Year 1/2 literacy lesson where the pupils imagined a visit to a rock pool, they confidently suggested what would be found and vividly described barnacles, starfish and seaweed. In discussions with Year 6 pupils about improvements to the school environment, boys and girls presented a well-balanced argument for more seating around the school and a better wildlife area for them to explore. In class, with carefully targeted questions posed by teachers, all pupils are given ample opportunities to speak; boys and girls, those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs all receive positive encouragement to develop their speaking and listening skills, in keeping with the school's ethos of inclusion. Teachers are adept at drawing all pupils into active participation through questioning. In Year 6, pupils use similes to develop their descriptions of character, "She had a face like an angel". More capable pupils are encouraged to close their eyes and "picture" a character they have described in words to bring that character to life. In Year 2, good use of open-ended questioning draws out pupils' language skills, as for example, when describing a rock pool. 'What do you think you might see?' asked a teacher, who was answered by one pupil 'Perhaps we'll see a squid.' This led to the opportunity to explore other 'sq' words and sounds. Confidence to speak in front of others is well managed throughout the school and is evident in other subjects. For example, in a physical education lesson, pupils describe their actions, eagerly explaining how they have improved their catching skills to partners and their teacher.
77. Standards in reading are at national averages. Reading has improved since the last inspection for all pupils through the use of a commercial scheme which provides continuity. A robust programme of

hearing reading and recording progress, with parental support, is aiding pupils' progress. A recent addition of fiction books for boys has paid dividends. Skills of sounding out new words are taught systematically throughout the school and are then applied in pupils' learning. An average pupil in Year 2 was able to sound out the words "pockets and rockets". Pupils in different age groups and with different capabilities read with fluency and enjoyment. They show enthusiasm for their reading. Higher attainers talk enthusiastically about a range of popular authors and subjects. A Year 5 pupil spoke confidently about her preference for autobiographies and was able to explain what the term meant in some detail. Additional assistance is given to those pupils with special educational needs in line with their individual programmes. Pupils describe trips to their local library with parents and can choose both fiction and non-fiction from the school library. They make sound use of the library but a lack of modern, attractive fiction and non-fiction and disorganised categorisation does not present the library as a vibrant stimulating environment that pupils want to visit, particularly for personal research. They can recount how computers both at home and school help with their reading and how home/school communication about reading ensures that there is continuity in their skill development.

78. Pupils' writing skills are average. Their writing includes stories, personal news and factual reports, which are evident in a range of subjects. Higher attainers use inferential skills to write independently on a range of topics. For example, in Year 2 pupils write letters to 'The Three Bears' explaining why Goldilocks ate their porridge. Year 6 pupils write a diary imagining themselves to be Lady Macbeth. Lower attainers in a mixed Year 3/4 class show good understanding of the difference between formal and informal letters, by writing their own examples. Year 1 pupils write a description of a trip to the seaside using words that they have assembled during discussions within the lesson. Handwriting is good overall, with the majority of pupils joining their writing by the end of Year 3. Despite formal teaching of handwriting to all classes, a lack of insistence upon high standards of presentation in all subjects results in some deterioration of tidiness in older pupils' work. Punctuation and spelling are generally at expected levels for pupils' ages. Use of dictionaries and thesauri across the school is inconsistent, as is the use of computers to support writing through word-processing. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language make satisfactory progress with active support from classroom assistants ensuring their inclusion in all aspects of the subject, where individual targets are concentrated upon. In other subjects, the opportunities for extended writing are not always taken to produce work of a sustained higher level. Too often, over-direction by teachers results in pupils not having enough opportunity to produce imaginative pieces of work.
79. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Literacy hour routines are well established and understood, with other time being devoted to reading and handwriting. Teachers are developing the use of literacy skills to good effect across the whole curriculum; this is a school priority. In the best lessons, the planning is thorough and teachers stress what pupils are to learn at the start of lessons. Pupils are well involved in these lessons through effective questioning in which teachers show their good subject knowledge and the pace of lessons, linked with teachers' enthusiasm for the subject, is evidenced in pupils' enjoyment. In a Year 3/4 class, use of direct questioning, with a classroom assistant supporting lower attainers and those with learning difficulties, the pace of the lesson was established at the start and sustained throughout at a high level. Pupils enjoy their literacy lessons, their teachers providing consistently good role models of speaking, reading and writing. Work set generally ensures that all pupils have tasks that challenge them. Where teaching is less satisfactory, pupils do not have adequate time to complete these tasks, challenge to pupils of average ability is lacking, particularly in the demand for extended writing that has been redrafted and there is a lack of the use of dictionaries, thesauri and computers. Pupils know their half-termly literacy targets, but because the marking of pupils' work varies, teachers' comments and suggestions do not always clearly show the next steps to be taken to improve standards. Opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of others are limited. However, pupils enjoy their literacy work, especially drama activities and visits to theatres and viewing visiting drama groups.
80. The subject is well led and managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator who is aware of shortcomings and is leading change. Procedures for assessment are good with the results of annual tests and samples of work in portfolios being regularly analysed, with all teachers receiving the results to enable them to modify planning and teaching. The monitoring of writing is a clear priority to enable teaching to improve. There is an awareness of the need to share the very good teaching

present in the school to those less confident in the subject. However, there has been satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection, especially in the quality of teaching.

## **MATHEMATICS**

81. Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 were well above average in comparisons with all schools and similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was well above average. In the tests at the end of Year 6, results were below average in comparison with all schools and similar schools, at both the expected and higher levels. Results were well below average in relation to pupils' prior attainment at the end of Year 2. Results were below those achieved in English and science. Boys performed better than girls. A significant minority of these pupils had moved schools during their education and this had an adverse effect on their progress, but there was also a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. Girls performed slightly better than boys.
82. Good improvement has been made in standards at the end of Year 2 since the last inspection when standards were found to be average. Standards by the end of Year 2 are now at least above average and similar to those in the 2002 national tests. In Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve very well and make very good progress in acquiring mathematical skills. By the age of seven, pupils have a very good understanding of the basic skills of number. Lower-attaining pupils understand place value in two-digit numbers and higher-attaining pupils work confidently with three-figure numbers. An above average number of pupils are attaining above average standards for their age. They add and subtract 10 and 100 accurately to a given number, use conventional symbols and apply their knowledge to simple money problems. In work on shape and space, the higher attaining pupils carefully and accurately measure using standard and non-standard measures, such as hand span. The majority of pupils recognise a wide variety of two- and three-dimensional shapes, with average and higher-attaining pupils confidently naming properties, including the number of sides and corners. Comprehensive coverage of all aspects of mathematics was seen in pupils' work, but some, especially in the drawing of graphs when handling data, was untidily presented. Also, in the work examined, there was an overuse of published worksheets that were not always well enough matched to the needs of the pupils.
83. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. The school has begun to raise standards, which have fallen since the last inspection when they were above average, by analysing test results effectively and identifying areas for development. These include mental recall of number facts to aid written calculations, handling data and solving practical problems. Teachers ensure all groups of pupils are fully included in lessons. They group pupils by attainment and provide work that is usually well matched to their different levels. This has ensured that many pupils are now achieving well. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in class with additional adult support and work set at the correct level and they make good progress. The small numbers of pupils learning English as an additional language also make good progress in understanding the language of mathematics. No significant difference was observed in the attainment or achievement of boys and girls, or of gifted and talented pupils.
84. By the age of 11, pupils have built on the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired earlier and made satisfactory progress. Most pupils are working within the level expected for their age with approximately a third of the pupils working at a higher than average standard. This is an improvement over last year. The higher attaining pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of the four rules of number, work with six-figure numbers and show good mental mathematical skills. Most pupils understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. In the area of shape, space and measures, pupils identify properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes. They record the perimeter of a regular shape but not all are confident in using formulae to work out perimeters and areas. In data handling, pupils collect and analyse data using a variety of graphs at a level appropriate to their capability.
85. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. During the inspection teaching varied from very good to being unsatisfactory in a very small number of lessons where tasks were not well enough matched to pupils' needs. The quality of teaching was very good in Years 1 and 2 and was consistently good in Years 5 and 6. Support staff and other adults are well deployed to help specific



groups of pupils make good progress. Staff generally manage pupils very effectively and there are good relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils respond very well to their teachers and other adults. They listen carefully and respond very well when in groups. Standards of behaviour are usually good and this enables staff to concentrate on imparting knowledge and giving help to pupils having difficulty. Attitudes are very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6.

86. All teachers are competent in teaching the basic skills of number and they plan their lessons effectively based on the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils know what they are going to learn because lesson objectives are outlined at the start of the lessons and are revisited at the end to ensure they have been covered. In most lessons, teachers recap well to ensure pupils understand work previously taught. In the best lessons, pace is brisk and pupils are kept interested. Most teachers work hard to ensure all pupils are included in the lessons by setting work at different levels; this is linked, with additional support and mathematical targets on individual education plans, for pupils with special educational needs. In Years 1 and 2 teachers use methods that capture the interest of pupils very well. For example in all lessons observed, the mathematical games and practical apparatus were well matched to the needs of the pupils and all available adults were very well deployed, ensuring that all pupils made very good progress and achieved well. In one lesson, however, the published worksheets, about telling the time, that were intended to consolidate pupils' learning had not been adapted to match the items taught in the lesson and served only to confuse the pupils. In Years 3 and 4 too few practical activities are provided and tasks are not always well matched to the needs of the pupils. For example, in an unsatisfactory lesson, the stated intentions were for pupils to 'solve problems in real life using money, finding totals, giving change and finding out which coins to pay'. However, most of the tasks provided were based inappropriately on pencil and paper activities rather than practical experience. The pupils found these too hard and the teacher had to leave the group she was working with on several occasions to sort out difficulties and to restore order in the class and learning was unsatisfactory. There is some good marking but opportunities to develop learning by the use of constructive marking are inconsistent. Homework is generally used effectively.
87. Throughout the school, teachers pay good attention to developing mathematical vocabulary, both in lessons and in the good quality classroom displays, supporting pupils' literacy skills. Numeracy is used satisfactorily across the curriculum. In science, pupils are given opportunities to measure and read scales. Number skills are developed effectively in music when pupils play complex rhythms and count beats in a bar. Measuring skills are developed in design and technology and pupils develop an understanding of number in geography. The use of information and communication technology in the subject is satisfactory. Pupils are given opportunities to use mathematical programs including data handling but this does not happen often enough. There are good opportunities to develop social and moral understanding when pupils work together with partners and in groups.
88. There is good management of the subject and good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Although the co-ordinator has only taken over the role since last September, she has a very clear vision of how to raise standards. The quality of teaching and learning has been monitored and strategies have been put in place to ensure continued improvement. Assessment procedures are good and are used effectively to develop learning. Resources have been improved but more effective use could be made of them and more are needed so that a more practical approach to teaching can be made especially in Years 3 and 4. The very experienced governor who has recently been assigned to mathematics is very committed to raising standards. The recent initiatives taken to improve mathematics together with the commitment and determination of the staff and governors indicate that there is good potential for continued improvement.

## SCIENCE

89. Results in National Curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2002 were average for the expected level and were above average for the percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels. Results in the tests at the end of Year 6 were average; in comparison with all schools, similar schools and in relation to pupils' prior attainment at the end of Year 2. Results were similar to those achieved in English but above those in mathematics. Boys achieved slightly better than girls but over time there is no significant difference.

90. By the age of seven and 11, standards are average. Throughout the school pupils make steady progress. Pupils use appropriate scientific vocabulary well for their ages. In a discussion in a Year 1/2 class one pupil was able to explain the term "germination" and a Year 4 pupil used the word "properties" in describing the criteria for sorting solids. High attainers in Year 6 use words such as "chlorophyll," "antibiotics" and "bacteria" as a matter of course in their written work. By the age of seven most pupils have begun to make predictions and to draw conclusions. By the age of 11 most pupils can do this with confidence as a result of a range of opportunities for practical experiments throughout the school. Most pupils at the age of 11 understand what is involved in performing a fair test. Pupils develop skills of an acceptable standard in recording data and comparing results. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 show good understanding of the properties of solids. Groups of pupils working together were able to sort items into hard and soft, rough and smooth, and rigid and flexible groups correctly. One pupil suggested using a Venn diagram as a means of recording. In a Year 6 group of low attainers some pupils showed a good understanding of terms such as "prediction," "quantity" and "variable" and were aware that a fair test needs a number of constant factors. Standards of presentation are variable. The standard of writing and drawing in books is often not the pupils' best. However, most charts and diagrams at all ages are the pupils' own work and are satisfactory. There are some examples of work of a very high standard as, for example, a Year 6 pupil's labelled diagram of the human heart. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory with pupils making use of their skills in simple data handling and in research.
91. Teaching is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to very good. Most lessons are well planned and the sharing of learning objectives with clear instructions at the beginning of lessons ensures that pupils know what is expected of them. Teachers use appropriate scientific vocabulary and pupils listen and behave well, showing interest in their work and operating well in their groups. All pupils are involved in all activities. Most lessons proceed at a good pace. Good teaching strategies support pupils' learning. In a Year 1/2 class deciding where best to germinate seeds, the teacher divided the pupils appropriately into two age groups, one well supported by a teaching assistant. The pupils were encouraged by good, probing questioning and the good dialogue between the pupils and the staff, resulting in the pupils' clear understanding of what they were required to do. The pupils were keen to take part and made very good progress. In a Year 3/4 class good use of questioning such as "Do we taste it?" and "What happens next?" encouraged the pupils to consider the safety aspects of activities when deciding on how they might sort different materials, and respond with good, thoughtful suggestions. Restricting the time given to a sorting activity helped to maintain a good pace and kept the pupils focused on what they were doing. In most lessons the teachers give good support to pupils by circulating and helping groups and individuals. Support staff are well deployed and work with groups or individuals so that all pupils can undertake the tasks assigned to them. During lessons teachers routinely assess pupils' understanding and move them on accordingly. In a Year 6 group of low attainers the teacher gave a very good demonstration of the different molecular structure of solids, liquids and gases using the pupils themselves. Good assessment was used to ascertain that pupils had understood new words that had been introduced and some good learning took place. However, an inappropriate grouping together of a number of pupils with challenging behaviour had an adverse effect on the planned learning outcomes. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and support staff who ensure that they understand what is required and support them in achieving it. Similarly, the minority of pupils with English as an additional language receive appropriate support.
92. In a minority of lessons, where the pace of questioning is slow, few hands are put up to answer questions and learning opportunities are lost. Although teachers plan lessons thoroughly, most activities and worksheets are the same for all pupils leading to high attainers not being sufficiently challenged and insufficient opportunity for low attainers to work independently. Although worksheets are not over prescriptive there are few opportunities for extended written work and marking is inconsistent, especially for younger pupils. In Years 3 to 6 almost all work is marked and good constructive comments take the pupils' learning forward, but teachers' comments are not always being followed up. There are good opportunities for practical experimentation although too much teacher direction inhibits the development of pupils' independent enquiry skills, limiting their progress, especially the older pupils. When interviewed, Year 6 pupils were enthusiastic about science, particularly about practical experiments and outdoor investigative work.

93. The subject is being satisfactorily managed by a recently appointed co-ordinator. There are good arrangements for the assessment with individual pupil progress being checked at the end of each unit of work. Teachers effectively evaluate their own planning half-termly and address any strengths and weaknesses that arise. Resources are good. The monitoring of teaching and learning is carried out by senior staff as part of a whole school approach and there are plans to enable the co-ordinator to be more involved in lesson observations. Teachers are required to send samples of levelled work to the co-ordinator termly and a portfolio of levelled work is being maintained, although it does not contain sufficient examples of work of the highest standards to use as exemplars of good practice. National Curriculum requirements are met. The school recognises the need to improve how it meets the differing needs of pupils and for more challenging activities for pupils, especially at higher levels of attainment. There is a clear plan for future action and appropriate priorities have been identified. Apart from in Years 1 and 2 there is little science on display to support pupils' learning in classrooms or corridors.
94. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 now make steady progress and the scheme of work ensures that there is continuous progress for pupils as they move from Year 2 to year 3. Monitoring arrangements have improved and are part of the school action plan. There is still some under-expectation by teachers in assessing pupils' potential as indicated in the test arrangements for 11-year-olds in 2002.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

95. Standards by the end of Year 2 are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They gain experience of working with clay, by learning to roll and cut a clay tile and to form a three-dimensional design to place on top of the tile. Pupils use a range of implements effectively to roll and cut their clay. They change the surface texture to realise their chosen design and use 'slip' to make their decorative work stick to the tile. Most pupils use the clay and the implements with the degree of skill expected for their age, but some pupils lack sufficient hand-eye co-ordination to enable them to carry out their tasks with great success. Other Year 2 pupils have opportunities to consider the style of the artwork of Richard Tuff and to produce pencil drawings which match or complement his way of working. Most pupils are successful in making pictures which accord with the example provided.
96. By Year 6, standards are average with a significant majority of pupils showing the expected level of awareness of the means to produce visual impact and achievement is satisfactory. When pupils use tools to work with clay to produce a mythical creature, the standard of their work varies from satisfactory to very good. The highest achiever makes a very recognisable animal form which has appropriate muscles in body and legs even though it is not meant to represent reality. Other pupils produce creatures with more abstract, geometric features. The art development for some of the oldest pupils, as evidenced in their sketchbooks, has been restricted. They have had limited opportunities to practise and improve their skills of sketching and of observational drawing, using a range of media. In some cases, pupils' drawing shows a lack of attention to perspective or the development of more subtle uses of pencil. However, they have had wider art experiences than is evident from their sketchbooks. Displays of their work show a broader range of artwork, including symbolic work. By contrast, much of the artwork of pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 reaches higher standards, using real examples of art as starting points for their own thinking. They produce two portraits of themselves, using carefully made stylised drawings which contrast how they look now and how they will look when they are older. These are based on a Picasso original. The two-colour background on which the teacher has displayed pupils' work is very effective in drawing attention to the strengths in their artwork. Other Year 3 and Year 4 pupils have had opportunities to create their own versions of aboriginal and African art using examples of pictures of real art as starting points. These show good use of colour and are effective both because there is evidence of good observation of elements in the examples and because a variety of paint types is used and their achievement is better.
97. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, teachers show good subject understanding as they demonstrate the use of art materials, for instance clay. They have a direct manner with children and use language well to explain the activities and to instruct pupils. Their lesson planning is often good because a clear sequence to the lesson is indicated, and preparation includes the prior organisation of resources so that pupils can spend the maximum time on their art

activity. All teachers seen create a calm, work-orientated atmosphere which is conducive to thoughtful work by pupils and emphasises the open-ended aspect of artwork. They enjoy very good relationships with the pupils in their classes, supporting the quality of learning. In good lessons, teachers pace work well and include opportunities for pupils to consider and discuss their own work and that of other pupils. Pupils respond well both to two- and three-dimensional work and enjoy opportunities to work independently. Satisfactory progress is made by pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language, as they move up from Year 1 to Year 6.

98. It is evident from the work done that pupils in Years 3 to 6 have not always had a sufficient quality of learning opportunities, including multicultural learning, although National Curriculum requirements are met. There is inconsistency in the quality of teachers' marking of pupils' sketchbooks. Whereas teachers sometimes respond to some pupils' drawing and sketching with detailed suggestions for improvement, other pupils' sketchbooks remain unmarked over long periods of time, which is unsatisfactory. Teachers' expectations of pupils' drawing and sketching are not always sufficiently high and as a result a number of pupils are not achieving as much as they could.
99. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator takes a positive approach to the subject and its place in the curriculum. The process of monitoring has included scrutinising teachers' medium-term planning and pupils' work and observing lessons but there is not enough rigour in the process to sustain improvement in all skill areas. Information and communication technology is not being used sufficiently to support the development of pupils' work. Procedures for assessment are underdeveloped, although there are plans to develop them further in accordance with whole school approaches. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory as pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2 has improved and is now satisfactory. However, there are aspects of artwork, particularly drawing and sketching in Year 3 to Year 6 where attainment and progress fall below national expectations.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

100. Because of the timing of the inspection, it was possible to see teaching in Year 3 and Year 4 only. A scrutiny of older pupils' work and a photographic record showing some of the products of different age groups across the school were examined.
101. Standards by the end of Year 2 are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils have experience of making puppets, providing them with practice in learning to sew and to glue, using various types of materials. The finished products are displayed in a puppet theatre to good effect. Pupils also construct and paint vehicles from boxes. Using saws and clamps, they make axles and wheels for their vehicles and then test out their finished products. Younger pupils make pizzas with a range of toppings to create variety and their finished products are good.
102. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average. Pupils have various experiences in the course of their studies. For their food technology work, they design and make biscuits. Through their design and construction work, using Dacta, they make models involving moving parts and mechanisms. Pupils' folders show that they understand the different stages in the whole design process from initial design, exploration of a range of possibilities, choice of a final idea and a step-by-step guide to the product, which is then made and evaluated. The most recent work has involved designing and making a slipper using a variety of textiles and other materials. From the display of their design stages and of pupils' completed work, it is clear that they are gaining a good understanding of all stages of the process. Pupils are using information and communication technology at the stage of evaluating their work, providing useful reinforcement for their word-processing skills, but there is no evidence that they are using new technologies for research purposes in the earlier stages of the design process.
103. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the teaching seen, planning was satisfactory. In better lessons, pupils are well managed, pupils are very attentive to their teacher and there is a calm, work-orientated atmosphere. In such lessons, pupils show very positive attitudes and good behaviour. Teachers' techniques for asking questions are good and words relevant to the lesson focus on designing and constructing a device to blow up a balloon, such as 'expand', 'inflate' and 'pump', are correctly used and pupils are well involved in the activity. Pupils also receive clear instruction when needed. Where teaching is less effective, however, the teacher does not always

ensure that all pupils are paying satisfactory attention, before instructions are given or discussion is held. In these circumstances, pupils are not gaining sufficiently from the lesson.

104. The work booklets are well devised and are effective in terms of assisting pupils to understand the various stages of the design process, helping pupils to work more independently. However, teachers' expectations about the quality of pupils' design work and their construction activities, are not high enough. This leads to shortcomings in pupils' drawing, labelling and writing, and they do not exercise enough care in the processes of cutting and gluing to construct their inflation devices. Where learning support staff are present, they are well deployed in assisting pupils who are lower-attainers or who have special educational needs, so that they make the same progress as other pupils. There is inconsistent marking of pupils' design booklets and this does not show them how to improve their work.
105. The leadership and management of the newly appointed co-ordinator are satisfactory. She has good subject expertise. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are in place. The action plan and the subject review rightly point to the need to enhance teaching through improvements in the use of information and communication technology. Improvements to the evaluation stage of the design process for younger pupils have already been made. Further developments, which are intended to sharpen the thinking of older pupils about the reasons for suggesting particular improvements to their designs, are now in hand. The school recognises the need to further develop the procedures for assessment which are unsatisfactory.
106. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Standards and progress are now satisfactory, having been previously judged as unsatisfactory. Pupils are now learning about and undertaking projects in, all aspects of design and technology. The policy, scheme of work and action plan now support the teaching and development of the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

107. Standards by the end of Year 2 are average. In Years 1 and 2 there are cross-curricular links between literacy and geography in coverage of their 'Going to the Seaside' topic. Pupils are articulate when contrasting their own environment with that of a seaside resort and their writing reflecting aspects of life in a resort contrasted with their school surroundings.
108. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average. The majority of pupils can identify common aspects of Italy and France. Work is recorded in books specifying capital cities, languages, rivers, currency and foods and pupils have a sound understanding of how these countries compare to their own area. Years 5 and 6 pupils carry out field work on a local river and can compare and contrast location, size, length and economic factors with the River Nile. In discussions with older pupils, they show a good understanding of how industrial and agricultural pollution of the local river occurs. They talk confidently about the effects of factory waste entering the local rivers and the reasons for farmers extracting water for irrigation of their fields. Pupils can compare the effects of rivers upon a local environment, showing links with science as they refer to animals, birds and plants that are to be found in the surrounding area. Particularly impressive is their knowledge of how the Aswan Dam has affected the life of the inhabitants of Egypt. The good use of reinforcing learning, by using local examples, is also seen in the work on the benefits of a recent road by-passing their town in terms of greater road safety and less pollution. Good links with mathematics are evident through pupils' work on mountain ranges as they compare and contrast the Lake District, Snowdonia and the Cairngorms with the Himalayas, Andes and the Alps. Pupils enjoy the subject and work effectively with CD-ROMs to obtain background knowledge, as well as the Internet for research purposes.
109. Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory, with planning and questioning being major elements to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Where teaching is less effective, the pace of lessons is slow and teachers' expectations are low. Teachers make good use of a wide range of visits to enable pupils to understand their own environment. This is well supported by residential visits to Wales for Year 6 to provide a contrasting environment. Maps of both the UK and the World are on display throughout the school; a balance of displays of pupils' work and maps to provide information are evident. A strength are the cross curricular links with other subjects. A visiting Jamaican was

questioned in depth by pupils about her country's history, economy, the island's sugar cane and tourism industry, its climate and links with the United Kingdom.

110. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection cannot be judged as at that time no comment was made upon standards. Areas of strength and areas for development are identified and discussed by staff, particularly challenge for those pupils of lower ability. Resources are satisfactory, good use is made of computers and digital cameras. Formal monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is in place.

## HISTORY

111. By the end of Year 2, standards are similar to those found at the last inspection and are average. Pupils develop a satisfactory level of understanding about the differences and similarities in their work on holidays taken 100 years ago and those undertaken today. This work is well linked to their studies in geography about the seaside. They can talk about the differences in people's dress, how holiday resorts came about and how they have changed. They responded with some surprise at the changes and in their postcards they drew satisfactory representations of what they had understood from the video that they watched. However, pupils in Year 2 produce below average standards of written work because all pupils generally do the same task.
112. By the end of Year 6 standards are average. In Years 3 to 6 most pupils recall important events related to the topics studied, such as the Romans, Egyptians, Greeks, Victorians and the First and Second World Wars. In discussion with pupils in Year 6 it is clear they enjoy history and can recall with enthusiasm what they have learned especially when visits to museums, visitors to school and role-play have enhanced lessons. However pupils' written work does not often reflect the quality of learning that pupils display during discussion. It is only when they perceive a real purpose for writing that they produce high standards of work. For example, when they produced 'St. Mary's Times', the standards produced were far higher than those seen in their exercise books. Work in the books, particularly of the less able pupils, is often unfinished and the teachers' marking seldom informs pupils how to improve the standard of work produced. Occasionally, when pupils are asked to write an historical report or account, longer pieces of work are produced, but this does not happen often enough and the standards of presentation are not high enough.
113. The levels of historical skills and understanding acquired by pupils in Years 3 to 6 have improved and standards are now in line with those expected. Throughout Years 1 to 6 pupils make satisfactory progress. The achievement of those pupils who have been identified as gifted and talented is not significantly different from that of most other pupils. Those with special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language are integrated into lessons with effective help from support staff and pupils make good progress. The quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory and relationships are good. Pupils work hard in lessons and enjoy their learning. However, written work in all year groups does not reflect the knowledge that the pupils are capable of acquiring and which they displayed in discussion.
114. There are appropriate links to other subjects. For example, in art lessons, pupils have drawn Victorian toys such as a Noah's Ark and dolls' prams and there are some high quality sketches of some of the Victorian houses in Burton Latimer. The Internet is well used to find out information to support the various topics and pupils' work in designing a media presentation on the school draws on their historical knowledge. However, the co-ordinator is aware that information and communication technology needs to be used more to enhance the subject and intends to purchase more software. There is good promotion of spiritual, moral and cultural development, for example, empathetic writing when pupils in Year 5 and 6 describe the conditions of Victorian children working in mines and when pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about ancient civilisations. Homework is used when appropriate. For example, pupils interview grandparents about their experiences in World War 2.
115. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. During Years 1 and 2 pupils' concept of time is satisfactorily developed through the comparisons between toys and domestic appliances in the past and those of today. In a Year 1/2 lesson, whilst teaching was sound overall, the video programme provided was confusing because it kept moving from the present to Granddad's childhood 50 years ago and then back to 100 years ago. Nevertheless, at the end of the lesson most pupils could explain

what might have been seen at the seaside in Victorian days. In the satisfactory lesson observed, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were learning about the life of children in Sparta and Athens. In this lesson, pupils in Year 4 produced better standards of work than those in Year 3.

116. Leadership and management are sound and the co-ordinator has made satisfactory progress in addressing the issues raised in the last inspection report. She has improved the quantity and quality of resources and these are supplemented by loans from the school library service to support the various topics studied. However, more resources are needed. The programme of visits and visitors to support teaching and learning provide valuable experiences for the pupils and enhance the curriculum which is based on national and local authority guidance and adapted to suit the needs of the school. The co-ordinator monitors planning for coverage, has observed teaching and learning in the classroom, moderated the standards throughout the school and reported the progress made in the subject to the governing body. Assessment is linked appropriately to pupils' historical enquiry skills or knowledge and the National Curriculum level attained each year is recorded on pupils' annual reports to parents.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

117. Standards by the end of Year 2 are average. Pupils achieve well as they learn how to log on and use simple programs in numeracy, for drawing and word processing. They know how to use an icon and most can save their work. Many know how to print their work. In control technology, they understand how to use a floor roamer and can program it to travel across the floor, performing straight lines and right angles.
118. Standards by the end of Year 6 are below average overall because not all of the National Curriculum requirements are met. Standards are at least average in many activities, such as word processing, desktop publishing and in the use of PowerPoint, Clip Art and web site work, but there are shortcomings in control and monitoring programs. This situation is an improvement since the last inspection in that pupils are acquiring basic computer skills. By Year 6 most pupils are adept in the use of computers, using appropriate icons and shortcut methods and able to save and print their work. Work in word processing sometimes suffers from spelling and grammatical errors but they are developing their keyboard skills effectively to work with more accuracy. Pupils understand the basic skills of designing a spreadsheet and can make simple interrogations of their data and convert it into appropriate graphs. They can use a Power Point presentation and can modify the text so that the bullet points flow onto the screen and in different formats and colours. They can add objects and pictures and are very proud of their work. Many show significant surprise at their achievements and amazement at what they can produce on the screen. In the current work in which pupils in Years 5 and 6 are preparing a multimedia presentation, they have effectively prepared their drafts and are now competently applying them using appropriate technology. Where there are shortcomings is in the use of control technology and in monitoring work, brought about by a lack of appropriate software. Overall, most pupils achieve well in discrete skills. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good as they are effectively supported by classroom assistants. Gifted and talented pupils make good contributions to lessons and achieve well. Overall, boys and girls attain and achieve equally well.
119. Progress in the use of computers to support learning in all subjects is broadly satisfactory although opportunities are missed. Weaknesses occur in how well pupils understand and can perceive which elements of technology can be used in their subject work. There are examples of word processing in English and history. In geography, improving use is being made of digital cameras, and in both history and geography CD-ROMS and the Internet are used for research. Satisfactory use is made of drawing programs in art. Whilst the use of information and communication technology is satisfactory in mathematics and science, opportunities are missed, especially in design and technology. However, the subject action plan and recent initiatives are beginning to have a positive effect in raising standards in this aspect.
120. The overall quality of teaching in discrete information and communication technology lessons is now good, but in lessons in other subjects where computers could be used it is only satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge for most programs and are making good use of the resources available. They give clear examples to pupils as to how they can modify their work; changing the

format of text, inserting objects and pictures. Lessons are generally well planned, with clear objectives and learning is good overall. Learning support staff are well deployed and have good subject expertise that they use well with individual pupils and in supporting the whole class. Teaching is less effective when pupils are in threes at a workstation and they are not all able to practise skills or to learn new ones. The school is aware of this limitation and has plans to increase resources. The procedures for assessment are broadly satisfactory but they require further development to inform pupils about their progress and for teachers to inform lesson planning. Thus some pupils who have a wide range of skills, often developed through the use of computers at home, are not always challenged sufficiently by the demands of the work set. However, teachers do sometimes provide them with independent learning tasks and the pupils show good levels of responsibility and concentration as they use their own ideas.

121. The co-ordinator is new in post but has brought significant enthusiasm to his role and is well supported by the headteacher. Leadership and management are good. The development plan is good and there has been monitoring and evaluation of teaching, which have led to some improvements. The procedures for assessment are broadly satisfactory in relation to basic skills, but the school recognises the need to develop assessment of pupils' capability in other subjects. There is only very limited technician support and this has an adverse effect on resource provision when computers break down. The ratio of computers to pupils is now average and there are plans set to further develop resources. Overall, progress since the last inspection has been good.

## MUSIC

122. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are above average. Standards are enhanced by a high proportion of pupils with well-developed musical skills who are involved in extra-curricular activities such as school choirs, recorder groups and ocarinas. A significant number of pupils also receive peripatetic or private music tuition. Several teachers have musical talents that are put to good use in setting high standards in classrooms. Pupils throughout the school make good progress. Good, robust and tuneful singing by school choirs results in singing of a good standard in assemblies. Recordings of classroom music show that pupils achieve good standards in composition work in most classes. By the age of seven most pupils know the names of the instruments they use. They understand that different sounds can be made using a single instrument or different instruments. Some pupils have not yet developed the skill of working together as part of a group, but they are making progress with this. One group of high attainers in Year 2 produced a good sequence of weather sounds using a computer. A Year 6 group composing a sporting song produced some outstanding work. The composition contained the group's own tune together with lyrics, chorus backing sounds and chants between lines. In most lessons the pupils show enjoyment and enthusiasm when taking part in singing, composing and playing instruments. Year 6 pupils say they enjoy music.
123. The quality of teaching is good overall, although stronger in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6, where it ranges from unsatisfactory to very good. In the best lessons teachers plan and prepare their lessons well, give clear explanations and have high expectations of work and behaviour. The pupils in these lessons respond by listening well. They show enthusiasm and concentrate on their tasks throughout and stop quickly when required to do so. Teachers make appropriate interventions to demonstrate good practice and the pupils are given opportunities to think about and comment on how to improve their own performance and that of others. In a Year 1 / 2 lesson the teacher used good probing questioning such as "What whistles in a thunderstorm?" and waited for a suitable answer. The pupils respond well and are effective in selecting appropriate instruments to make weather sounds. In another Year 2 class the pupils respond to good classroom control by working hard and really thinking about what they are doing and how to improve. Care is taken to ensure that all pupils are engaged in all musical activities. Teachers circulate giving support and advice and support staff are well used in helping pupils with behavioural and learning difficulties, resulting in these pupils making good progress. Unsatisfactory teaching and learning take place when the pupils' singing and playing lack effort and quality and the teacher does nothing to bring about an improvement. Time is wasted on finding the place when rewinding a tape, so the pupils become restless and learning opportunities are wasted on uninspiring tasks that only engage the interest of a minority of pupils. It also leads to missed opportunities for pupils' cultural development.



124. The subject is well managed with a good range of extra-curricular and peripatetic activities. Music has a high profile with public performances that involve choirs and musicians at Easter, Christmas and on other special occasions. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory and gifted and talented pupils are appropriately identified. There has been an improvement in the monitoring of teaching and learning, which takes place on a rota basis with other subjects. The co-ordinator has collected samples of composition work and singing from all classes. This is good practice, although the labelling of the tapes, announcements and quality of some of the work does not always provide exemplars of best practice. The co-ordinator has established good, clear priorities for future development. Music is well supported by annual visits of musical groups. There has been good improvement since the last inspection with new monitoring arrangements, better singing in assemblies and improved resources. A lack of percussion instruments at the last inspection has now been rectified. These are well used.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

125. Standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6, an improvement since the last inspection. A significant feature of all lessons seen is the equality of opportunity for both boys and girls and those pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. All pupils make good progress.
126. By the end of Year 2, with good direct teaching, pupils show an awareness of the need for exercise and the effect that it has upon their bodies. Warm up sessions ensure they are prepared for the rest of their activities. A lesson on Indian dance enables them to watch the teacher's demonstration and seek to improve their own performance in time with music. Pupils demonstrate very effective hand/eye co-ordination in a lesson on throwing and catching tennis balls and sustain their concentration well. In Years 5 and 6, pupils extend these skills to games in Kwik Cricket, where there is no difference in the capability of boys and girls in bowling, batting and catching.
127. Good links are made with other subjects. When younger pupils are asked to circle clockwise, form circles and squares, count the number of times they can catch a ball within a certain period and form groups of different sizes, this enhances their literacy and numeracy skills. They have to listen and follow instructions and understand shapes and do calculations. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 attend swimming lessons at a local pool in the autumn and summer terms. They make good progress due to very good organisation of these visits and the good use of class teacher's skills and those of pool instructors. Good advantage has been taken by teachers to improve their knowledge of swimming instruction and thus improve their own teaching. Pupils benefit and the majority meet the expectations to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6, with many exceeding this and going on to gain other awards. Pupils enjoy their lessons.
128. The quality of teaching is good. A good scheme of work based on national guidelines is well used to plan lessons so that pupils make progress and build on skills previously practised. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and their insistence upon pupils of all levels of attainment participating and being challenged, coupled with games that pupils enjoy, results in a varied and vibrant curriculum. Teachers clearly explain the purpose of activities to pupils so that they know what is expected of them. High expectations of both performance and pupil behaviour contribute to learning. There is effective time management and lessons have good pace, with good use of resources. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own performance and that of others, which they do well. There is good insistence upon health and safety aspects. Outdoor education is addressed through residential visits in the summer term. In extra-curricular sports clubs, such as soccer, netball, cricket and rugby, pupils are given the opportunity to enjoy the subject and to practise skills learned within lessons. They also play fixtures against other schools, contributing to their personal development.
129. The subject is well managed and led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator with good support from the rest of the staff. There is an awareness of the subject's strengths and areas for future development. Planning is monitored by the co-ordinator and teaching is monitored by senior staff. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory. Many staff have attended training in a variety of activities and now put this knowledge to good use in improving all pupils' skills and knowledge.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly as expected in relation to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in their learning about religion as they move up from Year 1 to Year 6.
131. In Year 2, pupils have developed an understanding about churches as religious buildings. They have visited the local parish church and have studied some of its features. They have learned about the artefacts found in churches and have considered how a church is used. At Christmas, pupils wrote a Christmas storybook in which they recorded the events of Jesus' birth. They are presently learning about the significance of baptism for Christians, including the use of the font, the practice of christening and the function of godparents. Some aspects of Judaism, including Jewish family life, have also been studied.
132. By Year 6, pupils have a more extensive knowledge of Christianity and have made some comparisons between the differing accounts in the four Gospels. In addition, they have learned about aspects of Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism and some of the customs and beliefs associated with these religions. At different times, they have had opportunities to consider some significant religious places and to consider concepts such as guilt from a religious perspective. More recently, pupils have been considering religious symbolism, including the significance for Christians of the cross and the dove of peace.
133. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The planning of lessons is generally good, but is not consistent. Good planning emphasises the purpose of the work and shows that the development of the lesson has been clearly thought out. Where planning is less effective, too little attention has been paid to purpose and development. Teachers display good knowledge and understanding of important aspects of religion, for instance the church year or the significance of baptism, which enables them to highlight key words and to ensure that the meaning of such words is discussed with pupils. Skilled questioning by teachers gives pupils good opportunities to talk about the subject. Furthermore, teachers are adept at building on pupils' contributions to lessons to develop the understanding of the whole class. Lessons are mostly taught at a good pace and pupils are effectively managed so that time is well used to sustain pupils' interest. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' involvement and pupils thus pay good attention and are eager to respond. The best lessons provide pupils with opportunities for reflective thinking. There is often a good rapport between class teachers and support staff, enabling lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs to progress as well as others. However, teachers' expectations about pupils' written work are not always set high enough and are sometimes inconsistent. The quality of presentation and the content of some of the exercise books of junior pupils are not always satisfactory. The approach to marking is similarly not consistent. On some occasions, teachers sometimes make suggestions for the improvement of pupils' work, but at other times they simply tick their work.
134. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory. The subject is effectively linked to the school's personal, social and health education programme and is making a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. The school's intention is to rewrite the schemes of work to make subject planning more coherent and the assessment of pupils' standards even more effective; these are well-judged improvements for the subject.
135. The leadership and management of the recently appointed co-ordinator are good. She has a good understanding of, and insight into, the subject. Teaching has been monitored, as have the medium-term planning and samples of pupils' work enabling the co-ordinator to gain an overview of strengths and weaknesses in the teaching. The limited use of information and communication technology to support teaching has been identified. However, the content and the standard of presentation of pupils' written work is only satisfactory, as is the quality of marking. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall, with sound improvement in teaching.