

INSPECTION REPORT

ST ANDREW'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chinnor

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123126

Headteacher: Mrs Gillian Copsey

Reporting inspector: Mrs Mary Speakman
21581

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th November 2002

Inspection number: 248428

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Station Road Chinnor Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX39 4PU
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Michael Thompson CMG, OBE
Date of previous inspection:	16 th – 20 th October 2000

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21581	Mrs Mary Speakman	Registered inspector	Geography History	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
14214	Mrs Gillian Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents.
1189	Mrs Sharon Brown	Team inspector	English Physical education	Special educational needs Educational inclusion English as an additional language
7593	Mr John Collier	Team inspector	Mathematics Music	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
22805	Mrs Jo Greer	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology	
21750	Mrs Sue Hall	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Art and design Religious education	
21378	Mrs Jean Harding	Team inspector		The unit for pupils with autism

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Andrew's Primary School is in the village of Chinnor about four miles south of Thame. There are 254 pupils on roll in the main school, including 14 children who attend the reception on a part-time basis. Fifteen pupils attend the unit for autistic pupils. Children are admitted into the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five and attend school on a part-time basis for their first term. Four per cent are entitled to free school meals, which is below average. The great majority of pupils come from a white British heritage and the few pupils from other heritages are mainly from other white or mixed backgrounds. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language. All pupils who speak English as an additional language do so fluently. There are 19 pupils who have statements of special educational needs, 15 of whom attend the unit for autistic pupils. This figure is well above the national average. There are 34 pupils in the main school who are identified as having special educational needs. At 13 per cent this is lower than the national average. Of the pupils in main school who have special educational needs, most have moderate learning difficulties. Other more specific needs include emotional and behavioural problems, speech and communication difficulties or physical difficulties. Pupils enter the school with a broad range of capabilities. Overall, their attainment on entry is similar to that usually seen.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Andrew's Primary School provides a sound educational experience for its pupils. The school is a united community that provides well for the care and personal development of its pupils. As a result they form positive relationships with other members of the school community and maintain the school's harmonious atmosphere. Standards at the end of the juniors are average overall with standards in mathematics being higher than average. However, standards at the end of the infants are below average. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and pupils in these year groups make insufficient progress. The provision in the unit for autistic pupils is very good. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in mathematics and art are above average in the juniors as are standards in design and technology throughout the school.
- The school's provision for the pupils' personal development and personal and educational welfare are good, with procedures for promoting good behaviour being very good.
- The teaching of the reception class and Year 6 is good.
- The additional support provided for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The provision in the unit for pupils with autism is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science in the infants are lower than they should be, as are standards in music throughout the school.
- Standards in writing and investigative science are lower than they should be in the juniors.
- The length of the school day in the juniors is below the recommended minimum time.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to the Parents and carers of all pupils in the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 2000. The rate of improvement since then has been satisfactory overall, with good progress being made in addressing the key issues from that inspection. The pace of improvement in some aspects has been limited because of the school's understandable commitment to tackling the key issues from the last inspection. The school is no longer deemed to have serious weaknesses. Standards throughout the school have been raised. The leadership and management of the school have been strengthened considerably by the introduction of systematic and regular monitoring of teaching, the curriculum and pupils' work. Planning for the school's further

improvement has improved. The roles of senior staff and subject co-ordinators have been developed appropriately. Provision for children in reception has been improved. Standards in most other aspects of school provision have been maintained. The teaching of junior pupils has improved but the good quality of teaching seen in Years 1 and 2 during the last inspection has not been maintained. Throughout the school not enough has been done to improve the quality of pupils' writing.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Results in the national tests taken towards the end of Year 6 have risen in line with the national trend since 2000. The scores attained represent pupils' satisfactory progress in English and very fast progress in mathematics and science since they were in Year 2. The slight decline in English scores in 2002 is mainly due to low scores in writing. The numbers of pupils achieving the expected level (level 4) and the higher level (level 5) in reading are markedly higher than the national average. Scores in the mathematics tests have improved significantly because of improved teaching and organisation of the curriculum since the last inspection. Standards attained in science tests in 2002 were well above the national average. Pupils attain below average standards compared to similar schools in English but standards compared to similar schools are above average in mathematics and well above average in science. The school sets realistic targets for pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6. Scores attained in English were very close to the school's target and were exceeded in mathematics. The results of the national tests taken in 2002 by pupils in Year 2 were average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Compared to similar schools, scores attained in reading and mathematics were average but scores attained in writing were well below average. The standards attained by the pupils currently in Year 6 are average in English and science and above average in mathematics. In English, pupils' reading standards are above average but in writing are below. Although pupils have a thorough knowledge of scientific facts and vocabulary, their experimental and investigative skills are below average for their age. The standards attained by the pupils currently in Year 2 are below average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in design and technology throughout the school and in art in the juniors are above those usually seen. Pupils attain the expected standard in information and communication technology, geography, history, physical education, and religious education throughout the school and in art in the infants. Standards in music are below average throughout the school. Children in reception achieve well and by the time they start in Year 1 their attainment is broadly average. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their classmates.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and enjoy their lessons. However, a significant number of pupils are reticent in class and reluctant to offer their opinions and ideas in whole class sessions.
Behaviour, in and out of	Behaviour in the classroom and around the school is good. Pupils

classrooms	understand and support the school's expectations of behaviour and fulfil them.
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Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are most positive. Pupils show a very good level of understanding for each other's needs and points of view.
Attendance	Attendance is very good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Unsatisfactory	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 is satisfactory. Teaching in the reception class is good, but teaching in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory overall. In Years 3 to 6 it is satisfactory overall, with much good and very good teaching being seen in Year 6. The teaching of literacy and numeracy in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory. In the juniors it is satisfactory in literacy and good in numeracy. In the reception class the teacher maintains a lively style of teaching and the children learn well. They make a good start to school life. However, this quality of teaching is not maintained in Years 1 and 2. Although teaching is characterised by positive relationships, teachers' expectations of what pupils may achieve are often low; tasks set are frequently mundane and do not motivate the children. Pupils do not work as hard as they could in many lessons and the pace of learning is often slow. In Years 3 to 6, teachers' expectations of what pupils may achieve are usually higher although there are times when the higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently. The pace of pupils' learning in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory and in the better lessons, it is good. In Year 6 where teaching is usually of a high standard, pupils work very hard, concentrate and learn well. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is at least satisfactory and in Year 6 is very good. Learning support assistants contribute valuable help and play an important part in helping pupils with special educational needs to learn. The teaching in the unit is very good and pupils make very good progress towards the targets set for them.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school's curriculum is broad and meets statutory requirements. The organisation of the curriculum does not always make best use of available time. Teaching time in the juniors is below the recommended minimum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils benefit from being fully integrated into groups within the classroom and from effective support by teaching assistants. Pupils from the unit profit from integration into classes.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils have similar skills in English to their classmates and make the same amount of progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Provision for social, moral and cultural development is good and for spiritual development is satisfactory. This provision has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and values.
How well the school cares	Good. There are comprehensive procedures for child protection. Teachers

for its pupils	set pupils personal targets for achievement. These are shared with pupils and parents and regularly reviewed.
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The school has very good links with the parents of its pupils and provides them with a good level of information. The impact of the parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior management team provide satisfactory leadership. They are working hard to continue the improvements within the school and to raise standards. Most teachers manage their co-ordinator duties efficiently.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors have a realistic view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Arrangements for oversight of the curriculum are particularly thorough.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The use of assessment and monitoring evidence is well used to support planning for school improvement and enables the school to accurately identify its weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. All resources, including specific grants, are used appropriately to support the school's priorities for improvement.

The school has satisfactory procedures in place for comparing its performance with that of others and good arrangements for achieving best value in resources and services. Overall, levels of staffing are satisfactory. Accommodation in the main school is satisfactory but that provided for the unit is unsatisfactory, being cramped and lacking in many facilities. Resources are satisfactory overall, with good provision for information and communication technology.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Teaching is good. • Parents are comfortable approaching the school with queries or problems. • Teachers have high expectations of what their children can achieve. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The homework provision. • The extent to which the school involves parents. • The provision for extra-curricular activities. • The information they receive about their children's progress.

Parents hold the school in high regard. The inspection findings support most of the parents' positive views. Overall the quality of teaching and the level of teachers' expectations are satisfactory. The inspection findings do not support most of the parents' concerns. The quality and quantity of homework are judged to be appropriate for the age of the pupils. The school involves parents well in their children's education and this has a positive effect on children's progress. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. However, inspection findings showed that annual reports contain insufficient evidence about the progress that children make.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 Children's attainment on entry to reception is similar to that usually seen. Children make a good start in reception. By Year 1 they have achieved the expected standard in all areas of learning and some achieve more highly, particularly in their confidence and use of computers. However, this rate of progress is not maintained in Years 1 and 2. This is because the overall standard of teaching in these year groups is not high enough to enable pupils to achieve well. At the end of Year 2 standards of attainment are below average. From Year 3 on pupils' rate of learning accelerates. Standards are raised so that at the end of Year 6 pupils attain average standards overall in English and science and above average in mathematics.

2 The results of the national tests taken in 2002 at the end of Year 2 were similar to the national average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. These results showed improvements in reading and mathematics since the last inspection. The number of pupils attaining the expected level was above average in reading, average in writing and very high in mathematics. However, insufficient numbers of pupils attained the higher levels (levels 2B and above). Pupils attained slightly higher in the writing tests than in earlier years but they made insufficient improvement to keep up with the national trend of improvement. When compared with similar schools, standards were below average in reading and mathematics and well below in writing. Girls attained significantly higher than boys in reading and writing and slightly higher in mathematics.

3 Since the last inspection in 2000 pupils' results in the national tests taken at the end of Year 6 have improved. Standards attained in these tests were average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. When comparing the results of the Year 6 tests with attainment of these pupils in Year 2, they had made average progress in English and well above average progress in mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, attainment in English was below the expected standard and above in mathematics and science. Pupils attained scores that were above average in reading, both at the expected levels (level 4) and the higher level (level 5). However, scores in writing at both these levels were significantly lower than the national average. Pupils attained markedly higher standards in the mathematics tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 than in earlier years. The improvements in mathematics and reading were because of improved approaches in teaching. All pupils benefit from the arrangements to teach literacy and numeracy in classes organised by ability. Standards attained in the science tests were well above average. Tests indicate that the gap between boys and girls' attainment seen in earlier years is closing in all three subjects, although it is slower to do so in English. The trend of improvement since 1998 is broadly in line with the national trend. The school's published targets for attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were met in English and exceeded in mathematics. Targets for 2003 are likely to be at least met by the end of the current school year. Pupils' individual targets in these subjects usually reflect realistically what they could attain.

4 The standards of those currently in Year 6 are average in English and above average in mathematics. Standards in science are average overall. Although pupils have good recall of the scientific knowledge they have covered, their investigative and experimental skills are below average.

5 Standards in speaking and listening are average throughout the school. Above average pupils speak clearly and confidently with a wider vocabulary. Year 6 pupils in particular are articulate, listen carefully to each other's ideas and respond appropriately.

However, too frequently, pupils are reticent and unwilling to share their ideas and opinions in whole class discussions. Standards in reading at the end of Year 2 are below the national average. Although pupils enjoy reading and read regularly, many are unable to discuss the books they are reading. Progress accelerates for the older pupils and by the end of Year 6 standards in reading are above average. Many pupils are reading at a high level and pupils are developing a good knowledge of young people's literature and non-fiction text. However, their research skills are not as highly developed. Standards in writing are well below average in Year 2; although the pupils can write simple narratives, their use of punctuation is inconsistent and spelling is inaccurate. Standards in writing are below average in Year 6; although pupils understand how to draft and redraft their work to improve it and are able to write in a range of styles, they are not adventurous in their selection of language to evoke atmosphere or reinforce a point of view.

6 In mathematics in Year 2, more able pupils are working at the expected level and sometimes beyond this. However, average pupils are not always confident working with higher two-digit numbers and along with below average pupils have covered insufficient work during this school year. In the juniors, with effective teaching, pupils make good progress. This accelerates further in Year 6 where pupils benefit from consistently high quality teaching in mathematics classes arranged by prior attainment. Pupils work accurately and have a secure understanding of number, shape, space and measurement. They work at mental mathematics problems well.

7 Standards in science are below average at Year 2 and average at Year 6. By Year 6 pupils' understanding of scientific facts is secure. However, throughout the school pupils' investigative and experimental skills are below average because teachers do not give pupils sufficient independence to design and carry out their own tests.

8 In information and communication technology standards reached by the pupils throughout the school have been raised since the last inspection. Pupils have benefited from improvements to teachers' expertise in the subject and the provision of a dedicated computer suite.

9 Attainment in art in the juniors and in design and technology throughout the school is above the expected standard and progress is good. Attainment in history, geography, physical education and art in the infants is similar to the expected standard, and progress is satisfactory. In religious education standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at Years 2 and 6. Attainment in music in both infants and juniors is below the expected standard. Although pupils are currently making satisfactory progress in this subject, in the past progress has not been fast enough. Recent innovations have improved provision but pupils have a lot of lost ground to make up before standards will be average.

10 The progress made by most pupils with special educational needs towards the targets in their individual education plans is satisfactory. The individual education plans that set out their work programmes are satisfactory overall, but vary between classes. In the best practice they are very good with specific targets set, but there are inconsistencies in style and in ensuring that meaningful and personal targets are set for each pupil in each class.

11 Insufficient attention is given to the needs of higher attaining pupils in some lessons. These pupils underachieve at times because the work they complete is not always demanding enough. Where these pupils are challenged, as in mathematics in the juniors, they attain very highly.

12 The attainment on entry to the unit of pupils with autism is well below national averages and expectations, and pupils' learning is inhibited by lack of communication and social interaction skills, and imagination. However, pupils make very good progress towards

the targets set for them. They display more socially acceptable behaviour and their communication skills improve greatly.

13 The last inspection's key issues required the school to:

- Raise standards in mathematics in the juniors and information and communication technology throughout the school.
- Improve provision for children in the reception class.

The school has worked successfully to fulfil these requirements and has raised standards in mathematics in the juniors and in information and communication technology and geography throughout the school. Provision in reception has improved and this enables children to achieve well in their first terms in school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14 The previous inspection found that most of the pupils were well behaved and enjoyed taking part in the various activities that are provided by the school. This positive picture has been maintained over the intervening two years; pupils' behaviour during lessons and at other times is usually good and their attitudes to school continue to be satisfactory. Pupils of all ages and abilities get on well with each other and relationships between pupils and with adults are warm and constructive. Although there were five fixed period exclusions during the most recent school year, they represent the actions of a single pupil and there is no overall cause for concern. Overall attendance continues to be well above the national average and there were very few unauthorised absences during the most recent school year.

15 Almost all the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire feel that their children like coming to school and that they are expected to work hard during the school day. Many of the pupils spoken to during the inspection agree with their parents and say that they would recommend this school to their friends. Pupils' responses during lessons vary widely, however, and tend to hinge upon the individual style of their teacher. For example, during lessons where teachers allow their pupils to experiment and to find things out at first hand, they respond enthusiastically and become very actively involved. During a mathematics lesson, Year 6 pupils thoroughly enjoyed learning about the key features of various quadrilaterals such as a parallelogram, rhombus or kite. Within a very positive and supportive atmosphere, they worked hard to construct and identify the various shapes and were very interested in each other's achievements. During other lessons, however, teachers often tend to control the activities tightly and plan exactly what it is that their pupils will be doing. Pupils can then become unresponsive because there is little scope for them to make suggestions or to use their initiative.

16 Pupils are usually well behaved during lessons and at other times of the school day. They are good company and are friendly and hospitable towards visitors. During lessons, most of the pupils of all ages, including those in the reception class, settle down quickly and do their best. Some pupils, however, appear unenthusiastic and, despite the best efforts of their teacher, remain unusually passive during lessons. Although they do as they are asked and willingly conform to school rules, they are reluctant to contribute to class discussions and are very difficult to motivate. Relationships between pupils and with adults are good and pupils relate warmly towards their classmates who join them from the autistic unit. This is a testament to the school's very successful policy of social and educational inclusion. Lunchtimes are very well organised and pupils eat their lunch quickly and with the minimum of fuss. Pupils say that, although bullying does occasionally occur, members of staff resolve any such problems quickly and effectively. Pupils in the unit have very good attitudes to learning. Considering their known difficulties with conforming to social norms, their behaviour is good in the classrooms.

17 Although the school does not specifically plan the way in which it promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, these elements form an integral part of school life. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and their moral, social and cultural awareness is good. Over time, pupils form their own set of moral values and beliefs and increasingly appreciate how their actions impact upon others. As they move through the school, they learn to understand intangible concepts such as the value of friendship and how particular situations make them feel happy or sad. They enjoy taking part in the extra-curricular clubs and, when asked to undertake particular roles or responsibilities, willingly seize the opportunity. For example, they may become the class co-ordinator for the day and return the dinner registers to the office; pupils may also act as librarians or run errands for their teacher.

18 Pupils learn about their own culture and increasingly appreciate the diversity of other ways of life and traditions. Within religious education, pupils learn about the symbols that are used by different faiths and, for example, the significance of the Sukkoth in Judaism. Although there are very few pupils from ethnic minorities, pupils develop an ability to appreciate and understand their own culture, as well as other people's values and beliefs.

19 Attendance was very good at the time of the previous inspection and it continues to be well above the national average. The school is committed to following up each and every absence and there are exceptionally few unauthorised absences.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20 A slightly higher proportion of teaching is satisfactory or better than at the last inspection, with more teaching being judged very good. Teaching is satisfactory overall with particular strengths in the reception class and in Year 6. However, the quality of teaching in the infants is unsatisfactory overall. Teaching in the juniors has improved since the last inspection; the drive to improve teaching in mathematics in the juniors has also had a positive impact on the quality of teaching in other subjects. The regular monitoring of teaching and standards has had a greater impact in the juniors than in the infants.

21 The quality of teaching across the school ranges from unsatisfactory to very good. In reception, most teaching is good and occasionally very good. In Year 6 the majority of the teaching is good and some is very good. In the infants, although much of the teaching is satisfactory and a little is good, a significant proportion is unsatisfactory. No very good teaching was observed in the infants during the inspection.

22 The good teaching in the reception class is characterised by the teacher's positive, enthusiastic and encouraging relationships with the children. By giving children encouragement and time and space to try things out for themselves the teacher enables children to develop their confidence as independent learners. Activities are interesting, very carefully prepared and relevant to the learning needs of the children. Children's progress is carefully tracked and provision is adjusted wherever necessary.

23 In the infants, pupils do not always achieve the standard of which they are capable, because the quality of teaching is not high enough. The inspectors' scrutiny of work completed during this school year revealed teachers' low expectations of what pupils could achieve in terms of the quality and quantity of written work that was accepted from pupils. This was particularly the case in English and mathematics. In many subjects, such as science, there is an over-dependence on published work sheets that require little of pupils. Opportunities to promote literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects are frequently lost. When the teaching is effective, pupils make good strides in their learning. For example, in a good mathematics lesson in Year 1 pupils were learning about two-dimensional shapes, how to construct them and the associated mathematical language to describe them. The

lesson was carefully planned. The teacher maintained a positive and encouraging style of teaching. Her use of questioning ensured that pupils of all abilities were given opportunities to answer questions and the confidence to have a go at matching shapes. Activities were carefully explained and they reinforced earlier teaching well. As a result, by the end of the lesson the pupils were able to identify rectangles, squares, triangles and circles in the school environment using the correct mathematical terms. This was a stimulating lesson in which pupils worked hard and made good progress. However, the key features of this lesson, the interesting activities, brisk pace and targeted questioning are not sufficiently in evidence in Years 1 and 2 to enable the standards of pupils' attainment to be raised. In the less successful and unsatisfactory lessons major features are the low expectations of what pupils can achieve and the slow pace of lessons. In some lessons the pace is so slow that pupils become fidgety and lose interest. A scrutiny of pupils' earlier work in English and mathematics shows that teachers have low expectations about the quantity and quality of work pupils are able to produce. In English, work is often untidy and incomplete. In some subjects too little is done to promote pupils' independence. For example, in an information and communication technology lesson the pupils were required to devise a firework picture using a creative drawing program. The lesson was satisfactory overall. However, the teacher did not allow the pupils to try out their own ideas of how the composition should look, although through their own efforts they were developing plenty of confidence in using the program and were well able to do so.

24 The picture in the juniors is a more positive, with the majority of teaching in Year 6 being good or better and some very good teaching in Year 3. Only very occasional lessons in Years 4 and 5 were very good. Progress being made in the juniors enables pupils to make up the deficit, particularly in Year 6 where teaching is consistently of high quality. The better lessons in these years are characterised by teachers' high expectations, a brisk teaching pace, good relationships and interesting activities. In these lessons there is a palpable sense of enjoyment in the activity both from the teachers and pupils. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 6, lower ability pupils worked very hard throughout a lengthy session. The teacher devised various strategies for pupils to identify the number of syllables in a word and the pupils found these great fun as well as enabling them to understand what a syllable was. They tackled more and more complex words with success. The teacher took every opportunity to promote the pupils' enthusiasm for language. A useful digression about the word 'catastrophically', its definition and root words, was just one example of how the teacher used individual pupils' ideas to extend everyone's understanding. Because of the teacher's clear and interesting explanations the pupils showed considerable appreciation and understanding of Roger McGough's poem *Fight of the Year*. Through discussion they came to understand how the poet had used personification to create an interesting poem about late winter into early spring. The teacher successfully broke down a lengthy lesson into separate sections, all equally interesting, and pupils could see that they were making good strides in their learning as the lesson progressed. Relationships were very positive and the integration of pupils with a high level of special educational needs, both within the mainstream year group and from the unit, were very well managed indeed. Everybody worked very hard to very good effect.

25 Overall, teachers use a reasonable range of methods to engage the pupils' interest and to promote progress. Sometimes pupils work in groups organised according to ability and sometimes they work co-operatively in mixed ability groups. In the better lessons teachers' presentation of new knowledge and skills is clear and interesting activities are set for follow-up work. In some of the less successful lessons in both infants and juniors teachers keep pupils sitting and listening for overlong periods of time; after a while pupils 'switch off' or become fidgety. Marking in pupils' books is very variable. Comments generally praise effort or comment on unfinished work, untidy presentation or lack of understanding. Teachers do not indicate what pupils need to do to improve or what the next stage of

development should be. In lessons, teachers share the learning objective with pupils but rarely do they return to it at the end so pupils can know whether they have achieved it or not.

26 Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory overall although it is stronger in reception and in Year 6. In both infants and juniors, teachers' knowledge of music is insecure. In science, teachers do not have sufficient understanding of how to build into lessons opportunities for pupils to undertake investigative and experimental work.

27 The teaching of literacy and numeracy in the infants is unsatisfactory because teachers have low expectations of what pupils may achieve and lessons move slowly so pupils do not accomplish what they are capable of. In the juniors the teaching of numeracy is good and in literacy it is satisfactory. In literacy, teachers' expectations in some classes in the juniors are not high enough.

28 Teachers' lesson planning is sound throughout the school. Teachers ensure that less able pupils and those with special educational needs are provided with tasks that are appropriately modified to suit their learning needs. Older pupils in the juniors benefit considerably from the daily experience of very high quality teaching of literacy and numeracy in a smaller class group. However, with the exception of literacy and numeracy lessons, higher attainers are rarely catered for in the same detail. These pupils benefit from the ability grouping in Year 6 for literacy and in Years 4, 5 and 6 for numeracy.

29 The provision of homework is satisfactory. Homework is appropriately linked to current learning and pupils receive a reasonable amount according to their age.

30 Support staff are experienced and for the most part very effective. They are very well briefed by teachers, work well alongside teachers and provide good support, particularly to pupils who have special educational needs and those who require additional help. They know their pupils well and are skilful at encouraging the more reticent pupils.

31 The teaching in the unit is very good. The teachers and support staff work very well together and have a very good knowledge and understanding of the problems of the pupils. They are well supported by therapists in the fields of education and health who provide an essential input to the assessment of the pupils and to the teaching. A major strength of the teaching is consistent, calm and highly effective management of pupils' challenging behaviour. The well-established system of on-the-spot recording provides instant feedback to staff and pupils, so that the teaching is constantly geared to pupils' developing skills. The planning of lessons is generally good but there are still areas for improvement based on the improved use of individual pupils' individual education plans.

32 The quality of learning is satisfactory overall. When teaching is effective the pupils are enthusiastic about their work and make good strides in their learning, but sometimes the teaching and tasks the pupils are set do not motivate them to give of their best. The pace of pupils' learning accelerates in the juniors and especially so in Year 6.

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

33 As a result of the last inspection, the school was required to review certain aspects of its provision. The issues have been addressed well. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is now planned to take account of current recommendations; large play equipment has been acquired for the reception children; there are suitable schemes of work for all subjects; and due consideration has been given to the total time allocated to each subject over the year so that skills can be developed, particularly in the juniors. The school now provides a suitable curriculum that meets statutory requirements, addresses pupils' needs and promotes a

depth of study in some subjects, such as history. However, there are still some weaknesses. The total teaching time per week in the juniors is below the recommended minimum of 23½ hours¹. In addition, the school is not always making the most efficient use of time to promote the best learning. Some lessons are too long, for example music in the juniors (timetabled for one hour) where pupils' concentration begins to lapse because the subject is almost always oral and requires their constant attention. Similarly, in the infants some numeracy lessons are scheduled for the period between morning break and lunch – 80 minutes – against the recommendation in the national strategy that lessons are best delivered in 45-minute slots². The school would benefit from a review of the timetable, taking into account recently published guidelines³.

34 The school has been particularly successful in developing the teaching of mathematics, using the national strategy, so that standards have risen significantly since the last inspection, particularly in the juniors. Literacy lessons are soundly delivered in accordance with the recommendations of the national strategy in the juniors, but in the infants there is a lack of challenge in many literacy lessons and this is unsatisfactory. Provision for the teaching of information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection though standards are not yet as high as they could be. This is, in part, due to the under-use of computers in classrooms to support lessons. Religious education is properly taught in accordance with the agreed syllabus.

35 The provision for pupils with special educational needs, including pupils with statements of special educational need, is good and follows the revised Code of Practice effectively. Pupils are fully integrated into groups within the classroom and are well supported by teaching assistants. Pupils from the unit are well integrated into classes and well received by pupils in the class. The school works hard to ensure early identification of pupils who may have special educational needs. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to bring concerns to the attention of the special educational needs co-ordinator through an initial action. The individual education plans are written by class teachers. They vary in quality with the best being very good, containing specific targets to help pupils improve. Where targets are too broad and general this is reflected in the learning taking place. Learning support staff give effective support, usually within classrooms, helping to move the learning on. The school has good systems for tracking pupils' progress. Plans are reviewed regularly and fresh targets set. There is less focus on the most able pupils who are not always provided with sufficiently demanding tasks and so on occasions do not always achieve as well as they might.

36 Much of the teaching in the unit concentrates on developing pupils' communication, personal and social skills. This is valid and pays dividends in the improvement in pupils' attitudes. A broad and rich curriculum is provided which includes appropriate specialist strategies and complementary therapies, as well as a modified National Curriculum. The unit staff aim to integrate any pupil who may benefit into main school classes for some lessons. Account is taken of the needs of the autistic pupil and the needs of the main school class. This integration is helpful in raising the awareness of main school pupils of the effects of disadvantage. Although the integration sessions are successful, more could be made of them, and opportunities are missed to capitalise on the teaching of the main school staff.

37 An analysis of the parents' questionnaire reveals significant concerns about the provision of extra-curricular activities, with less than half of the respondents expressing satisfaction with what is offered. Inspectors agree that there are fewer out-of-school clubs than are found in most schools and that not many are run by members of staff. However, outside bodies provide good quality experiences, for example in dance and rugby, and a

¹ DES circular 7/90: a minimum of 23½ hours is recommended exclusive of registration, collective worship, breaks and lunch.

² The National Numeracy Strategy DfEE p.11

³ Designing and Timetabling the Primary Curriculum, QCA, 2002

governor runs a drama club. At other times in the year there is a music club for infant pupils and a choir that practises for special occasions, such as Christmas. Both these are run by a teacher. Support for a computer club organised by a parent is currently being gauged. Apart from the out-of-school clubs, the school does provide good experiences for pupils that enrich the curriculum and give a broader view of topics than is gained in the classroom. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 experience residential visits that enhance geography and information and communication technology and promote social and cultural development. All pupils take part in educational visits. A particularly effective trip to the local church for Year 1 pupils was observed and other places, further afield, support work in subjects such as history. Pupils in Year 4, for example, visit Sulgrave Manor in connection with their Tudor project. Visitors too share their experiences with different classes, notably a wildlife enthusiast who regularly visits and enthuses the pupils. Overall, therefore, the provision of experiences that give pupils an extra dimension to their class work is satisfactory.

38 The school has a good programme of work for personal, social and health education. The policy has been drawn up jointly by the local partnership of schools and there is a weekly lesson for all classes during which important issues are explored. For example, Year 5 pupils have discussed the dangers of smoking and those in Year 6 are more aware of what they can do to avoid injury as a result of visiting the John Radcliffe Hospital's 'Injury Minimisation Project'. Pupils receive satisfactory sex education and a Drugs Roadshow visits the school to emphasise the dangers inherent in the misuse of drugs.

39 The community makes a good contribution to the school's work. There are good links with the local church and the annual Art Show, praised in the last report, continues to attract the work of artists from across southern England. The Summer Carnival, organised by the parents' association, attracts many from the local community and the pupils themselves distribute harvest gifts around the village and make a contribution to an organisation in Oxford that cares for homeless people. The links with other local schools have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now very good. The headteacher of the secondary school meets regularly with the heads of the local primary schools and joint policies are increasingly being drawn up so that there is a consistency in the experiences that all pupils are offered. Year 6 pupils begin a piece of English work that continues into Year 7 in the secondary school and they make visits to familiarise themselves with the organisation so that transition is eased. Subject co-ordinators meet to discuss individual pupils and the experiences that they have had and the partnership schools have access to teachers with specialist expertise in information and communication technology. Funding for the creation of a 'Community Learning Network' has just been approved and this is likely to provide enhanced links for the partnership of schools.

Spiritual, social, moral and cultural development

40 Overall the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and makes an effective contribution to pupils' learning and development. This is an improvement since the previous inspection of the school. A particular feature and strength is how effectively visual art enhances pupils' cultural development.

41 Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Occasionally there are moments that are very special, such as the unprompted gasps of "Wow" given by pupils in Year 3 when the teacher held up some examples of stained glass windows to the light allowing the beautiful colours of the design to shine brightly. However, on the whole there is not enough conscious planning of activities to promote spiritual development or enough conscious effort to maximise informal opportunities.

42 Assemblies give pupils satisfactory opportunities to reflect on their feelings and the experiences of others. However, overall, staff miss many opportunities to develop aspects of

spiritual development further in such activities, especially for the older pupils. Senior staff have made a conscious decision not to use music in some assemblies, which is unusual and limits the development of a special 'feel' to such occasions. Similarly there is no focus for pupils' thoughts through the use of a lighted candle or visual stimulus. In some junior assemblies there is no visual stimulation of any kind despite some very high quality art work available in school which would aid reflection on the beauty and wonder of the world. In the assemblies observed few pupils took an active part through readings or performance. Work in personal, social and health education (PSHE) makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' personal development. For instance younger pupils have opportunities to study pictures of children in situations of conflict, which encourages them to think about feelings. Through discussing how they might feel in similar situations pupils explore how to resolve such areas of conflict.

43 The provision for moral development is good. The school has a clear set of values that underline the principles of right and wrong. Pupils are closely involved in drawing up class rules which are clearly displayed and which most pupils adhere to. Sometimes pupils have opportunities to consider the wider aspects of morality such as environmental issues. Stories with a moral are used well for the infants. This is exemplified in an assembly when the story of a child losing a much-loved soft toy was used to illustrate how the problem was resolved through the intervention of a family member. This was used well to encourage younger pupils to reflect on their own experiences. Similarly, in the juniors' assemblies taped stories are used appropriately to encourage pupils to think about what others tell them and 'not to judge a book by its cover'. As part of their PSHE work older pupils think about the use and abuse of alcohol and drugs, issues of smoking and how to care for themselves, others and animals.

44 The provision for social development is good. Pupils have many opportunities to work in pairs and small groups. The school attempts to foster a sense of community within both the school and the local area. Good use is made of visits and visitors to extend pupils' learning across the curriculum. Particularly effective use is made of a residential visit for pupils in Year 6 at the beginning of the school year. This encourages the pupils to develop social relationships with staff and other pupils rather than leaving this until the end of the year when pupils are leaving the school. There are valuable extra-curricular activities such as rugby training that is well supported and involves boys and girls. The school attempts to promote racial, religious and other forms of equality. It is particularly successful in integrating pupils with autism into some school activities. This is effective when younger pupils indicate at lunchtimes they must be quiet because their friends do not like a lot of noise. There are opportunities for pupils to develop responsibility through the role as 'class co-ordinator', a role that changes daily. However, this opportunity is not fully utilised in that younger pupils are not always able to explain what this role entails.

45 Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils particularly develop an appreciation of visual art through the high quality of their work, which is well and widely displayed around the large school buildings. In literacy lessons pupils study the work of a variety of authors and poets. Local people visit the school and talk to the pupils about their jobs and local history and pupils have enjoyed a Victorian day in school. The school has made efforts to ensure reading materials reflect life in a multi-cultural environment but some old reading materials for the youngest pupils do little to enhance this. Visits and visitors extend pupils' understanding of the performing arts and all pupils visit the theatre at Christmas time to see a pantomime. However, the low profile of music in the school does little to support cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46 All members of staff share a sincere commitment to pupils' welfare and they do everything they can to ensure that pupils are well looked after during the school day. Great

care is taken to provide pupils of all ages and abilities with effective personal and academic support and guidance. Pupils who attend the autistic unit are accompanied by their own assistant and receive one-to-one support when they join the rest of the school for lessons or assemblies. Relationships between pupils and members of staff are good and this helps teachers to identify and address any problems at an early stage. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are very effective and attendance is closely monitored. Routine health and safety procedures are in place, although governors were informed of a number of concerns during the inspection. Child protection procedures are good and members of staff are fully aware of their responsibilities.

47 Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Detailed personal files include annotated examples of each pupil's work, along with their teacher's comments and any relevant correspondence. Over time, these files form a cumulative record of each child's achievements and help the school to monitor how each individual is developing. In addition, each pupil has his or her own personal targets; these are shared with parents and are regularly reviewed by the pupil and their teacher.

48 Procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are very good. There are three separate playgrounds but they are united by a single code of behaviour. The system for managing behaviour is incremental and anyone who misbehaves is subject to an escalating range of sanctions that include being given time to 'cool off' or being kept in at playtime. This system is very effective and is reflected in the good behaviour seen during the inspection. Within each classroom, pupils also agree their own set of class rules and this helps them to understand why they are important. Individual rewards vary from classroom to classroom and include, for example, bonus points in Year 6 and merit marks in Year 5.

49 Procedures for eliminating bullying are very good. Pupils say that any such incidents are dealt with in a positive and constructive manner that helps to ensure that they do not recur. The school has a very successful policy of social and educational inclusion and pupils of all abilities work together harmoniously, regardless of their ethnic origin or individual needs.

50 Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. The school regularly reminds parents of the importance of attending regularly and carefully follows up each and every absence. The effectiveness of the system is reflected in a level of attendance that has been consistently above the national average for many years and an exceptionally low level of unauthorised absence.

51 The care and guidance given to the pupils in the unit are very good. The multi-disciplinary approach ensures that pupils and their parents are well supported. Appropriate risk assessments of the unit's activities are carried out.

Assessment

52 Assessment procedures are good; the use of assessment information is satisfactory. There have been improvements since the last inspection, but further work is needed.

53 Pupils in the juniors are assessed annually in English and mathematics using commercially produced tests based on the national tests. The headteacher maintains a tracking record of pupils' attainment from the end of Year 2 onwards. She uses it to monitor the progress of individual pupils and to identify any who may need additional support. Test results are used in Year 6 to set pupils for mathematics and to form groups for English lessons. Information is used to set group and individual targets throughout the juniors. The targets are usually shared with parents and pasted in homework diaries, but there is some inconsistency in practice between teachers. There are plans to revise the wording of these

targets into more child-friendly language so that pupils can monitor their own progress more easily.

54 Each subject has an attainment record sheet which identifies the level achieved through a series of descriptive statements linked to the National Curriculum levels. These are completed at the end of each topic, showing how far pupils have achieved or exceeded them. The records are mainly skills based. The results are used to plan future lessons and are passed on to the subsequent teacher and this system works well, particularly in the juniors.

55 National test papers are carefully analysed to identify any questions in mathematics and science that have proved difficult for a significant number of pupils. This information is shared with all teachers and the curriculum adjusted for the future. Assessment information is used well when writing reports to parents but no information is given on the next stage of learning or what needs to be improved.

56 In the unit the assessment of pupils' progress in learning is very good. Very good use is also made of information acquired by the multi-professional team to devise appropriate programmes for individual pupils. Individual education plans are good overall, but sometimes the targets for the next term are a bit vague and they lack specific tasks to achieve, which means that staff cannot demonstrate pupils' short-term progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

57 The previous inspection found that this school enjoyed a satisfactory partnership with parents. Over the intervening two years, this has strengthened and the school's links with parents are now very effective. Parents are kept well informed about the day-to-day life of the school and provide their children with very good support at home and at school. They ensure that they attend very regularly and encourage them to work hard and to do their best.

58 As part of the inspection process, parents were invited to complete and return a questionnaire and just under half did so. Analysis of their responses shows that, although they are pleased with many aspects of the school, there are four areas that are causing concern. The first three are the amount of homework that is set, the extent to which the school involves parents and the range of extra-curricular activities provided. Inspectors disagree with these concerns. Arrangements for homework are very similar to other schools and the partnership between home and school is close and mutually supportive. Although the range of after-school activities is fewer than is usually seen, pupils are provided with a good range of out-of-class experiences, such as residential visits, that enhance the curriculum well. Around one fifth of those parents who expressed an opinion indicated that they are not satisfied with the information they get about the progress their child is making. While inspectors feel that parents are kept well informed about the day-to-day life of the school and what their children will be studying, they agree that reports include little information about what their children need to do in order to improve the standard of their work. In addition, written comments tend to be overwhelmingly positive and do not include details of their child's overall attendance.

59 Parents provide very generous practical and financial support for the school. They give freely of their time and there are regular volunteers who offer help during the school day. Although only a small number are prepared to help with the organisation of fund-raising events, they are very well supported. Each year, substantial amounts of money are raised and put to good use. Funds are used to help pay for the swimming pool and parents have also taken on most of the responsibility for checking the quality of the water. They also train as lifeguards and organise the summer holiday classes. Through their efforts and commitment, the school is able to keep the pool open and this ensures that the pupils are able to swim regularly. Funds are also used to enrich learning resources in a number of

subjects, such as history, music and art, and have provided benches for the three playgrounds.

60 The unit staff have a very good relationship with the parents and carers of pupils in the unit. Home-school diaries are used very well and this benefits the teaching and the care. Although parents have lots of information about the unit, the local education authority provision and the main school, this could be still better if it were more specific.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

61 The key issues identified at the last inspection embraced many major aspects of school management and provision and the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in its leadership and management. The shared sense of purpose, demonstrated by the school's leadership, has enabled the school to achieve a good pace of improvement in addressing all the key issues from the last inspection and a satisfactory rate of improvement overall.

62 Since the last inspection, the school has addressed the key issues related to improving the quality of leadership and management:

- A school development plan has been devised which builds logically on the post-inspection action plan; it contains all the necessary detail about how school improvement will evolve in the areas identified for improvement, over what periods of time initiatives will take place and how these initiatives will be monitored and evaluated and by whom.
- Arrangements for monitoring the quality of the curriculum and of teaching and learning are systematic and involve the headteacher, senior management team, curriculum co-ordinators and governors.
- There are subject co-ordinators for all National Curriculum subjects.
- The role of the senior management team and of subject co-ordinators has been closely defined so they have responsibility for overseeing and improving the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility.
- Levels of resourcing in information and communication technology and provision for reception children's outdoor play have been much improved.

63 The leadership and management are now sound. The deputy headteacher, senior management team and curriculum co-ordinators' roles are well established, which was not the case at the time of the last inspection. The school has a close and productive partnership with its governing body, which is much more involved in monitoring the quality of the curriculum and teaching and learning. The school's philosophy is *to encourage all pupils to achieve their full potential in every aspect of school life, and to provide an environment where all are equally valuedwithin the Christian ethos of the school*. This philosophy is mainly fulfilled. There is a caring atmosphere in which pupils and staff are valued and work hard. The school's values are well demonstrated in the daily work and life of the school. Pupils have greater opportunities to fulfil their potential in some year groups than in others.

64 The role of curriculum co-ordinator is clearly defined. The effectiveness of current arrangements is being tested, because, due to changes in teaching staff, some co-ordinators have assumed new subject responsibilities. Although they are managing a different subject they are well aware of what their role is and how to go about acquiring the necessary expertise and knowledge in the management of the subject. Those subject co-ordinators who have been in place for a reasonable length of time have a good level of expertise in the

subject for which they are responsible. Most give helpful support to their colleagues and lead the development of their subjects appropriately. The programme of monitoring the school's work ensures that they are involved in monitoring standards and teaching in their subjects, through observation of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning. Arrangements for performance management are well embedded and part of the school's overall development and monitoring process. The co-ordinators for English and mathematics are involved in the analysis of data in these subjects, gleaned from national tests, and make recommendations about how the curriculum should be planned to address areas of weakness in pupils' learning. For example, the school has concerns about the quality of children's writing. Analysis of the national tests taken at the end of Year 6 indicated that pupils were more successful when they were required to write persuasively and show a point of view than when writing a straightforward factual piece such as a brochure.

65 The deputy headteacher assumed responsibility for special educational needs towards the end of the last school year. The day-to-day management of the provision for special educational needs is satisfactory. The co-ordinator ensures that individual education plans are in place, up to date and regularly reviewed. The new Code of Practice is fully implemented, although not all staff are confident with the recent changes to the Code of Practice. The policy for special educational needs has yet to be revised to take account of recent developments. The co-ordinator has identified the need to extend her knowledge and understanding of early assessment strategies and the use of information gained to enable early identification of need. The responsible governor has a keen interest in pupils with special educational needs and meets regularly with the co-ordinator to discuss developments. The funds designated for special educational needs are used appropriately and the impact evaluated. As yet, there are no formal criteria in place against which to identify very able pupils. This, together with guidance, would raise awareness and confidence in teachers to recognise the needs of the very able pupils.

66 The leadership and management of the unit are very good. The head of the service for the local education authority is also a school governor, and she, the unit staff and main school staff work very well together for the benefit of pupils. Good systems and structures have been devised to ensure a top quality resource for pupils. However, the unit has grown considerably over a long period of time and there is now a need to review some aspects of the provision to ensure the highest quality service for autistic pupils and their parents.

67 Since the last inspection, teaching staff and governors have participated fully in establishing school improvement priorities. The current development plan is a logical extension of the post-inspection action plan and the good level of improvement in addressing the key issues is indicative of how successful it has been. However, in its efforts to raise standards in the identified areas such as mathematics in the juniors and information and communication technology throughout the school, less attention has been given to devising strategies to improve the quality of pupils' writing. The school is aware of this shortcoming and the English co-ordinator has detailed arrangements to address this. The governors and headteacher have a clear view of what the school needs to do next to improve further. This longer-term vision has a broader view than the current plan, which has understandably been constrained by the need to address issues which were judged as serious weaknesses at the time of the last inspection.

68 The last inspection judged that the governors, although very committed to supporting the school, were insufficiently involved in monitoring the development of the curriculum or the quality of teaching. Since the last inspection the headteacher and governors have addressed this shortcoming thoroughly. There is a curriculum committee which meets regularly, receives presentations from co-ordinators and scrutinises curriculum documentation. Each governor has oversight of a National Curriculum subject and meets regularly with the co-ordinator of that subject. These meetings are minuted and key points shared with the whole

governing body. Each governor is assigned to a particular class which they visit regularly. All these activities are carefully documented. A scrutiny of this documentation shows that the system is effective in keeping governors up to date on the main matters of concern for their subject. Visits to classes are helping governors to gain an overview of the quality of teaching throughout the school. The governing body fulfils all its statutory duties.

69 The school has good procedures for ensuring that the financial resources available to it are used properly to support the educational needs of the pupils. The use of the school's surplus finances is appropriately planned for. Resources have been set aside to fund an additional teacher later in the reception year, when additional children are to be admitted. A proportion of the surplus budget is earmarked to fund improvements to the classroom accommodation. The governors' involvement in the school's strategic planning cycles and in the monitoring of expenditure throughout the school year means that governors are fully informed and able to maintain good oversight of the school finances. Specific grants are used appropriately to support improvements in school development and provision. The governors and headteacher have addressed fully the few concerns raised by a recent audit.

70 The arrangements the governing body have in place for monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum and finances mean that the principles of best value are applied appropriately. Governors are beginning to evaluate the school's performance using a variety of information to assess how it compares with what is expected. They are aware of the need to obtain best value in purchasing services and resources and have the necessary procedures in place to ensure that value is obtained.

71 The day-to-day administration of the school works smoothly and good use is made of technology to enable the school offices to run efficiently.

72 Overall, staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. There have been some recent changes to staff, with temporary appointments made to cover maternity leave and resignations. Any outstanding co-ordinator responsibilities are being covered by permanent members of staff on a temporary basis and this has limited disruption in the management of subject areas. Induction and mentoring procedures for staff new to the school and those in their first year of teaching are satisfactory. Support staff provide a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. In addition, the finance and administrative staff contribute well to the smooth running of the school and to the pupils' day-to-day welfare.

73 The main school buildings provide satisfactory accommodation overall for teaching the curriculum. There is a long-term programme of improvements to the main school buildings, which is beginning to have an impact on the quality of accommodation of the main school. However, the accommodation provided for the unit for autistic pupils is not satisfactory to cope with the number on roll, the severity of their needs and the range of work undertaken.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Raise standards in English in all year groups by:

- Improving teachers' expertise in the teaching of writing.
- Giving pupils regular opportunities to write independently in English and other subjects.
Paragraphs 3, 5, 27, 101, 102, 104, 107, 109, 110, 115, 143, 148, 154, 181.

And additionally in the infants by:

- Giving pupils regular opportunities to participate in speaking and listening activities, including discussion about the books they read.
Paragraphs 1, 2, 5, 27, 101, 102, 104, 115, 118, 143.

Raise standards in science in all year groups by:

- Improving teachers' expertise in the teaching of experimental and investigative science.
Paragraphs 7, 123, 124.

And additionally in the infants by:

- Ensuring that there is a reasonable amount of time allocated to the teaching of all the required aspects of scientific knowledge.
Paragraphs 7, 9, 26, 123, 124, 125, 126.

Raise standards in mathematics in the infants by:

- Considering the recommendations in the national strategy for the length of lessons.
- Ensuring that tasks are suitable and meet the learning needs of pupils of different abilities.
- Raising teachers' expectations for the volume and neatness of work.
- Developing consistent practice for marking work.
Paragraphs 2, 6, 117.

Raise standards in music by:

- Developing teachers' confidence and expertise in delivering the recently introduced scheme of work.
- Reviewing the time allocated for individual music lessons in the juniors.
- Introducing pupils to musical experiences at times other than in lessons, for example during assemblies.
- Developing the use of computer programs to support music.
Paragraphs 9, 26, 164, 167.

Improve the quality of teaching for pupils in the infants by:

- Raising teachers' expectations of what pupils may achieve.
- Increasing the pace of learning in lessons.
- Ensuring that the work planned for these pupils is sufficiently challenging.
- Ensuring that the marking of pupils' work gives them guidance about what they need to do next to improve.
Paragraphs 20, 21, 23, 111, 118, 126.

Bring the time of the school day in the juniors in line with the recommended minimum.

Paragraph 33

In addition to the areas for improvement identified above, the governors should also attend to the health and safety issues raised during the inspection.

THE UNIT FOR PUPILS WITH AUTISM

74 The Chinnor Resource Base (the unit) is part of the local education authority's provision for pupils with autism. There are currently 18 pupils attending the unit, 15 on the roll of St Andrew's Primary School, and three on the roll of another primary school. A few pupils attend the unit on a part-time basis. Nearly all the pupils attending at present are boys. Pupils are taught in two class bases. They start in the unit after careful assessment by education and medical professionals. A few join having experienced the breakdown of placements in other schools. All pupils in the unit have highly complex difficulties that impede their learning. These special educational needs may be a combination of language difficulties and communication and social problems. A few pupils have complex needs of a medical nature. A feature of the problem, for a significant number of the pupils, is frequent violent outbursts, as they cannot make sense of the world. All the pupils have statements of special educational needs, which specify extra highly specialist provision. No pupil is disapplied from taking part in the National Curriculum or the national tests. The attainment of pupils on entry to the unit is well below national averages and expectations; judgements, in this report therefore, are made on the basis of the progress that pupils make in their learning, and their personal and social development, towards the targets set for them.

75 The quality of education provided in the unit is very good. Consequently, pupils make very good progress in acquiring a more acceptable response to life and work, and are able to learn more productively. There was no overall judgement made about the provision in the unit at the St Andrew's school inspection in October 2000, but some positive aspects were noted concerning the effects of pupils' integration into the main school.

76 Pupils' progress towards the targets set for them is very good. Pupils with challenging or bizarre behaviour make especially good progress in acquiring a more appropriate response to school work, and to life in general. Those who seem passive and exhibit extremely low self-esteem become considerably more confident. Pupils' communication skills, at all levels, improve enormously and this improves their intellectual skills. A good number of pupils are starting to understand beyond the literal, and this is a very big step forward. Many become less obsessive. Over time there has been great success in attaining most of the objectives set for them. A very good aspect is the improvement to pupils' abilities to take turns, to listen to others and to work independently.

77 Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. Pupils respond very well to the activities provided and, given the great behaviour problems exhibited by pupils in the past and at other times, their behaviour is, generally, good in the classrooms. When pupils' behaviour is disruptive or aggressive, the staff manage this extremely well, and so the pupils' response to frustrations and challenges is less violent. Staff are well trained in the management of difficult behaviour and their consistent approach is having a positive effect on the pupils. Teaching and support staff are restrained and calm under extreme provocation, and give their pupils security and the sort of unconditional acceptance that is so important for them to learn and to trust adults.

78 The teaching is very good, and this is a key factor in the success of the unit. The very high quality of teaching promotes very good learning by pupils. A major strength of the teaching is the policy of putting the needs of individual pupils first, but work, such as appropriate literature, is given that is suitable for pupils of their age, and is challenging on an intellectual level. Pupils are given choices and staff are assiduous in pointing out that all decisions have consequences; for many pupils this is a hard lesson to learn, but they are getting there. Symbolic representation is used well and staff have very good knowledge and understanding of the techniques suitable for pupils with such severe difficulties. A wide range of strategies is employed, and skilled support staff play a very important part in the teaching and the assessment of pupils' achievements. Lessons are properly evaluated and there is

very good on-the spot recording. Some lessons are not planned in enough detail for success to be measured for every pupil, and this is an area for development.

79 The curriculum is good, and many aspects are very good. A lot of the teaching time is, quite rightly, devoted to English and especially communication, but this is delivered through a wide range of well-considered approaches. Pupils have a rich and varied experience, and trips out to the village and the community are used very well to improve pupils' social skills. A broad range of complementary therapeutic approaches, including yoga, art therapy, music therapy, and psychotherapy, enhance the curriculum. Particular importance is given to movement, and this is essential in tackling pupils' long-term development. Pupils go riding and swimming, and some go to 'soft play' in the village. A very helpful movement-based approach is used at other times, and highly specialised communication strategies are used well. Many of the specialist ways of working with autistic pupils are employed judiciously, depending on the needs of individual pupils. There are good programmes for personal, social and health education. Appropriate aspects of the National Curriculum are taught, often using a developmental approach. Information and communication technology is used, but more could be done in this subject. Although religious education is taught at an appropriate level, the explicit planning of this could be better, so that checks can be made about what has been covered and how much pupils understand of the sensitive issues of differences in life-styles and of faith; these issues are conceptually extremely difficult for autistic pupils.

80 A very important aspect of the provision at this school is the integration of the pupils in the unit into main school classes. Autistic pupils are sometimes integrated into classes with pupils of the same age, but often into younger classes. Not all pupils integrate, as this is not considered beneficial to everyone at the present time; less than half the pupils integrate at present. Pupils mainly join classes for practical activities, but sometimes for lessons such as literacy; they always have a member of staff from the unit with them. Their learning in terms of the National Curriculum subjects is satisfactory, and their learning in terms of personal and social development is well promoted during these sessions. Main school staff are suitably briefed, but, given the nature of the pupils' difficulties, this could be better. Pupils from the unit benefit very well from these experiences, as do the main school pupils. St Andrew's pupils learn, at first hand, how people can be very different, but still have much to offer the community. This is a very important issue to understand in life. Pupils from the unit play in the main playgrounds with others at break. They eat in the dining room at lunchtime, and although this works well, opportunities are sometimes missed to exploit these times. The policy of integration is valuable in ensuring pupils' inclusion into as many aspects as possible of usual educational practices. This has been achieved due to the collaboration and goodwill of the main school staff.

81 The support and guidance given to pupils in the unit are very good. Due regard is taken of their vulnerable state, and the local education authority and the local NHS Trust provide a good range of outside professionals to work with the unit staff to teach the pupils. The speech and language therapists are involved at an appropriate level and education and health professionals work well together to ensure a multi-disciplinary approach, which is highly effective. The staff are very caring and pupils' parents appreciate this. Very good risk assessments for pupils are undertaken. The quality of care and support plays a large part in the establishment of the positive ethos of the unit. When they leave St Andrews, pupils mostly go into a similar unit at a local secondary school. Due to the seamless provision by the local education authority, and the very good management by the head of the autistic service, the transition is good and pupils at a vulnerable time in their lives are helped to settle well.

82 The assessment of pupils' learning is very thorough and good use is made of comprehensive ongoing assessments. Recording of attainment and behaviour is clear and

consistent and subsequent teaching is firmly based on what has been found. These records are an essential part of the diagnostic tools for staff. Good files of records of achievement are kept, and parents and pupils have appropriate input to these. Other professionals from education and health, such as art, music and language therapists, contribute very well to pupils' assessment. Pupils' individual education plans are realistic and devised in consultation with the pupils' parents and carers. They are good, as far as they go, but could be even better if they stated in more detail the strengths exhibited by pupils so that these could be used to remedy any problems. The targets are sometimes rather general, and the success criteria are insufficiently precise to enable staff and parents to see how much better the pupil is doing in the short term.

83 The unit's partnership with parents is very good. Staff work hard to involve parents and much good work is done out of school to help parents and carers help their child. The diaries between home and school are very effective in passing on educational as well as social information. However, this partnership relies too heavily on the commitment and personalities of the individual members of staff. Systems for passing on information, and parents' rights to be involved, are not formal enough to ensure all parents' total participation in the education of their child. Although individual staff and parents discuss possibilities for the teaching, there is no formal system to ensure that parents are given all the information about the range of teaching strategies that may be employed with their child. Many documents detailing the work of the unit are generic to the local education authority's service, and some information is hidden in other documents. There is a need to devise information for parents, and other professionals, which is accessible and specific to this unit.

84 The leadership and management of the unit are very good. The partnership of the St Andrew's Primary School headteacher and governors, the local education authority staff, and the unit staff has been developing over the last 20 years, and effective systems have evolved to ensure that autistic pupils are given help according to their needs. This high quality collaboration is key to the very good provision of the unit. The quality of the leadership means that a close-knit, high-performing team is in place, and this is of very great benefit to pupils. However, the long-term development means that some aspects have not been reviewed recently, and to ensure the very highest quality provision some aspects, such as the curriculum, the staffing and the accommodation, need to be reviewed.

85 The staffing of the unit is satisfactory. There are two full-time teachers and one who works part-time. However, there are only seven full-time equivalent support staff, and this is not enough to ensure the safety of all pupils, given the number of activities that take place which mean that these staff are not in the classroom. Staff are well qualified and experienced and a good range of appropriate training is given to enable them to keep up to date. They use a good range of resources, but lack of space constrains the acquisition of large apparatus and equipment that would be effective in the teaching.

86 These staff work in two old, demountable buildings outside the main school buildings. The accommodation provided is unsatisfactory as it affects the provision for the pupils, and the working conditions of staff. Apart from the age of the buildings, with the difficulties that this brings, they are separate from the main school. There are problems with the design that affect the teaching, and also the safety of pupils. Staff make great efforts to overcome the limitations, and safety is not compromised, but these constraints affect their way of working and put excessive strain on staffing levels. There is no suitable, quiet, safe room for withdrawal of a pupil when behaviour becomes intolerable for the rest of the pupils. There are too many hidden corners that affect the supervision of pupils. The teaching rooms are too small and, as there is little storage space, with clutter that is a hazard for pupils whose behaviour may be less inhibited and who may climb up shelving. There is no separate space that is visually restful for pupils who respond best in a 'quiet' area. There is too much electrical equipment left around which pupils can tamper with, as there is nowhere to store it.

The 'sensory' areas are unsatisfactory and opportunities are missed here to use a multi-sensory approach, which is often so valuable for autistic pupils. The curriculum would be even better with a better sensory room. The buildings cannot be adapted for pupils with sensory or movement difficulties. The unit managers and the headteacher and governors of St Andrews are aware of the need for a new building.

87 Much very good work is done in the unit. The unit is funded by the local education authority, not the school, but pupils from the main school benefit from having the unit on site. The staff of the main school make good use of the expertise of the unit staff. Autistic pupils and their parents are getting very good value from this provision. The amount spent per pupil, by the local authority, is very reasonable and, given the outcomes in terms of autistic pupils' achievements, it is money very well spent.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	22	29	4	0	0
Percentage	0	13	35	46	6	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	262
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	11

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	20
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	49

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	16	15	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	16
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	28	28	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (83)	90 (83)	100 (88)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	27	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (83)	90 (85)	94 (83)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	29	29	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	25	28
	Girls	27	27	29
	Total	84 (86)	90 (88)	98 (98)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (86)	90 (88)	98 (98)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	20	28
	Girls	28	26	29
	Total	49	46	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (68)	79 (82)	98 (93)
	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
242	5	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR –Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR –Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	196

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	663130
Total expenditure	589946
Expenditure per pupil	2092
Balance brought forward from previous year	62076
Balance carried forward to next year	135260

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
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	254
Number of questionnaires returned	122
Percentage of questionnaires returned	48

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	45	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	41	54	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	53	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	44	12	1	4
The teaching is good.	52	46	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	46	16	2	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	34	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	50	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	37	45	14	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	36	50	7	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	52	2	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	9	21	44	12	14

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

88 When children first start at the school they attend on a part-time basis in the term of their fifth birthday and then as full-time pupils thereafter. This means that some children have only one term of part-time education before they move into Year 1. This is considerably less time than many children nationally spend in the reception class and this has an effect upon the progress that they make in the long term. There are changes to this admission procedure identified for 2004.

89 The provision for children in reception is good overall and much improved since the previous inspection when a number of shortcomings were identified. These included the quality of the planning, which was identified as a key issue for improvement. There was also a lack of large play equipment to develop physical skills. Since this time there have been changes of staff and teaching has considerably improved. In general, the children are provided with a suitable range of learning experiences, but limited space restricts opportunities. Whilst the provision of large play equipment has improved, there is a lack of a covered play area to make best use of the available equipment.

90 A key feature of the improvement made is that children are taught in a discrete year group and planning is based upon the nationally recommended areas of learning. Activities are now suitable for the age and experience of the children. However, the teacher does not yet have a suitable planning format for all activities that specifically identify the 'stepping stones' to achievement and has to adapt a National Curriculum format for some planning that is less than ideal. Overall the recent improvements ensure the children make good gains in their learning during their time in the reception class. Because of this the children settle well into the school and are happy in their learning. This is seen when a small number of children choose not to speak in public. This choice is respected by the teacher who gives the quietest children time to adjust to being part of a group whilst fully including them in the range of activities. All children including those with special educational needs and those speaking English as an additional language are fully included and achieve well.

91 The overall attainment of the children when they first enter the school is average in most areas of their learning, although there is quite a wide range of early attainment particularly in early speaking skills. In the reception class children make good progress. By the time they transfer to Year 1 children attain the expected levels in all areas of their learning and a substantial minority exceed the Early Learning Goals⁴. Relationships are very good and children are treated with care and with warmth.

92 The quality of teaching is good in all areas of learning. A strong feature of the teaching is the enthusiastic manner of the teacher who encourages and supports all children to have a go at different activities. Group targets are set and displayed around the room, which acts as an effective source of information for parents. The children's attainment and progress are measured and records are kept. However, the conflicting information gained over recent years in such assessments has not always clarified exactly where children's learning is strongest or weakest and not been of sufficient use in informing subsequent planning. The school has clear plans to move to the national system of measuring children's early attainment as a more effective measure of how well children here achieve compared to those in other Oxfordshire schools or those nationally.

⁴ The Early Learning Goals set out what children should achieve by the time they reach the end of the reception year.

93 Management of the Foundation Stage requires further development to ensure that senior staff are aware of the limiting factors in current provision. The temporary Early Years co-ordinator has yet to establish a clear role in managing the information available or in helping to bring about further improvements in the facilities provided. An area for development within teaching is to extend the role of classroom support staff to ensure a more active and effective organisation of activities for which they are responsible. Sometimes support staff are inclined to do too much for children and this impacts upon their learning. There has been little monitoring of the effectiveness of support roles by senior staff and this has allowed some weaknesses to occur and this does not offer the highest level of support to teaching staff.

Personal, social and emotional development

94 By the time children move into Year 1, most achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area of their development, and several children exceed these targets. Teaching and learning are good with some very good aspects. Children are encouraged to register their presence in the morning by finding their name card and attaching it to a registration board. There is a kindly but firm insistence that the children should tidy equipment away and become more responsible for the things they use. The teacher gives clear pointers when children have to listen or when they can offer their ideas. Strong attention is paid by the teacher to promoting the children's understanding of the need to play and share equipment fairly and this is reflected well in their attitudes to their friends. Children are provided with opportunities to choose, from a given range of activities, what they would like to do. Most concentrate well on activities and are keen to complete the tasks set for them. For instance, children are able to change their shoes quickly and independently when going outside on a teddy bear hunt.

95 Children co-operate well and share and play effectively with one another. Children successfully develop their confidence in both their approach to learning and with each other. By the end of the Foundation Stage most have successfully developed their understanding of what it means to work and participate fully as a member of a wider group. Children are open and friendly towards one another and visitors. However, the opportunities to experience a range of cultures and traditions in the activities they undertake are limited.

Communication, language and literacy

96 By the time the children leave reception most attain the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning. However, there is a wide range of attainment, with some very quiet children unlikely to achieve the targets, whilst several higher attaining children easily exceed them. Teaching and learning in this area are good. The teacher organises an effective range of activities where children develop their speaking and listening skills. Most children are really keen to tell others what they think and have done, although a small number of girls are reluctant contributors. The teacher is aware that some are extremely quiet in discussions and attempts to involve them in a satisfactory manner but more could be done to directly involve them in activities. The language children use is generally appropriate for their age and some average and higher attaining children explain things well, using grammatical conventions and fairly complex sentences.

97 Children are encouraged to develop an interest in reading and good use is made of a 'story sack' of items connected to the story of Goldilocks. The teacher adopts an effective strategy of having 'forgotten' what she has to do when looking at a big book and the children take pleasure in telling her what to do and what some of the words say. They delight in retelling familiar parts of such stories and using different voices for Daddy, Mummy and Baby Bear. They also enjoy taking home their reading books and share these with their parents and many make good progress in reading. Children like using the class computer to match letters on the screen and keyboard. Whilst class displays are satisfactory, opportunities are missed

around the classroom to emphasise more clearly the key words they become familiar with. The range of reading materials is generally suitable although some older books do not offer children a strong picture of multi-cultural life today.

98 Children are provided with a satisfactory range of early writing activities. The large majority of children write their own names unaided and some higher attaining children write recognisable if not accurate sentences without help. However, opportunities are sometimes missed for incidental mark-making activities such as in the playhouse and class shop. There are no lists of items to buy or labels and few opportunities for the children to write out shopping lists, menus or the prices of items.

Mathematical development

99 The majority of children are on line to achieve the Early Learning Goals in mathematics by the time they enter Year 1. Teaching and learning are generally good. Most children have a good grasp of numbers. The majority identify numerals to 10 and several add one or two more or identify one less when using towers of cubes. Most identify what number is on a line of teddies and confidently count the number of plastic apples and oranges that they buy in the class shop. When carrying out a 'hide and seek' type of activity children find and count pictures of teddies enthusiastically and some are able to work out how many are still missing from the number that the teacher has hidden. Children have an average understanding of simple shapes. Some recognise the coins they play with in the class shop but few have a clear understanding that these have specific values.

100 Children enjoy using mathematical games to extend their understanding of numbers. However, such activities are not always well organised when the adult in charge allows children to use a hopscotch game in a very small area with associated health and safety concerns instead of using the adjoining empty classroom. Whilst there are some opportunities to use sand and water to extend the children's understanding of shape and capacity there is no room in the classroom for such facilities and the lack of a covered area impinges upon their learning in this area.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

101 Almost all children achieve the expected targets in this area of learning and a considerable number exceed this in their confidence and skill in using computers. Teaching and learning are good in this area with some very good features. The teacher makes particularly effective use of the school's computer suite to enable the children to work on individual computers. Children make good progress in using the range of computer tools to draw firework shapes, fill colour into parts of their pictures and add different effects, such as the use of a spray can to make the sparks from their fireworks

102 Recent work shows children learn about minibeasts. Displays show they know the correct number of legs and wings of spiders and butterflies. There is appropriate provision during free choice activities for children to use construction kits, playmats and 'small world' equipment. Photographic evidence shows children have found how difficult it is to build a tower when wearing gloves. The children have enjoyed recent religious education activities about food and the harvest and join in collective acts of worship. Whilst it was not possible to observe scientific, musical, geographical or historical activities, planning clearly identifies an appropriate range of these.

Physical development

103 This area of learning has improved since the previous inspection due to the provision of a good quality climbing and play frame, a number of good quality play vehicles and a

wooden playhouse. All of this equipment is used on a daily basis when weather allows, but the lack of an outdoor covered area again restricts activities. Teaching and learning in this area are good and virtually all the children achieve the expected learning goals. The children climb up and slide down the play frame with confidence. They pedal and push tricycles and scooters around the area with an average awareness of space and of other children. When playing a number game outside most children run in and out of the others and stop quickly to a given signal. Children also have appropriate opportunities to use physical education equipment in the school hall. The children's fine skills and co-ordination are average and most hold a pencil and paintbrush with an appropriate grip.

Creative development

104 By the time they enter Year 1 children have achieved the expected goals in this area. Teaching and learning are generally good. Although the classroom is small there is an area for creative work with an appropriate, but not exciting, range of drawing, painting and collage materials. Children enjoy the opportunities to make bonfire pictures by splashing and 'squidging' paint by hand onto a very large piece of black paper. The teacher makes good use of the activity to discuss the colours and patterns made, and encourages the children to use a wider and more descriptive vocabulary in such activities. Displays show how they have carefully folded strips of paper to make the legs of spiders and monkeys and how they folded their paintings to make symmetrical butterfly pictures. They have painted pictures of themselves showing average awareness of body shapes and made good progress when using an art program on the computer to produce pictures of their face. Displays are used in a satisfactory manner to enhance children's self-esteem but the quality of display is not as high as elsewhere in the school. Whilst there are opportunities for role-play these are limited by the poor state of the home corner.

ENGLISH

105 Standards are below average in Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. The previous inspection found standards to be average, although they had fluctuated greatly over time. Since that time standards in writing appear to have declined. Writing is of a below average standard in Year 6 and well below average in Years 1 and 2. These standards represent unsatisfactory achievement.

106 In the current Year 2, standards are below average in reading. Standards in speaking and listening are average throughout the school. In Year 6 reading standards are above average, due largely to good teaching and accelerated learning in the Year 6 classes as well as setting arrangements for lower attainers which are helping to raise standards for these pupils. The 2002 national test results indicate that standards have been sustained since 2001 in reading but writing standards show little improvement over time. This is borne out by the current inspection findings. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory overall.

107 In the juniors most pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject overall. However, progress is uneven between year groups, reflecting the quality of teaching. The good teaching in Year 6 is resulting in accelerated learning for many pupils, with additional strategies such as booster classes and setting for lower attainers helping to raise standards, particularly in reading. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make the same progress as others in the class. Those pupils with English as an additional language cope well with English and also make satisfactory progress.

108 The National Literacy Strategy is not having the desired effect on standards in writing particularly, largely because some teachers lack confidence in the organisation and delivery of the literacy hour. Some lessons are boring, being tightly controlled with little opportunity for pupils to exercise initiative. Over-long periods of time spent listening to the teacher talking

result in some passive learning. Some literacy lessons are too long, and the rate of teaching is very pedestrian. Consequently, pupils work at a leisurely pace. In these lessons, pupils do not complete enough work for the time allowed. There is no opportunity outside the literacy hour for pupils to write at length. Other strategies such as additional literacy support and early literacy support for Year 1 have been introduced, but are not yet having a noticeable influence on writing standards.

109 Standards in speaking and listening are average in Year 2 and Year 6, with a number of pupils above average, speaking fluently and confidently. These higher attainers articulate clearly, drawing on a wide vocabulary. Most pupils are happy to discuss their work and aspects of school life but are reluctant to engage in more extended discussions such as discussing their current reading.

110 Standards in reading are below average in Year 2. They improve well to be above average at the end of Year 6 largely due to the quality of teaching which accelerates progress in this year.

111 Most pupils in Year 2 enjoy reading and read regularly to an adult in school and at home. Higher attainers read fluently and with developing expression, but are unable to discuss their reading at length. Many pupils belong to the public library and parents are very supportive with hearing reading and maintaining reading diaries. Approaches to reading vary between classes. Not all pupils read individually to their teacher on a regular basis. Reading records lack detailed diagnostic information to develop reading skills. There is no check on the number of books read, which varies widely, or reading capabilities other than tests. In Year 2 even more able readers could not talk about favourite authors and few were familiar with terms such as 'illustrator', 'glossary' and 'author'. Insufficient attention is given to the concluding whole-class session in literacy lessons and other opportunities, such as drama, to enable pupils to speak at length, to offer explanations and opinions and to address an audience. A significant number of pupils adopt a passive mode in lessons with the same few pupils responding to questions.

112 By Year 6 many pupils are already achieving the expected level and a few are reading at the higher level. Pupils in Year 6 understand how books are organised in the library and can locate and retrieve information in many cases. However, library skills are not systematically developed as pupils move through the school and younger pupils have limited skills in this respect. Books are challenging in Year 6 for the higher attainers, but elsewhere in the junior classes the match of books to ability varies. Some are too easy but pupils cannot move on to the next level until the teacher says so, and some cannot remember when they last read to the teacher. The majority of pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of fiction and non-fiction texts. Library provision is adequate for pupils in Years 1 and 2, but the junior library is barely adequate, being very small and with a limited range of reading material. Plans are in hand to improve the junior library provision so that it becomes a working area and more effective use can be made of this resource. At present there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop research and private study skills. There is little evidence of pupils completing book reviews or of writing tasks being linked to the reading process. Although reading standards are above average, few pupils make use of higher skills of inference and deduction. Pupils in Year 6 have an increasing awareness of a range of authors and their work, but few engage in extended conversations about their reading preferences.

113 Standards in writing are below average by the time pupils leave the school. They are well below average in Year 2. The range of writing is limited in Year 2 and, although this increases, it is not as good as it should be in Years 3 to 6. Year 2 pupils write stories, a harvest prayer and instructions, for example for playing hide and seek. They use simple punctuation, although not consistently. Work is often unfinished and pupils do not complete

enough work in lessons. Work is often untidy and letter formation is insecure even for higher attainers. Spelling is weak for all but the most able. In Year 6 the range of purposes for which pupils write includes simple biographies, autobiographies and letter writing. For example, pupils write biographies of William Shakespeare. They are introduced to plays such as *Macbeth* and write a modern version of the witches' spell. They make good use of dictionaries in Year 6, but skills in other years vary. When writing letters to parents about a school residential visit, pupils show awareness of audience and appropriate techniques such as bullet points to list requirements, but skills have not been sufficiently developed over time so that standards are below average. Pupils show awareness of drafting and re-drafting writing, but do not have the expected skills. A significant weakness by the end of Year 6 is that pupils are not adventurous in their selection of language. There are very few examples of pupils using language imaginatively to write descriptions or successfully creating atmosphere. Very few pupils in Years 2 and 6 write at the length expected for their age.

114 Throughout the school, handwriting is unsatisfactory for a significant proportion of pupils and not as good as when the school was last inspected, although some Year 6 pupils have neat joined writing. Too many pupils lack pride in their work. Few Year 2 pupils join their handwriting and many do not form letters accurately or evenly. Some use capital letters within words. There are few opportunities for pupils to write at length in other subjects, reinforcing these important skills. Occasionally this happens; for example, pupils in Year 6 wrote postcards to their teacher from a holiday. They use computers for word processing on occasions but use of computers in the classroom is limited. The Amazon fact file produced in Year 6 was a good example of how literacy and information and communication technology could be used to support work in geography, but such examples are rare in other year groups. Pupils have few strategies to help them spell unknown words and standards of spelling are a weakness throughout the school, even for many higher attainers.

115 The quality of the teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory. The teaching provided does not support pupils to make adequate progress. Teachers have low expectations and lessons proceed at a slow pace, so that pupils do not cover enough work and higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged. The teaching of basic skills is unsatisfactory. This is reflected in pupils' limited skills, and knowledge and understanding of reading and writing. Sometimes, when pupils are bored, noise levels are high and behaviour deteriorates. The use of support staff is effective, helping pupils with special educational needs to make steady progress.

116 In the juniors the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although this varies between the year groups. The best teaching seen in Year 6 leads to accelerated learning for pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils who are taught in a small class for literacy and numeracy. Nevertheless, expectations are too low in some junior classes and the pace of lessons is not brisk enough, reflected in the amount of work pupils cover. Pupils' attitudes to learning and response in lessons are directly influenced by the quality of teaching. Where this is exciting, pupils are well motivated and keen to learn. They work with sustained effort in such lessons. A strength throughout the school is the good attention to inclusion for pupils with special educational needs and particularly the integration of pupils from the unit into mainstream classes.

117 English is well led and managed by the deputy headteacher who has recently taken on this responsibility. She is knowledgeable, sets a good example through her own teaching and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. Already some issues such as boys' underachievement are beginning to be addressed.

118 A wide range of good assessment procedures is in place and good use is beginning to be made of the information gained to inform teaching and learning. Marking, however, is inconsistent. The best marking provides constructive comments to help pupils know how to

improve their work, but this is not often the case. The use of targets for individual pupils has been introduced but practice is inconsistent. Not all teachers realise the impact that target setting has upon progress. There are good systems in place for tracking pupils' progress over time.

119 Overall, whilst there has been improvement to some aspects of English, much remains to be done, particularly in writing, to ensure rising standards and a consistent, coherent approach to literacy through an exciting and challenging curriculum that fully meets the needs of all pupils, in particular the more able.

MATHEMATICS

120 After the last inspection, the school was required to raise attainment in mathematics in the juniors. It has made good progress on this issue and the results of national tests between 2000 and 2002 improved significantly for the seven year old pupils and dramatically for the eleven year olds. Teachers are now confidently and effectively delivering the National Numeracy Strategy and planning lessons by adapting the units of work based on the guidelines. However, standards in the present Year 2 are below average. This contrasts with the average results achieved by seven year old pupils in the 2002 national tests. In Year 6, standards are currently above average but, with good teaching and setting arrangements⁵, it is likely that results in national tests in 2003 will be well above average, as they were for the eleven year olds in 2002. The school's target for these pupils – that 95 per cent will gain the expected level of attainment – anticipates that this will happen.

121 There is a wide range of ability in Year 2 and the more able pupils are working at the expected level and beyond, in some cases. In general, they recognise odd and even numbers and can count on in tens from a given number up to 100. They name flat shapes such as a hexagon and total coins to £3 correctly, writing the amounts using a decimal point. The volume of work produced by average and below average pupils is inadequate and presentation is untidy. Work is sometimes not completed and figures are often reversed. Average pupils work confidently with figures to 50, use non-standard measures to calculate length and know the number of sides in a triangle and a rectangle. However, they are unsure about the value of the digits in a two-digit number. One said that 29 is, "A two and a nine". Below average pupils and those with special educational needs double numbers up to 5, complete a sum such as $13=10+?$ and name simple flat shapes such as a circle and square. They need considerable help to total three coins when the answer is above 10p. The teaching assistant supports them well and they make satisfactory progress. Progress for pupils as a whole, however, is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 because they enter Year 1 with average skills.

122 The reason for inadequate progress is largely connected with teaching. One lesson in the infants during the inspection was unsatisfactory, two were satisfactory and one was good. However, the scrutiny of work revealed low expectations for the quality and volume of work, and superficial marking that praised the pupils' efforts but gave no guidance as to what was needed to improve. Each ability group has a target for improvement and it is usually appropriate; for example, the average attainers in Year 2 have to "write numbers to 100". Teachers rarely refer to the target in their marking to indicate to pupils that they are on the way to achieving it. In lessons, the work is often not well matched to the needs of pupils. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, some pupils were using cotton reels and paint to make a recurring pattern, an activity normally seen in a reception class. In contrast to this unchallenging work, a task given to some Year 2 pupils proved too difficult. Many average pupils could not accurately total the amount of money in a purse and come up with the

⁵ The system by which pupils are put into ability groups for lessons. In St. Andrew's School in Year 6 there are three ability groups.

correct answer, 54p. The control of the pupils was not secure in the unsatisfactory lesson and pupils wasted time in unsupervised groups so that, after five minutes, only half had begun work. The pace of lessons is often leisurely. Most lessons are scheduled for at least an hour and some last for 80 minutes. This exceeds the recommendation in the national strategy that, for infants, 45 minutes is a suitable length of time.

123 In the juniors, pupils make good progress which accelerates further in Year 6 where they are organised into three classes determined by their ability. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 also benefit from setting arrangements, though here pupils are divided into two rather than three ability classes for their lessons. These arrangements promote better learning because teachers are able to plan work that more closely matches the needs of the pupils. Overall teaching in the juniors is good, though it is variable. In the middle juniors, the scrutiny of work revealed a variation in the amount of work expected of pupils of the same age depending on which class they are in. However, teaching in Year 6 is consistently good and sometimes very good and this promotes better progress.

124 The more able Year 6 pupils work with very large figures and understand the value of the digits in seven-figure numbers. They know the relationship between decimal numbers, fractions and percentages. They understand the concept of probability and interpret data from a graph. They identify the properties of shapes such as a rhombus and a parallelogram by looking at angles, lines of symmetry and opposite and adjacent sides. However, they find it difficult to explain their conclusions in words although most of them use mathematical terms confidently. This difficulty has been identified by the school from a close analysis of the most recent national test results and is an example of how the good systems of assessment are helping teachers to refine their planning to improve pupils' learning. In mental calculations, these above average pupils cope easily with rapid-fire questions involving addition and subtraction of numbers with at least three digits. Average pupils are equally adept at solving mentally a succession of problems that test their knowledge of tables. They are given a specified amount of time to complete the examples and compare their scores with those previously recorded for the same test. In other work, they compile a bar chart from information that they have gathered about favourite chocolate snacks and explore a variety of methods for multiplying 45 by 18. Most understand how to find the perimeter of irregular shapes but a few have difficulty in calculating the lengths of the sides that are not specifically given on the plans. The below average pupils and those with special educational needs multiply a two-digit number by a single digit, round numbers to the nearest 1000 and money to the nearest £, and complete a tally chart to show the results of throwing a die for a specified number of times. They are taught very well in their lesson and receive good support from teaching assistants. This promotes very good learning and enables them to correctly construct flat shapes from the information that they are given. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported throughout the juniors and make the same progress as everyone else.

125 Teaching is good in the juniors because teachers realise the importance of practical and real-life activities that harness pupils' enthusiasm. Those in Year 4, for example, enjoy looking at till receipts from a shopping trip to identify the savings made by buying special offers. Most teachers present challenging tasks in their lessons but make apparatus available to help find solutions. They use resources well such as whiteboards on which pupils write answers. This enables the teacher to check each pupils' understanding, for example in a Year 5 lesson where she requires pupils to label axes 'x' and 'y' prior to work on co-ordinates. Proper attention is paid to teaching basic skills: in Year 4, pupils learn that multiplication is the inverse of division. Computers are beginning to be used. In Year 3, pupils enter data from an earlier science lesson and produce a graph of results. This lesson also demonstrates how mathematics is linking with other subjects. The lesson took place in the computer suite. However, during the inspection, the computers in the classroom were not used in mathematics lessons. The brisker lessons are in Year 6. Here pupils are often presented

with opportunities to exercise their own initiative, for example, to develop and explain their own strategies for calculating the perimeter of a rectangle. Teachers are skilled at asking open questions that do not suggest the answers but encourage pupils to think for themselves. Homework is used well throughout the school to support work. Homework tasks are checked during a timetabled lesson before a new assignment is set. Marking is often better in the juniors, too, with helpful advice sometimes being given, for example in Year 3, where a pupil who is adding 1 continuously to solve $6+7$ is advised to make larger jumps.

126 The co-ordinator has assumed the role this term. He inherits a well-established system where monitoring of lessons has been effective and where good assessment systems are enabling teachers to track pupils' progress and identify weaknesses in understanding. The subject is well resourced and pupils enjoy their lessons. Many say that mathematics is their favourite subject and this bodes well for the future.

SCIENCE

127 Standards in science are below average at the end of Year 2. Standards at the end of Year 6 were well above the national average in the 2002 national tests, but standards in the work seen are average. Standards are below average in experimental and investigative work in both infants and juniors. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection – standards have risen, resources have improved and the co-ordinator has a clearly defined role, but there is still much to be done, especially in Years 1 and 2, and with investigation skills throughout the school.

128 At Years 1 and 2 there is an imbalance in the work covered with an over-emphasis on life processes and living things so that progress in other aspects is unsatisfactory. Presentation in pupils' books is untidy and insufficient work is covered in the two years. Opportunities to develop writing skills are limited. Although pupils have satisfactory hands-on practical experiences, there is little evidence of the experimental work that is expected at this age. Work is too teacher directed so that pupils do not begin to learn how to set up a simple fair test. Pupils do not have opportunities to experiment with components of simple electric circuits to find out for themselves what does and does not complete the circuit, nor how a switch can break a circuit. Pupils discuss different light sources after walking around school. They cut pictures of different lights and lamps from a magazine and stick them onto a plan of a house. However, they do not have opportunities to undertake investigational activities, such as examining the effects of different coloured translucent papers, that would be more relevant. Too much time is spent colouring in, cutting and sticking. More able pupils are not sufficiently challenged, so few attain the higher levels at the end of the Year 2.

129 In the juniors pupils achieved well above average results in the recent national tests, but the quality and quantity of work in different year groups are very variable, with insufficient work produced in some. Throughout the juniors, pupils' investigative skills are unsatisfactory. As in the infants, the practical tasks are much too teacher directed so pupils in Year 6 are not confident when asked to devise a simple fair test. Pupils are not given opportunities to devise their own tests and evaluate whether they are workable and, if not, why not. In one Year 6 lesson seen, although pupils were asked for their suggestions, when these had been collected the teacher told them in precise detail how they should undertake the investigation. Pupils were given little responsibility in undertaking the very simple task of testing whether temperature affects how quickly sugar dissolves in water. Although pupils in the parallel class converted the table of results into a graph, they joined the points to form a continuous line graph, which is incorrect with this data. In a very good lesson in Year 3 pupils generated their own ideas to test different paper towels for absorbency; they were quite clear about what constituted a fair test. They conducted the test with great care, sharing the equipment, taking turns and recording the results in a table. In a subsequent lesson pupils transferred these results into a bar chart on the computers.

130 Teaching is generally satisfactory, with some better lessons seen. In many lessons the pace is pedestrian, pupils are given little opportunity to develop independence and too much reliance is given to worksheets and prepared frameworks for recording the process and results of practical work. Some of the commercially prepared worksheets are of dubious quality and need to be carefully checked for accuracy before they are used. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons by capable assistants so they make similar progress to their classmates.

131 Science does not contribute sufficiently to developing writing skills, mathematical skills or the use of computers. Although the school has the resources for data handling, sensors to measure aspects such as temperature change over time and a computer microscope, these are rarely used.

132 Assessment procedures are good. Pupils are assessed at the end of each topic on how well they have understood the factual content. This is recorded in their personal records. Twice a year pupils are assessed on their practical skills. However, because of the limited scope for developing these skills, teachers seem to be making over-generous assessments.

133 The co-ordinator has a clearly defined role. He has undertaken a review of the curriculum and initiated the introduction of new published schemes for both infants and juniors. He has monitored lessons and scrutinised pupils' books. So far this has only been undertaken in Years 3 to 6. He has limited awareness of what is happening in Years 1 and 2. It is urgent that he finds opportunities to acquaint himself with teaching and learning in these classes. Resources are good. They are stored neatly in clearly marked containers making it very easy for teachers to find the equipment they need.

ART AND DESIGN

134 By the age of seven pupils' attainment is average and by the age of eleven this has improved and attainment is above national expectations. These findings indicate standards for older pupils have improved since the previous inspection of the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress and those in the juniors make good progress and achieve well. Boys and girls achieve equally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those speaking English as an additional language, make similar progress to their classmates.

135 Parents indicate that over several years art has been seen to be a strength of the school and they are pleased that this largely remains true today. Work is extensively displayed around the large school site and the display of work is often of high quality; it considerably enhances the quality of the pupils' work and raises their self-esteem. Pupils' cultural awareness and development are well supported by art activities. The school holds an annual display of the work of amateur and professional artists. Alongside this is held an annual art competition for which all pupils submit work. Independent judging takes place and prizes are awarded in each year group. Some of this work is of a very high standard in all years across the school.

136 In Years 1 and 2, pupils demonstrate satisfactory basic art skills in drawing and painting and some pupils in Year 1 make good progress when colour mixing to produce portraits in the style of Paul Klee. Pupils use a good range of materials and techniques when creating their work. Recent displays show pupils are taught to observe closely what they see around them and some of this work is of a good standard. Observational drawings of shells and the inside of fruits using chalks are particularly good. However, current work in Year 2 such as paintings of animals following a visit to a wildlife park is of only an average standard and not as effective as some work in one Year 1 class.

137 Well-organised and well-presented photographic evidence shows that pupils in the infants produce satisfactory collage pictures of a colourful elephant and make models using malleable modelling materials. In an activity week with the theme of North American Indians, pupils have made simple tepees. Pupils in Year 2 have produced some very eye-catching work in the style of Aboriginal artists and pupils in Year 1 have produced tie and dye work.

138 Pupils in the juniors are provided with a good range of opportunities to explore what effects they can create with paint, crayons, oil pastels and a variety of media. Some of this work again shows a good level of observational skill and the work of some higher attaining pupils is of particular note. Pupils in Year 6 have recently produced some good quality water-colours following their visit to a local nature reserve. When continuing their work on portraits, pupils in Year 5 have opportunities to further develop their understanding of line and tone when using charcoal and some work is of exceptional quality.

139 Pupils in the juniors have good opportunities to learn about the artwork of different times and cultures. In Year 6 they produce Japanese-style work reproducing patterns from 18th century textiles. In Year 5 they produce work in the style of William Morris, Sisley, Nash and Turner. Pupils in Year 4 have produced careful drawings of tinned food in the style of Andy Warhol and other work in the style of Matisse. There is a good range of both traditional and more imaginative art techniques. Whilst it was not possible to evaluate much work in three dimensions or environmental art, photographic evidence indicates suitable work is produced. Photographs show some bold, vivid and imaginative work.

140 Work is extended well when pupils use art programs on computers to produce self-portraits. This work enables the pupils to have wider opportunities to develop critical awareness of the range of effects they can create when using the different techniques. However, the opportunities to develop speaking or writing skills to a greater degree through discussions and comparisons are not fully utilised. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop an art vocabulary and to evaluate the quality of work produced.

141 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Whilst pupils have suitable opportunities to paint, teachers do not give sufficient pointers to pupils as to how to improve their work. Teaching in the juniors is good overall. Whilst the teaching observed in the few lessons seen was average the extensive sample of recent work and photographic evidence shows that over time this teaching has been good. There is evidence of work of a really high standard in some year groups but this is not always equal across the year groups. Appropriate use is made of information and communication technology to enhance teaching and learning.

142 The art curriculum is well balanced and enhances the development of a range of skills and pupils' cultural development effectively. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory during an interim period prior to the appointment of a new subject co-ordinator. The subject has been a traditional strength of the school. Several staff are enthusiastic about the subject and senior staff have ensured that time to develop art skills is safeguarded as a priority. Photographic evidence compiled by a governor is very attractive and a valuable resource in appraising pupils' work. Assessment in the subject is satisfactory and has ensured a balance of different aspects of the curriculum. However, there are slight weaknesses in the design element of the curriculum and pupils do not make really effective use of sketchbooks to try out and refine their ideas.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

143 Standards in design and technology are above average overall at the end of both infants and juniors. Standards are average in the design process, very high in making skills

and high when evaluating commercial and their own products. Progress in making skills and evaluating products is good while progress in designing is satisfactory.

144 Design and technology is timetabled in blocks so that each class undertakes a project for half of each term. During the inspection only Year 6 were timetabled for the subject. Teaching in this year is variable but never unsatisfactory. Pupils were at the beginning of a project to design a shelter for a specific purpose. To do this they evaluated a range of shelters for fitness for purpose, materials used and construction method. Through this process they learned how to make decisions about their own designs. The pace of lessons was variable, one being much sharper so that pupils were more enthused and productive. Both lessons contributed well to speaking and listening skills when each group reported back to the whole class.

145 During the inspection pupils brought into school examples of artefacts they had made the previous year. The co-ordinator produced a selection of photographs showing pupils working on their models. This evidence indicates that pupils concentrate well when making careful measurements before using saws and bench hooks to cut wood strips to make frameworks for model vehicles and houses. This contributes well to measurement in mathematics. Pupils in Year 4 wear protective gloves when they use low temperature glue guns. The models show a high degree of accuracy in measuring so that joints are square. Pupils take good care when finishing models, such as decorating houses to represent Tudor buildings.

146 The curriculum is well organised so that projects link into other subjects, such as the Tudor houses with history. There are good links with science so that pupils include electric circuits with switches into vehicles to make the headlights work. Other models incorporate different mechanisms such as pulleys in a crane and pneumatics in a moving monster. Food technology and textiles are included. The standard of all models is very high and much better than usually seen. Sewing skills are also good.

147 Time constraints mean there is little opportunity to develop design skills in detail. Pupils produce annotated designs, thus contributing to aspects of writing. There is corroborative evidence, in addition to the Year 6 lessons observed, that pupils make good progress in evaluating products, but this is always done orally, including ongoing evaluation and modification of their own models. There is no planned use of information and communication technology in the present curriculum.

148 The co-ordinator is professionally skilled in the design and making processes. This is a major contributory factor to the high standards seen. He supports and encourages other teachers well so that they have the confidence to teach the subject. Resources are good for the planned projects and pupils are taught the appropriate safety rules to use tools correctly and independently. There has been good progress in the subject since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

149 At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainments in the infants and the juniors were found to be below the expected standard. Since then improvements have been made to the organisation of the curriculum and attainment now is in line with what is expected. Pupils with special educational needs are included fully in activities and make satisfactory progress.

150 By the end of Year 2, pupils have started to develop sound geographical skills. Younger pupils develop understanding of maps and plans through a variety of practical activities such as walking through the school grounds and making simple plans to illustrate their walk. By the end of Year 2 pupils are familiar with plans and simple maps, and understand that symbols represent objects too large to draw. They can give an account of

the various routes they take to school and are aware of and have knowledge of other villages, towns and the principal cities. They learn about far away places through following the adventures of Barnaby Bear as he travels the world and study in more detail contrasting places such as an imaginary Scottish island. More able pupils have a good general knowledge and can use a globe to indicate other countries they have visited and make sensible comments about distances.

151 In Year 3 this acquisition of geographical skills is built on further when pupils undertake a geographical and historical study of the locality. This develops pupils' geographical skills and knowledge using detailed contemporary and historical maps and practical observational activities in the village. Pupils continue to make appropriate strides in their learning as they move through the school. In Years 5 and 6 very good use is made of residential experiences in Poole and on the Isle of Wight to support pupils' geographical studies and these and other fieldwork are most successful in bringing geography alive for pupils. Year 6 pupils talked enthusiastically about a recent study they had undertaken of a local brook and could explain in considerable detail the impact of the river's flow on its shape. In Year 5 pupils write about the main features of Poole. Their writing is interesting and all pupils state an individual point of view about the town. Their work benefits from their first-hand experience of the town and discussions about how and why the town functions as it does.

152 No teaching of geography was seen in the infants during the inspection but discussions with Year 2 pupils and teachers and scrutiny of pupils' work and displays linked to aspects of the subject indicate that the curriculum is being delivered in a thorough and interesting way. However, more use could be made of geographical experiences to develop pupils' literacy skills.

153 In the juniors teaching overall is good. The work in pupils' books and on display shows thorough coverage and some use of the subject to develop pupils' literacy skills, although more could be done in this area. Lessons are carefully planned and teachers are well informed about the subject. The organisation of the curriculum throughout the juniors ensures that pupils undertake carefully designed tasks that enable them to develop skills progressively. The activities that pupils undertake are modified for less able pupils and this enables them to participate fully. However, insufficient attention is given to extending activities to challenge the more able. Information and communication technology is very well used to support geography. In a geography lesson observed that took place in the computer suite, Year 3 pupils were using a computer program to extend their mapping skills further. They were also required to access the Internet, and work with a mapping program that would give them further information. The teaching of both subjects was inextricably linked. Instructions and information were given clearly by the teacher and all the pupils managed to get into the required website, although some took a lot longer than others. They made sensible use of the information on the local maps that were presented. The pupils learnt a great deal in this lesson both about the geography of the area and about how to make use of a website to provide the required information. Everybody worked very hard and the pupils gained a great deal of satisfaction from their achievements.

154 The co-ordinator has developed the subject well since the last inspection. She has a high level of expertise in the subject and is very enthusiastic about its place in the primary curriculum. The school has adopted nationally recommended guidelines for the subject and has adapted them to suit the school's rolling programme. Geography is taught in half termly blocks that alternate with history and as far as possible the geographical and historical themes being studied are juxtaposed so they complement each other. Pupils' attainment is assessed at the end of each unit. Resources are satisfactory and well used. There is a good programme of visits to places of geographical interest which as well as enhancing pupils' geographical studies makes a good contribution to their cultural development.

HISTORY

155 The school has maintained the standards of pupils' attainment at the time of the last inspection. Standards at the end of both infants and juniors remain at the nationally expected level.

156 By the end of the infants pupils have a reasonable understanding that life in the past was very different to their lives today. The youngest pupils start to develop a sense of the past by considering their own families and the different generations within it. As they get older they develop their sense of chronology further through comparing modern and old toys and by learning how homes were different in the past compared to today. In discussion with Year 2 pupils they demonstrate enthusiasm about a recent study of the seaside in which they have identified how seaside holidays in late Victorian times differed from the contemporary. They are able to suggest different useful sources of information such as old photographs, documents and very old people.

157 In the juniors pupils build steadily on the skills they have acquired earlier. They study Tudor times in depth. They understand why Henry VIII had so many wives and the impact that changes in religious allegiance had on ordinary people as well as on key events such as the conflict with Spain. Taking part in a 'Victorian day' enhanced their study of the Victorians. They can reflect on the contrast between the lives of wealthy and poor children and appreciate why improvements in sanitation were so important to the health of many people. Historical skills are developed in tandem with the teaching of historical knowledge. For example, Year 5 pupils use photographs of a decorated Ancient Greek vase as a source of information about the clothing and arming of Ancient Greek soldiers. Pupils in Year 6 compare world maps published in 1489, 1587 and a current publication to extract information about what was understood about the geography of the world at different points in history.

158 No teaching was seen in the infants and there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching in these year group. Teaching in the juniors is satisfactory overall. Teachers have thorough subject knowledge and there is a good balance in lessons between teaching new historical knowledge and enabling pupils to acquire historical skills. Teachers in the juniors devise interesting activities to stimulate pupils' interest, using contemporary resources such as Celtic artefacts or photographs of the art of ancient civilisations such as that of Greece. These are well used to stimulate pupils' discussions and to enable them to understand just how much information can be derived from a study of historical artefacts. In a lesson seen in Year 5, pupils were learning about Ancient Greek civilisation. Through discussion about the decoration on a vase pupils began to appreciate that the smallest detail on the vase would yield some interesting information. Teachers give less able pupils additional support during lessons; this is most helpful as is the emphasis on paired and group discussion work. However, there is no evidence of tasks regularly being extended to enable the higher attainers to work to their full potential. There is a tendency in both the infants and the juniors to depend on commercially produced worksheets or to set pupils written tasks that require only brief answers. The only example of extended writing found during the work analysis was in Year 3 where pupils had written interestingly and at some length about their findings derived from a first-hand study of the village of Chinnor. Throughout the school insufficient use is made of pupils' literacy skills to record what they have learnt. Historical events are not used regularly as a starting point for independent factual or imaginative writing. Teachers ensure that pupils use their numeracy skills to place events on time lines and promote pupils' growing awareness of the order of events over years and centuries.

159 The school regularly uses information and communication technology, to record findings and do research, using websites provided by major national museums such as the

British Museum and the National Maritime museum. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

160 The management of the subject has improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has a good level of subject expertise and manages the subject well. Since the last inspection the curriculum has been up-dated and a scheme of work has been devised. History is taught in half-termly blocks and all the required skills and knowledge are taught in a coherent order and links are made with the geography curriculum wherever possible. There is a system for assessment in place that takes account of the pupils' rate of progress in developing historical skills and acquiring historical knowledge. The level of resourcing is satisfactory. Good use is made of the locality as a resource, for instance in the teaching of local history. Pupils regularly visit places of historical interest in the region such as Sulgrave Manor and, wherever possible, take part in drama activities that enhance their study of history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

161 Standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when information and communication technology was a key issue. There are now sufficient resources to teach all aspects of the curriculum. An appropriate scheme of work is in place. All teachers have received training so that their confidence and competence are much improved, although continual advances in technology mean there is always a need to update knowledge and skills. Each class has at least one timetabled hour in the computer suite each week and many have two. The teaching of skills is planned through a curriculum subject. Although each classroom has at least one computer, some of which are networked to the computer suite, these are not used well enough to support and extend the work done in the suite. Few computers in classrooms were switched on or in use during the inspection. Teaching is being monitored and the co-ordinator has begun a series of portfolios with examples of pupils' work. Plans are at an early stage to form a computer club.

162 All pupils develop confidence in communication aspects of the required curriculum. By the end of the juniors pupils have above average keyboard skills and a few pupils begin to touch type. All pupils use the accepted conventions for editing and correcting their work. They are confident in creating a multi-media presentation, importing graphics and sound effects and using animation features. Standards are above average. Pupils have less experience in data handling, using spreadsheets to model possible outcomes and using *Logo* to create a program to control an on-screen turtle. In these aspects standards are satisfactory. They have no experience of using sensors to make measurements, for example of changes in temperature over time. Although the school has a computer microscope this has rarely been used. Pupils have few opportunities to use the digital camera. Pupils have a good understanding of how information and communication technology is used in everyday life, including their own homes.

163 In the juniors pupils use data from a science experiment to create bar charts. Pupils use spreadsheets to estimate how much water their household will use in a given time as part of their geography and environmental studies work. Other pupils write a simple program using 'repeats' to draw a regular shape such as a square or triangle and then extend this to create a composite flower or star pattern.

164 The youngest pupils learn mouse control when using simple programs such as identifying the initial phonic sound for picture images. In Year 1 pupils 'paint' portraits of family members, trying out different features before labelling these and creating a caption using a capital letter and full stop.

165 Teaching in the computer suite is satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons well to develop skills in the context of another subject. Lessons are generally well organised and managed and the projector is used very well to teach new skills and facilities. Occasionally the pace of lessons slows when teachers encounter difficulties with programs and resources through their own limited experience. Teachers do not give enough attention to ensuring that chairs are at the correct height so pupils do not strain their bodies, and that doors are open to give enough ventilation.

166 Pupils learn to make very good use of the Internet to research information. They do not simply download quantities of undigested information. They are set specific questions to answer. In this way they learn to be critical and to scan the information for key facts. This is demonstrated very well in fact files that Year 6 pupils created for the Rivers Nile and Amazon. Each pupil found and presented his or her own sheet using formatting conventions of their own choice. In Year 5 pupils produced a lively poster advertising Poole as a holiday destination. They considered their audience when designing the poster and used pictures and information from the Internet.

167 The co-ordinator has made a good start in monitoring teaching and learning. The portfolios show some of the work pupils have completed but not all the aspects are covered, so she does not have a complete picture of what is being achieved in school. More software to support all areas of the curriculum is being considered.

MUSIC

168 At the time of the last inspection there was not enough evidence to be able to judge standards. Evidence now is sufficient to say that standards in Years 2 and 6 are below average because, historically, progress has not been good enough. Current provision for the subject is satisfactory but the innovations have been too recent to raise standards sufficiently. Progress is getting better and learning in the lessons seen was generally sound. However, pupils still need to catch up and acquire the levels of knowledge, skill and understanding that are appropriate for their age. At present, teachers have to plan lessons for their class that in other schools would be taught to younger pupils. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, though pupils distinguished high and low sounds with some accuracy and recognised loud and quiet noises, they used instruments in simple ways to represent rain by shaking maracas or tapping a woodblock. They do not vary the sound they make but are still at the stage of exploring the effects that different instruments produce. In Year 6, pupils are not used to playing instruments together and a performance involving four groups playing complementary rhythms deteriorated because one group was out of time with the others. Pupils are only just beginning to explore musical notation and some are unclear about the definition of rhythm. One pupil says, "It is like a beat." Some pupils in this class have missed their music lessons in the first half of term because of cycling proficiency classes. This has affected their learning.

169 The co-ordinator, who has been in post for just over a year, has introduced a commercial scheme of work that provides teachers with the necessary materials to plan and deliver their lessons. There is a satisfactory system for assessing the standards that pupils achieve. The co-ordinator is aware that some of her colleagues lack confidence and expertise, and is supporting them by watching their lessons and making suggestions for improvements, for example in how to control pupils' enthusiasm. This is a slow process and there is some way to go, not least in developing the use of computer programs to support, in particular, musical composition.

170 In the four lessons seen, teaching was at least satisfactory with one lesson being good. Teachers' insecurity with the subject was apparent, however. One failed to notice that pupils were playing triangles with the wrong end of the beater and another accepted the word

'shaker' from an older pupil and missed the opportunity to introduce the correct word 'maraca'. Nevertheless, the lessons captured pupils' interest and were entirely practical. However, in the juniors, concentration lapsed because lessons were scheduled for one hour. This is too long. The Year 2 lesson, at 35 minutes, was just right, leaving the pupils wanting more. Teachers assemble and use instruments effectively. The school has good quality instruments and there are enough for every pupil in the class to have one. Teachers organise their classes efficiently into groups when required, for example in Year 4 to devise suitable rhythmical accompaniment for *Lil Liza Jane*. The better teaching occurred because the lesson was taken at a brisker pace and there was an insistence on good quality performances by the pupils. This teacher, for example, did demonstrate how to play a triangle properly when she saw wrong practice. She also devised a particularly effective method of playing instruments during a rehearsal, using wooden skewers. This kept the noise level down and enabled everyone to appraise the accuracy of the rhythms being played before conventional beaters were used to play the instruments in a performance.

171 The school is without a pianist at present and pupils experience very little music except during lessons. No music was played as pupils entered the hall for assembly and there was no singing. The only singing heard was in a Year 4 lesson and here it was not entirely tuneful or lively. Pupils found it difficult to reach the higher notes and there was a harsh tone from a section of the class. There are no after-school musical clubs at present though the co-ordinator has run a club for the infants in the past and intends to do so in the future. A choir is formed to practise for special occasions such as a local festival at Christmas. Violin teaching has lapsed this year because of a lack of interest from pupils and no other instruments are taught. The subject does not make as significant a contribution to pupils' spiritual, social or cultural development as in most schools. However, selected pupils regularly take part in local events such as the Dorchester Festival of Music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

172 A small sample of lessons was observed during the inspection. Lessons in dance and games were seen. Overall, standards in physical education are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. The previous report found standards in line for pupils in Years 1 and 2, but above expectations at the end of Year 6. However, only games were observed at that time. The subject has had low priority over time and little attention as the school has rightly focused on issues from the previous inspection. This is why standards are not higher, particularly in the junior classes. The lack of sporting teams and out-of-school activities are other factors influencing standards.

173 In dance, Year 6 pupils respond well to the mood of the music *War of the Worlds*. They practise their performance of human actions, refining their movements soundly. However, skills in dance have not been developed effectively over time in school and some pupils are inhibited when performing to an audience. Boys actively engage in bold movements such as football or martial arts and the nature of the dance has particular appeal for them. In Year 3, pupils show good awareness of space as they travel in a variety of ways at different speeds. They are able to send and receive a rugby ball with the expected level of skill in most cases, although few have above average skills. They put these skills to use in a game situation, showing reasonable control and a developing awareness of the requirements for teamwork.

174 In Year 2, pupils select small equipment such as balls, quoits and beanbags and use these in a variety of ways with the expected level of skill. Most pupils throw and catch competently, but higher attainers underachieve because they are not sufficiently challenged by the pace or the task. Pupils in Year 1 have average skills in dribbling a ball, with boys more confident than girls. They practise ball and beanbag skills, but there are missed opportunities to extend skills further.

175 Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but vary greatly between classes. Good and very good teaching was observed in dance and games in some classes. However, some unsatisfactory teaching was also seen in a Year 2 lesson. The strengths of the very good teaching and learning lie in the relationships between teachers and pupils, making learning fun. As a result, pupils are well motivated, working with sustained effort and enthusiasm. Where teachers expect pupils to work hard and behave well, they respond positively, keen to please their teacher. Basic skills are carefully taught and pupils are encouraged to practise and refine their performance. In the best practice, opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own and each other's performance helps them to improve their skills further.

176 When teaching is unsatisfactory, teachers' expectations are too low. Lessons proceed at a pedestrian pace and undemanding tasks fail to challenge all pupils. This results in unsatisfactory progress with higher achievers particularly not progressing as well as they could do. Teaching assistants are not always used effectively, and do not always wear appropriate footwear for lessons. Pupils work noisily and the behaviour of some pupils deteriorates. Consequently, there are some missed opportunities for learning to progress, largely due to the teacher's lack of confidence and experience. Most lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively in pairs and groups and to share equipment, contributing effectively to their moral and social development. There are good opportunities to integrate pupils with special educational needs into the life of the school. They are well supported and often progress as well as others in the class.

177 The curriculum covers all aspects of the National Curriculum, including swimming. The subject is currently being overseen by the headteacher in the absence of a co-ordinator. Whilst this is satisfactory, in order for physical education to develop and for standards to rise, greater challenge and opportunities are needed, particularly through out-of-school activities and sporting teams. There are training needs, particularly for those teachers who lack confidence in the subject. The school has also identified dance as an area needing further improvement. Assessment procedures for checking skill progression are effective, particularly for gymnastics and swimming. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school is fortunate to have its own learner swimming pool. This contributes greatly to pupils' confidence in water and ensures all pupils achieve the basic swimming standard before they leave the school. The good accommodation makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. After-school dance and tag rugby clubs are run privately and a good number of pupils attend these. Pupils also have good opportunities to participate in dance festivals, joining with other schools. The local secondary school gives good support, having sports college status. Older pupils benefit greatly from a residential experience, which contributes effectively to their personal development. Monitoring of teaching and learning in physical education has yet to be developed effectively in order to raise standards further.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

178 Standards of attainment are at the levels expected in the local syllabus of religious education and in national guidance at the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils make sound progress in most areas of their knowledge and understanding and achieve satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs and those speaking English as an additional language achieve in line with the rest of the class. There is no difference between the attainment levels of boys and girls. The school has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection by maintaining standards.

179 All pupils have recently enjoyed different but linked activities celebrating food and the harvest culminating in their visit to St Andrew's Church for a whole-school harvest celebration. Good use is made of links with the local church on other occasions, including

Christmas and Easter. Some good quality art work has recently been produced in activities linked to festivals. Strengths in recent work are in the use of Bible stories to extend pupils' thinking of a range of situations and their understanding of Christianity.

180 By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of stories that Jesus told such as *Daniel in the Lions' Den* and enjoy explaining how Daniel was protected and the lions' mouths remained closed so that they didn't eat him when he was in their cave. Pupils understand the main parts of the story of *Jonah and the whale* and are able to use this knowledge to paint suitable pictures of different parts of the story. They also have thought about animals. Whilst pupils have painted appropriate pictures to illustrate stories, they have written little about what they have learnt. In Year 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of why Jesus is important to Christians and his work as a teacher. They have learnt about stories such as that of the *Sower* and the *Feeding of the Five Thousand*. Whilst there is only limited evidence of recent work, planning indicates pupils will learn not only about relevant aspects of Christianity but also of other main faiths through stories and discussions.

181 Pupils in the juniors build on the skills they have acquired, showing a deeper understanding of Christianity. Most have reasonable knowledge of a range of Bible stories, festivals and celebrations. However, several pupils including the oldest in school are confused in their understanding of other faiths. They are unsure of the main differences between the Hindu and Muslim faiths and of the places of worship, festivals and special features and clothing associated with different beliefs. A limiting factor in the progress the pupils make is the lack of recording of what the pupils have learnt. Because pupils rarely write about the stories they hear or the information they are given they have nothing to refer to later and become confused in their recall of detail. Progress in this area of learning, whilst broadly satisfactory, is an area for development.

182 By the end of Year 6 pupils have reasonable knowledge and understanding of the main similarities and differences of the Christian and Jewish faiths. In recent work on harvest they have thought about God as Creator and Provider and have carried out research to produce work illustrating one of the three main faiths studied. In Year 5, pupils have learnt about Hindu deities. They have drawn pictures of Brahma and recognise how many arms, hands and heads his representations have. In Year 4, pupils have reasonable knowledge of miracles featured in stories from the Bible, including the parting of the Red Sea, the resurrection and turning water into wine. In Year 3 art lessons, pupils enjoy learning how to make representations of stained glass windows alongside developing their understanding of Biblical stories.

183 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers generally have good understanding of aspects of Christian beliefs and, as seen in Year 2, tell stories from the Bible such as Jonah well and in language the pupils understand. However, some staff have limited knowledge of other faiths and this has affected the nature of such work and the progress made. The pupils have satisfactory attitudes to the subject although teachers do not always make enough use of directed questions to involve pupils who offer little in discussions.

184 Religious education makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by helping pupils learn about special people, times and places, which extends their cultural understanding appropriately. There are good links with art as seen in photographic evidence of large-scale banners produced and used for an Easter service illustrating betrayal, crucifixion and resurrection.

185 There is a satisfactory development of literacy skills in religious education but this is not systematic enough and staff miss many opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and writing skills by recording their discussions in more detail. This is a main weakness in

teaching and learning. The use of information and communication technology in religious education is limited and an area identified for improvement.

186 The subject co-ordinator has a satisfactory grasp of standards and coverage of the subject and has worked conscientiously to produce a planning overview for each year group to better ensure continuity in pupils' learning. This takes account of both the local syllabus and national guidance and is an effective document. There are well-advanced plans to make changes to the main faiths studied to ensure pupils widen their knowledge of Islam. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and are used to ensure step-by-step development of understanding as pupils move through the school. However, the co-ordinator has had relatively few opportunities to observe teaching across the school or the quality of pupils' recent work, and this has allowed confusion over the different faiths to occur. Visits from local clergy and visits to the nearby church enhance the curriculum effectively but there have been few visits by any other faith leaders or visits to non-Christian places of worship.