

INSPECTION REPORT

BURFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tenbury Wells

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123464

Headteacher: Mrs J Grant

Reporting inspector: Kevin Hodge
18466

Dates of inspection: 18-20 November 2002

Inspection number: 248460

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	County
School category:	Primary
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Forresters Road Burford Tenbury Wells Worcestershire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. R Padwick
Date of previous inspection:	December 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18466	Kevin Hodge	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science, Information and communication technology Special educational needs Equal opportunities.	The school's results and the pupils' achievements. How good is the teaching. How well is the school led and managed. What the school should do to improve further. English as an additional language.
9510	Christine Murray-Watson	Lay inspector		How good are the links with the parents. Pupils' attitudes and values.
16892	Julia Elsley	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Design and technology Music.	How well does the school care for the pupils.
19387	Mari Powell	Team inspector	English Geography History Physical education Religious education.	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

There are 112 pupils on roll, with a higher proportion of boys than girls. During the last year, two pupils left the school and 13 arrived. There are 19 children on the special educational needs register, and three pupils have statements of special educational need. Approximately 11 percent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. Very few pupils, approximately three percent, come from ethnic minorities, and no pupils speak English as an additional language. Most classes have more than one age group. There is one class formed with pupils from years 4 and 5, and they are taught separately in the morning. The youngest pupils can join the school at the beginning of each term, depending on their age. The school serves mainly the local village, although some pupils come from a wider area. The pupils come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. They have a wide range of ability, but their initial attainment is generally average overall.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The headteacher leads the school well and receives increasingly effective support from the staff team and governors in its management. The pupils enjoy school and work hard. Standards are improving and by the age of eleven are above average in English and information and communication technology. The quality of education is good overall and strongest in the teaching of Years 3 to 6. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils reach above the expected standards in mathematics by the time they are seven.
- They achieve above the expected standards in information and communication technology and in their English work by the time they are eleven.
- The headteacher gives good leadership and manages the school well.
- The teaching for the pupils aged seven to eleven is consistently good, and often very good.
- The pupils behave well within the lessons and around the school.
- The moral and social provision for the pupils is good.
- The school develops good links with the parents and raises their understanding of what the children do in school.

What could be improved

- The planning and teaching of the Foundation Stage curriculum
- The co-ordination of some subjects such as geography, history and religious education.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in December 1997 there has been a complete change of staff that has brought about good improvement in response to the key issues raised. Standards are higher, especially in English, design & technology and information and communication technology. The management and leadership of the school are now good and have improved significantly. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is now on a far firmer footing, and the staff continues to work to improve the breadth of experiences offered to the pupils in the Foundation Stage.

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	D	C	C
Mathematics	E	E	D	D
Science	E	D	D	D

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

In 2001, the results obtained by the eleven-year-olds were low in mathematics, but rose along with English this year. The proportion reaching the higher levels in mathematics and science this year was below the national average, which reduced their overall results. In the national tests for seven-year-olds, the pupils reached slightly above average levels in reading and writing, but achieved very high standards in mathematics. This is also characteristic of their daily work in this subject where they reach above the nationally expected levels. The trends in results are rising following some decline in previous years. The evidence from the inspection shows that there is improvement in the pupils' performance in English and secure progress in mathematics for the oldest pupils. This should help towards achieving the demanding targets set in English and in mathematics. Last year the school met its English target, but fell short in mathematics. The results last year for seven-year-olds showed that the girls achieved slightly better than the boys in their writing and reading assessments, but the results for the oldest pupils were broadly similar. The inspection evidence indicates that there is no significant difference between the boys' and girls' attainment. By the time they are eleven, the pupils achieve well and reach above the expected levels in English and information and communication technology. In all other subjects of the curriculum, standards are satisfactory, and the pupils achieve appropriately.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils like school and respond very well to their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils are courteous and kind and willingly help around the school. Within the classes they listen and behave well.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The pupils relate well to visitors, each other and their teachers. They co-operate sensibly in their group activities, and work well independently.
Attendance	Above average. The pupils arrive promptly for school and for the start of lessons.

The pupils work together very well and develop good relationships with each other and the staff. This contributes to the good ethos found in the school. The pupils are attentive and hard working, and can be trusted to work alone. The daily routines of work are well established and enable the pupils to settle down quickly to work. They often help around the school and the 'Playground Pals' scheme they have devised works well.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is good overall and particularly strong in the oldest classes. The teaching seen in the Foundation Stage was satisfactory overall, although opportunities to promote the pupils' own choice of activities and the use of outside facilities were infrequent. The teachers care for the pupils well, and promote good relationships between pupils and with adults. The teaching for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 was consistently satisfactory and in half the lessons seen it was good. The teachers plan interesting work, develop positive relationships and the pupils are managed well in nearly all lessons. In some activities, such as science, the pupils write up their findings too simply onto a prepared sheet. The teaching for the pupils in Years 3 to 6 was consistently good, often very good and occasionally excellent. The teachers plan and lead activities very well, which promotes very good levels of learning and discussion. All the teachers ensure good learning of English and mathematical skills, and have implemented the national strategies to underpin activities. The teachers take account of the pupils of all abilities and those with special educational needs are catered for effectively overall.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the pupils aged five to eleven is broad and balanced and enriched by a good range of extracurricular activities. However, there are weaknesses in the curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. The pupils are well supported within their normal activities and make good progress overall.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The pupils' spiritual and cultural development is fostered appropriately and their moral and social development is a particularly strong feature of the school. A caring and responsible attitude is promoted between the pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school has a range of procedures to care for the pupils' welfare and safety. There are good arrangements for the assessment of the pupils' progress, but some day-to-day marking is not always consistent through the school.

The range of activities for the Foundation Stage is narrow and is not enriched by enough planned use of the environment outside the classroom. There are times during the week when the pupils choose their own activities to follow, but these are not frequent enough.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has given the school good leadership in raising standards in English and mathematics and in tackling the key issues from the last inspection. The recently appointed deputy headteacher provides strong support and is helping accelerate the rate of improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors have a range of appropriate committees and are aware of the school's needs. Many visit informally to support the various activities. However, their procedures for visiting the school systematically are not yet fully developed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has analysed its results in national tests and has monitored its daily work. This has led to improvements in class organisation and teaching in the oldest classes.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. The finances are administered well and the additional class formed in the morning aids learning for pupils. The small number of staff makes delegation of responsibilities more difficult and some subjects are without a specific co-ordinator.

The school is led well by a committed and caring headteacher. Furthermore, the recent appointment of an effective deputy headteacher has helped to increase the pace of improvement. The appointment of other new staff has raised the general quality of the teaching, but particularly so in the older classes. The staff works well as a team to tackle the many tasks associated with the running and improvement of the school. They regularly swap classes to make better use of their specific expertise. This is a good feature. The priorities of the school improvement plan are the right ones, for instance identifying the changes needed to enrich the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. The resources of the school are good, and recent improvements to classroom accommodation help the staff and the pupils. The playground and playing fields provide a pleasant environment for games activities and after-school clubs.

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 • The quality of the teaching • Being able to approach the school with problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of homework • Information about how the pupils are progressing • The extracurricular activities

The inspection findings confirm the positive aspects of the school highlighted by the parents. Arrangements for homework are effective with some good features such as the well-used homework diaries. The range of extracurricular clubs is better than is found in many schools of similar size. Last year's reports on pupil progress lacked detailed analysis, but this was because of the short time that many staff had been at the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When they come to school, the pupils' attainment is broadly average. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children meet the expectations of the early learning goals that are set for them. The children have good attitudes to their learning and they attain appropriately in all areas. They make better progress in their range of physical development, despite their having some restriction on the range of activities provided for them. Appropriate activities promote good role-play and develop their confidence. However, opportunities for them to choose their own activities are limited and this hampers the development of their independence. Having older pupils in the class sometimes restricts the range of activities to be planned for these children, but they make steady progress in all areas.
2. At the last inspection, the standards attained by pupils in Years 2 to 6 were in line with the national expectation in most subjects. The eleven-year-olds were achieving standards in mathematics that were just satisfactory, and their attainment in design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT) was below expectation. However, the pupils aged seven were achieving standards in mathematics that were better than the expected levels. Since then there have been improvements, particularly in English and information and communication technology work of the pupils aged eleven. In design and technology, the pupils now attain the expected levels by the time they are seven and eleven. In all the remaining subjects, the standards have broadly been either maintained or improved in some aspects. The evidence from the inspection indicates that the pattern is of rising attainment, due to better identification of weaknesses, additional teaching where necessary and the increased pace of learning.
3. In the national tests this year, the results for seven-year-olds were better than the national picture in writing and particularly so in mathematics. A higher than average proportion of the pupils reached the higher Level 3 in both writing and in mathematics. In reading, the school reaches standards similar to the national picture. This is a considerable improvement on the previous year's tests when reading and writing were very low and mathematics was just similar to the national average. The trends in improvement were falling until this year, but now appear to be rising; the inspection evidence largely confirms this. In the teachers' assessment of science, the pupils reached high levels compared to national averages, but at this stage of the present year these very high standards were not evident in either the pupils' previous work or the lessons seen. The attainment of both boys and girls is broadly similar, but the girls do reach slightly higher standards in both their reading and writing assessments. However, no obvious differences between them in attainment were seen during the present inspection. Comparisons with similar schools indicate a positive picture in writing and mathematics where they are better than other schools, and in reading they achieve similar standards to others.
4. This year, the results for the percentage of eleven-year-olds reaching the expected levels matched the national average in mathematics, and just exceeded it in English and science. The proportion reaching the higher Level 5 was average in English, but mathematics and science were below the national average. The attainment of boys and girls is broadly similar across all three subjects. Compared to similar schools, the results are below average in English and mathematics, but in science they are similar.

5. By the time they are seven, the pupils respond confidently to questions, and put forward their ideas well in discussions. This continues as they move through the school and, by the time they are eleven, the pupils have good levels of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. The National Literacy Strategy underlies the standards attained, and the rising trend in achievement, particularly by the pupils in Years 3 to 6, is reflected in their day-to-day work. In mathematics, the pupils aged seven attain the standards that are above those expected nationally. At present, the eleven-year-olds are reaching the expected levels. The youngest pupils in Years 1 and 2 are very secure in their number work, and the oldest pupils have suitable knowledge and are confident in handling numbers to four figures. Throughout the school, the pupils attain standards in science that are in line with the national expectation. The oldest pupils' investigative skills develop well and they are prepared to undertake the next stage of their education with confidence.
6. By the age of seven and eleven, the pupils attain standards that are in line with the national expectation in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education. In information and communication technology, they reach the expected standards at the age of seven, but their attainment is above this level by the time they are eleven.
7. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the majority of the subjects, and particularly in English, mathematics and science. They have good levels of support, particularly in Years 3 to 6, that enable them to take part fully in lessons and make good gains in their learning. They were often seen working well and unobtrusively, with good levels of collaboration with other pupils. The pupils with statements of special educational need also make good progress and their level of support is good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The pupils are keen and eager to come to school. Their levels of attendance are good and there is very little unauthorised absence. They arrive punctually at the start of the day and the lessons start promptly. They have good attitudes both to each other and to the staff who are good role models for the pupils. The pupils make full use of the good range of extracurricular provision, including the after-school sports clubs and choir.
9. During the lessons, the pupils' response varies from satisfactory to excellent, largely dependent on the quality of the teaching they are receiving. They are always polite, well behaved and attentive to the teacher and to each other, but some can become restless and distracted when their lessons lack challenge and the pace slows. However, when the teachers set a high level of challenge, and provide stimulating lessons, the pupils work very hard. They concentrate well and apply themselves with enthusiasm to the task in hand. For example, during a Personal, Health and Social Education lesson, the oldest children rose well to the challenge of examining pieces of charity advertising, considering the strength of each appeal and deciding which one they would choose to support. As this was done in small groups, the skills of discussion, reflection and organising the group's results to present to the whole class were very evident. Around the school at playtimes and lunchtimes, the pupils behave well, and some act as supervisors in the corridor when their classmates go to assembly.
10. The relationships between the pupils are generally good, although a very small number of the pupils sometimes find it difficult to fit in with their classmates. A particular strength, however, is the way many of the oldest pupils have undertaken a responsibility to help and support the younger children on the playground. Through a 'Playground Pals' scheme for which they were given appropriate training, these pupils watch out for any upsets, help to organise games and summon

adult help where needed. An example of this was seen during one playtime when a pupil who had become upset and tearful was promptly approached and comforted by two older pupils, whilst a third went to a midday supervisor to tell her the problem. The older pupils concerned were not even part of that day's 'team', but had simply assumed their caring role as a matter of course.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

11. Since the last inspection there has been a complete change of staff and this has contributed to the improved levels of teaching. Overall, the teaching was either good or very good in over two thirds of the lessons observed. Some excellent teaching was also seen in three lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. There are strong features of the teaching in nearly all areas of the school. The teaching of the pupils in the Foundation Stage was generally satisfactory, but the strengths and weaknesses were finely balanced in two lessons. In Years 3 to 6 the teaching was particularly strong and more consistently of a high standard. This is contributing directly to raising the quality of learning and the progress the pupils make; it should be extended to all classes. **This is an additional issue for action.**
12. The teaching of the youngest children seen in the Reception and Year 1 class is satisfactory. The teachers strive to provide appropriate work and activities for their pupils, some of whom require a Foundation Stage curriculum, whilst others work on the early stages of the National Curriculum. For instance, in one lesson in this class taken by the headteacher, the teaching was well planned, had a clear focus and was of good quality because it met the differing needs of all the children. However, although the work for the Foundation Stage pupils is based on national guidance, the planning could be improved to ensure more consistent provision in meeting their needs. For instance, although there is appropriate emphasis on promoting early literacy and numeracy, and the Foundation Stage children soon get used to working with the older children in these lessons, the teachers also need to consider increasing the frequency of the creative and physical activities these children need each day. A revision of the tasks undertaken by the hard-working classroom assistant would be one way of addressing this issue.
13. In Years 2 to 6, the teachers plan a variety of activities that make allowance for the mixed-age groups and the range of abilities in their classes. They provide well-organised group work pitched at appropriate levels. For example, the science work in the Year 3 and 4 class was well planned to use a variety of resources and to allow the pupils of different abilities to experiment with sounds. In contrast, in an otherwise satisfactory science lesson in Year 2, the pupils' recording of work was of a low level and did not extend their skills. In a Year 5 and 6 science activity, the teacher organised the class very well to cater for both different activities and ages so that their initial experiments with light were successful. Overall, the teachers' expectations of the quality of the pupils' contributions to the lesson are good, and the way in which the pupils are encouraged to 'have a go' in a supportive atmosphere is promoting higher standards in some lessons. For example, the pupils in a Year 5 and 6 were very willing to experiment with different actions and sequences in a dance lesson related to a poem and set to music. In many lessons, the expectations are high, particularly concerning behaviour, good manners and collaborative working.
14. The school effectively implements the literacy and numeracy strategies, and good teaching in these core areas was seen in all classes. The good features include a clear focus for the lesson, well-established group work and the teachers' good subject knowledge. For example, the lesson introductions are short, to the point and move on quickly to the main focus and activity. In the Year 4 and 5 morning class, for instance, the teacher moved on quickly from the introduction of simple mental calculations to activity games involving jumping from spot to spot, in response to answers to set problems. In their English and mathematics work, the pupils in Years 1 to 6 have

targets that are kept in special homework diaries that are monitored regularly by the class teachers.

15. The very good relationships that the staff has with the pupils certainly help to motivate them. This is a strong feature of the lessons and in the general ethos that is promoted around the school by all staff. It enables good learning to take place in many lessons and within different subjects. There were good examples throughout the school, but particularly in the Year 3 to 6 classes. For example, a religious education lesson in the Year 5 and 6 class and a design and technology lesson in the Year 3 and 4 class were excellent. The teachers posed challenging questions, gave very good demonstrations and had high expectations. Good learning is a feature of the good and very good lessons, and the behaviour and quality of relationships promoted are significant strengths of the school.
16. The assessment arrangements for the various areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum have been in place since the beginning of the term and the school now liaises closely with the pre-school group on the school site to exchange information about the progress of children entering the main school. Throughout the other year groups, the teachers keep good assessment information in English, mathematics, science, and ICT, which provides a consistent picture of the pupils' attainment and progress in these subjects. The quality of the marking is generally consistent, but the comments indicating how the pupils can improve further are relatively few and vary from class to class. **This is an additional issue for action.** Comments made to the pupils as they work are very helpful and supportive.
17. The teaching of the pupils with special educational needs is good overall. The activities take good account of the learning targets. The teaching assistants help the pupils to raise their attainment in literacy and numeracy and also support them effectively within different subjects. This close support is improving the way in which these pupils approach their work and the way they integrate into the school.
18. The arrangements for homework are clear and consistent between classes, and the support that the children receive with their reading at home significantly enhances the teaching and learning that takes place in the classroom. The extracurricular clubs and activities are additional positive features of the provision enjoyed by the pupils. The school also runs a 'booster' class for mathematics that is well attended by pupils and is leading to higher standards of attainment.

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

19. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is broad and balanced, and satisfactorily meets the needs of all the pupils. The older pupils in Years 3 to 6 in particular enjoy a good range of interesting experiences that ensure good progress in their academic and personal development. Sound arrangements are in place for developing the skills of literacy and numeracy. The implementation of a comprehensive programme for advancing the pupils' personal development represents a marked improvement since the last inspection. The policies and planning approaches have been reviewed in many subjects and ensure greater consistency and continuity in the pupils' learning experiences. Nevertheless, the updating of the policies for design and technology and art and design remains to be completed in order to ensure that they are sufficiently comprehensive and rigorous. For example, greater clarity is needed in determining the extent to which the art from a range of cultures is to be taught throughout the school.

20. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage does not take sufficient account of the national guidelines for the six areas of learning identified for this stage. There is an insufficient match between the planned activities and the steps through which the children progress to reach or exceed the early learning goals before they begin the National Curriculum in Year 1. For example, there is minimal provision for a balance of indoor and outdoor activities or child- initiated activities. **This is a key issue for action.**
21. In the rest of the school, effective use has been made of the guidelines for foundation subjects of the National Curriculum, such as geography and history, so that progress is more consistent as they move from class to class. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection. The effective organisation of the programmes for history and geography now means that work is not repeated, even though the age composition of the classes varies from one year to the next. It ensures that the pupils' new learning builds steadily on their existing knowledge and understanding. It also sets time allocations in all subjects in Years 1 to 6, which allow appropriately for the development of the necessary skills. Many interesting activities are now planned, especially for the older pupils, to link the various curriculum areas together. Prominent among them is the use of information technology to record work that includes word-processing, the compilation of grids and charts and the inclusion of graphics. This was evident, for example, during work studying the local area in geography lessons.
22. The school is very aware of the value of visits and visitors for broadening the pupils' experiences. Representatives from the local community, including the church, police officers and the school nurse, have enhanced the provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education and their work in religious education. Experiences such as 'Crucial Crew', has contributed powerfully to the pupils' personal development. The pupils in Year 6 have also benefited from a programme of 'drugs awareness', and younger pupils learn about the beneficial use and the harmful misuse of medicines. There are satisfactory arrangements for sex education. A partner high school has complemented the provision the school is able to make for sport and music. Visits by musicians and an Arts Week have raised the pupils' aesthetic awareness. The pupils respond well to the provision of a good range of extracurricular experiences that include clubs and competitions with other schools.
23. The curriculum is designed and organised to meet the needs of a range of pupils. A group of pupils in Years 4 and 5 follows a morning programme of learning in literacy and numeracy that is well tailored to their needs.
24. The provision to foster the pupils' spiritual education is satisfactory. Their self-esteem is consistently raised because the adults value them and praise their efforts. There are satisfactory periods of reflection during school worship, and prayers are not only a regular feature of assemblies but are also said at various points of the school day. Older pupils have written very poignant poems about tree felling, but generally few instances of attention to the pupils' spiritual development were either noted in the teachers' planning or observed during the lessons. Nevertheless, the school intends to participate in an eco project that has the potential for the pupils to experience and appreciate the wonders of the natural world.
25. The provision for the pupils' moral and social development is strong. This represents a very marked improvement from what was seen at the last inspection. A very clear, agreed ethos is being confidently developed and ensures that the pupils have a growing sense of how to relate to each other. They generally behave well. The quality of the provision for their moral development was well exemplified during a lesson for the oldest pupils where issues relating to apartheid and racism were discussed. The teacher's questioning showed a high degree of sensitivity, matched

by the confidence with which pupils were able to explain how they would react if they encountered various forms of racism. The oldest pupils are mature and reliable in the way they carry out a range of duties, notably those relating to caring for younger pupils in the playground. They participate in visits and receive visitors courteously. They enjoy opportunities to entertain members of the community and to participate in events relating to good causes. These include the sponsorship of a family of gorillas living in the wild.

26. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is sound overall, though relatively little prominence is given to the wide range of art from other cultures. Work in history, geography and religious education makes an important contribution to the cultural development of the pupils. Older pupils, for example, are soon to visit a non-Christian place of worship in Birmingham and are also exploring the establishment of a link with an inner city school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

27. The school works hard to ensure the welfare, health and safety of its pupils, and a number of new policies and procedures have been introduced effectively since the last inspection. For example, the process of risk assessment when planning and conducting school trips has been formalised and a simple checklist is provided for everyone involved in the care of the pupils. There are regular fire drills and key members of staff hold appropriate first-aid qualifications. The pupils' health and general well-being is supported by the programme of Personal, Health and Social Education and, on a practical level, a new initiative to provide fresh fruit for the pupils to eat during the morning breaks is helping them to develop good eating habits. The pupils are made aware of safe practices in the use of tools and equipment during lessons in science, physical education, art and design, and design and technology; and when moving around the school. The premises are bright and clean and provide a safe environment in which to learn.
28. Since the last inspection the policies and procedures for child protection have been reviewed and are now securely in place. The school maintains an ongoing programme of training for the staff and governors to ensure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities with regard to any vulnerable children in the school.
29. The pupils know the school rules and code of behaviour well. These procedures are now firmly established and are much improved since the time of the previous inspection. As a result, the pupils have a very positive approach towards learning. The evident commitment of all the staff to the well-being, care and personal development of each child helps to provide a secure and happy community in which pupils of all abilities make good progress.
30. There are effective systems in place for the monitoring, evaluating, reviewing and supporting of the children's academic performance and personal development. Moreover, good improvements in the use of assessment procedures have been made since the time of the previous inspection, although they are not yet fully developed in areas such as religious education, history, geography, art and design, design and technology and music. The use of assessment in English and mathematics shows that the teachers track the pupils' progress conscientiously and are increasingly using a good range of information to guide their planning. The staff makes good use of the information gained from national tests results and other test and assessment data. This results in the teachers' having a clear picture of what each pupil knows and can do, and enables the setting of work that challenges the pupils appropriately. The teachers maintain comprehensive records and profiles of their pupils' work, and the information gained is beginning to influence their planning by pinpointing specific weaknesses. This is particularly the case for the pupils in Years 3 to 6. The targets for individual pupils are set, discussed with parents at consultation meetings and

recorded for future monitoring. However, the teachers' marking does not always consistently identify where the pupils need to improve in order to meet their targets.

31. The children with special educational needs make good progress. Careful attention is given to raising their self-esteem and increasing their belief in themselves as successful learners. This is particularly noticeable where they have difficulties controlling their own behaviour and relating well to other pupils. Thorough and detailed notes are maintained about each pupil's strengths and weaknesses, which are then used to set clear and appropriate targets for improvement. They are regularly reviewed with the child and the parent, and it is clear that most pupils are making good progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

32. The parents are appreciative of the quality of education offered by the school. In particular, they recognise that their children like to come to school and that the teaching is good. They feel comfortable approaching the staff with any concerns and are aware that the school expects their children to work hard. A few parents have concerns about the use of homework, the information given about the progress being made by their children and the extracurricular provision being made by the school. The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views, although the quality of teaching is much better for the pupils in Years 3 to 6 than for the younger children. They also consider that the parents have a valid concern about the information they receive about the pupils' progress. The annual reports sent to parents did not contain in-depth information about progress, but many of the teachers had been teaching the class for a short time. Nearly all the class teachers had been newly appointed when these reports were prepared and issued. As a result, the reports presented insufficient detailed information about the skills the pupils had acquired over the year and the progress they had made. Effective use is made of homework and there is good extracurricular provision through the choir and sports clubs, which change according to the season.
33. There have been several recent initiatives to enable the parents to gain a better understanding of how English and mathematics are taught in the school and this has brought about a number of benefits. Groups of parents with children in Years 1 to 6 have attended ongoing courses in the school, which have enabled them to provide better-informed support for their children at home. All the pupils have homework diaries that provide an effective link between the parents and the class teachers. The school also offers opportunities for informal contact with staff at the end of the school day and there is a regular programme of formal parents' evenings. An attractively presented school prospectus and a weekly newsletter present a clear and informative picture of life in the school. The prospectus, however, lacks sufficient information on the Foundation Stage curriculum for the very youngest pupils in the school.
34. The 'Friends of Burford School Association' organises a regular programme of social and fundraising events for the school and provides valuable funds to augment the equipment and educational resources available to the children. Many parents offer active support for school trips and the transportation of the children to out-of-school sporting events.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

35. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides very clear and caring leadership that has ensured improvement in key areas of the school. The staff, all of whom were appointed since the last inspection, shares the headteacher's positive commitment to the development of the school. The governors support the school positively and are particularly

clear about raising standards for the pupils. Overall, there is a clear sense of direction and purpose, and the school's knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses is helping to raise standards. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

36. The school's mission statement is published and widely distributed. The pupils' behaviour and good relationships throughout the school demonstrate their commitment to the aims and values that the school seeks to engender. A strong feature is the emphasis on the need for staff and children to care for others and be sensitive to their needs. The school achieves these aims well.
37. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the key staff share the co-ordination of different subjects, and the headteacher has monitored the quality of teaching in the classrooms. This is usually either by observation or by evaluation of the work of the pupils. The local authority adviser also helps to validate the quality of work in the school. The monitoring of the work and better systems for promoting good behaviour are clear improvements since the last inspection. The school evaluates the pupils' performance in national tests, and has prioritised raising standards in English, mathematics and science. Careful analysis of the national test results has ensured that realistic but demanding performance targets are set; for example, in English and mathematics, all pupils are hoped to reach the expected levels. The improvements in this year's test results reflect the school's actions to remedy the previous shortcomings. The school has responded well in compensating for the low standards identified in the last report and in the past national test results.
38. The day-to-day management of the school is good. A very effective deputy headteacher, appointed at Easter, has clearly defined areas of responsibility and supports the headteacher very well. Due to the small number of staff, the delegation of responsibility for subject co-ordination is difficult. The key subjects are co-ordinated well, but some subjects such as geography, history and religious education have no named co-ordinator. **This is a key issue for action.** The staff is beginning to monitor the standards of the pupils' work in their subjects and identifying where improvements are needed. The programme of performance management for the teaching staff is in place and effectively organised. Their targets are regularly agreed and reviewed, and their training needs are identified with regard to both the individual's and the school's needs. The school development planning and self-evaluation procedures are generally good, and a number of areas have been identified for improvement, such as the outside play areas for the Foundation Stage children, co-ordination of subjects and various subject policies.
39. The governing body is effective in supporting the school. Some governors play an active part in the school life and provide support by taking assemblies and hearing the pupils read. The committee structure is logical and appropriately organised. The chair of governors is very aware of his responsibilities and that of the governing body in general. The literacy governor has visited the school to monitor English activities, for example, but this process is not generally well developed and **is an additional issue for action.** Overall, the governors, supported by the headteacher, have a clear vision for the development of the school and make an appropriate contribution to the improvement planning and priorities. They receive good information about the school's performance and have a realistic appreciation of its current strengths and weaknesses. There is a well-established process for forming the improvement plan, and priorities are appropriately identified for future years. Educational priorities in the improvement plan are well supported by the targeted use of funds. The governors fulfil their statutory duties.
40. The school is well staffed and there is a good match of qualifications and experience to provide a broad curriculum in most areas. There are good induction processes to support teachers who are new to the school, and the formation of the extra class taught by the newly qualified teacher is proving successful. Other staff sometimes swap over for certain lessons such as design and

technology to maximise their expertise, which is effective. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed by the headteacher in partnership with the teachers and teaching assistants. The teaching assistants and midday supervisors are effectively trained and generally well deployed. They play an important part in ensuring the quality of the pupils' learning and their good behaviour, although are sometimes left for extended periods without intervention from the teacher. A considerable strength of the supervisors is their ability to relate well to the pupils and support them in their 'Playground Pals' activities.

41. The school has a number of valuable facilities, such as the playing fields and playground. The improvements to classrooms have reduced noise levels and the distraction they caused for the pupils. However, the Reception and Year 1 classroom constrains the range of activities needed for this age group both indoors and outside, and is therefore not satisfactory overall. The outdoor play areas are good for most of the pupils, but are not sufficiently well developed for the pupils in the Foundation Stage. Generally, the school's teaching resources are good and are readily accessible. The quality of reading books is generally good and there is a small well-stocked library. The provision of artefacts appropriately enhances the religious and cultural aspects of the children's learning. The quality of the learning environment and the school surroundings owe much to the standards achieved by the caretaking staff and to the care and pride in their school shown by the pupils and adults.
42. The financial management of the school is good. The finance committee of governors is provided with clear and timely information through analysis of the monitoring statements provided by local authority officers, who help administer the budget. New technology such as computers is used well to not only track and monitor the budget but also for other administrative purposes. The governors have a policy for achieving 'best value' and procedures to evaluate the impact of their spending decisions on the pupils' attainment and the quality of their education. Additional funds and grants are applied appropriately to their designated purposes and often supplemented from the school's budget. For example, additional funding to facilitate the parents' awareness of the teaching of mathematics was used well and proved successful. The school secretary is effective in enabling the day-to-day procedures of the school to operate smoothly and allowing the headteacher and staff to focus upon teaching and learning. The school has relatively high funding, but offers some very good teaching, promotes good standards of behaviour and is achieving rising standards in some subjects. Consequently, the inspectors consider that it gives sound value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

43. In order to enhance further the quality of education provided by the school and thereby raise the pupils' attainment, the staff and governors should:
 - (1) **Improve the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage by : (Para 11, 12, 20, 44, 54, 55.)**
 - providing more opportunities for the pupils to have outdoor activities;
 - broadening the curriculum to allow more child-initiated activities;
 - identifying the characteristics of the very good teaching and learning already evident in parts of the school;
 - highlighting the Foundation Stage in the school prospectus.
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 - (2) **Improve the co-ordination of subjects by : (Para 38, 85, 102, 104,)**

- reviewing the present distribution of subject responsibilities;
- deciding how all subjects can be covered effectively.

**Improvements in regard to the following minor issues should also be considered:
(Para 16,39,76)**

- the consistency of marking throughout the school;
- the governors' systematic monitoring of the school's activities and development.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

34

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	7	13	12	0	0	0
Percentage	9	21	36	34	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y R – Y 6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	112
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	19

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.4

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	13	3	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	13
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	14	14	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (58)	88 (75)	100 (92)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	13
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	14	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88(67)	94(92)	100(75)
	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	11	11	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	8	10
	Girls	9	8	10
	Total	17	16	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77(86)	73 (71)	91(95)
	National	75(75)	73(71)	86(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	9	8	7
	Total	18	17	16
Percentage of pupils	School	82(86)	77 (86)	73(95)

at NC level 4 or above	National	73(72)	74 (74)	82(82)
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	110	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	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

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: Y R – Y 6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	22 a.m. /29 p.m.

Education support staff: Y R– Y 6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	45

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A

Financial year	01-02
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	£
Total income	261113
Total expenditure	260651
Expenditure per pupil	2327
Balance brought forward from previous year	6150
Balance carried forward to next year	6612

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	112
Number of questionnaires returned	17

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	47	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	53	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	53	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	47	12	6	0
The teaching is good.	59	41	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	53	18	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	47	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	29	65	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	47	47	0	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	65	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	47	12	0	6

Other issues raised by parents

Some issues regarding the morning arrangements for the parents to visit the school were raised. The school, concerned for the safety and well-being of the pupils, felt that procedures that are slightly more formal were needed for parents to come into the school at the start of the school day. There were no other significant issues raised by the parents.

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

44. Taken overall, the teaching and the progress children make are satisfactory. All the children in the current group are likely to reach the targets set in the national guidelines for all areas of learning. However, the breadth of the curriculum is narrow. The use of planned play as a focus for learning is limited and, although taken account of, is not sufficiently resourced nor appropriately planned in most areas of learning. The pupils' outdoor learning environment is limited and is rarely used. The lack of opportunity for the pupils to develop their gross motor skills was noted in the last inspection as a weakness and has yet to be fully addressed. **This remains a key issue for action.**
45. The children start school in the term in which they are five years old. There are currently five children of Reception age within the Year1 class and this will increase to seven from the spring term. A further six children are scheduled for entry during the summer term. Most children have had some pre-school playgroup experience. The results of the assessment tasks that the present children did on entry are either average or above. There are no children with below average abilities or with special educational needs within this group, but procedures are in place for any child to be given additional support and attention should the need arise. There are no children with English as an additional language. New assessment procedures were set up at the beginning of term and are at an early stage of development. A new entry profile is to be introduced from January 2003.

Personal, social and emotional development

46. When they enter the school, the children's attainment in personal, social and emotional development is generally in line with the age-related expectation. The present children have made a satisfactory start and most have settled well. This is because the teacher's major focus has been to foster the children's skills in this area. However, when presented with more formal tasks, one or two children are less secure and happy about their ability to complete what is expected of them. In these cases, the learning support assistants are very helpful to the children and are able to reassure them. Most children have formed positive relationships with their peers and other adults outside of the immediate family. They have become familiar with the school routines, and have learnt to listen to instructions and to tidy away when a task is completed. A significant feature is the way in which the children show respect for one another. They share and take turns well when using equipment. They can independently dress and undress themselves for physical exercise.
47. Over the course of the inspection, the various activities were prepared and put out onto the tables and this often runs counter to the children's need for individual choice, exploration, enquiry and discovery. It slows their progress in gaining independence in their learning. However, a positive start has been made to improving this aspect of the curriculum by introducing a session where the children are allowed to select, organise and be responsible for their own equipment and materials to complete a task. During this session, the behaviour of the children is very good because they become totally involved in the task, whereas on other occasions when their initiative is curtailed it is noticeable that they become restless and inattentive. The procedures for 'snack time' reinforce good socially acceptable behaviour amongst the mixed-aged class.

Communication, language and literacy

48. A major emphasis is placed on the development of the children's spoken English and their listening skills. At the start of the year, the children's attainment in these skills was in line with the age-related expectation. The adults encourage the children to listen carefully to stories, and ask questions about what took place and what might happen next. The adults working with the children give good attention to the development of spoken English during not only the literacy sessions but also, for example, during the children's role-play activities. The adults' skilful and sensitive questioning is fostering and encouraging the children to respond in extended sentences rather than two or three-word phrases. In the group-time, there are good opportunities for the children to speak clearly when sharing their thoughts and ideas, to ask questions of each other and adults with confidence and interest, and to enrich their vocabulary.
49. A significant feature of the teaching is at the start of the literacy sessions. The introductions to new activities are clear and precise, and the learning points are highlighted very well, enabling all children to understand the teachers' explanation and extend their knowledge. During the short time the children have been in school, the adults have stimulated the children's interest and love of books and stories. The teacher's good selection of books has ensured that the children regard stories and information texts as sources of pleasure, leading to a growing understanding of the written word. Some have begun to read some words and most can recall some details of a story. They know the author of a book and that a story has a beginning, middle and end. They can identify the main character, and recall and sequence the events in the correct order. They are also keen to offer their opinions about the illustrations in the books.
50. On entry to school, the children have writing skills that are average and their progress is maintained at this level. The teacher has paid good attention to handwriting and the formation of letters, so most children now write their names using the upper and lowercase letters that are correctly formed. The approach to writing is mostly teacher directed and they have to write their sentences using word banks and picture cues. This often restricts the children's own creative and imaginative thoughts and ideas being put down on paper because of the importance of spelling the words correctly. Three or four words are written at most within the allotted time. During their play activities, they write far more 'words' imaginatively for a range of purposes and can read confidently and competently. In many cases, they use the capital letter at the beginning of the sentence, leave gaps between words and remember to add a full stop. The adults encourage the children to share their work with each other at the end of the sessions. They provide good role models for the development of spoken English and literacy skills, and the work is very carefully prepared to meet the needs of all children.

Mathematical development

51. The curriculum for mathematics is based on the Foundation Stage curriculum and the early levels of the National Curriculum. As a result, the children are making consistent progress in their mathematical learning and it is likely that they will achieve the goals set out for the end of the Reception year. In the numeracy sessions, most children count to twenty, recognise written numbers to 10 and put them into their correct order. They can do simple additions and subtractions, such as $1+1$, $3+1$, $3-2$, and respond independently.
52. In the group activity, the learning support assistant uses accurate mathematical language to support the children's understanding of the mathematical concepts. This was evident, for example, when they were working on the idea of 'more or less'. However, a narrow range of equipment was used to help the children to 'add on one more' and, as a result, their children's interest

wavered despite all efforts to keep their attention. In the activity observed, the teaching tended to use a narrow range of resources, and little use was made of different resources such as containers, sand tray or water tray to extend their understanding. Greater opportunities for incidental mathematical discovery in role-play activities, such as that seen in the 'café', and more frequent use of structured play, both the indoors and outside, would also enhance the children's learning. This is particularly so when tackling the concepts in the use of and applications of mathematics to everyday situations such as shape, space and measure.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

53. The curriculum is focused around the early part of the National Curriculum and modified to meet the needs of the Reception children. They listen to the same introductory session as the Year 1 pupils and are then taken off in a group to do the set task with the learning support assistant. On this occasion, a very positive reinforcement of the planned learning intention was repeated to the children. Good questioning provoked their curiosity about different ways sound is produced by various instruments. The children handled the instruments and explored the sounds made by plucking, hitting, blowing and shaking them. They listened well and followed instructions carefully. Observations were made of historical or geographical activities during the inspection, and there were no specific learning objectives for the reception children within the curriculum planning for Year 1. All are able to turn on computer equipment, use the mouse to control the cursor and activate a range of icons fairly competently. The necessary skills are taught and the appropriate language is being introduced and used.

Physical development

54. There is limited provision for physical education, but the activities provided ensure that most children maintain the average to above average physical skills they had already acquired on entry. They confidently use a range of apparatus in the school hall and other equipment such as small construction toys. Their finer movements, for example in using pencils and scissors, are well controlled, and the children are aware of the safety issues involved. They cut and tear materials, such as wool, cloth, paper and card, competently and confidently, showing pleasure in their achievements. However, the school's policy and planning do not yet make sufficient use of the available outdoor space, either as a means of enhancing the children's physical skills, or as a resource to support other areas of the curriculum. There are limited resources and there are few opportunities for the children to be creative and imaginative in the use and control of larger equipment.

Creative development

55. The provision for the children's creative development is largely subject based and similar to that for the Year 1 National Curriculum. However, the school has recently introduced child-initiated learning for one session a week. This is a positive start towards proper Foundation Stage provision, but the time is insufficient over the course of a week. In this one-hour session, the Reception children and the Year 1 pupils plan, do and review their own independent work and good learning takes place. For example, through the role-play activity in the 'café', the children wrote orders, estimated costs, used the calculator to add up the bills, and took turns at the 'cooking'. The sensitive intervention by the adult with probing and challenging questions ensured that the children were extending their vocabulary in its appropriate context both confidently and competently. Other children designed and made cards, writing out messages that often had more than one sentence. Others were engaged on constructions using 'small world toys' building with care and thought about design. The children remained on task throughout the session and their

behaviour was very good. This session was also extremely beneficial to a significant number of the Year 1 children whose basic creative skills are below expectation. On this occasion, the children undertook no artwork, and their previous efforts on display were restricted mainly to the basic skills of collage. Although the children's progress is broadly satisfactory, there was a marked absence of the use of free painting and any three-dimensional work. For example, there was very little evidence of exploration of colour, or a planned range of activities such as finger painting. A wider range of large wooden construction equipment, workbenches and tools, as well as sand and water trays, would enhance the imaginative play. **This is a key issue**. No specific musical activities were seen, other than that seen as part of a science lesson. In assembly, the children try to follow the words of songs attentively and sing along with the other pupils.

ENGLISH

56. The oldest pupils taking the national tests in 2002 achieved results that were broadly in line with the national average and equal to those of similar schools. This reflects an upturn in the results and matches the markedly improving picture seen at the time of the inspection.
57. The proportion of pupils on course to achieve the expected levels in the forthcoming tests at the end of Year 2 is broadly in line with the national average. However, it is likely that the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in reading will increase. The inspection findings suggest that by the age of eleven the pupils attain standards above the national expectation. A growing number of pupils will reach the expected Level 4 in reading and an increasing proportion is on course to achieve the higher Level 5. This overall improvement is due to several factors. The school now has a well-planned literacy curriculum that meets the needs of the full range of pupils. The subject is co-ordinated well and, for the pupils in Years 3 to 6 in particular, the quality of the teaching is high.
58. Throughout the school, the pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. This is because the teachers engage the pupils in wide-ranging discussions that include topics such as the eco system, responses to literature, and others that motivate them to talk. At the same time, this process enables them to develop good listening skills. A good example was seen during a lesson where the pupils were discussing litter that had been collected around the school. When asked for their comments and suggestions for remedial action, a lively dialogue ensued! Older pupils have been engaged in more formal discussions where matters such as the Code of Conduct and the 'Playground Pals' scheme were decided.
59. Standards are satisfactory at the end of Year 2. The pupils are enthusiastic readers, and a few children read with above average fluency and expression. The school's successful literacy strategy ensures that there are regular opportunities for reading individually, in a group and as a class when the pupils share the 'big books'. The sounds and names of letters are thoroughly taught in the younger classes so that the pupils are acquiring good methods for tackling unfamiliar words. The youngest class enjoys this regular routine of practising letter recognition because it is presented in the form of a game.
60. By the time they are eleven, the pupils read confidently and reach better than expected standards. The pupils encounter a variety of texts that are used as a basis for work during literacy lessons. Many pupils now confidently select books that are more challenging in content. One boy talked enthusiastically about his enjoyment of books which 'leave you on a cliff-hanger'. The older pupils are encouraged to research the meaning of difficult words in texts. For instance, a group of average readers was skilfully questioned to explore the meaning of 'convex' and 'reflection' in a non-fiction text. Throughout Years 1 to 6, the pupils enjoy reading poetry and are encouraged to

do so both silently and aloud. The older pupils have opportunities to read a range of factual texts from the Internet. This often supplements information they gather from books as part of their work in history and geography.

61. The pupils' writing skills by the end of Year 2 are satisfactory and there are signs of improvement in the way many of the pupils now sequence their writing. This is because they have been encouraged to plan their writing, often using a variety of 'writing guidelines' to help them. They write for an appropriate range of purposes and develop an awareness of how the addition of adjectives and adverbs can enrich their writing. At times, however, the writing tasks are too constrained to allow the younger higher attainers to write freely and expand their ideas. Conversely, the lower-attaining writers receive good support for spelling and the organisation of their writing.
62. The pupils in Year 6 make good progress and reach better than expected standards. They learn how to enrich their writing by using a range of stylistic devices such as metaphors and similes, when appropriate. Many of them are becoming increasingly selective about the language they use and employ adverbs such as 'obviously', 'unexpectedly' or 'surprisingly' to good effect. They have learned to set out dialogue appropriately and are developing confidence in using paragraphing. In Years 1 to 6, the pupils' handwriting skills are improving overall, but the quality varies between classes.
63. Standards in literacy are improving because the classes are generally well taught. In Years 3 to 6, some of the teaching is very good. The literacy activities are well balanced and the teachers have a secure knowledge of how to teach English. They show a high level of commitment to raising the pupils' literacy attainment by encouraging them to enjoy reading and writing. They take time and trouble to select texts that will appeal to both boys and girls. The library area is in the course of being reorganised. Older pupils are eager to resume their duties as librarians. The pupils generally take pride in their work and the teachers recognise their efforts. However, the marking of work does not consistently inform the pupils of where they could improve. Spelling and reading provide useful homework tasks.
64. The subject is managed well, and test results have been analysed effectively. All the pupils benefit from having identified targets. Comments about their work help the pupils to make progress towards achieving these targets. The lower-attaining pupils and those identified as having special educational needs are well supported by their teachers and, where available, the classroom assistants. All the children benefit from the regular assessments of their reading and writing. Careful analysis of their attainment and progress in these important skills forms the basis of subsequent teaching.

MATHEMATICS

65. Overall standards of work are good by the time the pupils reach seven, and this is reflected in the national test results. The position is similar to that reported at the last inspection. The pupils' achievements also compare very well to those of similar schools. By the age of eleven, the pupils reach the levels expected nationally, and a number achieve higher standards in their day-to-day work. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The results of the tests in 2002 improved on those of the previous year, but were lower compared to similar schools. The pupils' learning and progress are good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Year 3 to 6. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall. There is no significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys. The pupils' attitudes to mathematics and behaviour are good throughout the school.

66. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 acquire a broad range of mathematical skills, although those deriving from extended investigations were not observed during the inspection. The pupils quickly recall addition and subtraction facts to 10 mentally, know place value to one hundred and use their 2 and 10 times tables. Their mental agility is good. During one lesson in Year 2 the pupils demonstrated that they could work out the missing numbers on a large number square. In Year 1, the pupils confidently added and subtracted numbers along a number line, but the teaching did not extend the pupils' understanding or thinking. The original focus on counting, incorporating some work on computers, was interesting and appropriate, but the follow-on activities did not motivate the pupils as effectively.
67. In Year 2, the pupils understand the concept of fractions well. They explain confidently how pizzas can be divided into quarters and halves, and the higher-attaining pupils also know that cutting them into eighths gives you eight pieces. The teaching in this lesson was particularly effective. The pupils were involved in their learning, and were expected to respond quickly to questions. The teacher enhanced her teaching by using a real apple to demonstrate and explain fractions. The pupils' past work shows good understanding of solving written problems, and other work using hand spans to measure in Year 1 was completed well. In Year 2, there has been good coverage of measurement and the identification of two and three-dimensional shapes, and the pupils' work indicates good levels of understanding. The presentation of the work is generally good, with an appropriate balance between the pupils' own recording and their completion of prescribed worksheets.
68. By the age of eleven, the pupils achieve standards that are in line with national expectation. In the Year 3 and 4 class, the pupils develop an appropriate range of methods to work out simple and more complex addition and subtraction problems. They record their thoughts and answers on whiteboards, which aids their methods of working out. The higher-attaining pupils show better levels of understanding and can suggest alternative ways of working out answers that were not originally thought of. The pupils in the additional Year 4 and 5 class reach appropriate standards in their mental addition and subtraction work based on money problems. They correctly identify how these problems should be written, with the correct placement of the decimal point or pence. They also quickly work out problems to allow them to play a simple game in competition with classmates. In the Year 5 and 6 class, most pupils reach satisfactory standards in their work and some attain above this level. They have a good understanding of plotting co-ordinates and how shapes can be 'translated' from one position to another. They confidently explain how the co-ordinates have either negative or positive values, depending on the 'translation' and the point of origin. The pupils also use their mathematical knowledge in other subjects, particularly in information and communication technology, such as their work on data logging. Evidence from discussion and the pupils' past work indicate that in Year 5 they multiply three-digit numbers accurately and acquire knowledge of mixed numbers. The pupils in Year 6 have an appropriate understanding of number calculations, multiplying fractions and decimals. They also know the properties of various shapes, such as quadrilaterals, and how to find their perimeters.
69. All the teaching is based on the National Numeracy Strategy, and mathematical activities take place daily. Homework regularly supports the class teaching and parents are informed of the types of activities to use with their children to develop their mathematical skills.
70. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The headteacher is the co-ordinator for the subject and has a clear picture of how the school compares nationally. Various measures to boost the pupils' knowledge and skills in Years 3 to 6 have been introduced, including extra teaching sessions after school. The pupils demonstrate their enthusiasm for the subject by

conscientiously attending these sessions on a regular basis. The teachers plan for all ability groups, ensuring good support for the pupils with special needs and the higher-attaining pupils. The teaching assistants effectively support specific pupils, thereby enabling them to make good progress. Cross-curricular links with other subjects are planned, for example with information and communication technology and with geography when the pupils are investigating the local area. The pupils' progress against the key learning skills is regularly monitored and recorded half-termly. Marking is undertaken regularly throughout the school but is not always consistent between classes. The parents are invited into school to see what goes on in mathematics lessons, and to help them understand how they can help their children at home. The mathematics resources are good, stored well and used effectively. Good displays are used not only to celebrate the pupils' achievements, but also to extend their knowledge and understanding. The school is well placed to improve standards further.

SCIENCE

71. The teachers' assessment of science work for seven-year-olds shows that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 was well above the national average, but the work seen during the inspection indicates that they reach only average standards. The results of the 2002 national tests for eleven-year-olds show that the pupils reached levels just ahead of the national average, but lower than the results reached by similar schools. The number achieving at higher levels was also low. The work seen in lessons, discussion with the pupils and scrutiny of their past work indicate that they will achieve higher standards next year. The performance of eleven-year-olds is showing improvement
72. By the age of seven, the pupils record the results of their observations and investigations effectively through the use of pictures, charts and their own brief written text. In Year 1, for example, the pupils explored different types of sound by using various instruments and chime bars. They recognised if sounds were high or low, but could not always say why. The lesson was organised appropriately overall, but there was a little confusion when some incorrect terminology was used to describe pitch. A Year 2 lesson was taught satisfactorily using a range of simple instruments like guitars and a xylophone. The pupils explained what they were doing and why certain sounds were either high or low. However, the use of prescribed worksheets did not extend their abilities in recording their results, or extend their collaborative working. The pupils' past work indicates that they have appropriate knowledge of different materials that reflect or glow, and understand the way that shadows are created. They also know about the life cycles of animals and where sources of light occur. In all of the lessons seen, the pupils behaved well and enjoyed their activities.
73. By the time they are eleven, the pupils design investigations to ensure that they are fair, and record their results in a consistent format. They make sensible predictions about the results and can explain how variables can control the outcome. In the Year 3 and 4 class, they build effectively upon the work planned in the younger age groups. For example, they investigate the way sounds are made using different instruments or similar instruments that produce different pitch, such as a descant, treble and tenor recorders. The teacher organised the work effectively and supplemented the lesson using a 'Power Point' demonstration to enhance the lesson. The pupils were then motivated to find out more. The pupils' previous work also indicates that skills are built upon well. For example, the older pupils experimented with materials that affect the transmission of sound and constructed funnel devices to measure the results. The pupils in the Year 5 and 6 class have a good understanding of how different approaches can be used when experimenting. For instance, following some very good teaching that promoted high levels of

thinking, the pupils conceived and began to make simple devices to experiment with light sources and the way that rays either bend or reflect.

74. The pupils' writing and recording skills are appropriately developed as they enter their findings into their science notebooks. Worksheets are used in some lessons for the younger pupils and, although they are usually pitched at the right level, they do little to develop the pupils' own skills of recording. More purposeful practice is found in the older classes where the older pupils of all abilities are encouraged to write their own accounts of their investigations. The application of numeracy skills is also in evidence in Years 5 and 6, for example when the pupils use a data-logging device to record the variations in sound over a set period. There is also good evidence to show that information technology is used to support learning, particularly with their work on sound in the oldest class. The pupils' attitudes towards science activities are good generally and particularly good in the Year 5 and 6 class. They demonstrate good levels of co-operation in carrying out their investigations. As a result, their investigative skills are developed well.
75. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the teachers and teaching assistants and this enables them to make good progress.
76. The subject is managed very effectively by the deputy headteacher. There are plans to make specific classroom observations to monitor the quality of the teaching and learning in the school, but this programme has yet to be fully developed. The science curriculum is planned well throughout the school to a consistent format that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The assessment of pupils' progress is good, and carried out on a regular basis. The pupils' work is marked conscientiously, although there are some variations in the amount and quality of advice given to pupils. The resources to support science are good, such as the range of torches and mirrors. Overall, the quality of learning in the subject has improved since the last inspection, and standards are rising throughout the school.

ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

77. Satisfactory standards in art and design have been broadly maintained since the previous inspection and are identified on the school's current development plan for further improvement. No lessons were seen during the inspection because the focus for this half term is on design and technology. The teachers' planning over the course of the year indicates a fairly well balanced approach to the development of basic skills using a good range of resources and materials to ensure that the pupils make reasonable progress. However, a greater emphasis on the use of artists' work in lessons and the display of examples from both European and other artistic traditions would enhance the children's knowledge, understanding and appreciation of art. It would also contribute to their understanding of multi-cultural issues.
78. Discussions with Year 2 pupils, their work in sketchbooks and a small sample of the work displayed around the school indicate that there is an appropriate focus on the basic skills. The individual characteristics of the children's drawings show that they are acquiring suitable observational skills. They mix a range of colours and learn about the gradation of tone through experiments with colour washes. The pupils paint accurately, but as yet do not apply colour freely and with verve. The school recognises that there is insufficient emphasis on three-dimensional work. A discussion with the Year 5 and 6 pupils revealed that they have an enthusiastic approach to art and love to use a range of paints, pastels, wax crayons and printing materials. Attention is properly given to the designing process and the pupils are given suitable opportunities to sketch their plans and label the parts. Art is well used to support topic work, for example, in geography, history and science.

79. Currently, standards in design and technology by the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with those expected nationally, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Most pupils are making satisfactory progress by the time they are seven. The youngest pupils in the Reception and Year 1 class are learning about moving parts in books. They are eager to explore and evaluate the levers, slides and split pins that allow movement in printed books. Having discovered the principles and mechanisms on which these movements are based, with the help of their teacher they have used them well in designing and making their own moving cards. This process ensures that the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing their own technical knowledge and understanding of a pivot to make a moving picture. In the lesson seen, the teacher had very clear objectives of what she expected the children to know and be able to do by the end of the session. The youngest children in Year 1 had skills that were below those expected for their age group and many had great difficulties in cutting material and paper. The resources were well prepared and the task was explained clearly, thereby enabling the children to feel successful with their efforts during the practical session. No lessons were seen in Year 2, but the work in the pupils' folders shows that they have made a range of plans and sample sliding mechanisms before constructing a 'pop-up' card. They talked confidently and competently about this process, using words such as pivot, lever and bridge accurately and in their appropriate context.
80. The work of the older pupils in Years 3 to 6 demonstrates the children's ability to join, fix, and combine a range of materials, for example when making a moving toy or a chair. For example, the Year 6 pupils were keen to explain and discuss the problems they encountered when designing and making a chair. They expressed very clearly their ideas as to how they would improve the process and outcomes if they had the chance to make another one. The different techniques used to strengthen the legs and the range of materials used show that the pupils have thought through their designs and their use of material. One lesson was very well planned and built consistently on the low-level skills from the children's prior learning experiences. As a result, they made excellent progress in their knowledge and understanding of the importance of planning, designing, experimenting and applying the skills to the task in hand. The lesson was highly focused on the samples of levers, rotary wheels, pivots and sliding mechanisms the children had made and used to produce 'pop-up' or moving pictures in their own story books. The lesson was very stimulating and all the pupils were actively involved. Their behaviour was excellent and they took great pride in their achievements. This lesson was successful because the teacher showed good judgement in allowing the children to work things out for themselves and intervened only to give support and guidance where necessary. The set task was challenging and promoted very high levels of skill in exploration, enquiry and discovery. The teacher's excellent knowledge and understanding of the subject enabled these children to build rapidly on their existing skills, bringing them up to a satisfactory level.
81. Because the national initiatives for literacy and numeracy have taken priority and all staff are new to the school since the previous inspection, there is still some way to go before all the issues raised for design and technology at the previous inspection are fully addressed. Nevertheless, a very positive start has been made. The staff's good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum are being used to establish firm foundations for the work and to ensure that the teaching and learning are consistent throughout the school. A co-ordinator for both art and design and design and technology has recently been appointed. The school improvement plan indicates that a policy is to be written, and a review of the curriculum planning and assessment procedures will be undertaken in the Spring of 2003.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

82. Geography and history are taught in rotation within a two-year alternating programme for pupils in Year 1 and 2 and a four-year programme for the pupils in Years 3 to 6. This is an appropriate arrangement to meet the needs of mixed-age classes and to ensure that the National Curriculum requirements are met. One lesson in history was observed in the youngest classes and in geography in the Year 3 and 4 class. Other evidence was gathered from scrutinising the pupils' work mainly for this term, but with the addition of some by the youngest pupils from the last summer term. Discussions were held with pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6.
83. The quality of work in both subjects is in line with what is expected nationally. The geography for the summer term in Years 1 and 2 and the current work on the local area completed by the older children show evidence of some above average features. The youngest children have a good level of recall of how the seaside has changed over time. Older pupils are adept at gathering and extracting information from a range of sources, including fieldwork and printed and illustrated material.
84. The pupils use the local area to develop their mapping skills and progressively learn to interpret a range of maps, including local Ordnance Survey maps. The travels of Barnaby Bear have broadened the younger pupils' knowledge of distant places. For example, they understand that Turkey is very hot in summer because Barnaby Bear had to abandon his warmer clothing to travel there. When questioned, the younger pupils showed a satisfactory recall of the date and the events leading up to the Great Fire of London. The oldest pupils talked enthusiastically of visits to local places of interest, such as Blists Hill, and had a generally good awareness of the lives of children in Victorian times. During the current geography topic, the pupils have used their literacy skills well to record the results of surveys and to prepare questionnaires. They have also drawn upon their mathematical skills to record data and construct graphs.
85. There is no specific co-ordination of these subjects, which means that their development is less clear. The teachers' planning provides evidence of well-prepared lessons that include a range of relevant and interesting activities. The resources available are varied and attractive. The older pupils were very enthusiastic about a Roman role-play experience, and some talked about how they enjoyed using databases on the computer to record information. The volume of recorded work is limited, but it became clear from discussions with the pupils that they took an interest in their work and remembered details over a considerable period of time.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

86. At the last inspection, the standards attained by the seven-year-olds were just satisfactory, but the majority of the oldest pupils in the school fell below the national expectation. The present inspection findings indicate that standards are satisfactory for the seven-year-olds, and the older pupils now exceed the standards expected nationally. Only activities taking place within other lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, and only one teacher-led session was seen in a Year 5 and 6 class. Evidence from the pupils' past work, discussion with pupils and observation of activities outside the classroom were taken into account in forming the following judgements.
87. The younger pupils in the Reception and Year 1 class gain appropriate experience of using computers and in learning about simple devices used around the home. These skills develop appropriately as they move into the next class. The pupils use the mouse and keyboard effectively, and know how to operate simple programs to supplement their work in other subjects, such as mathematics. For instance, they use computers to practise their addition skills. By the time they are seven, the pupils can also use the computer to complete simple word-processed

tasks. They used the word processor, for example, to write short descriptions of the class hamster, Caramel, and clip art program to design a greeting card for a child's special occasion. In another lesson on the life of Florence Nightingale, the pupils used a word processor to produce simple sentences to describe her. In discussion, the pupils know that devices such as video recorders and DVD players and some toys use technology to make them work. Additional small-group teaching is also used to extend their computer skills. The teaching seen was satisfactory and made appropriate use of the computers; their use within other subjects is a helpful feature. The pupils are motivated by the choice of activities that are relevant to them, and they learn satisfactorily overall. Recently, the school abandoned a small computer suite and placed the computers in the classrooms. This appears to be helping the pupils to make better than the expected progress.

88. By the time they are eleven, the pupils build and improve upon these skills. Some of the pupils supplement them by using computers at home. The pupils word process effectively, and use the computers appropriately for a range of purposes, such as investigating rotation in mathematics, charts and graphs in science and various English activities. In the Year 4 and 5 class, the pupils used a desktop publishing program to produce the school newspaper, 'Farmyard Times'. This reflected their good use and understanding of how computers manipulate text and graphics. The pupils use digital cameras to take pictures of activities in the school and use these in other contexts. For example, in geography, some pupils used a combination of pictures and word-processing to illustrate their project work about the dangers of the local main road. They have also designed quite complex presentations using different media. The oldest pupils in the school are very competent when using and discussing the use of computers and programs. For example, they can explain the design principles and potential features of a web site. In discussion, they show that they know how to send E-mails and the highest-attaining pupils are familiar with sending attachments and using the Internet. The pupils also know how to use an electronic device called an 'ecolog' that collects information about temperature, light and sound. They explain how it works and how to interpret the results. The teaching is now good overall. Improvements in the planning of the curriculum mean that pupils now learn the appropriate skills in a systematic and advancing manner. The pupils enjoy their activities and work well in collaboration with others.
89. The management of the subject is good. The policy and scheme of work are based upon national guidance and are tailored effectively to the needs of a small school with mixed-aged classes. The policy is particularly clear and concise, and addresses the issue of safe Internet access. All members of staff have completed the nationally provided training, and this is helping to enhance the pupils' learning. For example, different classes use the new data projector that greatly enhanced a literacy lesson in the Year 3 and 4 class. The resources have improved since the last inspection, and the purchase and use of the LCD projector is an achieved aim highlighted in the school improvement plan. The assessment arrangements are good, with a combination of short-term ongoing assessment and the regular testing of specific skills.

MUSIC

90. During the inspection, two class lessons, singing in assemblies and a musical performance by the choir were observed. At the time of the previous inspection, no judgement was made on the standards achieved by the pupils throughout the school. The major concerns about the planning have since been suitably addressed. The teachers' plans demonstrate that the pupils have the opportunity to experience music making through the full range of the curriculum in singing, composing, appraising and listening. To ensure that this happens, the teachers follow both the national guidelines and a published scheme of work.

91. Throughout the school, the pupils overall achievements are in line with what is expected nationally. The very good teaching in Years 3 to 6 is likely to result in a significant minority of the pupils attaining higher standards. Overall, the standard of singing is satisfactory, and the children obviously enjoy it. Most of them recall the words of a song and the general contour of the melody, but their rhythm and general sense of pitch sometimes falter. More emphasis on improving the basic skills of pitch and rhythmic accuracy would enhance the quality of the singing. However, the performance of the choir during an assembly showed that the children's sense of melody, pitch and rhythm was more accurate because the required skills had been taught well. The children enjoy performing for other pupils, who listen attentively and spontaneously show their appreciation.
92. In a Year 2 class music lesson, the children produced sounds on untuned percussion instruments that were beginning to be musical in nature. They also showed some control over rhythm and duration, and confidently followed the agreed signs and symbols on graphic scores conducted by the adult. In the one lesson seen in the Year 5 and 6 class, the specialist music teacher used her musical knowledge and understanding very confidently and competently to stimulate and interest the children. At the beginning of the lesson, there was good emphasis on improving the children's understanding of dynamics, such as loud and soft, and on their rhythmic skills using the voice, body movement and instruments. The teaching was centred on developing a greater understanding of chord progression through very good demonstration. This enabled the pupils to understand, practise and then produce collaboratively a composition based on the use of the named notes within the chord. As a result, the quality of the learning was very good and all of the pupils became fully involved in the music making. The pupils' behaviour in music lessons has improved since the time of the previous inspection. It is now good. The children clearly stated that they look forward to their music lessons each week and are keen to participate. In both cases, the lessons were well constructed to ensure that the pupils understood what they were doing. However, the inclusion of music from non-European countries and the acquisition of non-European musical instruments would further strengthen the music curriculum.
93. Music has had a high priority in the school improvement plan for this year. This has enabled the music co-ordinator, appointed since the time of the last inspection, to have a positive influence on the quality of the music curriculum and the overall status of music within the school. She actively supports the non-specialist classroom teachers in the preparation and presentation of their music lessons, but above all she provides a wealth of opportunities for the pupils to perform in and out of school hours. For instance, she has reintroduced opportunities for children to have individual instrumental tuition on guitar.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

94. On the basis of the lessons seen, it is evident that by the end of Year 2 standards have risen since the last inspection. There is also convincing evidence that team games are strong amongst the older pupils. The seven-year-olds worked hard to produce a sequence of well-executed dance movements inspired by Japanese warrior music. The success of these younger pupils is due to the fact that the teacher has a good understanding of the subject and expects them to respond positively. Relationships in the lessons are good. Pupils of different gender co-operate well, for example during paired activities using small apparatus and in dance lessons.
95. They respect the necessary safety conventions because the teacher is rigorous in her insistence that the sequences contain no contact between the partners. During an indoor games lesson, the pupils assiduously practised their skills of dodging, marking and dribbling and successfully devised a range of small-sided games. The very youngest pupils in Year 1 alternate their dance lessons

with others that focus on developing gymnastic skills. The objective is for them to develop an awareness of space and to be able to devise body movements to reflect this.

96. Dance is a strong feature of the curriculum for the pupils in Years 3 to 6 and they have benefited from working at a local secondary school. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 worked hard to produce a sequence of movements in response to a poem about Moby Dick, which also included a musical element. Very good teaching created an atmosphere where the pupils were able to give of their best and consequently the range of their movements was good. There is some photographic evidence of good work that shows engagement and real effort in order to match movements appropriately to music.
97. The pupils also enjoy games such as mini-rugby and compete against other local schools. The school makes appropriate arrangements for the teaching of swimming and nearly all pupils can swim the required 25 meters when they leave the school.
98. Physical education is a highly valued part of the school's curriculum. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and is ensuring that equipment is updated to provide a good range of experiences for the pupils. The after-school sports clubs and inter-school competitions further enhance the curriculum.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

99. The pupils' attainment matches the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Only three lessons were seen during the inspection. Other evidence was taken from the teachers' planning, an appraisal of the pupils' recorded work in Years 3 to 6 and discussions with the pupils. From this, it is clear that the pupils are acquiring a good knowledge of celebrations in major world religions and learning to recognise the qualities of various prominent religious leaders.
100. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils learn about special places. For instance, they recognise their local church as an important place in the life of Christians in the local community. It has also significance because the Year 6 pupils celebrate their leavers' ceremony there. The pupils know that different faiths have special books that are prized and revered by worshipers. They learn that Christians are expected to be kind and forgiving towards others and that all the major faiths have codes of conduct that govern the behaviour of those who believe in that faith.
101. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 develop a deeper understanding of important ceremonies such as baptism. They recognise that creation stories are important in many religions and that the natural world is to be cherished and respected. The work of the current term is providing the pupils with deeper insights into what has motivated various prominent leaders, such as Desmond Tutu. The oldest pupils were visibly moved when asked how they would feel upon being forced from their homes, as commonly happened to poor black people in South Africa. One pupil blurted out, 'It makes me mad, just reading about how these black people were not allowed to be educated like white people'. There followed an interesting, articulate exchange of ideas about the leadership qualities of Archbishop Tutu.
102. Where the teaching is outstandingly good, the quality of learning is also high. The lessons often begin with an arresting activity, and the pupils listen very well to what teachers have to say and respond with interest. This was the case in a lesson with the oldest pupils where the teacher let fall droplets of water into a bowl of water to represent the ripple effect of the deeds of people such as Desmond Tutu. In contrast, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher struggled with knowing the correct biblical names and places. In the very good lessons seen, the quality of presentation and

skilfully promoted dialogue ensure that the pupils remember what they have learned and are able to recall it later.

103. The volume of recorded work is rather sparse, but it is sufficiently regular to ensure that the oldest pupils at least have some written record to which they can refer. Often, the work is recorded in the form of illustrations, notes or diagrams. There is little recorded work in Years 1 and 2, but in discussion the pupils showed a good recall of some of the topics they have studied. They particularly appreciated the good Bible stories that have been read to them.
104. Good resource materials supplement the teachers' knowledge; however, the lack of a co-ordinator means that those who are less familiar with the topics are deprived of the support they need, for example in order to know and read the biblical names of people and places correctly. There is no formal assessment of the pupils' attainment although, in some cases, the recorded work indicated that tasks had been well matched to the pupils' capabilities.