

ERRATUM

The Unique Reference Number for this school is **123724**.

INSPECTION REPORT

MILFORD INFANTS' SCHOOL

Yeovil

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123734

Headteacher: Mrs Kairen Smith

Reporting inspector: Mrs E M D Mackie
2208

Dates of inspection: 17 – 19 March 2003

Inspection number: 248494

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Glenthorne Avenue Yeovil Somerset
Postcode:	BA21 4PG
Telephone number:	01935 475426
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Alan Partington
Date of previous inspection:	10 November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2208	Diana Mackie	Registered inspector	Art and design English Foundation stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1264	Brian Sampson	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3305	Ian Bennett	Team inspector	Design and technology Music Special educational needs	
3261	Ian Hancock	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Religious education English as an additional language	
3277	Susan Orpin	Team inspector	Geography History Science	
2919	Robin Taverner	Team inspector	Physical education Mathematics Educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
824	Graham Todd	Team inspector	Provision for pupils in the Language Resource Base	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Milford Infants' School is in a residential area north of the centre of the town of Yeovil. Most pupils come from the immediate locality of the school, where there is both rented and privately owned property. This is a bigger than average sized infants' school, having 306 pupils on roll, of whom 107 are in the Reception year. Eleven pupils with statements of special educational need for speech and communication difficulties are taught in the Language Resource Base; they join the mainstream classes when this is suitable. When they start school, there is wide variation in children's abilities, but overall, attainment is average. One per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is very low in comparison with the national average. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority heritages, and none speaks English as an additional language. Ten per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs for learning, emotional or physical difficulties; this is below the national average. Because of the Language Resource Base, the school's percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need (nearly four per cent) is well above the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a caring and improving school that provides a sound education for its pupils. Standards in English, mathematics and science are currently in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2. The overall quality of teaching is good, with some very good and excellent teaching, and teachers manage the pupils well. Relationships in the school are very good and pupils behave well and enjoy coming. The headteacher provides very good leadership and key staff fulfil their roles well. The governors manage the school well and serve the pupils conscientiously. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in speaking and listening, art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education are above national expectations by the end of Year 2.
- Provision for children in the Reception classes is very good.
- Pupils behave well and have very positive attitudes to school.
- Teaching is good.
- Teaching and curricular provision for pupils in the Language Resource Base are good.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is good and the relationships are very good.
- The headteacher gives very good educational direction for the school.
- The school works very well with parents.

What could be improved

- *Standards in science are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2, but information from assessments is not used sufficiently to drive up standards.
- *Teachers do not always provide sufficiently challenging work for higher-attaining pupils.
- *The accommodation for pupils in the Language Resource Base is too small.

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

*The school is already dealing with these issues

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in November 1997. The key issues identified have been dealt with effectively and the school has the good capacity for further improvement. The teaching and learning of mathematics have improved. Standards in ICT have risen because of improved provision of computers and better teaching. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment have improved. The information gathered is used well to inform teachers' planning in most subjects and to tell parents about how their children are getting on. Information from assessments is still not always used well enough to ensure that higher-attaining pupils are challenged in all lessons.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	B	D	E	E
writing	B	B	D	E
mathematics	B	C	E	E

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

Results in 2001 and 2002 were disappointing, but pupils made sound achievement based on predictions from regular assessments during their time in school. Care has to be taken in interpreting results at the school because of the larger than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups. Targets set by the school were met in 2002 and pupils are well on course to reach targets set for 2003. In Year 2, overall standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are now broadly in line with national expectations. There are fewer pupils with special educational needs in the school this year – ten per cent compared with 24.5 per cent in 2002. Regular teaching of the basic skills and early emphasis on speaking and listening, which are good, help pupils to achieve satisfactorily during their time at the school. Higher-attaining pupils could achieve more in some lessons. Pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are used and practised effectively in other subjects. By the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening, art and design, design and technology, ICT, history, physical education and religious education are above average. In geography, standards are average. No judgement is given for music, as so little teaching was seen during the inspection.

Children in the Reception year make good progress and achieve the Early Learning Goals set for the age group in communication, language and literature, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. They exceed the goals in personal, social and emotional development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about learning. They settle down to work conscientiously.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. This has a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms. Pupils play happily together at break times.
Personal development and relationships	Very good, and a strength of the school. Pupils are mature and responsible for their age and are thoughtful for one another.
Attendance	Good, and above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Very good	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.

Overall, the quality of the teaching is good, and there was no unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. There were examples of excellent and very good teaching. In the Reception classes, the very good quality of teachers' planning reflects their secure understanding of the needs of young children. Learning is gaining momentum as pupils benefit from the way teachers work well together as a team so that there are consistent ways of teaching throughout the school. Teaching is good in English and sound in mathematics, and literacy and numeracy are promoted well in most subjects. Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs are well supported with carefully organised work based on their individual education plans. Higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged with sufficiently demanding work. Relationships are very good. Learning support assistants play a significant role in the teaching programme as they work with groups of pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall, and very good for pupils in the Reception classes. The school provides an interesting range of activities, including very good extra-curricular activities, to promote pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils in the Language Resource Base and the mainstream classes benefit from good support from dedicated staff, and from the implementation of well-written individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. It is very good for their spiritual, moral and social development and good for their cultural development. This is a strong aspect of the school's work that leads to very good relationships and a harmonious community that values every member.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. There are good procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare. Assessments of pupils' academic and personal development are usually used effectively to guide teacher' planning and help pupils to become increasingly mature and responsible. Assessments in science are not used well enough to raise standards.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has a clear vision for the school and her educational direction inspires the staff and pupils. The deputy headteacher and senior staff work together effectively to fulfil the school's aims. Subject co-ordinators are enthusiastic in their drive to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors manage the school well through a system of committees and use their expertise conscientiously in the service of the

	pupils. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school's improvement plan supports systematic development based on careful evaluation of the school's needs.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources are managed efficiently and governors look for best value in their transactions. Specific resources for special educational needs and staff training are organised efficiently.

The school is well staffed with suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to ensure the proper teaching of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage, the National Curriculum, religious education and the requirements for pupils in the Language Resource Base. Professional training for staff is well organised and of very good quality. Accommodation and outdoor provision is satisfactory overall, but the accommodation for the Language Resource Base in a small temporary building is unsuitable. Learning resources are good in English, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, music and in the Language Base, and they are satisfactory elsewhere. Resources are obtained at the most competitive prices and the school uses them in the best possible way to achieve its aims.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school expects their children to work hard and do their best. • The teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. • Parents are happy about the amount of homework their children get. • The children like school and make good progress. • Parents feel comfortable about coming into school with questions or a problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small number of parents feel that: • The school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. • They are not kept well informed about how their children are getting on.

The inspectors agree wholeheartedly with parents' positive views. The school provides a greater range of activities outside lessons than is usually seen in infant schools. Every pupil in Year 2 can attend a club on Thursday lunchtimes, and there are trips to places of interest for all classes. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire feel comfortable about coming into school with questions and the school has an 'open door' policy. There is a good range of meetings when parents can find out about their children's progress, and annual reports are written well.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Care has to be taken in interpreting the school's results in national tests because of the high number of pupils with special educational needs who have taken the tests in the past two years. Based on records of their prior learning, pupils achieved well. The school achieved its own targets in 2002 and is on course to reach them in 2003. In the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 2, the school's performance was well below average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics in comparison with that of all schools nationally. Comparisons with similar schools were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in science were well below average nationally. Since 1999, the trend in the school's results in reading, writing and mathematics has been downward. There has been no significant difference between the overall performance of girls and boys. Current standards by the end of Year 2 are broadly in line with national expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science. They are above average in speaking and listening. However, higher-attaining pupils do not always achieve as well as possible. The systematic monitoring of lessons has had a significant positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning, especially in literacy and numeracy.
2. Children enter the Reception class with levels of attainment that are broadly average for their age. There is a wide range of ability. By the time they move to Year 1, most children have achieved the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals in the statutory six areas of learning and, in personal, social and emotional development, they exceed them. They achieve well because of the very good quality of the teaching and support that is based on secure understanding of the needs of young children. The planning of the curriculum is very good and staff create an encouraging atmosphere in which children learn happily.
3. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve soundly. They develop their speaking and listening well and widen their vocabulary consistently in all subjects and express their ideas and views confidently. Specific subject vocabulary is taught well and pupils are encouraged to use this to ask questions, express their views and share their thoughts with other people. Pupils enjoy reading and have access to a wide range of texts enabling them to practise their skills in all subjects. As they read from enlarged texts in the literacy hour, they use illustrations to help them to understand stories. The step-by-step teaching and learning of letter sounds and patterns ensures that pupils make good gains in reading, writing and spelling.
4. In mathematics, most pupils use a good range of strategies to answer questions in mental arithmetic sessions. Pupils increase their mathematical vocabulary so that they express their ideas and show other pupils how they have worked things out. Pupils develop an increasing awareness of the use of mathematics in everyday life; for example in weighing, measuring and shopping. In science, pupils benefit from the school's practical approach to the subject, and pupils quickly develop skills of systematic observation and recording. The school encourages them to learn through practical investigations so that pupils gain a deeper understanding and knowledge of the world around them. Through their scientific study, pupils understand the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise. Information from assessments is not used well enough to raise standards.
5. Standards in ICT are above national expectations. Most pupils are adept at using the keyboard for word-processing and simple editing. They use simple drawing packages, drag images across the screen and locate them accurately. Standards are good because of the effective staff training and good leadership of the subject. Standards in art and design, design and technology, history and physical education are above national expectations. In geography, standards are in line with national expectations. No judgement is given for music as so few lessons were seen. In religious education, pupils achieve above the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

6. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained good standards in most subjects. Average standards have been maintained in mathematics but standards are not as good as they were in English and science. Pupils with special educational needs, including pupils with specific difficulties with language and communication, make good progress and achieve well in relation to the targets set for them; pupils build well on what they already know, do and understand. Those pupils who are identified as being gifted or talented make sound progress. However, higher-attaining pupils do not always achieve as well as they could because the work provided for them is not challenging enough.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The pupils have very good attitudes to their school. These are a strength of the school and compare well with the previous inspection when they were said to be positive. Most of the children are enthusiastic about their school and very interested in their lessons and all other events and functions in which they take part. For example, in a design and technology lesson in Year 1, the pupils made pizzas to take home and cook for tea. Some of the designs that they had invented were quite beautiful; for example, a picture decorated with pineapple and ham pieces and a face with olive eyes and a piece of pepper for a nose. Pupils said that they really enjoyed the lesson and were sorry when the day ended.
8. Behaviour is good at the school. In some lessons, where management and discipline was very good and the lesson content stimulating, behaviour was often very good. During playtimes no bullying whatsoever was witnessed and this is a very good trait of the school. At lunchtime the pupils eat their sandwiches in an orderly manner whilst carrying on a normal conversation. In and around the corridors, moving to and from physical education or assemblies, they are well disciplined and controlled. They are proud of their school and keep it very tidy and during the inspection no vandalism or graffiti was witnessed. There has been only one, short-term excluded child in the twelve months before the inspection.
9. The personal development of the pupils is very good and another strength of the school. This has improved upon the already, existing good level seen at the previous inspection. The school is ensuring that the pupils will become caring, mature and responsible, future citizens. The majority have a good awareness of the fact that not all people are the same. They have learnt that, even within their own community there are those who have been brought up with different values and views on life. The love and feelings that they have for each other, was clearly illustrated in a circle time (group discussion) seen on, 'My Special Person'. Those, proudly chosen were various, from a special friend, relative or a teacher. The very nature of the way that pupils get on so well either in the playground or in lessons indicates their maturity. They often help with each other's work such as in a Year 1 numeracy lesson when a friend pointed out to his partner that he had missed out one of his calculations. They also have a very good understanding of the fact that usually if you hurt someone they will hurt you back therefore setting up constant conflict. Relationships amongst pupils and with teachers are very good. Although the school does not yet have an organised school council, the pupils are very good at using their initiative and taking responsibility. Most of the variety of extra -curricular clubs were suggested by the pupils themselves. In addition they are very conscientious about keeping their cloakrooms and classrooms tidy. Pupils from each class regularly deliver and collect attendance registers and help in assemblies.
10. Attendance at the school is still good and above the national average for this type of school. The majority of pupils come to school and into classes on time and lessons start promptly.
11. Overall, the attitudes, values and personal development of the children are well supplemented by the very high standards of the school's spiritual, moral and cultural provision and these together contribute significantly to the success of the pupils' learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

12. The overall quality of teaching is good. It is very good in the Foundation Stage. During the inspection, the quality of the teaching seen was good or better in two thirds of the lessons seen. It was very good in nearly a third of lessons and excellent in a one lesson. No lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. Teaching in the Reception classes is very good. English is taught well and teaching is sound in mathematics and science. In art and design, design and technology, history .ICT, physical education and religious education, teaching is good. It is satisfactory in other subjects. No judgement can be given for teaching in music because too little was seen. Teaching is good in the Language Resource Base. Teachers throughout the school work hard and show enthusiasm for their work. They embrace the school's aims and values and work as a team to provide education of good quality for the pupils.
13. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children are significant features in the teaching of children in the Reception classes. Planning for this age group is based on national guidance and is enhanced with a very good range of stimulating activities that motivate children to want to learn. As a result, the children achieve well. Staff regularly assess children's progress and use the information gathered to inform the next stage of planning. Teaching and learning are enhanced by the good deployment of learning support assistants. Children are encouraged to be independent and to respond appropriately to instructions and this has a positive effect on their personal and social development. Staff establish clear routines and firm, well-understood classroom rules.
14. In the best lessons in Years 1 and 2, high expectations, challenging tasks and very good classroom management were significant features. Pupils understood very clearly what they should be able to do better by the end of the lesson, and what they were expected to achieve. Teachers asked probing questions to elicit pupils' understanding and extend their learning. Activities moved on briskly but careful monitoring made sure that every pupil made progress. In most lessons, learning was effective because teachers divided up the lessons into appropriate sections so that there was a good range of activities to keep pupils interested.
15. In the less effective lessons, although teachers prepared work for all groups of pupils, they did not always extend the learning of higher-attaining pupils sufficiently; for example, when pupils in Year 1 were involved in role-play that did not extend their learning enough during the literacy hour. However, because work is usually well organised in English and mathematics, pupils benefit from intensive teaching from staff so that their questions are answered quickly, mistakes are overcome and problems solved. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good in all classes and this provides an encouraging and stable environment where pupils can make mistakes without fear of ridicule. In the less successful, although satisfactory lessons, the pace of learning was sometimes too slow, or activities did not challenge pupils to learn well enough.
16. Teachers' planning is good in Years 1 and 2. Teachers are following the successful model of team planning which works very well in the Reception classes. The subject co-ordinators feed in ideas during the team planning sessions, so that expertise and knowledge are shared. The needs of all pupils are included so that there is equal access to the curriculum. Skills are developed systematically, for example in art and design, when teachers encourage pupils to explore a good variety of materials and build up a range of techniques which help them to create increasingly intricate pieces of work. Teachers value pupils' ideas and contributions and make lessons interesting in lots of ways.
17. Teachers are confident and they give pupils clear instructions on what to do and how to do it. They use specific subject vocabulary to enhance learning in all areas of the curriculum, and literacy and numeracy are developed well throughout the school day. ICT is integrated effectively into the teaching and learning during lessons, and teachers use computers well for planning and for disseminating information to colleagues. In all classes, the teachers' secure subject knowledge is linked to good questioning. Literacy and numeracy are promoted well.

18. In all classes, teachers' high expectations of good behaviour are reflected in the pupils' positive attitudes to getting on with independent tasks responsibly. Pupils are managed very well and are expected to be reflective, to consider alternatives and remember facts so that they build consistently upon previous learning. This is a significant feature that promotes good progress in art and design. There are high but realistic expectations of pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are followed well so that pupils build step-by-step on what they already know and can do.
19. Throughout the school, teachers keep regular records of pupils' achievements and regular half-termly records are kept and used very effectively to inform the planning of lessons. Within lessons, teachers encourage pupils to employ skills they have learned earlier. The teachers' marking of pupils' work is good. Teachers refer to the targets set for pupils and this helps them gradually to take responsibility for their own improvement.
20. Teachers successfully promote learning for pupils with special educational needs, including pupils who are integrated from the Language Resource Base. They work with the school's co-ordinator for special educational needs to create individual educational plans for pupils. These provide appropriately matched, achievable and sufficiently challenging work with carefully targeted teaching points to help these pupils to make good progress, especially in literacy and numeracy. Learning support assistants give good individual support in lessons. Pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment and particular needs in numeracy and literacy lessons so that that tasks are matched well to their needs. Staff maintain very good records and there is regular, relevant and high quality sharing of information between all staff, who work very well together as a team.
21. Learning resources are used well. Teachers also use extremely simple resources very effectively. Time is used well in most lessons. There is an effective home and school reading partnership which teachers use well to extend pupils' reading and to involve parents in their children's learning. Teachers set work well in range of subjects for pupils to do at home, including research to support learning in class. For example, as part of their work in food technology, pupils talked to their parents and found out more about the different kinds of toppings for pizzas.
22. The school has a good capacity to continue to improve standards in teaching because of the significant level of self-evaluation that exists amongst teachers, and the good levels of support from the headteacher and governing body. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 since the last inspection. In the last report, there was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching, but there was none during this inspection. Teachers reflect on their own work and want to improve their classroom performance.

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

23. Issues raised at the last inspection have been dealt with effectively. Time allocated to ICT was insufficient and mathematics was not timetabled equally in every class. There was no scheme of work for mathematics.
24. The school meets the requirements for the teaching of the National Curriculum and religious education, and there are policies and schemes of work for all subjects. There is a planned cycle of review of the curriculum, involving consultation with the teaching staff and the governors' curriculum committee. The curriculum is monitored well by the headteacher, through the checking of teachers' planning, analysis of pupils' work and lesson observations. The school aims to meet the needs of all children. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are well established and inspection findings show that they are contributing well to the currently improving standards.
25. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. Good provision is made for these pupils and their progress is monitored carefully. There are no significant differences between the

rates of progress for girls and boys. The school has a well thought-through policy for the prevention of racism. Steps have been taken to prepare pupils for life in a multicultural society and further initiatives are planned. The recent Arts Week had a multicultural theme and reading books have been introduced which promote multicultural understanding

26. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities, including clubs for gymnastics, computers, sewing, cookery and singing. These operate for pupils in Year 2 on Thursday lunchtimes. The school has good links with the community and liaises closely with the local pre-school providers and with the junior school that is on the same site. Students from local colleges of further education have work placements in the school and pupils from the area secondary school come for work-experience. The school is used regularly for the placement of initial teacher training students. Visitors to the school and educational visits out of school enrich pupils' experiences. For example, during the recent half-term topic on 'Artists' in the Reception classes, an author, an artist and a dancer visited the school to work with the children. Members of the police force, the fire brigade and the school nurse come into school to talk to the pupils about health and safety issues. Pupils make visits to the local church and to the rural life centre in Glastonbury to support their studies in religious education and history.
27. The school's provision for personal, social and health education is good. There is a clear policy and a helpful scheme of work for this area of the curriculum. Lessons in personal, social and health education are included in the weekly timetable for each class. A range of methods is used to teach the pupils to be good citizens. In 'circle time', pupils sit in a circle and play games that teach them to share and co-operate with each other. Pupils discuss their personal thoughts and opinions. For example, in one lesson, the teacher spoke about special people and the pupils were asked to name their own special person. High self-esteem is encouraged when pupils are given opportunities to recognise their own achievements and to praise the achievements of others. Names of pupils are entered into the golden book and certificates are awarded to celebrate good pieces of work or acts of kindness. The school has plans to develop citizenship by setting up a school council.
28. Personal, social and health education is closely linked to science lessons in which pupils are taught about healthy lifestyles. This teaching programme includes good provision for drugs awareness and sex education, appropriate to the needs and ages of the pupils. The governing body has recently reviewed the school policies for sex and relationships and drugs education.
29. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils are well supported throughout the school and make good progress with their learning. Learning support assistants are very effective and skilled. They offer sensitive, caring and challenging support. Statutory procedures are in place and all pupils on the school's register for special educational needs have well-written individual education plans with clear, appropriate targets. Parents and pupils are involved in writing the plans and assessing progress and staff continually review the plans. Pupils are supported in the classroom or are withdrawn for specific support.
30. The overall very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has been sustained since the last inspection, and it is a strength of the school.
31. Very good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Assemblies are used very well and they provide pupils with an opportunity to think about and value the world around them. In an assembly in Year 1, pupils were given the opportunity to think about flowers, particularly the daffodils around the school, and how they change when they die. The teacher led a simple prayer and gave pupils an opportunity to reflect on the signs of spring in the world around them. The 'Spring' section of Vivaldi's 'The Four Seasons' was played as the pupils entered the hall and it was referred to during the assembly; the pupils listened to the music very well.
32. There is a very good range of interesting and uplifting displays in the classrooms and corridors that enhances pupils' spiritual development. Pupils have drawn flowers and shells, and in several classrooms there are attractive displays of spring flowers. Pupils in Year 1 visited a local church and on their return made an impressive display of their own 'stained glass windows', made

from a variety of transparent, brightly coloured papers. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual development and other lessons also contribute well. In an ICT lesson, when the teacher 'flood-filled' the background of a stained glass window with purple colour, the pupils gasped in wonder. Provision for pupils' moral development is included throughout the curriculum and is established in the life of the school. Pupils are clearly taught right from wrong and there are high expectations of good behaviour. They are encouraged to take care of the classrooms and care for pets, such as the goldfish. In geography, they are learning to value and look after their environment, becoming aware of such problems as car parking and litter. Pupils are able to give an opinion on the school environment and suggest ways that it might be improved.

33. Pupils' social development is promoted very well. They are very good at taking care of each other and integrate very well with pupils from the Language Resource Base. Many displays around the school focus on working together and on classroom rules, and teachers often use 'circle time' and other discussion times to air social issues. In one lesson on personal, social and health education, a teacher skilfully used a story about Mr Greedy to help the pupils to understand about making choices. After the story, the pupils took turns to use a puppet to answer questions about how Mr Greedy had made his decisions. Pupils also have opportunities for taking responsibility. For example, monitors, wearing badges, go to bring teachers to collect their classes at the end of assembly.
34. Good provision is made for pupils' cultural development. Pupils learn about their own culture in a variety of ways. In history, pupils learn about the lives of the Victorians, famous people, and are beginning to understand how our lives have been influenced by times, events and people of the past. Pupils in Year 2 read traditional tales, such as 'Rumpelstiltskin' and 'The Princess and the Pea'. In other subjects, they learn about famous artists and musicians. Their visit to the local church gave pupils an opportunity to appreciate their local heritage. Religious education provides pupils with good opportunities to learn about other religions, and there is a range of books, with which the pupils are familiar, on faiths that are practised in modern Britain. Classroom displays also illustrate multicultural education; for example, the display about a visit from an Indian visitor, highlighting dress and food.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school has good procedures for child protection and ensuring the welfare of its pupils and these compare well with the similar standard reported on at the previous inspection. The headteacher is the named person for child protection. All staff are aware of relevant procedures for child protection and are due shortly to receive more in depth training. The school has a newly written, draft policy. Very good liaison is maintained with the local social services and police protection team.
36. The headteacher is also the named person for health and safety in the school, and the school's written policy is clear and up to date. Together with the named governor and maintenance manager, the headteacher carries out very regular site and whole school inspections, taking appropriate action to deal with problems. Risk assessments are up-to-date and very closely scrutinised. Currently, although the school has no major structural problems, there is an incursion problem from a local badger set. The governors are negotiating with the appropriate authorities to deal with this. Some metal outside doors in the main building are too heavy for pupils to open and close satisfactorily. All fire, portable electrical and physical educational equipment is tested appropriately. The school ensures regular emergency fire exercises and all escape routes are accessible and well marked. The school has caring and effective routines for reporting accidents and dealing with medicines. There is a very comfortable medical room and several trained adults for first aid. Very good use is made of outside professional help such as the school nurse, educational psychologist, behavioural support specialists and a range of therapists.

37. The school has good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. Registers are well kept and returned to the office for checking. Parents are made well aware of their relevant responsibilities for their children's attendance, through a range of absence and lateness letters sent to them when necessary. The school is tightening up its procedures for immediate checks on pupils who are unexpectedly absent. There are already very tight routines for checking lateness, and there is good liaison with the educational welfare officer.
38. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying are very good. The school has an up-to-date, written behaviour policy, with realistic awards and sanctions. There is a separate policy for anti-bullying. The pupils make up their own class rules and all of them know and appreciate the school's 'golden rules'. To receive a 'golden' certificate and have one's name put into the golden book is a great honour and well sought after by the children. At circle time and assemblies, bullying is discussed and the pupils are given the confidence to report any such incidents. In addition, staff are well aware of any potential situations and nip them in the bud.
39. The very good personal development of the pupils is backed up by very favourable procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils. The school's clear and well-applied personal, social and health educational programme is well organised. The staff know the children well and regularly consult parents on any causes for concern or celebration. Pupils' personal development is well recorded in both the pupils' own records and the annual report to parents.
40. Assessment procedures have continued to improve since the last inspection. They are good overall and information is used well to guide most curricular planning. However, the use of assessments to guide planning for the more able has not been fully addressed in all subjects. There is now strong communication between staff, who have worked hard to establish appropriate structures for assessments, and records are passed on from year to year. Parents are provided with very good information regarding their children's progress. The school carefully analyses various aspects of children's development when they enter school in the Reception classes, using the county baseline assessment procedures. This information is effectively used, together with continuous teacher observation and reviews, to ensure that work and activities are well matched to all children's needs. As a result, children in the Reception classes achieve well in their Early Learning Goals.
41. There are good procedures for assessing and monitoring the progress of pupils with special education needs. Individual education plans are well based on information that is gleaned in a variety of ways, sometimes with advice from visiting specialists. Parents are well involved and informed about the targets set for their children, and pupils know what they need to do to achieve the next step of improvement. Information is shared effectively between all who are involved – pupils, parents, staff and visiting specialists.
42. There are good procedures for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils in English and mathematics, as part of the school's commitment to raising standards. This information is used well to set individual targets for each pupil to improve in writing. There are also group targets for reading and class targets for numeracy. Assessment opportunities are underdeveloped in science, and this hinders pupils' progress. Tasks are sometimes not matched well enough to pupils' needs and higher-attaining pupils are not fully challenged in all lessons. The school has identified these issues and they have been given priority in the school's improvement plan. In ICT, useful assessment procedures have been established to help teachers plan their lessons and systems are developing in other foundation subjects and religious education. In many subjects, well-presented portfolios of pupils' work help teachers to assess attainment and progress and keep records of completed work. The quality of marking is good, with many examples of evaluative comments to help pupils improve their work.
43. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory overall but good in English and mathematics. The school carefully analyses national test results and carefully monitors the academic progress made by pupils to effectively use this information to modify teaching. For example, in mathematics the need for more problem-solving activities was

highlighted and appropriately addressed. In English, the teachers' careful monitoring of pupils' unsupported writing has been effective, and new reading tests have been introduced to provide teachers with additional information which helps them to set challenging targets. The headteacher visits classrooms regularly to monitor teaching and learning in all subjects, and co-ordinators scrutinise teachers' plans and pupils' work to monitor how their subjects are being taught and learnt.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. From views expressed at the parents' meeting, on returned questionnaires and from talking to parents at the inspection, the majority of them consider that this is a very good school. They say that their children like school, the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best and is helping their children to become mature and responsible. They believe that the school is well led, teaching is good, behaviour is good and their children get the right amount of homework. They think that the school works closely with them and feel comfortable in approaching the school with a question or problem. A significant minority think that the school provided did not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspectors agree with the positive views but judge that the school provides very good extra-curricular facilities for an infant school.
45. The information the school provides for its parents is very good and compares well with that noted at the previous inspection. Every parent receives a copy of the prospectus and governors' report, and these comply with statutory requirements. Information on provision for disabled pupils is being brought up-to-date appropriately to meet new requirements. The annual report to parents covers all subjects of the curriculum, is easy to understand, says what pupils can do and gives targets for future improvement. Parents receive regular and informative newsletters and there are regular parents' evenings for discussions on pupils' progress. Parents appreciate the home/school reading books and use them effectively to communicate with the school. There is an 'open door' policy, so that staff are available to speak with parents at any time, with opportunities for appointments for longer discussions when this is necessary.
46. Parents make a valuable contribution to their children's education. Once a term, they are invited into school to play mathematical games with the children and read with them. All classes have an enthusiastic nucleus of parents to whom they can turn for help with art, cookery and music. During last year's Royal Jubilee, which was also the school's fiftieth year, parents provided a tea party for the whole school and also came to watch individual class 'Jubilee' assemblies. School performances and events at Christmas and sports day are very popular with parents. This raises pupils' confidence and self esteem
47. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are provided with good levels of information on their children's progress. Targets are shared with parents and appropriate review meetings enable them to contribute effectively to their children's learning. This has a positive effect on pupils' progress. In all classes, most parents are very keen to help with homework projects. For example, parents helped pupils in Year 1 to design and provide the various toppings for making pizzas in a design and technology lesson.
48. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. The school is well supported by the very energetic Parent Teachers Association, which has raised considerable sums of money towards arts equipment and extra-curricular musical events. Overall, the effectiveness of the school's partnership with its parents is very good and a strength which contributes significantly towards the success of the children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The headteacher provides very good educational leadership for the school. Good staff morale and a sense of teamwork are the result of her strong professional guidance. In partnership with the deputy headteacher, she works conscientiously to meet the school's aims and raise standards of pupils' attainment further. Teachers with special responsibilities fulfil their duties well. The staff have confidence in each other and all want to provide for pupils as well as they can. The headteacher, the deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators monitor teaching and learning, and teachers evaluate their work and plan together in teams. Staff share the good things that are going on in the school and address any areas of relative weakness. Monitoring has proved successful in Years 1 and 2 and is helping to raise standards. The 'coaching' style of the headteacher encourages teachers to improve constantly, and this has a positive effect on the children's learning.
50. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties effectively and governors use their skills well in the service of the school. Governors have benefited from training from the local education authority. The well-informed chair of governors works closely with the headteacher, and all governors work conscientiously to provide effectively for the pupils' education and welfare. The strong partnership between the staff and governors gives the school the very good capacity to

succeed with further improvements. There is a well established system of committees which meet regularly in order to manage the work of the school. Co-ordinators report to the governors and keep them informed about current developments in their subjects.

51. The governing body is kept very well informed about the work of the school by the headteacher through discussion and written reports. School documentation, including a wide range of policies and schemes of work, is reviewed regularly in order to meet statutory requirements. Governors identify clear priorities for improvement through regular school self-evaluation and the school's improvement plan is monitored rigorously. This enables the school to recognise its strengths and face up to challenges when there are areas for development. Because priorities are well chosen, teachers and governors are able to focus on issues that make a real difference to the quality of provision and the raising of standards. Current priorities, to raise standards and provide more challenge for higher-attaining pupils, have been identified through rigorous analysis of the school's results in national tests. Challenging targets are set for improvement in the school's performance.
52. Governors regularly discuss matters concerning special educational needs and the named governor for special educational needs keeps in regular touch with what is going on in the school. The new Code of Practice has been implemented successfully. The school's co-ordinator for special educational needs, manages the provision well, and the specialist teacher provides good leadership in the Language Resource Base. Specific funding is spent appropriately to provide pupils with adult support and other appropriate resources for teaching and learning. Governors consider the school's provision for all groups of pupils – ethnic minority groups, girls and boys, pupils with special educational needs, gifted and talented pupils - and ensure that they have access to the full curriculum.
53. There is a good match of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and learning support assistants to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and religious education. Staff are open and honest about their performance in lessons. The headteacher looks out for areas where teachers could do better and then works alongside them to effect improvement. This is especially helpful for teachers new to the school. The school's improvement plan clearly identifies necessary training for staff during the introduction of new initiatives and in the drive to raise standards. The deputy headteacher plays a significant role in staff development, particularly in providing a good role model for teaching. Learning support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and have a clear role in the classroom, where they often teach small groups of pupils. The appraisal of teachers' performance is fully in place.
54. The school accommodation is satisfactory for the teaching of the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, and the outdoor areas are used well for play, physical education and scientific investigations. The main building and temporary buildings for pupils in

Years 1 and 2 provide enough rooms of adequate size and a hall that is well equipped for physical education. Occasionally, lessons are disturbed as other classes move through the hall, but staff and pupils are considerate and careful as they do so. The temporary building used as the base for pupils with language and communication difficulties is too small for their needs. Some outside doors in the main building present a hazard because they are too heavy for the young children to open and close. The governors are negotiating with the appropriate bodies for the movement of the badgers from the school field to a safe site. At present, the badgers cause holes and leave droppings that represent a hazard to the pupils. In English, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, music, and in the Language Resource Base, resources are good and, in other subjects, they are satisfactory. In addition, staff make very good use of the school grounds, the local area, visitors and educational visits to enhance provision for the pupils and bring relevance to their learning.

55. The governors have a good understanding of the financial affairs of the school and manage them well. The agreed budget reflects priorities in the school's improvement plan, and governors look ahead and plan strategically to ensure proper provision for pupils. The headteacher, the bursar and the committee for finance carefully monitor progress through the plan. Plans for the use of the very large carry forward from the last completed financial year included the provision of more computers, full-time support from learning support assistants in the three Reception classes and an increase in the number of learning support assistants to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively when they are working in the mainstream classes. The money has now been used effectively. Specific grants for provision for pupils who have special educational needs and for staff training are used appropriately. There is a very clear understanding of the need to ensure 'best value' in all that the school does, and governors consider the educational outcomes of all of their spending decisions. The headteacher and the school bursar carefully manage the day-to-day administration of the budget and make good use of the school's computer system to support this work. Office routines are well organised and appropriate financial controls are in place. Good systems ensure that the school secretary deals very efficiently with day-to-day administration so that teachers are not disturbed in the classrooms unnecessarily.
56. Bearing in mind the current improvement in standards, the good overall quality of the teaching and curricular provision and the sound achievement by the end of Year 2, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. The governors, headteacher and staff should:
- (1) *Raise standards further in science by:
 - Using existing information on pupils' attainment and progress more effectively to inform teachers' planning.
(Paragraphs 4, 42, 97)
 - (2) *Raise the performance of higher-attaining pupils by:
 - Providing challenging work for them in all lessons.
(Paragraphs 1, 6, 15, 82, 95, 97, 112, 113, 116)
 - (3) *Negotiate with the appropriate authorities to improve the accommodation for pupils with language and communication difficulties.
(Paragraphs 54, 64)
58. Other issues which the governors should consider for inclusion in the action plan:
- *The outside doors in the main building.

(Paragraphs 36, 54)

- *Arrangements for moving the badgers from the set on the school field to a safe site elsewhere.

(Paragraphs 36, 54)

* These issues have already been identified by the school and are being dealt with.

PROVISION FOR PUPILS IN THE LANGUAGE RESOURCE BASE

59. The school provides a good curriculum for the pupils with speech and language difficulties. The overall quality of teaching is good; the pupils are well supported, and, as a result, most pupils achieve well and make sound progress in overcoming their speech and language difficulties.
60. All the 11 pupils have statements of special educational need. The speech therapist works with them for three days each week. She liaises effectively with the teacher in helping to plan an appropriate curriculum to meet their wide range of needs. The classroom accommodation is unsatisfactory; it is too small for the size of the class and, therefore, does not allow enough personal work areas for pupils who need to work alone and away from the group. Some of the pupils have quite complex needs in addition to their speech and language difficulties. There are pupils with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and others with associated behavioural difficulties who are not easily managed; for example, when they do not listen to instructions or opt out of activities during physical education, so that the learning of other pupils in the class is adversely affected.
61. Good teaching was seen in English. The pupils listened well as the teacher read a story from a 'big book' called 'The Runaway Pizza'. The teacher used sign language at the same time to ensure that all pupils understood. Good opportunities were available for the pupils to recognise characters. A 'feely bag' was used effectively to enable pupils to associate the characters with the story. For example, one pupil recognised that the spider was an important part of the story of 'Little Miss Muffet'. Good use was made of rhyme to link sounds and letters. The learning support assistants had clearly identified roles. They contributed effectively to the lesson, by reinforcing signing and using multi-sensory techniques such as drawing letters in the air.
62. Signing by teachers and support assistants is used well throughout the school. Some use is made of a visual timetable that helps two pupils to see what they will be learning during the day. Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS) is used for individual pupils when the school, the home and the speech therapist feel it is appropriate. Although some good work has been achieved using a symbol vocabulary to improve pupils' language and sentence structure, this work needs developing further. A digital camera is being used extensively to record pupils' achievement and support their learning. Overall, the use of ICT is good and supports pupils' learning well. There is a good range of resources for teaching and learning in the base, but storage space is extremely limited.
63. Three pupils are currently reintegrating into mainstream classes for literacy and numeracy lessons on a regular basis. Two others are reintegrating for art and design and one for physical education. At the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils from the Language Resource Base move on to Milford Junior School.
64. The management of the Learning Resource Base by the class teacher is good and teamwork between the staff is very strong. Although the accommodation is unsatisfactory, the teacher has arranged the room in the best possible way. She has done her best to make it bright and cheerful and to display pupils' work. Assessment procedures are good and records show a very detailed knowledge of the pupils and how assessment is being used to plan teaching. All the pupils have comprehensive individual education plans; the targets are precise and are used effectively to measure progress when reviewed. The school fully involves parents in the annual reviews of

statements. Statutory requirements in relation to these are fully met. The expertise of the staff in the Learning Resource Base is shared with everyone in the school; for example, the school values the training given in signing and autism. Good links have been made with two local special schools. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	47

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	16	21	19	0	0	0
Percentage	2	28	37	33	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 more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	306
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	31

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	54	48	102

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	41	42	47
	Girls	46	46	42
	Total	87	88	89
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (79)	86 (88)	87 (90)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	41	47	49
	Girls	46	40	36
	Total	87	87	75
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (86)	85 (89)	74 (93)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
196	1	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR –Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	21
Total aggregate hours worked per week	429

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	639,457
Total expenditure	631,437
Expenditure per pupil	2,091
Balance brought forward from previous year	140,711
Balance carried forward to next year	148,731

Recruitment of teachers

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

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	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	306
Number of questionnaires returned	84

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	26	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	31	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	52	4	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	50	1	0	1
The teaching is good.	76	21	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	45	13	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	24	1	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	44	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	46	48	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	64	33	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	38	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	30	13	5	26

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

65. Children, make good progress in the six nationally agreed areas of learning for young children and reach the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the Reception class. In personal, social and emotional development, they exceed the goals. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection. Curricular provision and the quality of teaching have improved. Teachers plan very well for children to follow the 'stepping stones' of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Assessment procedures to measure children's progress through the curriculum are well embedded and used to plan future work. Children with special educational needs are well supported and they achieve well, and children from the Language Resource Base are integrated effectively.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. Because of the very good teaching, children soon settle into the school's routines and concentrate for increasing lengths of time. They are guided and supported well and soon learn to be considerate for one another. Their self-control strengthens and they gradually develop an understanding of what is right and what is wrong and develop greater levels of independence. They play happily with older pupils in the playground and move around the school sensibly; for example, when they go to the school hall for assemblies. Children achieve well and their attainment is above expectations for their age by the end of the Reception class. Relationships are very good and children learn to respond positively to gentle reprimands when their behaviour is unacceptable. Children are encouraged to use their initiative, become increasingly confident and act responsibly; for example, when they help to tidy up at the end of lessons. All staff take time to talk to children and use praise effectively to raise their self-esteem. They listen to them well and help them to sort out their problems. In class discussions, teachers promote good levels of social awareness as they talk about being fair, working together, listening to the views of other children and recognising the worth of every person. In discussions at the end of one lesson, a teacher got two boys to tell the class how they had worked together to make a model. The boys showed mature levels of social skill for their age as they described how each step of the construction had required close co-operation from them both.

Communication, language and literacy

67. The very good quality of teaching and learning in all the Reception classes contributes well to the children's good progress. Children are encouraged to develop language through discussions, stories, writing and role-play, which is of a high quality. Staff provide a wide range of opportunities for children to talk, communicate and extend their vocabulary and children begin to use specific vocabulary, for example in mathematics and literacy lessons. Very good teaching of letter sounds and shapes begins as soon as children start school, and by the end of the Reception class, most children recognise letter shapes. Higher-attaining children read simple books with repetitive texts. There is a good range of attractive story and non-fiction books in all the Reception classes and children develop a love of literature that makes them want to learn to read. Most children form letters correctly, begin to write sentences independently and illustrate their writing with lively drawings. Skills are fostered through enthusiastic story telling and well-organised reading areas in the classrooms. The teachers introduce elements of the literacy hour in a gradual way so that children recognise links between reading and writing as they explore texts together and look for repeated words and patterns of letters. The learning support assistants are actively involved in teaching the children. In all the Reception classes, staff provide writing areas where children can make marks and practise their writing. Children make attractive books, showing a clear sense of narrative through sequences of pictures and simple captions. Manipulative skills for writing are developed through practice in painting, drawing, three-dimensional work with clay and dough and play with construction kits.

Mathematical development

68. Children count, sort and order using a wide range of natural and man-made objects. Teachers encourage the children to look at the world around them and see how things are bigger or smaller, and how number is an important feature in the natural world; for example, when they count the petals on flowers. Children begin to add small numbers together and gain early understanding of addition and subtraction as they talk about 'one more' or 'one less'. They name simple two- and three-dimensional shapes. Children's understanding of 'more' and 'less', 'bigger' and 'smaller' and 'heavier' and 'lighter' develops well in imaginatively organised activities when they play with sand and water or choose boxes to make models. Most children enjoy answering quick-fire questions during short and well run sessions of mental arithmetic, and higher-attaining children begin to develop and record their understanding of addition and subtraction. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers use an appropriate mix of direct teaching, questioning and stimulating activities to promote children's learning and extend their mathematical vocabulary. Staff prepare appropriate activities so that children learn in a practical way. Learning support assistants are involved in the day-to-day assessments of children's progress, which are used appropriately to inform the planning of future work. All staff engage well with the children in order to help them to sort out their ideas. Teachers ensure that children develop a good range of mental strategies and encourage them to think hard before they answer questions.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. Staff provide interesting activities that help children to develop investigative skills. Children explore the school grounds, learn about seasonal changes and find out about their environment. The school environment is used well to support learning about the natural world. Children sow seeds, learn to care for plants, observe insects through magnifying glasses and know that caterpillars turn into butterflies. As they make simple models with construction kits, children reflect their knowledge of the real world; they make cars, lorries and houses. In the 'theatre box office', they use the telephone, issue tickets, collect money and give change. Because of good levels of adult support, children acquire an increasing vocabulary to express their ideas and explain clearly what they know. They gain an increasing understanding of different cultures and ways of life. In all the Reception classes, children develop appropriate skills in ICT as they explore simple programs on the computers. Teaching and learning are of very good quality and, because staff are secure in their knowledge of the curriculum for young children, activities are stimulating and appropriate. Staff interact very well with the children, pick up their ideas and take their learning forward effectively. Learning is based firmly on experiences that are relevant to the children; for example, when children organise camping activities. Teachers organise interesting trips to broaden children's experiences and extend their general knowledge. They plan tasks that prepare children very effectively for subjects in the National Curriculum such as science, design and technology and ICT.

Physical development

70. Children run, jump, climb and balance with confidence as they play in their own well-organised outside play areas. Most children move around with an awareness of space and are controlled and purposeful. The Reception classes have opportunities to dance, play with small equipment, climb and jump in the well-equipped school hall. They respond well to the teacher's instructions and develop increasing levels of bodily control. Children play with older pupils during break times and lunchtimes, when they run about and join in games with appropriate co-ordination. Children develop manipulative skills as they model with dough, use simple craft equipment, construct models from reclaimed materials, play with model vehicles and build with construction kits. The quality of teaching is very good and staff ensure that all children, including those who have special educational needs, learn at a good rate and achieve well. Staff plan well for the children to have regular exercise. Lessons are planned effectively so that there is a warm-up session at the beginning and a cool-down at the end, so that the children acquire proper routines, and children have opportunities to refine and improve their movements. In the classrooms, teachers plan

stimulating activities for children to develop finer manipulative skills

for writing, drawing and painting. In the writing area, they write letters and record messages. Regular opportunities for drawing and painting help children to develop increased levels of pencil and brush control.

Creative development

71. Early experimentation with paint and brushes leads to bright pictures and models in the Reception class as children explore colour, texture and shape in two and three dimensions. The children use a good variety of materials including paint, crayons and pastels to make pictures. These often link with topics, and help to reinforce and consolidate learning, and children gradually learn to make decisions and choices when selecting materials and equipment. Children are given opportunities to explore materials and to practise techniques in a purposeful atmosphere, without fear of criticism. This develops their independence and provides valuable opportunities for them to use their initiative and imagination. Children roll, squeeze and shape malleable materials such as dough and to develop skills and techniques for model-making. In music, children acquire a good repertoire of simple songs, they sing tunefully and listen well. Staff provide interesting activities which help children to listen carefully to how sounds can be made; for example, when a range of kitchen utensils are hung on a line outside and children can tap them with sticks to make musical sounds. In role-play areas such as the 'theatre' or the 'campsite, children interact with one another confidently during imaginative play. Staff extend dramatic play as they ask the children who they are pretending to be and what they are doing. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Because staff listen well to children, creative activities provide valuable opportunities for children to discuss their ideas. Children explore their feelings and develop their imagination. Planning is good and children's artwork is valued and displayed attractively; this raises their self-esteem.

ENGLISH

72. Current standards in Year 2 are broadly in line with national expectations. Overall standards are not as high in reading and writing as those reported at the time of the last inspection, but good standards of speaking and listening have been maintained. Based on evidence from assessments when they started school, pupils in Year 2 have made sound progress. Pupils' attainment in writing is frequently underdeveloped when they start school; many seem to have little experience of using writing materials and making marks to express their ideas. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because the work is carefully matched to their ability and they are well supported. Pupils from the Language Resource Base are well integrated and achieve well when they join lessons. Gifted or talented pupils, with particular abilities, make sound progress.
73. Throughout the school, standards of speaking and listening continue to be above those normally seen. Pupils listen attentively and express their ideas well in class discussions. This affects standards positively in all subjects. Teachers encourage oral work and introduce specific subject vocabulary so that pupils use precise words as they express their ideas and give explanations. Teachers model good speech and practise the language to be used in later written work.
74. This is a 'reading' school, where teachers encourage pupils to read in a myriad of ways. There are arresting notices, labels and pieces of text with pictures and charts throughout the school. Standards in reading are in line with national expectations in Year 2, and higher-attaining pupils read very well for their age. The range of ability in all classes is wide and, in Year 2 for example, ranges from the standards expected of Year 1 to Year 4 pupils. Most pupils have an appropriate range of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words and correct errors when the sentence does not make sense. Pupils benefit from reading large texts together as a class during the literacy hour. Letter sounds and shapes are taught rigorously from the beginning of the Reception class, and by

the end of Year 2, pupils are able to break words into syllables in order to read them. Teachers encourage pupils to use the illustrations to find clues to the meaning of texts, and higher-attaining pupils consider the context when trying to work out words. Pupils are

given books that are appropriate for their ability, and teachers keep accurate records of the books pupils have read. Home reading diaries are kept well so that parents are able to help their children effectively.

75. Standards in writing in Year 2 are in line with national expectations, and a higher proportion of pupils than last year are on course to reach the higher level (Level 3) in national tests at the end of the school year. Simple spellings are accurate, and letters are usually formed correctly and are consistent in size. Pupils begin to join their writing effectively and present their work tidily. By the end of Year 2, pupils write in a variety of forms: imaginative or favourite stories, instructions and factual accounts, and use wide a range of written vocabulary. Higher-attaining pupils have a good understanding of basic grammar and they write sentences accurately. All pupils' books show good progress since the start of the school year. Pupils use writing in a wide variety of forms; they write independently about their science, record historical work well, describe their design processes in design and technology and show a good understanding of character in their story telling.
76. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers manage their classes very well and pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are keen to learn and do their best because they find the work interesting and have a positive attitude to school. Relationships are very good. Learning is effective because teachers divide up the lesson into appropriate sections, are well prepared, and set work that reflects the range of ability within each group. Throughout the school, learning support assistants make an important contribution to the learning through their effective teaching of small groups and sensitive support for pupils who have special educational needs. Homework is used appropriately for pupils to extend their learning.
77. Good teaching and learning were observed in many lessons because teachers are skilled in asking questions that make pupils think. Teachers explain the purpose of the lesson clearly and use the different parts of the session to develop a range of skills. Pupils understand very clearly what they will be able to do better by the end of the lesson, and know the high standard they are expected to achieve. A good example was seen in an excellent lesson in Year 2 when, within the one lesson, there was a good mix of activities. This included reading an enlarged text together as a class, exploring the features of non-fiction books and writing a glossary for a book about the human body. In the purposeful final ten minutes the teacher checked pupils' understanding, brought the parts of the lesson together and indicated how the work would develop the next day.
78. Some very good teaching was seen during the inspection when pupils were stimulated by the teachers' enthusiasm. A good example was seen in Year 1 when the teacher used a good range of strategies to maintain pupils' interest. Activities moved on briskly but careful monitoring made sure that every pupil made progress. The teacher used a recent visit to the local church to stimulate pupils to write sentences. Simple resources, such as small boards, were used for pupils to show their answers to questions on spelling. Standards were rigorous and every pupil was expected to contribute. 'Can you put the word into a sentence for me?' asked the teacher. There was no hiding place. Good humour kept the learning enjoyable.
79. Target setting is used effectively. Teachers have a good understanding of their pupils' ability, targets are set and pupils know the skills they need to develop. Teachers mark work conscientiously so that pupils understand clearly what they need to do to improve. Computers are used appropriately in many classes to present finished work in an attractive manner, to develop skimming skills in reading text on the Internet, or as an alternative way to draft and correct work.
80. The experienced co-ordinator has worked hard to support staff in raising standards. She monitors teachers' planning against the work in pupils' books and is able to form a good picture of standards and areas of strength or weakness. She uses the outcomes from national and other

tests to modify planning, set targets, organise groups and track individual pupils' progress. The literacy governor has a good understanding of the national strategy, and works regularly in the school; this gives her a good understanding on which to base reports to the governing body. There is no specific library area where pupils can sit and read, but the school has a good range of fiction and non-fiction that is stored attractively in the main corridor and distributed around the classrooms so that pupils always have a good variety of literature to hand.

MATHEMATICS

81. The results of national tests taken by pupils in Year 2 in 2002 were below the national average and well below the results of similar schools. However, data held by the school showed that this cohort of pupils had below average attainment on entry to the school and pupils had made sound progress by the end of Year 2. Test results are predicted by the school to improve in 2003. Inspection findings support these predictions.
82. Standards in Year 2 are now in line with national expectations. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls. Teachers and learning support assistants give good support to pupils with special educational needs in order for them to take a full part in the lessons and to achieve as well as they are able. All pupils are included in the lessons and work hard to complete the tasks set for them by the teacher. Behaviour is good and pupils are enthusiastic about the subject. They enjoy mathematics and have very good attitudes in lessons. Pupils from ethnic minorities benefit from the general enthusiasm for mathematics and the way teachers provide practical activities where pupils work together in pairs and groups. Higher-attaining pupils are not always given sufficiently challenging work to ensure they reach the standards for which they are capable. However, the teachers in Year 2 have identified a group of gifted and talented pupils, and the co-ordinator for mathematics teaches them once a week. The mathematical skills of these children are being developed well through the use of mathematical investigations and problem solving.
83. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make sound progress in number and algebra, shape, space and measures and handling data. By the end of Year 2, pupils can use various methods to solve number problems involving addition and subtraction including partitioning of numbers and using a blank number line. Pupils of average ability are working with numbers up to 100. More able pupils are using numbers up to 200. Pupils are becoming familiar with simple multiplication and division methods and are using these skills to solve problems such as: 'There are four apples in a box; how many apples are there in 3 boxes?' Pupils have a good knowledge of mathematical vocabulary and, for example, know that words and phrases such as find the difference, less than and take away are associated with subtraction. Pupils can name and describe the properties of common two- and three-dimensional shapes and are able to recognise and draw shapes that are symmetrical. Pupils create a variety of diagrams for handling data and are able to sort and classify numbers, for example, when they used a Carroll diagram to sort numbers that were more or less than 14, and odd or even. The higher-attaining pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to work with higher numbers.
84. Pupils are encouraged to use and apply their mathematics skills and to develop their logical thinking skills by carrying out investigations. For example, pupils in Year 1 were asked to find out whether it was true that when 10 is subtracted from a two-digit number, the digit in the unit column remains the same. Year 2 pupils investigated how many ways they could arrange four sets of two children (represented by colours) around a table so that the children wearing the same colour were never sitting next to each other. In all lessons, there were not enough planned opportunities for pupils to discuss their work with other pupils or to collaborate with other pupils in order to solve mathematical problems.
85. ICT is used increasingly to support teaching and learning in mathematics; for example in two lessons when teachers used a computer program during the mental arithmetic sessions to prompt pupils to count in tens from various starting points. Trying to keep up with the computer helped pupils to improve their ability to make quick mental calculations. During the inspection, teachers did not plan sufficiently for pupils to use computers during the central part of lessons when they were consolidating or extending their mathematical understanding. However, from

scrutiny of pupils' past work, it is clear that pupils use computer programs to present data in bar graphs. For example, some pupils had made a graph showing the types of houses in which they live.

86. The quality of teaching is sound overall with some lessons having good and very good features. The strongest part of most lessons is first section when pupils are taught to improve their ability to make mental calculations. Where teaching is good, this section of the lesson makes use of imaginative techniques to grab the attention of the pupils and so improve their numeracy skills. For example, a teacher played a version of 'bingo' to help pupils develop their mental calculation skills in subtraction. Pupils were very enthusiastic about the competitive element. In another lesson the teacher linked sounds and numbers. Stamping represented hundreds, clapping -tens and clicking fingers - units. The pupils had to listen to the sounds and say the number. This game helped to teach number partitioning skills. Discussion periods at the end of lessons are used to good effect to support and extend the learning objective. The pace of lessons is good and teachers show good subject knowledge.
87. Where teaching is weaker, the main teaching point of the lesson is not followed through into tasks set for the pupils. In some lessons, the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Extension work could easily be provided for these pupils by giving them higher numbers to work with or more challenging problems to solve.
88. The National Numeracy Strategy has been fully implemented in the school and teachers make good use of the three-part structure to lessons. Planning is usually detailed and teachers work closely to it. This ensures that pupils experience the full breadth of the curriculum. Work is planned so that it matches the abilities of different abilities of most pupils, but there is not enough more challenging work for the higher-attaining pupils to help them to achieve to their full potential. Assessment and record keeping are good. Each term, an assessment week is identified and pupils' progress is checked against the key objectives of the National Numeracy Strategy. The results of these progress checks are recorded on a chart that shows the level of understanding of individual pupils. Where weaknesses are identified, this information is fed into the next medium-term plan to take pupils' learning further. Work in exercise books is marked diligently. Marking makes it clear to pupils whether they have achieved the right or wrong answer and praise is given where appropriate. Marking is most effective when it gives pupils advice for future improvements.
89. The school has made good efforts to involve parents in their children's learning. Homework is used to good effect to support learning in the classroom. In Year 2, it is usually in the form of a game or activity that the pupils can play with their parents. Parents are informed of class targets so that they are aware of what their children are expected to achieve during the term and how they can help them to do so. Once a term, parents are invited into the classrooms to play mathematical games with their children.
90. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject in the school and knows what must be done to make improvements. There are plans to improve the use of the discussion period at the end of lessons, increase the use of computers in lessons and set more challenging work for the more able pupils. Monitoring of lessons is planned to ensure that the good practice in teaching, evident in some classrooms, is shared so that all teachers can make use of the most successful teaching techniques and strategies.
91. The co-ordinator has the energy and commitment to see through the necessary improvements to raise standards in the school and is well supported by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable numeracy governor. Resources to support teaching and learning are good. Equipment is in good condition and each class has sufficient quantities of apparatus to enable lessons to proceed without any time wasting. The school has made good progress in the development of mathematics since the last inspection. There is an up-to-date policy that sets out how the subject will be taught, assessed and monitored. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has promoted the teaching of mental arithmetic successfully.

SCIENCE

92. In Year 2, most pupils achieve in line with national expectations. This represents a considerable improvement since the teachers' assessments in 2002, when the school's performance was well below that of similar schools. Although current standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection, there have been improvements in some aspects of science. Pupils' skills of investigation are better and pupils in Year 2 record their findings well. A clearer picture of progress is evident as pupils respond well to the school's revised scheme of work.
93. Because teachers tap into the pupils' natural curiosity and make learning relevant, pupils are interested in science and enthusiastic about carrying out investigations. For example, pupils in Year 2 investigated how their heart rates changed when they did some exercise and recorded their findings in a table. Pupils explore and record the differences between people's physical features. Through investigation, they have developed a fair test to identify the best material in which to store ice. Pupils in Year 2 can name parts of the body and correctly label diagrams of internal organs. They know that some materials are more flexible than others and that some can be more easily reshaped. They know what happens when a material freezes or melts. They know about sources of light and how shadows are produced, and they have done some experiments to investigate the properties of sound. There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls or ethnic groups.
94. Learning is linked well to pupils' work in personal, social and health education. In one class, pupils organised foods into two groups - healthy and unhealthy. Pupils were interested and engaged because the teacher based the lesson on the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. Most pupils made sound progress in classifying the foods, but there was insufficient challenge for the higher-attaining pupils, who knew very quickly which were the healthy or unhealthy foods and could have gone on to more demanding work.
95. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and some teaching is very good. Teachers have worked hard to develop pupils' scientific skills, and pupils are interested, curious; they enjoy scientific enquiry. Teachers are confident in the subject and provide pupils with a good range of interesting activities. As a result, pupils concentrate well and work enthusiastically. Work is planned well and resources are carefully selected. The pace of lessons is usually brisk, so that pupils learn well. Learning support assistants are skilful in providing appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs, who often need help with recording their findings. As a result, these pupils make good progress and enjoy the same quality learning experiences as other pupils. Pupils are managed well; they are interested, have very good attitudes and behave well. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and mark it carefully with helpful comments to reinforce learning. However, in some lessons, the work set is not challenging enough for the higher-attaining pupils.
96. In the better lessons, teachers stretch the thinking of all pupils. For example, in the lesson where pupils were experimenting with springs, higher-attaining pupils were asked, as an additional challenge, to predict the outcomes and suggest the order of success. In all science lessons, teachers use specific scientific vocabulary, and they promote literacy and numeracy soundly. Teachers and pupils use ICT well during lessons. Pupils use it for labelling, and for recording some of their work in diagrams. A digital camera is used regularly to record pupils' work. Health education is well developed. Pupils are enthralled by the wonders of nature as they study flowers, plants and animals.
97. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership for the subject, and is highly committed to improving the teaching and learning. The scheme of work has been developed well. Although teachers make regular assessments, there are no clear procedures to say how this information is to be used to judge pupils' progress and measure how well they achieve. This makes it more difficult for some teachers to develop challenging activities for the higher-attaining pupils. The plotting and tracking of pupils' progress is not as well developed in science as it is in English and mathematics. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly but there is not enough focus on what pupils are

achieving. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and they are managed well. Improving standards in science is an identified priority for the school and the co-ordinator has a very clear plan of actions that need to be taken to effect improvement.

ART AND DESIGN

98. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations by the end of Year 2. This is in line with the findings of the last inspection. Significant factors in pupils' good progress are the use that is made of art in other subjects to extend and reinforce pupils' skills, and the wide range of media, materials and techniques experienced by the pupils. Also important is the good quality of teaching that leads to attractive and well-executed work by pupils.
99. Pupils' build on effectively on earlier experiences and produce attractive work using materials such as paint, crayon, pencil, pastels, charcoal and chalk. They develop particularly good levels of skill in observational drawing. In a good lesson in Year 2, pupils observed daffodils closely and then did drawings of good quality. The teacher monitored the class well, intervening to help pupils to look more closely and improve their work. Pupils in Year 1 produced carefully observed and detailed sketches of seashells, showing the lines and curves beautifully. In Year 2, sketching was taken a step further when pupils used pastels to draw shells and create three-dimensional effects by smudging the pastel lines. Three-dimensional work is varied and done well; for example, when pupils wove with rich red and brown-coloured materials, including wool, ribbon and string, to form attractive pictures. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to explore different shapes and textures. In Year 2, pupils produced well-finished ceramic tiles, with beautifully modelled pictures from traditional tales such as 'The Princess and the Pea' and 'The Gingerbread Man'.
100. In other subjects, pupils use art and design to bring life to their work. In personal, social and health education, well-executed drawings of moving figures illustrate the importance of exercise in keeping healthy. ICT is used increasingly as pupils use graphics packages confidently, choosing colours and tools confidently to create attractive drawings. In much of their work in English, science, design and technology, geography and history, pupils illustrate their writing with lively drawings and carefully drawn diagrams. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy art lessons because they can express their ideas and feelings without the constraints of having to read or write, both of which are difficult for some pupils.
101. Teaching is good, and teachers look for new ways to get pupils to reflect on the way pictures are created. Pupils learn from the work of acclaimed artists, and use their work to create new pictures; for example, when they cut some prints of well-known pictures into six parts and six pupils each drew their own version of a section. They then put these together, forming thought-provoking pictures. The teachers used this activity not only to extend pupils' artistic skills and knowledge, but also to develop pupils' ability to work with others in a group. The activity was successful in doing this. Lessons are prepared well and learning support assistants work with groups of pupils, encouraging them to be observant and to use tools properly. Teachers assess pupils' work at the end of each unit of work and build effectively on what pupils already know and can do.
102. Pupils from ethnic minority heritages benefit from the way the school celebrates artwork for a range of cultures. As they learn about the Hindu festival of Divali, pupils make Rangoli patterns. In a good lesson in Year 1, the teacher skilfully taught pupils how to make pictures from dots of colour. She showed pupils pictures of Aboriginal art, and challenged them to make similar pictures. The pupils rose to the challenge and produced work of good quality. A pupil from the Language Resource Base joined the lesson and did some very good work.
103. There is a clear policy and useful scheme of work for art and design. Leadership of the subject is good and, in a school where recent emphasis has been on raising standards in literacy and numeracy, teachers have done well to organise bright displays of pupils' work which indicate that art and design is still has importance and continues to play a significant role in developing pupils'

cultural and aesthetic awareness. Resources for the subject are good. An 'Arts Week' promoted the subject further and involved a variety of visiting artists to enhance pupils' learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. Standards in design and technology exceed national expectations and have improved since the previous inspection.
105. Pupils cut and shape materials well and have a good level of competence in sewing while making bags. Pupils have made a variety of imaginative three-dimensional models of vehicles, and have created a number of interesting designs for a range of pizzas. Pupils were very keen to achieve good results and concentrated well on the tasks teachers gave them.
106. During the inspection, teaching was good overall, with an example of very good teaching. Good teaching was characterised by clear instructions, good support for pupils and a clear understanding of the desired outcomes. In the lessons observed where pupils were making pizzas, they used simple and effective templates to design them. They then used an appropriate range of tools to turn the designs into pizzas. Pupils were very proud of the results.
107. Pupils, including those from minority ethnic heritages, are enthusiastic about the subject. Quite a number of them clearly understand the properties of the materials they use. In many of the activities they undertake, they are given a wide range of materials and then they select those that they feel best suit their designs. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included and very well supported by learning support assistants. In the Language Resource Base pupils were particularly well supported. Learning support assistants encouraged them to make choices and to take a real pride in their work. Throughout the school all pupils are fully included in lessons regardless of gender or ability. Good links are made with other subjects. In particular, pupils are encouraged to practise their literacy and numeracy skills. ICT is used effectively to enhance work; for example, pupils had designed tee shirts using a graphics package.
108. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. She is enthusiastic and has developed a scheme of work that has full commitment of the staff. It is based on national guidance and has been adapted to meet the school's needs. There is a good portfolio of pupils' work, and staff give design and technology a high profile, particularly in the quality of displays around the school. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work, and monitoring of lessons is planned as part of the school's rolling programme to ensure that the good practice in the school is disseminated to all teachers.
109. Resources are good and the co-ordinator has spent the budget wisely in developing a range of tools and equipment. All classrooms have a good supply of resources and teachers make very good use of recycled items allowing pupils to design and make using a wide range of materials.

GEOGRAPHY

110. In Year 2, pupils are on course to meet standards expected nationally. Although standards are lower than in the previous inspection, geography in the school has continued to improve despite the focus of teachers' development being on changes in the curriculum. Pupils' geographical skills are particularly well developed. They are able to draw and make sense of simple maps and have some understanding of symbols, and the legend on a map. They are able to describe their journey to school and can illustrate their routes; for example, in a classroom display where a route was shown for the story 'We're going on a bear hunt'. They have a good knowledge of the local area and can link places to a map. In one lesson, when the class were taken for a walk around the school, the pupils were able to relate places they had visited to photos on a map in the classroom. They could then give their opinion about the attractiveness of the places and how they might be improved. This experience helped them learn about scale and direction, and the

teacher's invitation to comment on the environment encouraged them to find out about how human and physical geography interrelate. Pupils are less confident when talking about places beyond their own locality as they have had little opportunity to study areas further away.

111. The teaching of geography is satisfactory overall, and there was some very good teaching. Teachers are confident and have a good understanding of the subject. They plan well and use a wide range of teaching strategies, including direct observation in the field. Teachers' management of pupils is good and lessons make good use of time and learning support assistants. Teachers are skilled in their questioning. For example, in a lesson in Year 1, when pupils were considering the school environment, the teacher made good use of open questions to encourage them to think for themselves. She then let them have time for reflection, so that they could consider their answers carefully. Suitably challenging written work, and the thought that they could achieve well, meant that all the pupils were carefully included in the lesson and they learned very well. Pupils with special educational needs are carefully supported and achieve well. There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls or of any ethnic group. Although only two lessons were seen during the inspection, the analysis of pupils' work, together with observation of classroom displays and discussions with pupils, showed that pupils have not yet had the opportunity to learn about contrasting localities and to make comparisons between them. This work is planned for the summer term. Pupils' good skills in ICT could make a more significant contribution to their learning in the subject. Teachers promote the pupils' use of specific geographic vocabulary, and literacy and numeracy are fostered soundly in the subject.
112. All teachers assess their pupils' work effectively, marking pupils' books regularly and incorporating helpful comments. However, teachers' assessments are not always used sufficiently to identify pupils' achievement or to help teachers identify the level at which to pitch work. Analysis of pupils' work shows that in some classes there is not enough challenge in the work set for higher-attaining pupils and as a result they do not achieve as well as they might.
113. The subject is soundly led. The co-ordinator is highly committed to the subject and is extending opportunities to widen pupils' experiences. Planning has been developed well to meet pupils' needs, and resources are managed well. The monitoring of pupils' work and classroom teaching and learning needs to be developed in order to raise standards further and provide more challenge for higher-attaining pupils. Resources are satisfactory, but teaching would benefit if there were more aerial photographs, more resources for teaching about distant places and more ICT software.

HISTORY

114. In Year 2, pupils are on course to meet standards above those expected nationally. This represents a picture similar to that at the last inspection, demonstrating that the good work of pupils and teachers has been maintained.
115. Pupils in Year 1 develop a good sense of chronology by learning how people change as they age, and by comparing their own lives with those of older members of their families. They learn about times years ago by comparing old and new toys. This helps them understand how artefacts are used to find out about life in the past. Pupils in Year 2 build on this understanding by learning about famous people such as Mary Seacole and Christopher Columbus. Through their study, pupils learn why people acted as they did and the reasons why certain events took place. In Year 2, pupils learn about Victorian times, so that they are able to contrast life then with the present day. Through their work in history, pupils learn to use a range of source materials, such as photographic evidence, and to ask questions about the past. In a lesson about the Victorians, the teacher provided pupils with a variety of source material, including a number of artefacts. She explained that we learn about the past in a range of ways. These included discussion, questioning, handling artefacts, and through written documents and drawings. One pupil was 'hot-seated' as she pretended to be a Victorian girl and was asked about her life at school. Speaking and listening are developed well in the subject.

116. History teaching is good, and teachers are confident and have a good understanding of the subject. They plan well, manage their pupils well and make good use of time in lessons and the resources available. Learning support assistants are used effectively and they help pupils with special educational needs carefully ensuring that their achievement is good. There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls or of any ethnic group. Teachers assess their pupils' work effectively and books are regularly marked, incorporating helpful comments. In some classes, higher-attaining pupils are set work that is too easy for them. In better lessons, teachers provide activities that meet the needs of all the pupils. Teachers in all classes use specific historical vocabulary, and literacy and numeracy are promoted soundly. ICT is not yet used widely enough to support the subject.
117. The subject is led soundly. The recently appointed co-ordinator is keen and enthusiastic, with many ideas to develop the subject. Planning has been developed well; it is based on the helpful scheme of work. Resources are adequate and they are managed well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards of attainment in ICT are above national expectations by the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 2. Standards have improved since the last inspection, when they were judged to be in line with expectations. A key issue raised at the last inspection was that pupils did not have enough time on the computers to develop their skills in ICT. This has been fully addressed. Teachers have simple but effective systems in place to make sure that all pupils have enough time on the computer each week to practise their skills. There are now more computers in the school. It was only possible to see a limited amount of timetabled direct teaching of ICT during inspection, but teachers integrate ICT effectively as they teach most other subjects. Evidence of standards of provision and pupils' achievement was also gained from examining pupils' work and displays and from discussions with teachers and pupils. High priority and commitment has been given to raising standards. Nationally funded training has significantly improved teachers' subject knowledge and teachers are now able to provide pupils with a wide range of activities more confidently. There are strong cross-curricular links to support pupils' learning. Literacy skills are used effectively, particularly in the word-processing of poems and captions to pictures. Numeracy skills are extended well when pupils create graphs and charts electronically; for example, when they plot graphs showing their favourite pizza toppings or hair colours across the class. Counting skills are well developed through the use of mathematical computer games.
119. Children are introduced to computers at an early age and are encouraged to explore ICT through directed and self-chosen activities in different aspects of the curriculum. Children learn to use the keyboard and mouse confidently in developing word-processing skills. By the end of Year 2, many pupils have developed these skills to produce their own simple sentences and stories. Higher-attaining pupils are developing more advanced word-processing skills and editing techniques, and pupils from ethnic minority groups enjoy the subject and achieve as well as their classmates. Pupils save, access and edit their work more confidently than at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils use texture and pattern tools to produce stamp designs. Then they use these to create repeating patterns. Many older pupils store and retrieve digital photographs taken on a visit to a local church, and write captions for them. Less able pupils use a graphics program, with some adult support, to draw houses. In Year 2, pupils use music software to develop a musical composition. The subject co-ordinator runs a weekly ICT club that is very popular with older pupils who use it to practise and reinforce their skills.
120. The quality of teaching is good overall. Each classroom has a designated ICT area around the computer with displays of good quality work produced by pupils. Good teaching stems from confident subject knowledge, a brisk pace, well-planned activities and challenging tasks. Where there is good teaching pupils have very good attitudes to learning, thoroughly enjoy their work and make good progress. They listen attentively and respond well to teachers' instructions. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 class pupils designed a stained-glass window using a graphics package, and then printed it out on a transparent acetate sheet in colour. Pupils talked very enthusiastically about their work and explained clearly what they were doing. In the most effective lessons, work is well matched to support the needs and challenge the abilities of all the pupils, including higher-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. In the less effective lessons, pupils are given the same task and then some get restless because the task is either too easy or too demanding for them. There are only one or two computers in each classroom and this makes it difficult for teachers to ensure that all pupils have access, especially when teaching new skills. The school has clear plans for a suite of computers where ICT skills can be taught to whole classes. A number of pupils have computers at home and share their knowledge and understanding with their classmates. Pupils work very well together and can be trusted to work very sensibly and independently on different tasks; this has a positive impact on their social development.
121. The subject co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and is very effective in supporting staff. She has led professional training for teachers well and is now training learning support assistants to increase their knowledge and confidence. There has been effective monitoring of teaching and this has helped to raise standards. The co-ordinator has provided teachers and pupils with very

useful help-sheets to assist them in solving everyday problems and has also provided useful technical assistance. A technician from the local secondary school also provides good support one morning a week. She tries to make sure that computers are up and running and always ready for lessons. The school has clear assessment systems to track pupils' progress. A more refined system is being developed to measure how well pupils can use computers on their own. Good use is made of resources including digital cameras, robot toys and sound systems to capture pupils' imagination and support their learning effectively.

MUSIC

122. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above national expectations and they show great enthusiasm for the subject. The quality of work with musical instruments is good, and the school is well resourced with a range of exciting percussion instruments that stimulate pupils' interest.
123. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection and there is insufficient evidence to comment on the overall quality of teaching. The teaching of singing is good and this is clearly evident in the way pupils sing in assemblies. They sing with good pitch and rhythm, they are enthusiastic and their diction is clear.
124. In the lessons seen and from discussions with pupils, percussion instruments are played well. In fact the school has built up an impressive range of instruments from across the world. In one lesson, where pupils were exploring music from around the world, they used a broad range of instruments to create sounds reflecting the Chinese music they had just been listening to. They showed a clear understanding of the task. Evidence shows that pupils record their work graphically as simple scores. Pupils have the opportunity to learn the recorder. African drummers and dancers have worked with pupils and the school recognises the importance of music in developing cultural awareness. The Milford Junior School orchestra plays for the pupils. Throughout the school pupils are fully included in lessons regardless of their gender or ability.
125. The co-ordinator has held the post for one year. She is enthusiastic and has a clear understanding of how to further develop the subject in the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. In Year 2, pupils achieve standards above those expected nationally. These high standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
127. All pupils participate fully in lessons. They all wear appropriate kit. They change quickly and sensibly and proceed to the hall with the minimum of fuss. This means that good use is made of the time available. Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and enjoy the lessons.
128. Pupils are taught a broad range of physical skills. In gymnastics lessons pupils make good use of the space available and are taught to move in various ways. For example, in one lesson the learning objective was to improve skills in jumping. Pupils were taught to hop from one foot to another and to make small and large forward jumps. In dance lessons pupils learn formal country dances. In links with the Arts focus, pupils became more aware of the dance and music from a range of cultures. This respect for and interest in dance from round the world raises the self-esteem of pupils from ethnic minority heritages. Pupils achieve high standards in these lessons, learning sequences of dance steps and movements. Pupils practised these until they are ready to perform the dance to music. No games lessons were observed during the inspection, but planning indicates that an appropriate programme of work to develop games' skills is taught throughout the year.
129. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers show good subject knowledge. Lessons are well structured and the pace is good. Teachers and learning support assistants provide very good

role models for their pupils and demonstrate and join in with the movements. For example, in one lesson the teacher and the learning support assistant joined hands to

demonstrate a section of a country dance. Good support is given to less able pupils and pupils with special educational needs by the teachers and learning support assistants. This enables all pupils to achieve well.

130. Teachers are aware of health and safety issues. At the beginning of one lesson the learning support assistant was asked to check the hall for pins or anything sharp before the lesson began. Teachers always begin lessons with warming-up activities and end them with cooling-down activities to promote health and prevent muscle damage.
131. Assessment is informal and takes place during lessons. For example, in a dance lesson the teacher noticed that the pupils were supposedly counting steps, but the numbers were not matching the number of steps they were actually taking. The teacher practised this skill with the pupils who then got better at it during the lesson. There are no methods of recording progress in physical education that are used across the school.
132. Where teaching is weaker, activities are not well matched to the needs of the pupils, and pupils are not given opportunities to imitate others or discuss improvements. For example, in one lesson pupils were allowed to travel too quickly around the hall and this meant that they did not concentrate on improving the quality of their movements. On another occasion pupils were not asked to create a simple sequence of movements for other pupils to discuss and evaluate.
133. Skills in other subjects are promoted well through the teaching of physical education. Pupils' vocabulary is extended through the use language related to movement. Numeracy skills are reinforced through counting and sequencing in formal dance lessons. Music is linked to movement in dance to improve pupils' sense of rhythm. Musical instruments are used in lessons to link sounds with movement. For example, one teacher played a drum to give signals to the children to move at different speeds.
134. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator is revising the policy and scheme of work to provide teachers with detailed guidance on all aspects of the subject. She is doing this through discussions with colleagues so that the process becomes a training opportunity. The co-ordinator monitors the subject by analysing the planning but has not yet had the opportunity to observe teaching. She recognises that creative dance is a weakness in the school and is taking action to rectify this. The co-ordinator has recently started a physical education club that runs at lunchtime on Thursdays. Resources are adequate and they are well kept and stored.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

135. Standards in religious education are above those expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of Year 2 and have been maintained since the last inspection. Standards remain at a high level because of teachers' good subject knowledge and enthusiasm, imaginatively planned activities, strong links with other subjects and the new subject leader's bright outlook.
136. Younger pupils develop a good awareness of Christianity. By visiting local churches they understand the importance of baptism and wedding ceremonies. Imaginative use of role-play brings these ceremonies to life, and they are well recorded for follow-up work using a digital camera. As a result, many pupils remember the events well. Pupils learn about Christian festivals such as Christmas, and learn about the customs and celebrations of world religions; for example, they learn about the Muslim festival of Eid. They recognise that the Bible is a special book for Christians and that the Qur'an is a special book for Muslims. Good use is made of literacy skills when pupils write about books that are special to them and give their reasons. They appreciate that certain objects are special and handle them with respect. They draw a

Menorah and describe it, and they handle a Muslim prayer mat. They learn stories connected with Jesus, such as the story of Zacchaeus, and about aspects of Jesus' teaching, such as the story of the Good Samaritan. Pupils of all faiths are included sensitively in lessons and parents are invited into school to talk about their cultures and show special objects.

137. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers plan their lessons effectively from the school's own scheme of work adapted from the locally Agreed Syllabus. They have a sensitive approach and value pupils' contributions. In the most effective lessons teachers manage pupils well, have high expectations of their work and behaviour, and encourage them to show respect for the feelings of others. In these lessons attitudes are very good because the work is stimulating and well matched to pupils' abilities - including those of higher-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs. Teachers challenge higher-attaining pupils appropriately; for example, to produce a 'zigzag' folded book that outlines the Muslim faith and other main religions. Less able pupils are given work matched to their abilities; for example, they might be asked to place in correct sequence pictures showing the story of the Good Samaritan. In less effective lessons, teachers plan to do too much and leave too little time to reinforce the learning objectives. During the inspection pairs of pupils talked enthusiastically about their visit to the local church, saying what they enjoyed most and making notes about something they had learnt to tell their parents when they got home. Moments of pure wonder occur spontaneously in lessons. For example, one teacher flooded a picture of a stained glass window on a computer screen with colour and gasp went up from the pupils. While at the local church pupils were asked to fold and tear pieces of paper and to their amazement opened them up to reveal the shape of crosses. As a result, their spiritual development is very well promoted in religious education.
138. The subject leader is newly appointed and enthusiastic. She has already assembled an excellent portfolio of very good work to demonstrate what can be done in the subject. With the other teachers she has adapted the scheme of work to suit pupils' needs. She carefully monitors planning. At present she has no time to monitor the quality of teaching to share good practice. Teachers record what children can do in an informal way, but there is no agreed system for measuring progress. An annual report informs parents of pupils' progress. Resources are adequate. They are supplemented by borrowing artefacts from the junior school next door.