

INSPECTION REPORT

ILCHESTER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ilchester

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123735

Headteacher: Mr D M Jay

Reporting inspector: Mrs P C Cox
19178

Dates of inspection: 30th September – 3rd October 2002

Inspection number: 248498

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Illustrious Crescent Ilchester Somerset
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Whittaker
Date of previous inspection:	19 th – 22 nd January 1998

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19178	Mrs P C Cox	Registered inspector	History	The school's results and the pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
13874	Mrs J Chesterfield	Lay inspector		How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
21904	Mrs D Gale	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in The Foundation Stage Art and design Physical education	
22805	Mrs J Greer	Team inspector	Science Religious education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
20846	Mr A Wilson	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography	The quality of the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
22352	Mrs F Gaywood	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology	Educational inclusion Special educational needs
27240	Mr W Hooper	Team inspector	English Music	English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ilchester Primary School is situated on the northeast outskirts of the village of Ilchester and is on two sites, one housing the infant department and the other the juniors. The sites are separated by about a quarter of a mile. There are 426 pupils on roll, between the ages of 4 and 11 and the numbers in the school are around a third higher than at the time of the previous inspection. The proportion of boys and girls is similar. Most pupils live in Ilchester and almost all pupils are of white ethnic heritage and few have English as an additional language. As the school serves a significant proportion of pupils from service families, well over half of the school population, there is very high mobility. During 2001-02, mobility affected about a quarter of the pupils, but mobility was much higher amongst the infants. During the last school year, there was a turnover of almost 50 per cent in Year 2. Three per cent of pupils are registered as being entitled to free school meals, a percentage that is lower than the national average. However, the local education authority does not provide cooked dinners, and, consequently, the statistics are not representative of the pupils' backgrounds, which are broadly average. Seventeen per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, a proportion that is similar to that in other schools. The majority of these needs are in the areas of specific learning difficulties, and speech and communication difficulties. Three pupils have a Statement of special educational needs. The children's attainment on entry to the school is below average overall, particularly in communication, language and literacy and personal and social development, and has fallen since the time of the last inspection. The proximity of the naval air station leads to significant noise disruption by air traffic, particularly for the infant department. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and a DfES School Improvement Award in 2001.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides its pupils with a sound education and has many strengths. Pupils do well in English and mathematics at both key stages and in mathematics their attainment is above average. At Key Stage 2¹, pupils also achieve well in science, music and physical education. The quality of teaching is good for the children in the reception classes and for pupils at Key Stage 2, but is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1². Overall, the pupils behave well and have good attitudes to school. The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior management team are good. The school has effective procedures for ensuring that it gives all pupils equal opportunity to succeed. Given these factors, and its average income, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children achieve well in the reception classes. The pupils do well in English and mathematics at the end of both key stages, and in science, music and physical education at the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is good in the reception classes and at Key Stage 2.
- The headteacher and senior management team lead and manage the school well, particularly in coping with the challenges of a split site.
- Because the provision for the pupils' moral and social development is very good, they behave well and have good attitudes to school.
- The school provides well for the pupils with special educational needs and for those who join partway through their school career.
- In spite of the level of mobility, the school forms very close links with the parents.
- There is very good provision for extra-curricular activities.

What could be improved

- Standards in speaking and listening, and history.
- The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1.
- The provision for the pupils' cultural development.

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

¹ Key Stage 2, also known as the 'juniors' caters for pupils aged 7 to 11 and refers to pupils who are in Years 3 to 6.

² Key Stage 1, also known as the 'infants' caters for pupils aged 5 to 7 and refers to pupils who are in Years 1 and 2.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in January 1998 and the report identified many strengths, including the progress the pupils made; their attitudes to learning; the quality of the teaching; the links with the parents; the assessment systems and the leadership and management. The school has made sound progress in maintaining these positive features, although the teaching at Key Stage 1 has deteriorated. There were three issues for the school to address in 1998. Standards in science were not as high as in English and mathematics; provision for the pupils' spiritual development was not effective and some pupils at Key Stage 1 missed important lessons when they were withdrawn from class for individual support. These issues have been addressed and standards in science are now high; provision for spiritual development is satisfactory and the arrangements for the withdrawal of pupils has been revised to ensure that they have equal access to all activities. The school is soundly placed for further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools ³
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	C	B	A
Mathematics	A	A	B	A
Science	B	C	A	A

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

The results of the national tests have varied from year to year at the end of both key stages, as is common in schools where there is a high rate of mobility. The results of the tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 results demonstrate that these pupils have performed well in mathematics, over the years, and have reached standards that are well above the national average. In contrast, the results in English and science have shown little consistency since 1997. The results in 2002 are above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. When compared with similar schools, the results are well above average. The pupils presently at the beginning of Year 6 are working at an average level in English but at a level above average in mathematics and science; their achievement is good in all three subjects because they are taught well.

The results of the tests in 2001, taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, were close to the national average for reading and mathematics but below average in writing. In 2002, the results had improved. These were at the national level and that of similar schools in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. The results of the teachers' assessments in science indicated pupils' attainment to be above the national average. The pupils currently at the beginning of Year 2 are working at standards close to those achieved by pupils in Year 2 last year, but the rate of progress is slowing in one class in the key stage because the teaching is unsatisfactory.

Standards in almost all other subjects are similar to those in other schools at both key stages and the pupils are achieving satisfactorily. In religious education the standards reflect those required by the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In music and physical education at the end of Key Stage 2 the standards are above average and pupils achieve well. However, in history at the end of both key stages standards are lower than in other schools, because the curriculum has been unsatisfactory until very recently. Pupils throughout the school do not make enough progress in developing their speaking and listening skills.

Children enter reception with attainment below that usual for their age and well below in some areas of communication, language and literacy and personal and social development. They achieve well throughout that year, and are attaining standards typical of their age in mathematical, physical and creative development and in knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they enter Year 1. However, their attainment is still below average in personal, social and communication skills.

³ 'Similar schools' are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

The school set cautious targets for test results in 2002 in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2, and these were exceeded. It has set very challenging targets for the pupils for 2003, which should be achievable given continuing good teaching.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils enjoy coming to school and taking part in all its activities. In almost all lessons they concentrate well and try hard with their work, particularly at Key Stage 2. When the teaching is inspiring, the pupils respond very well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are well behaved in the majority of lessons and most behave sensibly and work quietly. Their behaviour around the school and in the playground is orderly and mature.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The pupils take responsibility well and the older juniors often take the initiative in caring for their school and for others. Relationships are, overall, satisfactory, but it is often difficult for many pupils to form longstanding relationships given the high mobility rate.
Attendance	Very good. The attendance rate is well above the average and the pupils come to school on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Unsatisfactory	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 teaching is satisfactory. It was satisfactory or better in nine out of ten lessons and good or better in over half. In seven out of ten lessons, teaching was very good or excellent. The balance of teaching in lessons was reflected in other evidence seen during the inspection.

In the reception classes, the teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons and good or, occasionally, very good, in six out of ten. At Key Stage 2, the teaching was at least satisfactory in 19 out of 20 lessons, and good or better in just over half. The teaching was very good, and occasionally excellent, in a fifth of lessons and was particularly good in Year 6. However, at Key Stage 1 the teaching was satisfactory in only four out of five lessons and was good in less than half. While the teaching is consistently at least good in one class in Year 2, it is unsatisfactory in one class in the key stage, and there are weaknesses in other classes at that key stage.

The teaching of mathematics is good and in English it is satisfactory: the school promotes the pupils' literacy and numeracy well throughout the curriculum. Science is taught well at Key Stage 2, and is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Overall, the school meets the needs of all of its pupils soundly.

The best teaching at Ilchester School is inspirational and carries the pupils along with its enthusiasm, interesting resources and good use of humour. The planning is conscientious and matched carefully to their needs, so that the work builds carefully on what the pupils already know and understand. The tasks are challenging, but achievable, because the teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and support them to do their best. Consequently, pupils work with interest, concentration and apply themselves totally, working rapidly and carefully. Discipline is very good and the classrooms are calm, orderly places.

In the lessons where the teaching is unsatisfactory, the planning is often not matched well enough to the needs of the pupils and time is used inefficiently. Expectations are too low and, therefore, the pupils are sometimes given work that does not stretch them sufficiently. Tasks are sometimes dull and on other occasions they are over-complicated, confusing the pupils. Consequently, pupils occasionally become bored, and, on these occasions, a few pupils are likely to behave unacceptably.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. There are good schemes of work in place for subjects that the school is adapting more closely to its needs. However, the class timetables are not planned well enough to ensure that the curriculum can be taught efficiently. The curriculum for the reception classes is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The systems for identifying and supporting these pupils are effective and ensure that they achieve well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. These pupils receive appropriate support and the work is matched to their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school has good systems for ensuring that the pupils develop good personal skills. These are particularly effective in developing their social and moral awareness and are satisfactory in the case of spiritual development. However, the provision for pupils' cultural development unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The pupils are cared for well and the school ensures that their physical and emotional needs are met in sensitive and appropriate ways. There are good systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and these are used soundly to support teaching. Systems for ensuring equality between all ethnic groups work well.
How well the school works in partnership with parents.	The school works very hard to form close links with the parents of its pupils and provides them with a good level and quality of information.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides a strong educational direction to the school and is supported very well by the senior management team. Responsibilities are allocated appropriately and imaginative systems are in place to ensure that the two parts of the school, separated by some distance, work as a team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well and take a full part in monitoring and planning for school improvement. They are keen to improve their involvement and to support the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The senior staff monitor and evaluate the school's provision accurately and are aware of where the strengths and weaknesses lie. Appropriate action is taken to improve where this is needed. Planning for school improvement is undertaken well and the priorities for development are suitable.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school uses its finances very well to support its priorities and is careful to ensure that all grants are used for the intended purposes.

The senior management and governors have a good understanding of how to compare the school's performance with others and to ensure and check that they get the best value from the decisions they make. The school has a good level of staffing, but has had significant difficulties over the past two years in attracting suitably experienced teaching staff for Key Stage 1. The accommodation is adequate, but the distance between the two sites is a considerable impediment to the school's ability to function as a whole. Resources are satisfactory overall, adequate in almost all areas and good in some.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • The school has high expectations and the teaching is good. • The school works closely with parents and keeps them well informed about their children's progress. • The school is managed and led well and parents are comfortable approaching it with questions or problems. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible and the behaviour is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was some concern that the setting of homework was inconsistent between classes.

Sixty-one parents returned their questionnaires to the inspection team and 19 attended the meeting held for them before the inspection. Although these represent a low proportion of the parents and carers who have children at the school, it was apparent that the responses were, with very few exceptions, very positive about the school, with little need seen for improvement. The team agrees with almost all the positive comments, but finds that the teaching at Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory, unlike that in the rest of the school. The homework provided is similar in content and quantity to that in other schools and is set flexibly to take account of family circumstances.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The attainment of children in the reception class is assessed formally, shortly after they start school, and these assessments have shown a downward trend in recent years. On entry to the reception classes, it is now below the county average and below the standards expected for children of a similar age. This differs from the previous inspection report, when standards on entry were found to match those usual for children of their age. Their skills in communication, language and literacy are well below average. Their personal, social and emotional development is below average. Their mathematical skills are just below what is expected for the age group, as is their knowledge and understanding of the world. In this area, they also have difficulty in articulating what they know because of the weakness in their speaking skills.
2. Although standards by the time the children reach Year 1 are, overall, lower than at the time of the previous inspection, the children in the reception classes make good progress and achieve well. Their skills in communication, language and literacy improve, so that, by the time they reach Year 1, their standards are below average rather than well below. They also make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and many children reach the level expected. They meet the expected levels in their mathematical, physical and creative development, and also in their knowledge and understanding of the world.
3. The results of the national tests in 2001, taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, were similar to the national average in reading and mathematics, but below the national average in writing. However, when compared with similar schools, all results were below the national average. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was similar to the national average, but in reading and writing it was below average. The results in 2002 show an improved picture. In reading and writing, the results match the national average, and the average of similar schools, and in mathematics the results are above average. Standards in 2002 are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection in most subjects, although the level of children's attainment on entry has fallen since then. The results in the national tests have shown a significant variation over the years since 1997. However, the high mobility rates are most apparent at Key Stage 1 and some pupils enter the school without experience of the National Curriculum. The school's tracking records indicate that, where attainment is measurable, pupils who spend any length of time in the school have made at least sound progress.
4. The teachers' assessments in 2001 indicated that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in science was close to the national average, but that a lower proportion than usual reached the higher level. Teachers' assessments in 2002 are improved and indicate that standards are above average when compared nationally and with similar schools. Results in all subjects suggest that, although the results have varied from year to year, the girls and boys have achieved similarly over recent years.
5. The standards being attained by the pupils presently in Year 2 are similar to those in Year 2 last year. The pupils are working at a level in writing, reading and science which is average; standards in mathematics are above average. The pupils in the infant department are doing well overall in mathematics and science, because the teaching and curriculum are secure. In addition, the initiatives used to promote the progress of the more able in mathematics are effective, and teaching in one Year 2 class is good. Pupils' achievement in English is sound overall, but it is unsatisfactory in speaking and listening because the school has not focused sufficiently on compensating for the low standards on entry. In addition, the progress of some pupils in the middle of the key stage has slowed because the teaching is unsatisfactory.
6. At Key Stage 2, the results of the 2001 national tests were similar to the national average and the results of similar schools in English and science and above average in mathematics. Results at the end of this key stage have also been variable over the years, but show a decline from a peak in 1999. However, the trend in the school's results is overall broadly in line with the national trend,

although the standards in mathematics have been consistently strong. Comparing the attainment of this year group with their attainment when they were in Year 2 suggests that the pupils made satisfactory progress in English, good progress in mathematics, but unsatisfactory progress in science. However, a high proportion of the year group has joined the school since Year 2. The school's detailed tracking information demonstrates that almost all pupils who have been with the school for an appreciable length of time have made at least sound, and often good, progress.

7. Results in the national tests in 2002 show a significant rise in all three subjects. When compared with the national average, the results are well above average in science, and above average in English and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, the results are well above average in all three subjects. The pupils currently in Year 6 are on course to attain above average levels in mathematics and science and average levels in English. They are achieving well overall because they are taught well but, as at Key Stage 1, standards in speaking and listening are not high enough. The attainment of boys and girls is similar, although results vary from year to year.
8. Pupils' achievement in other subjects throughout the school is satisfactory overall and in some subjects it is good. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education, information and communication technology, design and technology, geography, and art and design, and reach similar standards to those in other schools by the end of both key stages. In music and physical education pupils' achievement is satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1, but good at the end of Key Stage 2, where standards are higher than is usual for pupils of this age, because the teaching is good. However, the standards in history at the end of both key stages are lower than the pupils are capable of, because the planning and curriculum have not been good enough. This has now been remedied at Key Stage 2 because the curriculum is now appropriate and it is in the process of being addressed at Key Stage 1.
9. The pupils' numeracy skills are developed well across the curriculum, through the use of measurement, and the presentation of work in subjects such as science, design and technology and geography. Most literacy skills are also developed well in many other subjects, but the pupils do not use their speaking and listening skills sufficiently in other subjects to extend them sufficiently. The more able pupils make appropriate progress, because the work that is set for them is usually more challenging and complex. Pupils who show a talent or gift in an area of the curriculum have appropriate opportunities for developing those talents through class work, extra-curricular activities, and by working in small groups.
10. The group of pupils who have high mobility is larger at Key Stage 1, and tails off in Years 5 and 6, when Service families tend to become more settled. The school's curriculum and monitoring procedures are designed to target support in order to achieve higher standards. This generally works well, and, although younger pupils in this group may have problems, older pupils are not disadvantaged and do not under-achieve by the end of Year 6. There are few pupils whose first language is not English and none are at the early stages of learning the language. The school monitors these pupils' progress carefully and teachers are careful in their lessons to ensure that the pupils have the support they need to improve their understanding and make similar progress to others in the class. However, like their classmates, their speaking and listening skills are not as well developed as they could be.
11. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the individual plans and targets set for them. Standards are monitored very carefully. There is no evidence of under-achievement because the support and work they are given are matched well to their needs. Results in national tests confirm this, for instance, where pupils attain average standards when they might not have been expected to do so originally. This is due largely to the focused, energetic teaching by the co-ordinator for special educational needs and her team of learning support assistants, working alongside teachers and committed to the pupils' success. The more able pupils achieve well because almost all teachers ensure that they have work that enables them to make rapid progress.
12. The school set targets for attainment in the most recent national tests for the pupils in Year 6 in English and mathematics. These were cautious and were exceeded in both subjects. More challenging targets have been set for the pupils currently in Year 6, and these are achievable if the pupils continue to make good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils' attitudes to school are good as they were at the time of the previous inspection. They enjoy coming to school and taking part in all its activities. For many pupils the disruption to their schooling, through frequent moves, and its attendant effect on their lives sometimes results in immature behaviour and attitudes to learning. This has a significant impact on some pupils' ability to form good social relationships, especially for the younger age group. On entering the reception classes, the youngest children in the school find difficulty in maintaining their concentration for a sustained length of time. Many find it difficult to share sensibly and communicate with others. However, routines are soon established, so that they are quickly made aware of what is expected of them, and learn to follow instructions. Those children who find it more difficult to meet the expected standards of behaviour are given good support to enable them to become more responsive and develop good attitudes.
14. In most lessons at both key stages, pupils concentrate well. They listen to their teachers and classmates. When the teaching is lively, the pupils respond enthusiastically, being eager to answer questions and offer suggestions. The pupils settle sensibly to individual tasks and work hard to complete them. In the less inspiring lessons or where good learning habits have not been as firmly established, particularly at Key Stage 1, pupils often waste time, become restless and lack concentration. They are reluctant to listen or take turns to answer questions. Occasionally, many pupils in the class take too long to settle down to their work and can be unwilling to share equipment and materials or co-operate properly in tasks.
15. Pupils with special educational needs contribute well in lessons, joining in successfully with all parts of literacy, numeracy and science lessons, because teachers target their questions well. Other pupils have reasonably mature attitudes and are tolerant, sometimes offering help in lessons, or with tying a shoelace, for example. Pupils are generally involved with tasks and happy to learn. Some of those with behavioural difficulties experience problems as indicated in their individual education plans, but the school liaises well with outside agencies to improve the situation wherever possible.
16. Pupils' behaviour around school and in the playground is good. Pupils know and understand the school's code of conduct and are aware of the rewards and sanctions. If problems arise, they are discussed during personal and social lessons. Most pupils are polite and helpful, offering to open doors for adults and greeting them in a friendly manner. They are trustworthy and have respect for their own and the school's property. There is no evidence of vandalism. Behaviour is usually good in lessons except on a few occasions when teaching is unsatisfactory, when it sometimes deteriorates. There was one temporary exclusion in the previous year.
17. Pupils respect one another's feelings. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour towards the very few pupils from other countries and cultures and the other pupils are interested in hearing about their different experiences. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. They understand the effect of their actions on others. In the few instances seen of unkind behaviour of one pupil towards another, the pupils responsible apologised immediately and explained why such behaviour was inappropriate. All staff provide good role models and set good standards so that, by the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have learned to make good relationships. They show a good sense of responsibility, carrying out their prefect duties well. Pupils show initiative by conducting independent research especially when organising the fundraising activities that are entirely managed by the pupils themselves. The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development have been maintained soundly since the previous inspection.

Attendance

18. Pupils' attendance at the school is very good. Since the last inspection the school has been successful in maintaining very high standards, well above the national average. Most absences are caused by illness and there is no absence for unacceptable reasons. Punctuality is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and arrive on time in the morning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but there are particular strengths in the teaching as well as some weaknesses. At the time of the last inspection teaching throughout the school was almost always satisfactory with over half of the teaching good. The quality has been maintained in the reception classes and at Key Stage 2, with similar statistics. The teaching was very good or excellent in about one seventh of the lessons observed. However, it has deteriorated in quality at Key Stage 1, being satisfactory in only four out of five lessons and good in slightly less than half. The balance of strengths and weaknesses is reflected in other evidence scrutinised.

The Foundation Stage⁴

20. The quality of teaching and learning for children in the reception classes is good, and never less than satisfactory. In two lessons observed, the teaching was very good. The teachers provide a warm and encouraging atmosphere, where children can grow in confidence. They work well as a team, valuing each other's contribution, and planning a good variety of tasks. Every opportunity is taken by teachers to ensure a good emphasis on the development of children's personal, social and emotional development and of their language skills. This was a strong feature in the very good lessons observed. The teachers use their ongoing assessment effectively so that work is matched to the children's needs and basic skills are established from the start. Teachers are very aware of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language, and those who are more able.
21. Although they do not plan consistently for those with behavioural problems, a strong feature is the teachers' quick understanding and reaction to an individual child's attitude and response during any one lesson, and the way in which they quickly adapt to ensure that the child is fully included. In the lessons where the teaching is satisfactory, the basic skills are taught soundly, but the teachers sometimes miss opportunities to extend children's learning, through discussion and questioning, as they apply themselves to their tasks. Learning support assistants play a consistently helpful role in supporting children's learning, although their potential support in helping the development of children's speaking and listening skills is not always fully realised.

Key Stages 1 and 2

22. The picture is very mixed in the classes in Key Stage 1. The teaching seen was at least satisfactory in 79 per cent of lessons, but unsatisfactory or, occasionally, poor in the remainder. Teaching was good, and, occasionally, very good, in 45 per cent of lessons observed, and some good teaching was observed in each class. Teaching is good in one Year 2 class, but all other classes had instances of unsatisfactory teaching and there are significant weaknesses one class in the key stage. The inspection evidence shows that teaching is always satisfactory in mathematics and almost always in English. The basic skills in these subjects are taught competently, but planning in some other subjects is not consistently effective and the teachers' expectations are not high enough at times.
23. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all but five per cent of lessons observed at Key Stage 2. It was good or better in 55 per cent, and very good or excellent in 20 per cent. The weight of inspection evidence demonstrates that a positive experience through the junior department ensures that the pupils learn well and make good progress over time. The key features of the good teaching include the interesting techniques that teachers often use and the care they take in ensuring that the planning of work matches the pupils' attainment. The teaching of mathematics is good and the teaching of English is satisfactory overall. Literacy and numeracy are taught effectively throughout the curriculum, so that the pupils make good progress. The quality of teaching is particularly good in Year 6. The teaching is also good in science, information and communication technology and physical education. Teaching is good throughout the school in design and technology, and, often in music.

⁴ The Foundation Stage relates to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

24. The good teaching in the school is characterised by a well-ordered environment in which the pupils learn effectively. In these good lessons the subject knowledge displayed and the range of methods used ensure that pupils work hard and increase their understanding of the topic. The purposes of the lesson are shared consistently with pupils and time is given at the end of sessions to discuss whether these have been achieved. The pupils gain a sense of urgency about their work and expectations are high. For example, in an outstanding information and communication technology lesson with pupils in Year 5, the lesson moved at a brisk pace and the pupils were inspired by the teacher's enthusiasm and stimulating use of computer programs. The teacher supported the pupils exceptionally well, guiding and challenging sensitively while building very well on their previous skills. Discipline was very good but the pupils were managed in a relaxed manner. Consequently, the pace of learning was rapid and by the end of the lesson, pupils had built well on their ability to move and resize computer graphics and to choose the appropriate program.
25. The best teaching is imaginative and uses resources in an interesting way. Games are sometimes used to capture the pupils' total attention, as in a very successful mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 6. The exposition was very clear so that the pupils knew precisely what they had to do. The work was based on a very good knowledge of their skills and understanding, and the activities were set at an accurate level for each group. Questions were used very well to probe and develop understanding and were directed to individual pupils at an appropriate level for them. As a result, the pupils concentrated very well throughout the lesson, trying their best and working very hard.
26. In the lessons where pupils do not learn effectively and their progress is limited, it is because the teaching is dull and unchallenging. The work is not prepared carefully enough and in some lessons the teacher's own time is not planned effectively. Occasionally, the pupils become bored and restless in lessons when the pace of the lesson is slow and the work does not stimulate them. At times, a few pupils become disruptive and the management of inappropriate behaviour dominates the lesson so that the pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn. In some less effective lessons, insufficient attention is paid to the range of ability and stages of learning of the pupils. In a few lessons there is a significant amount of over-direction by the teacher that does not give pupils opportunities to develop or apply their skills of investigation or independent learning. In others, teachers plan too many different activities for the class and are unable to manage everything that is going on. Time is sometimes wasted in activities that do not develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding further.
27. Lessons are usually planned carefully and the majority of teachers are clear about how they are going to present them. In many lessons the resources are well organised and prepared. However, in the infants, pupils do not always have a clear understanding of what they are doing or what is expected of them. Although medium-term planning identifies clearly what pupils are to learn, not all of the lesson plans are specific enough. When the teaching is good, teachers use day-to-day assessment well to set targets for the next stage of pupils' learning, but this is not always in evidence. Teachers often give pupils suitable opportunities to develop independent learning techniques, but this is not consistent through the school. In the past, the libraries and computers have been under-used as resources for research, but an improvement in resources and their use are having a positive impact on the pupils' competence. Although information and communication technology is not used as broadly as it could be, this is an improving area and the teachers are developing their confidence and competence in using computers throughout the curriculum.
28. The school ensures that all pupils are included in all it has to offer. In most cases, the teachers understand and plan effectively for individuals and groups of pupils. They are particularly concerned to ensure that the pupils who have arrived recently are assimilated as quickly as possible. The support they receive is very flexible and sessions can be moved around to fill the greatest need. The teachers work hard to minimise the disruption caused by the noise of low-flying military aircraft, particularly over the Key Stage 1 building. However, the considerable noise during some lessons means that it is impossible to continue an explanation or discussion and this sometimes interrupts the flow of lessons.
29. The more able pupils in Key Stage 2 often receive the challenge and extension necessary for them to reach the level of which they are capable, and this is the case for some pupils at Key Stage 1, but not all. In addition, not all teachers in Key Stage 1 pay sufficient attention to the different needs

of pupils from two year-groups in the same class. Marking is generally adequate, although not in every class. In only a few classes does marking contain comments that will help pupils to improve or set targets for themselves. Occasionally, work is not marked at all. Homework makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning and is often planned into the topics. Support staff work well with the groups and individuals they assist. In some lessons, teachers use their time and expertise well during whole-class teaching sessions, to support the teaching or assess the pupils' contributions to discussion. However, this is not always the case.

30. Teachers plan lessons well to provide appropriate tasks for pupils with special educational needs. They incorporate strategies and ideas into their planning, through close co-operation with the co-ordinator for special educational needs and the subject co-ordinators. This ensures that work is well matched to the needs of these pupils, as well as those with a Statement of special educational needs. This includes advice to staff to help with difficult and challenging behaviour. Most teachers cope well on the whole, using a range of strategies. However, a few teachers experience more problems because their management is not so good. Because pupils' individual education plans are specific, and include targets for English and mathematics, for example, teachers and learning assistants provide effective support for individuals and groups. Teachers often ask well-directed questions, so that the pupils at all levels of attainment join in. They also provide appropriate support for the pupils with English as an additional language, so that they achieve as well as their classmates.

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

31. The curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage is good, and this reflects the findings of the previous report. It is broad and balanced and matched to the six areas of learning appropriate to the age group. Through careful planning, the teachers provide an interesting and varied curriculum that promotes learning and good opportunities for children to make positive progress in all areas of their development. A good feature is that teachers regularly review the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of the children. There is early identification of children with special educational needs and the potentially gifted and talented children in the reception classes. Teachers carefully monitor their progress, and are prompt at consulting the co-ordinator for special educational needs should they have concerns. They provide good support overall, and help them to participate in all learning opportunities.
32. The school meets statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. At Key Stages 1 and 2, there is a wide and interesting range of learning activities to support the pupils' academic and personal development. This reflects sound improvement since the last inspection. The previous report noted that pupils occasionally lost full access to some subjects when they were withdrawn from lessons for extra support. The school has addressed this issue successfully. In addition, the curriculum co-ordinator has a thorough knowledge of the curriculum and regularly reviews progress along with senior staff. Consequently, a number of strengths have emerged since the last inspection, as well as some areas for future development.
33. Teachers are making good use of the national strategies for developing pupils' numeracy and literacy skills. Numeracy, reading and writing are extended effectively through teaching in other subjects, but not enough is done to improve speaking and listening across all areas of the curriculum. The teaching of French in Years 5 and 6 is a positive recent addition to the curriculum. The investigative approach to the teaching of science is also having a positive impact on learning and the school has a good programme of work for music and physical education.
34. There is a good scheme of work for personal, social and health education, which provides pupils with many opportunities to discuss moral and social issues such as family responsibility and the effects of their own behaviour on others. Topics such as healthy eating are explored through science and teachers enable older pupils to discuss their sexual development sensitively. The school participates in a project for drugs awareness, whose representatives visit the school annually. Pupils are also encouraged to contribute to the school improvement plan, for example by suggest ways of improving their surroundings.

35. There are good policies and schemes of work in place for all other subjects and these have been fully adapted to meet the most recent national developments. The teachers make sound use overall of these schemes to plan their work. The scheme of work for history has, until recently, been inadequate but a sound programme is now in place. The weaknesses have been addressed at Key Stage 2 and the subject is now planned soundly and, at Key Stage 1, there are appropriate plans in place to ensure improvement to the provision for the subject.
36. Teachers are encouraged to include links with other subjects and the use of information and communication technology in their lesson planning, but this practice is in the early stages of development. Other areas for development are related to the management and organisation of the curriculum and the daily timetable. In Key Stage 1, for example, some lessons are shorter than they should be, either starting too late, or finishing early, because too much time is spent on minor activities, such as tidying up or getting ready for play. At Key Stage 2, some activities are too long and are sometimes split between morning and afternoon sessions. This adversely affects pupils' concentration and limits the variety of activities that can be planned for each day. Additionally, there is often too little time following afternoon assemblies for teachers to complete all the elements of the lessons they have planned.
37. The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils have full access to the curriculum. The needs of these pupils are recognised very early and individual education plans are focused, with manageable academic or behavioural targets set. These are reviewed, updated and revised regularly. Parents are fully involved and older pupils are included, wherever possible, in setting or agreeing targets. The school has very constructive links with outside agencies. All opportunities are taken to use their expertise and advice, to the full, for example with the behaviour support advisory teacher from the local education authority. She reports that the school is very receptive to suggestions and will persevere with strategies to help pupils improve and achieve well.
38. Overall, there is a strong commitment throughout the school to ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn and improve. A curriculum has been planned for equal opportunities and is designed to allow equal access. This usually works well, but some younger pupils often find it hard to share, especially when working with computers. During the inspection, there were classes where boys attempted to dominate, and girls were frequently prevented from having their turn. This happened even in classes where teachers made it very plain that partners were to share ideas as well as turns at using the mouse and other functions. However, this became less and less of a problem amongst older pupils, and did not happen at all at upper Key Stage 2.

Provision for pupils' personal development

39. Provision for pupils' personal development is good overall, as it was at the time of the last inspection. The school is very good at developing pupils' moral and social awareness and a good code of conduct is displayed prominently around the building, in classrooms and outside. Pupils have a clear understanding of the system of rewards and sanctions, which are part of the effective behaviour management policy. Good use is made of outside agency support for the few pupils who have difficulty understanding what is appropriate behaviour.
40. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong through personal and social education, specific lessons, and religious education and assemblies. Pupils know that they can go to any member of staff for help. Teachers take great trouble in helping pupils understand that some behaviour and actions are inappropriate, why these are not acceptable, and the effect they have on others. Particular attention is given to helping pupils develop good social relationships. The effect of frequent moves for many pupils makes it more difficult for some of them to form long-lasting relationships with other pupils. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to work and play in social groups. There are good residential visits for older pupils. Many lessons involve pupils working in pairs or small groups, where good co-operation is essential if the tasks set are to be completed properly. Younger pupils are taught to take turns, to listen to each other, to wait and to share properly. Through religious education lessons, when considering rules for living, such as the Ten Commandments and devising their own set of rules, the pupils begin to understand the need for rules if societies are to function effectively.

41. The school works very hard to foster good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning, ensuring that all pupils' needs are met as closely as possible. A very good, highly effective induction process enables the school to slot pupils into its community with maximum speed and minimum disruption. Pupils help each other in this, acting as a 'buddy'. However, several pupils have moved many times and some of the younger ones display problems in communicating, sharing or being tolerant. Some fail to display mature attitudes, for example when sharing a computer. Because the school works so hard to integrate and support pupils in every way, they reach upper Key Stage 2 confident, caring and responsible.
42. There has been an improvement in provision for pupils' spiritual development since the last inspection and it is now satisfactory. Religious education is used very well to give pupils an insight into the values and beliefs of different faiths. The pupils have good opportunities to reflect on important events in their lives, such as birthdays and the birth of new members in their families. The older pupils reflect on how principles of love and care in the community are relevant to their own lives. They learn to empathise with those less fortunate than themselves. However, although there are opportunities for reflection in some acts of collective worship, this is not always a key feature and so some opportunities are missed. The school is beginning to consider how further time for reflection can be developed in lessons, but planning and awareness is still at an early stage of development.
43. Provision for pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory. Although there are visits to the theatre each year, there is little provision for pupils to appreciate works of art, music or dance from western and non-western cultures. There are very few books in the libraries that give a good picture of life or values in other cultures. Although pupils study non-western countries in geography, this is not used well enough for them to appreciate the value of life in those societies. In history, science, and mathematics, pupils are not taught about the contribution non-westerners have made world development. There is very little opportunity for pupils to visit places or meet people from other cultures, because of the distance from large cities. The school has not found enough ways to introduce pupils to the values inherent in other cultures to properly prepare them for life in a multicultural society. The depth of understanding is superficial, but the planned arts week later this year, which will focus on art, craft and dance from other countries, is a sound start.

Extra-curricular activities and links with the local community

44. The staff work hard to provide a very good range of extra-curricular activities for the pupils, maintaining the standard seen during the last inspection. These make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal and social development as they learn to mix and work with others as part of a team, and grow in confidence through developing their skills and representing their school. Pupils of all ages are able to join clubs for sport and music and also other activities such as information and communication technology and drama. Pupils enjoy and appreciate these opportunities and are keen to take part. Pupils at Key Stage 2 also have the chance to go on three residential trips, which they find very exciting. In addition, parents benefit from the out-of-school childcare facilities run on the school's premises.
45. The school makes effective use of the local community to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils learn about being good citizens, for example, by visiting and performing for the elderly residents in the community, and the school makes the most of the facilities offered by the naval base, such as the swimming pool. Appropriate links have been established with local schools and playgroups, although many pupils come from or move to schools further afield. These links enable the pupils concerned to transfer smoothly from one stage of their education to the next.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The school has continued to care well for its pupils since the time of the last inspection. Its particular strength is in recognising the difficulties faced by pupils who may have to transfer from school to school, and in adapting its routines to meet their needs. Due to family circumstances, many pupils can find themselves at the school at short notice. As Service families move around, pupils may find themselves back at the school for a second time. The mobility of pupils means that

the school must work hard to keep files updated and to track their progress carefully. It has a very good induction procedure that allows pupils to fit in and be assimilated at short notice, as quickly as possible. Staff know the pupils well and take care to ensure that their needs are met, whatever the circumstances. By the time pupils are reaching Years 5 and 6, mobility becomes less of a problem and they benefit from the school's care and welfare, which allows them to succeed and be successful. When pupils leave the school, well-devised transfer records ensure that full personal and academic data are sent to their new destination to help make the move as easy as possible.

47. Staff give good attention to pupils' welfare on a day-to-day basis. Daily routines run smoothly despite the inconvenience caused by the split site, and pupils are well supervised in and out of class. Health and safety is managed well and the site is cleaned and maintained efficiently. There are effective procedures to ensure the safe use of the Internet. Although the registers are not stored centrally, the school has appropriate systems to guarantee that they are accessible at lunchtime in case of fire. There are good procedures and guidance for staff on child protection issues, and pupils are taught appropriately about keeping safe through their well-planned programme of personal, social and health education. The organisation and administration of first aid is good. Very thorough records and good quality information about pupils' specific conditions means that staff always know how to give individuals the right care and treatment.
48. Procedures for monitoring attendance and following up absence are good. The school operates a system of telephoning the pupil's home on the first day of absence, which parents appreciate as it gives them peace of mind. Records of individual absence are stored centrally so that the school can quickly spot any developing problems and act on them straightaway. The school has good systems for managing behaviour and ensuring and promoting ethnic harmony. The new playground code of conduct is implemented consistently and valued by staff, pupils and parents. All involved feel that the system is fair and manageable, and, as a result, the playgrounds are safe and sociable places. Most teachers manage behaviour successfully in class, although, occasionally, a few have difficulty in making sure that all pupils do as they are told. Bullying and racial and sexual harassment are rare, and any instances are taken seriously and handled firmly by the school, in close liaison with parents.
49. Individual education plans are used well, to support pupils who have behavioural problems. Teachers remind pupils of their targets frequently, and how they can work towards them. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good. This is because careful records are kept of pupils' attainment and progress. Simple, effective assessment sheets also include a behaviour concerns checklist. The school constantly monitors its work to make sure all pupils with special educational needs are on target, by tracking individuals and groups to ensure appropriate achievement takes place. National and optional test results are analysed very carefully under all headings of support. The analysis shows that this support is paying off as pupils achieve well, or within acceptable limits. This good progress is a team effort. The staff know their pupils well and are in a very good position to support their personal development effectively.

Assessment

50. There are good procedures for assessing children in the reception classes. The results of assessments are used well to plan further work, identify needs and set initial targets. The children are assessed through daily observations and by more formal assessments through the year. Clear and informative records are kept, and children's work is annotated carefully and analysed accurately to show what has been achieved. This all ensures that teachers can plan work that is appropriate to the children's needs. However, at the end of the reception year, some formal assessments of children's writing skills are optimistically high and do not consistently reflect what has been achieved.
51. The school has maintained the good assessment procedures for both key stages reported in the last inspection. There are good assessment systems in place throughout the school for each pupil, with appropriate focus on English, mathematics and science. Careful records of all national and optional test results are kept from pupils' entry to the school, and passed on from year to year. After the statutory tests at the end of Years 2 and Year 6, the local education authority provides the school with a detailed analysis of test results, which they use to predict the levels of attainment they

expect individual pupils to achieve by the end of the year. Additionally, due to the high rate of mobility of pupils in the area, the school takes great care to assess the attainment of new pupils on entry and to track their progress and this has a positive impact on their subsequent achievement.

52. Teachers use the information from all tests soundly. They identify where additional support is needed and have established the practice of setting targets for individuals and groups of pupils, although these are in the early stages of development. The co-ordinators recognise that there is more work to be done to improve these so that the pupils become increasingly involved in their own learning. They are also working hard and successfully to establish useful systems for measuring progress in the remainder of the curriculum areas, for example by planning a special 'moderation day' for each subject. The use of assessment and day-to-day marking is satisfactory overall. Teachers throughout the school mark work in most subjects regularly and conscientiously, which is a strong feature of teaching, but marking is not yet established consistently as a tool for assessment. The school is now in a good position to develop the use of day-to-day assessment as a means of showing pupils what they can do to improve and for planning the next day's work at the precise level of difficulty for individuals and groups within their class.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. The school has been successful in maintaining and building upon its very good relationships with parents since the time of the last inspection. As a result, parents have very positive views of the school and want to send their children there. They feel that the school is very approachable if they have any queries or problems, that the staff have high expectations for their children, who are helped to become mature and responsible. They also believe that the school is well led and managed, and are confident that their children are happy there, making good progress because they are taught well. These views are well founded. A tiny minority of parents expressed some dissatisfaction with homework provision, but these concerns are not justified. The homework arrangements are similar to those found in many schools.
54. There are well-established procedures for the induction of children entering the reception classes. There is good communication with parents, who are given the opportunity to attend meetings for further information. A useful pre-school profile is compiled, and children gradually become used to the school environment through the staggered entry during the first few weeks. This all makes a positive contribution to helping the children to settle in the school.
55. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved at all stages and the comments they make on report slips are very supportive. They are well informed at every stage of the process and copies of their children's individual education plans and targets are sent home when appropriate. Two copies are sent for signing. If parents are happy they sign and return one to the school, keeping the other for reference. If they need to discuss anything they make an appointment to speak to the special educational needs co-ordinator. All parties believe this system works very well.
56. The links the school has made with the parents of its pupils are very good. This is because the school is especially sensitive to the circumstances of its parent and pupil community, who have often had to move from one school to another. Consequently, the school makes extra efforts to keep parents informed and to find out what they think. Parents are consulted about relevant matters, such as the playground code of contact, and school security, and their opinions have been listened to and acted upon. There is close liaison with parents when children start at the school, and flexibility about their settling in arrangements. Staff are readily accessible to all parents and happy to chat to them about their children's wellbeing at any time. To make life easier for parents, the school also offers them childcare facilities on its premises.
57. Information for parents is good, because it is detailed and comprehensive. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with events and developments, while termly topic sheets and guidance on homework sheets help parents to support their children's learning. Parents value the amount of information that they get and feel that it makes a difference to the help they can give their children. The governors' annual report to parents now fully meets requirements.

58. Reporting to parents on their children's progress is good, because the school makes every effort to keep parents informed throughout the year. Each half-term, the teachers report formally to parents, either through a consultation, a pupil progress sheet or the annual written report. These systems are much more extensive than those found in most schools. The pupil progress sheets in particular are a good innovation, as they give parents a quick and regular overview of how well their children are doing for their age. Annual reports are satisfactory. They give a clear picture of what children can do, but they do not indicate whether this is good, average or below expectations for children of that age. In addition, the quality of the targets given in the reports has not improved since the last inspection. They are often too vague to be useful to parents who want to help their children improve further.
59. Parents make a good contribution to the life of the school and their children's education. They support the school's aims and uphold its rules and routines. Very few take their children out of school for holidays during term-time, for example, and almost all make sure that they explain their children's absences straightaway. Parents help their children and the teachers by hearing reading at home regularly and ensuring that homework is completed on time. Some parents have the time to work actively for the school as governors, classroom helpers or members of the thriving Friends' Association, and they make a significant and substantial contribution to the school community.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The school is led and managed well and this quality has been maintained since the last inspection. The headteacher, staff and governors have worked hard to ensure that there are appropriate values and policies in place and that parents share these. The school aims are reflected very well in the life and work of the school. The headteacher, deputy headteachers and staff work very closely together and have created a corporate approach to decision-making that operates efficiently. The headteacher and senior management team have worked particularly effectively to create a whole-school ethos in order to overcome the difficulties caused by the physical distance between the two buildings. There is a caring atmosphere, based on consideration for the whole individual, in which pupils feel valued and develop their confidence and self-respect. The school has an effective learning environment in almost all classes and relationships are good. This is reflected especially in the close teamwork of all staff and governors.
61. The headteacher's strong leadership has been effective in providing a clear educational direction for the school. There are challenging but realistic targets for raising attainment, firmly based on a good knowledge of the pupils and their capabilities. Development planning is undertaken well, staff and governors have a close involvement and the appropriate priorities for school improvement are identified accurately. The senior management has monitored the quality of teaching and identified clear points for development based on a knowledgeable evaluation of the provision. Consequently, there is a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and appropriate support has been put in place where it is needed. Planning is always forward-looking, so that there are contingency plans to modify the curriculum if the number of pupils on roll necessitates a change to mixed-age classes.
62. The whole school is very clear about the direction it will take in the future. Performance management systems are used very effectively to ensure that teachers have appropriate objectives and are given every opportunity to build on their professional skills. The analysis of test results is used well to support the identification of areas for improvement and to demonstrate teachers' success in raising attainment. The headteacher has built a strong team of committed teachers at Key Stage 2, but has had difficulties in recruiting some suitably experienced staff for Key Stage 1. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. The committed co-ordinator is efficient and has a good understanding of the needs of the youngest children of the school. She ensures that there is good curriculum provision, and keeps clear records of the children's development.
63. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is a member of the school's senior management team and as such she is ideally placed to lead and manage this important area of the school's work. Many pupils in the school are in need of support of varying degrees, including those who have had many moves of school. The considerable expertise of the co-ordinator, and her team of well-qualified learning support assistants, ensures that pupils receive all the support they need. She is

highly effective and the paperwork is thorough and very efficiently managed. The co-ordinator for special educational needs and the special educational needs link governor work closely together for the benefit of the pupils and both have real understanding of the needs and problems that arise in the school. The governing body supports these pupils well. A good example of that was highlighted when central funding was reduced, but the governing body decided to match the remaining funding in order to keep up the levels of support in all groups.

64. The governing body is very supportive of the school and conscientious in carrying out its legal responsibilities. Governors work with a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are involved well in shaping its future direction. Committees work effectively and many governors are frequent visitors to the school, sitting in on lessons and holding discussions with key staff.
65. The school is well aware of its duty towards all its pupils, including those who move in and out of the area, often at short notice. A very effective induction plan has been devised to ensure pupils are assimilated and settle down as quickly as possible. Records are promptly requested and assessments are carried out in order to ascertain how best support might be given. This happens very quickly, because the support team is flexible in timetable and approach. The headteacher and staff work hard to maintain a stable, friendly environment, where all pupils can feel part of the community.
66. Responsibilities are shared out equitably and teachers take their responsibilities seriously, attending training and supporting their colleagues with problems. Pupils' work is planned in detail and co-ordinators take care to ensure that there are appropriate schemes of work for all subjects. Teachers work closely together and share their planning, so that co-ordinators are able to monitor what is planned for their subjects. Consequently, most teaching builds consistently on what pupils already know and understand. Results of the national tests are analysed each year so that weaknesses can be identified and adjustments made to the curriculum. The co-ordinators for English and mathematics have had opportunities to monitor and work with their colleagues in order to analyse strengths and weaknesses in detail and draw up plans to improve resources and planning. Their leadership has had a significant impact on the teaching of their subjects and the standards the pupils attain. Other co-ordinators are developing their roles in taking responsibility for raising attainment and there is a suitable programme to monitor teaching and standards in their subjects this term. They write action plans to bring about the required improvements. However, many of them are new to their roles and have yet to become fully conversant with the standards and planning.

Strategic use of resources

67. Financial resources continue to be used very effectively. The school applies the principles of best value well. The governing body compares pupils' performance with that of similar schools, and also looks at the school's patterns of expenditure alongside statistics for comparable local schools. Well-advised by the headteacher, the governing body uses the budget wisely, with a strong focus on supporting priorities identified for improvements to teaching and learning. The very recent audit judged the systems to be managed very efficiently and identified no major issues for action. There has been recent high expenditure on setting up the new computer suite and this important new resource is already beginning to help raise pupils' attainment in information and communication technology. Similarly there has been a well-considered initiative to employ extra classrooms assistants so as to give extra support to pupils in all numeracy and literacy lessons. The school's research has demonstrated that their work has had a significant effect on the standards these pupils attain.
68. Governors recognise other needs specific to the school such as the impact of mobility on the class sizes. They have, therefore, suitable contingency plans for any foreseeable increase or reduction in pupil numbers. They are careful to consider competitive quotations when this is appropriate, for instance for the wiring of the new computer suite. A particular strength is the importance attached to consulting with parents and to considering their views about the school.

69. The very good strategic allocation of the budget in the school development plan is backed up by careful procedures for routine management of finances. With very good support from administrative staff, the headteacher checks expenditure very carefully to ensure it is in line with what has been planned. The large amount carried forward from last year has enabled the school to repay a loan from the local education authority. Funds given to the school for specific purposes are used appropriately. For instance, income allocated to benefit pupils with special educational needs is spent appropriately on staffing and resources to enable them to make the same progress as other pupils. Governors receive reports of expenditure regularly and consider whether the expected benefits of particular initiatives are being gained.
70. The funding allocated to the school is similar to that given to other primary schools. When account is taken of all aspects of the school's work, including pupils' achievements; the quality of teaching; good attitudes to work that are generated among pupils; the strong leadership and management, the school gives sound value for money.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

71. The staff are committed and hard working. They have, overall, a positive impact on the standards that pupils achieve and are conscientious about developing their professional expertise by, for example, attending courses. The school recognises the importance of this in its plans for development. There are sufficient teaching and support staff to teach the areas of the National Curriculum and religious education and they have had appropriate training to carry out their roles effectively. Their various areas of expertise are matched well to the positions that they hold in the school. However, the school has had significant problems in attracting teachers with suitable qualifications and experience for Key Stage 1 in recent years. The professional development of teachers is supported by the effective procedures for staff appraisal. The learning support assistants have all received some training and they make an effective contribution to the standards that pupils attain through their work with groups and individuals. There is also a good system of performance management to help their professional development.
72. Each subject area has a member of staff to act as co-ordinator in each key stage and this helps all members of staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and to develop their management expertise. Newly qualified teachers are supported well by an induction scheme that enables them to make a full contribution to the school within a short time scale. They are clear about what they need to do, and liaise closely with other members of staff. The administrative and maintenance staff make very positive contributions to the smooth running of the school community.
73. The accommodation at the school is satisfactory. The buildings are maintained well and give adequate space for the teaching of the National Curriculum and religious education. There has been development of the Key Stage 1 library since the last inspection and it is now conveniently situated. It is an attractive area of the school and is used well. At Key Stage 2, plans are in hand to erect a picket fence in the area around the mobile classrooms to make them more secure. However, many classrooms do not provide an appropriate level of exclusion of outside noise. The noise of aircraft from the nearby airbase and the busy road that passes very close to the Key Stage 1 buildings interrupts teaching and disturbs the concentration of the pupils. This results in the time available for teaching being less effective than it should be and the pupils' learning is affected adversely because it is difficult for the teachers to maintain a smooth flow to their lessons.
74. The school is fortunate to have large green playing areas in both the Key Stage 1 and 2 departments. However, the distance between the two parts of the school has a negative impact on the efficient use of time and resources. Members of staff and pupils who need to move from one part of the school to the other spend their time unproductively on this journey alongside a road that is polluted by noise and exhaust fumes. The situation makes it particularly difficult for the pupils from both key stages to mix together socially or academically. The local education authority has drawn up plans to extend the Key Stage 2 site to accommodate the infant department, but this positive move is hampered by a lack of funds.
75. Learning resources are sufficient in both quantity and quality to enable effective teaching of the curriculum. There are now computer suites in both parts of the school and these make a positive

impact on the standards achieved in information and communication technology. In most other subjects the range and quality of resources is satisfactory for effective teaching, although this is not the case in religious education, geography and history where resources are not adequate for the demands of the curriculum. In music, physical education and science there is a good range of high quality resources that support the teaching of these subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

76. In order to improve the educational provision for pupils, the governors, in partnership with the headteacher and staff, should:
- Raise standards in speaking and listening throughout the school, by identifying and using all opportunities to improve the pupils' skills. *(Paragraphs 1, 5, 7, 9, 33, 81, 83, 98 and 145)*
 - Raise standards in history, at both key stages, by implementing the new scheme of work and ensuring that all the necessary skills are taught in each year. *(Paragraphs 8, 35, 142 and 143)*
 - Improve the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1, in particular by improving the planning, the use of time and the organisation of lessons. *(Paragraphs 19, 22, 26, 30, 118, 128, 140 and 161)*
 - Improve the provision for pupils' cultural development throughout all subjects of the curriculum. *(Paragraphs 43 and 155)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

100

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

41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	12	39	38	8	1	0
Percentage	2	12	39	38	8	1	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR– Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)

426

Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals

7

Special educational needs

YR – 6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

2

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

80

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language

6

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission

49

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

50

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

School data

3.9

National comparative data

5.4

Unauthorised absence

%

School data

0.2

National comparative data

0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	32	32	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	27	32
	Girls	29	31	30
	Total	58	58	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (83)	90 (85)	97 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	28	32
	Girls	30	30	31
	Total	59	58	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (85)	91 (95)	97 (92)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	24	34	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	19	24
	Girls	32	30	34
	Total	51	49	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (86)	84 (81)	100 (95)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	20	22
	Girls	27	29	31
	Total	43	49	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (86)	84 (89)	91 (95)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	327	1	
White – Irish	0		
White – any other White background	19		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0		
Mixed – White and Black African	0		
Mixed – White and Asian	0		
Mixed – any other mixed background	0		
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0		
Black or Black British – African	0		
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1		
Chinese	0		
Any other ethnic group	0		
No ethnic group recorded	58		

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.1
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	235

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	820,361
Total expenditure	790,458
Expenditure per pupil	1,961
Balance brought forward from previous year	42,046

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6

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	406
Number of questionnaires returned	61
Percentage of questionnaires returned	15

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	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	39	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	48	0	3	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	41	7	5	2
The teaching is good.	67	28	0	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	26	5	2	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	20	0	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	20	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	64	28	3	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	75	23	0	2	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	44	0	2	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	44	5	5	3

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

77. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. The children in the two reception classes and the mixed reception and Year 1 class achieve well, and make good progress. Most children start the reception year with levels of attainment below those usual for their age, and well below expectations in the skills of communication, language and literacy, and in some areas of their personal, social and emotional development. By the time they enter Year 1, the vast majority of children achieve standards that are just below what is typical for their age in some areas of their learning, but in other areas attain standards which meet the expected levels. This shows a lower level of attainment than in the previous inspection, but, given the low starting point, it demonstrates good progress. The good overall standards of teaching, the monitoring of children's progress and achievement and the commitment of the staff makes a strong contribution towards the children's achievements.

Personal, social and emotional development

78. Most of the children enter the school with skills that are below expectations in this area of their learning and some are well below expectations. Many have difficulty in relating to each other, taking turns and sharing, and have a short concentration span. Teachers ensure that routines are immediately established and children begin to learn what is expected of them. For example, they soon learn how to say 'please' and 'thank you', and to sit in a circle and listen, and they are beginning to respond to what they hear with relevant comments. They begin to show increased independence in selecting and carrying out activities, and also show a good degree of independence when changing for their physical education lessons. However, they do not consistently show a sound aptitude for perseverance or consideration of others. Although they are developing a respect for their own culture and beliefs, and those of others, this is below the level usually seen in children of this age.

79. Boys frequently try to dominate when using the sand tray or construction kits, and many children have little idea as yet for the need for care of equipment when using such activities. Although boisterous when engaged in some activities, some children are reticent when asked to perform or participate in activities that are new to them. For example, children were shy when given opportunity to demonstrate sounds using musical instruments, and a few were hesitant about joining in the activities of physical education. With the support and understanding of teachers, the children do make good progress, and by the time they reach Year 1, many of them achieve the standards that are expected for children of this age group in their personal, social and emotional development.

80. The quality of teaching in this area is consistently good. Every opportunity is used to reinforce this aspect of children's learning, whether it is planned or spontaneous. Teachers have high expectations for behaviour and attitudes, and ensure that the children are aware of these expectations, right from the beginning of their time in the reception classes. At the same time, staff provide a caring atmosphere, where children can develop a sense of right and wrong and grow in confidence. Teachers have a good awareness of those children with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English, and, on the whole, carefully help them to integrate with other children and make progress in their personal development. The staff are particularly supportive of those who enter the school during their reception year and need help to settle in.

Communication, language and literacy

81. Many children's communication, language and literacy skills in English are well below average when they enter the school. Although the standards of attainment reached are still below what is expected for children as they enter Year 1, their achievements are good. On entry to the school, children's skills for speaking and listening are particularly weak, and this greatly hampers their initial progress. Children have an appropriate vocabulary, but many of them are not able to put together their thoughts into coherent sentences. For example, when looking at books they name and identify

the objects and animals that they see, but are not able to extend this information into ideas or statements. Their inability to listen is a real weakness. This was noted in the previous inspection, and there has been little improvement in this area. Whether in a group, class, or even individual situation, children's attention soon wanders, they are easily distracted, and they constantly try to interrupt. Teachers ensure they use a varying range of strategies and activities in order to sustain the children's interest.

82. At the beginning of their time in the reception classes, children enjoy books in the book corner, but find difficulty in sustaining their interest. Individual children show an enjoyment of books and the humour within them, but offer very few comments. A few recognise single sounds and words, but do not demonstrate a curiosity about print. Their progress is good so that by the end of the reception year, they are demonstrating sound basic reading skills. Many of the children enter the reception classes with well below average skills in writing. They understand that marks on paper convey meaning. They write 'Get Well' cards to Humpty Dumpty, writing it in their own way, and a minority write their own name. The work in the books from the previous year shows how well the children, whatever their ability, make progress. By the time they reach Year 1, the more able children are beginning to write two or three sentence stories and use their knowledge of letter sounds to help with their writing. Children of average ability recognise single letters and write single sentences under a picture, while less able children know individual letters and their writing is emerging.
83. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is good overall. The teaching of basic skills is consistently good, ensuring that children have a solid foundation on which to build their learning. Teachers recognise any child who is potentially gifted or talented, and also those with special educational needs or whose first language is not English, and ensure that all groups have the appropriate challenge. The teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, and an understanding of what is needed for children to progress. They make on-going assessments carefully and the comments on children's work clearly show what was needed to improve it, and the steps taken to help this. The teachers ensure that the constructive use of language permeates all areas of learning, and that their planning incorporates opportunities for speaking and listening on a daily basis. However, there is no comprehensive and structured programme for developing speaking and listening. Learning support assistants provide helpful support, but are not prepared sufficiently well to aid the further good promotion of speaking and listening skills.

Mathematical development

84. Many children enter the reception classes with levels of mathematical understanding just below average. At this early stage of their time in the reception classes, most show that they can count and match to five and some go further. They recognise patterns when guided by their teachers, but most are not able to copy or make patterns of their own when using coloured cubes or printing. Some are beginning to recognise shapes, such as squares and circles, but they lack a basic mathematical vocabulary. Through activities such as cooking, and the use of the sand tray, they immediately begin to develop their understanding of weighing and capacity. They appreciate how mathematics is all around them in the wider environment when they walk with teachers to the local shops. During these outings, shapes and signs, patterns and numbers are all pointed out to the children by the teachers and learning support assistants.
85. A study of previous work shows that the achievements of children as they proceed through the year are good. By the time they reach Year 1, most are reaching the standards expected for the age group. They add and subtract, with the more able children using numbers to at least 20 competently. Their understanding of measure and the language of mathematics is sound, showing that they can order objects according to size and recognise 'shorter' and 'longer', and use terms such as 'less than' and 'more than' in the right context.
86. The teaching of mathematics is always at least satisfactory and is good overall. Teachers make good use of a variety of strategies and resources to stimulate children's thinking skills, to motivate them, and to provide a good grounding in basic mathematical skills. The good teaching is demonstrated when the staff link group activities well with what children are learning. These activities help to reinforce concepts being taught during whole-class sessions. Most teachers use

challenging questions to enhance and extend children's learning, and have high expectations. The teachers are providing suitable learning opportunities for children of all abilities, which is an improvement on the previous inspection, when the more able children were not sufficiently challenged. However, the teachers sometimes miss opportunities to extend children's learning by further discussion and effective questions. Some sessions are too long, and thus the impetus for learning is lost.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

87. Most children enter the school with knowledge of the world in which they live which is just below average, but they are not able to articulate their knowledge and understanding clearly. During their time in the reception classes, the children broaden considerably their understanding of the world around them and the beliefs and cultures of others. Their knowledge of the time and places is developed well through an interesting range of activities. They learn how to use different materials and tools to help them with designing and creating models. For example, the children use a selection of boxes to help them build a wall for 'Humpty Dumpty'.
88. Experiences, such as a walk to the shops to buy the ingredients for cooking, help the children to recognise, more clearly, features of their immediate environment, the need for safety near roads, and, at the same time, contribute much to their language development. Through cooking activities, the children observe how things change when mixed, stirred or heated. They begin to consider ideas of predicting and testing through an investigation with eggs, and, through this, start to form their own questions. The children's work of the previous year shows that they have gained a wide spectrum of knowledge, providing a good preparation for children's learning in the subject areas of the National Curriculum, particularly science. By the time they reach Year 1, children's attainment is similar to that expected for the age group. However, there was little evidence of the use of information and communication technology during the inspection, although this area is included appropriately in planning for this year.
89. The teaching in this area of children's learning is good overall and sometimes very good. In one very successful lesson, the children were prepared very well for their walk, with maximum opportunities for learning during this visit to the shops, and in the ensuing conclusion. The quality of language and questioning used extended the children's perceptions of their environment, as well as developing their knowledge of the use of language. Overall, the lessons are exemplified by well-planned opportunities for children to gain in knowledge and understanding, using effective demonstration and questioning, with good expectations for what children should learn.

Physical development

90. The children make good progress in their physical development, and by the time they enter Year 1, have attained standards that are expected for their age group. When they enter the reception classes, a small minority is hesitant in taking part in physical education activities, but teachers show understanding and gentle encouragement to these children. The majority of the children show the expected level of control and dexterity when running, hopping and jumping. Children's language skills are also developed successfully in these lessons, as is their personal and social development. Within the classroom, children handle paints, pencils and scissors with sound, and, often, good control. When cutting out shapes to make 'Humpty Dumpty', for example, many show careful accuracy and dexterity.
91. The teaching of this aspect of children's development is good. In physical education, although the children take a while to settle and listen, the teachers manage them well. Teachers are well aware of safety and ensure that they have quiet attention before undertaking any activities. In these lessons, teachers provide good guidance, so that the children can fully explore movement and space. The children respond to this with quite a good degree of perseverance. In one good lesson seen, the teacher used effective strategies to ensure that a more boisterous child was fully stimulated and involved in the lesson. The learning support assistants provide valuable support to those who are uncertain or who have special educational needs, to participate fully. Regular opportunities are provided to help children develop sound manipulative skills in the range of activities for drawing, writing, painting and cutting.

Creative development

92. The children develop sound skills and achieve the expected levels of attainment in their creative development by the time they enter Year 1. Opportunities for role-play, which are linked with current topics, are used to develop children's imagination and creative thinking. However, the children's ability to participate in role-play is a weakness at the time of their entry to the reception classes, due to their lack of communication skills, and their inability to sustain their concentration. The artistic activities they undertake contribute much to the development of creativity. For example, children experiment with colour mixing, through the use of thin paint and by dropping blobs onto wet paper. This leads to much wonder and questions as they watch splattered paint growing and changing in size and shape. They look at finished results and each recognises a different object: a 'face', a 'butterfly', and a 'crown'. This inspires them to experiment and explore further.
93. The more able children use their creativity to 'write' letters to 'Humpty Dumpty' or to a 'prince' in the role-play castle. A study of children's previous work shows that they become confident with their paintings, and can use a range of different materials to make their own pictures. In music activities, the children are beginning to recognise percussion instruments and how they make sounds, using the new words they are learning, such as 'scraping', 'shaking' and 'tapping'. However, their skills for singing are at an early stage of development and many do not yet have the confidence to join in.
94. The quality of teaching is good overall, with one very good lesson seen. In this lesson, an atmosphere of awe was created as children observed the teacher's demonstration. She used their responses effectively, creating more wonder and developing their language skills, at the same time encouraging their creativity, thinking and observational skills. Teachers have sufficient knowledge to develop the creativity of children of all abilities successfully over a range of activities. Learning support assistants provide useful support, especially in helping to involve children with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English to participate in activities. The development of the children's musical ability is satisfactory overall, but the activities for singing lack sparkle and do not yet convey to the children a feeling for the joy of singing.

ENGLISH

95. Standards in English at the end of both key stages are average overall and have been maintained at this level since the time of the previous inspection. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests in reading showed that the standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 2 were close to the national average, but below the average levels when compared with similar schools. The standards in writing were below both the national average and the average attained by similar schools. The proportion of pupils who gained the higher level in writing was, however, close to the national average. The results of the National Curriculum tests for 2002 show that the pupils at the end of Year 2 attained standards in reading that were very close to the standards seen both nationally and in similar schools. However, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was lower than the national average. The standards in writing improved in 2002, and were close to the national average and an average proportion of pupils attained the higher standard. There has been no discernible pattern to the results over the years, reflecting the high level of mobility at Key Stage 1.
96. Pupils at the end of Year 6 attained standards in English in 2001 that were close to the standards reached by schools nationwide and those of similar schools. Standards rose in 2002; the results were above the national average and were well above those found in similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level in English has increased between 2001 and 2002, and this is also above the national average. The trend of results at Key Stage 2 is also uneven, falling, after a peak in 1999, and rising again in 2002. The school set cautious targets for 2002, for pupils in Year 6, and these were exceeded. The targets for 2003 are challenging but achievable.
97. The pupils come into Year 1 with underdeveloped language skills, especially in speaking and listening. Those presently in Years 2 and 6 are attaining standards in almost all areas that are similar to the national average and their achievement is good in all aspects apart from speaking and listening. The more able, gifted and talented make similar progress to their classmates because

they usually receive tasks that extend and challenge them. At the last inspection the standards at the end of Year 2 were higher, but at the end of Year 6 they were lower. The school has a much larger proportion than usual of pupils who enter and leave in all age groups, and at all points in the school year. In schools with such an unpredictable turnover, the results seldom show a consistent trend.

Speaking and listening

98. Overall, standards in speaking and listening at the end of both key stages are below average and the pupils do not do as well as they could. By the end of Year 2, some pupils show increasing confidence in speaking and begin to use more formal speech patterns. Younger pupils are given opportunities to practise these skills in their literacy lessons. An example of this was in a good lesson in Year 2, when pupils were encouraged to predict what would happen next in a story. However, this good practice was the exception rather than the rule, as in many lessons teachers failed to take opportunities to develop pupils' skills in this area. Pupils do not always find it easy to listen to teachers or each other in an attentive manner, and this can lead to poor behaviour. In some lessons for older pupils, teachers sometimes attempt to move the lesson on more quickly by doing most of the talking. This fails to involve pupils or help them develop their confidence in speaking to an audience.
99. At the end of Year 6, some pupils demonstrate high standards, for example, when talking about their reading books and their work in other subjects. In a successful Year 6 lesson, the teacher developed the speaking and listening skills of pupils by encouraging them to rewrite a scene from 'Macbeth' in a modern style. The pupils responded well and were eager to volunteer ideas and phrases that would be suitable. During the inspection, however, there was no use of drama or role-play to develop their speaking and listening skills. Learning support assistants in the classroom play a valuable part. They clarify questions, explain new vocabulary, and encourage pupils to offer answers. However, not all teachers utilise the skills of these members of staff effectively and, sometimes, they are not given an active enough role in the lesson.

Reading

100. Standards in reading throughout the school are close to the national average and the pupils do well because the teaching they receive at the end of both key stages enables them to make good progress. The younger pupils develop skills that help them to read the text accurately. Pupils in Year 2 read many words confidently, and talk about their reading books in an interesting way. The more able pupils in Year 2 use a variety of strategies to work out words that they find difficult, such as splitting up the words, sounding out the letters and gaining clues from the illustrations. Not all pupils in Year 2 are clear about the difference between an author and illustrator and fiction and non-fiction. Some talk about the books and authors that they know, but these are a minority. Not all pupils in this age range know how to use their knowledge of the alphabet to find books or information. Even the pupils with sound standards of decoding words are not as good at interpreting the meaning of the text in anything more than a very literal way. Among older pupils, all know how to use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate texts and are familiar with the terms 'contents' and 'index'. In this age group, pupils are soundly developing their awareness of how to use CD-ROMs and the Internet to help with research.
101. Some of the pupils in Year 6 name authors and talk confidently about them, but a minority is less knowledgeable. Some of these pupils also have under-developed skills of searching the texts for deeper meaning and find it difficult to do more than recount the events of the story. Pupils mostly enjoy reading and read both fiction and non-fiction texts with enjoyment. The reading records for the younger pupils foster links between home and school effectively by getting parents and carers to add comments, which help their children to develop their reading skills. However, as pupils move into the older year groups, the records mainly list the books read with a comment from the teacher. These diaries have reading targets printed at the front, but these are not used, reducing their usefulness. The pupils who have special educational needs, or speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress as a result of the good support they receive with their reading.

102. There are two libraries in the school, one for pupils in the Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2, and the other for older pupils. Neither library is used much for private reading in free time, although they are pleasant areas. The library for older pupils has a good stock of non-fiction books and is used, appropriately, to develop the research skills of pupils. The library for younger pupils is an attractive and welcoming space. There is a good range of both fiction and non-fiction material. In this age group, pupils mainly use the library under the supervision of their teachers. Class libraries provide extra reading material.

Writing

103. The standards attained at the end of both key stages are close to the national average and the pupils' achievement is good with their progress accelerating towards the end of both key stages. At Key Stage 1, the more able, younger pupils develop good handwriting styles quickly and use capital letters and full stops to demarcate sentences. Most pupils spell short common words and longer regular words correctly. Where the words are spelt incorrectly, most pupils manage a version that is recognisable. The work seen in pupils' books covers the various areas of the National Curriculum satisfactorily. In the juniors, pupils write for a range of different purposes and use punctuation accurately. As they get older the majority of pupils use a joined and legible script consistently, but some pupils of all ability levels in Years 4 and 5 were still writing in pencil, which detracted from the presentation of their work.
104. There were some lively pieces of work in Year 6, where pupils had written on the theme 'A Murder Mystery'. Some pupils had added good descriptive phrases and created a mood and setting by imaginative language choices. The more able pupils organise ideas into grammatically correct complex sentences and show an increasing understanding of speech and question marks. However, even in Year 6, some pupils were still misspelling common words, for example, 'hotal', 'sea-sike', and making basic grammatical errors such as 'Me and my sister went'. The pupils in Year 4 wrote some interesting acrostic poems and these had obviously stimulated pupils to think about their choice of words. Pupils learn to follow planning structures and to organise their writing. Some lessons, however, do not take account of the needs of the more able pupils and provide little challenge for them.
105. Teachers sometimes take opportunities in other subjects to encourage pupils to increase their technical vocabulary and their use of spoken English. There were some good examples of this in music lessons, where terms like 'ostinato' and 'pentatonic' were used as a natural part of the teaching. The provision is not consistent, however, and opportunities are missed. There were some 'Letters from Evacuees', as part of a history display, which developed pupils' literacy, but there were few other examples in the sample of pupils' written work in subjects other than English.
106. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages and much is good, particularly for the oldest pupils at each key stage; consequently, the pupils learn soundly and often well. Most of the teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory, or good, with only a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching, examples of which occurred at both key stages. When the teaching is better, skilful questioning and explanations ensure that pupils understand their work. Praise is used well to show pupils that their work is valued and to encourage higher standards. In a good lesson in Year 5, on developing a play script, the teacher set a brisk pace, made effective use of a variety of strategies that kept pupils thinking about the subject matter, and challenged all pupils, including the most able. Pupils had a good grasp of this type of writing and could talk confidently about stage directions, dialogue and the role of the narrator.
107. In the less successful lessons, teachers set activities that have not been planned thoroughly. This leads to pupils losing concentration and making poor progress. Many teachers mark the pupils' work thoroughly, make regular comments to encourage and instruct and give effective points for improvement. However, this is not always the case, and practice in the school is inconsistent. The targets for the lesson are generally shared with the class, so that they are all clear about what they will be learning. Relationships are good and most teachers manage behaviour well. As a result, pupils work hard, show interest and sustain their concentration throughout the lesson. Most pupils co-operate well in group-work and, therefore, the subject makes a satisfactory contribution to their moral and social development.

108. There are two co-ordinators for English, one at each key stage. This arrangement is an effective way of ensuring that the needs of all age groups are met. The co-ordinators monitor teaching and scrutinise samples of work in each year group. Most teachers are secure in their knowledge of National Curriculum levels and this is helpful in assessing the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. There is a comprehensive system of assessment that looks at progress over the medium and long term, but there is too little focus on the day-to-day assessment of pupils. The school is developing a system of setting individual targets for pupils and, in some classes, this is now well established. This helps pupils to have a better understanding of what they need to do to achieve the next level in their progress through the National Curriculum.
109. There are satisfactory resources for the subject and they are of a good quality. The school is developing the use of information and communication technology to support literacy. Pupils at both key stages use computers competently to draft and re-draft work. Much of the use of information and communication technology in Key Stage 2 takes place in the computer suite, but there are plans to make more use of classroom computers for pupils to word-process their work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the effective arrangements for their support. Much of this takes place in the classroom, but, for some additional literacy support sessions, small groups of pupils work in the library or other areas of the school. There is good communication between the learning support assistants and class teachers, so the planning for these sessions takes account of the main focus of the work that the rest of the class is doing. The small number of pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress to the other pupils, and, again, the arrangements for their support are entirely appropriate.

MATHEMATICS

110. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards over the years have fluctuated, but have been rising at broadly the same rate as results nationally with the exception of 2000, when they fell to just below average. Significantly, this was a year in which support for the more able pupils was unavailable. This support was reinstated in 2001 and standards improved again to just above the national average. Results for 2002 were also above the national average, indicating that the improvement has been maintained. Inspection findings indicate that pupils in Year 2 are, again, on track to achieve standards above the average for their age. The 2001 and 2002 results at both key stages were above average in comparison with similar schools. This comparison does not take into account the high rate of mobility of pupils in the area. Teachers and support staff work hard to support and track the progress of pupils who arrive part way through their school career. Similarly, there is consistently good support for pupils with special educational needs and for those who speak English as an additional language. Consequently, pupils throughout the school are achieving well. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls at either key stage. Standards throughout the school have been maintained since the previous inspection. The school set cautious targets in 2002 for pupils Year 6 and exceeded them. The targets for 2003 are challenging but achievable.
111. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards have been consistently above average or better since the last inspection and have risen at the same rate as the national trend. In the tests in 2001 they were well above average compared with results nationally. The test results for 2002 were above the national average and well above the average of similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that the pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to achieve standards above the average for their age. This is because the quality of teaching is good overall throughout the key stage and teachers are making good use of the national strategy for teaching numeracy.
112. In Year 1, most pupils confidently recognise common two-dimensional shapes and use everyday language to describe them, for example, by saying that a circle is curved, has no straight lines and no corners. They begin to recognise interesting number patterns that occur naturally and this enables them to work out and explain, for example, how to add or subtract nine or 11, starting at any number up to 100. In a good Year 2 lesson seen, for example, one able pupil explained, 'To add 9 to 27, I just looked diagonally across the square and got 36'. A few less able pupils at this stage need some help to accurately move the hands of a clock an hour forward or back. By the end

of Key Stage 2, almost all pupils can use a one hundred square accurately to help them to add and subtract numbers.

113. From Years 3 onwards, pupils are encouraged to explore a range of strategies for arriving at answers and to explain their reasoning clearly. As a result, almost all describe how they use a variety of methods well to multiply two digit numbers. By the end of Year 6, many more able pupils successfully transfer these skills to more complex number work, for example, to express equivalent fractions and decimal numbers, reflecting standards consistently above that usual for their age. This was seen clearly in a very good lesson for pupils in Year 6, where the teacher provided problem cards for her class to work on in pairs. These both challenged them to think logically and developed their use of mathematical language and they quickly solved the problems. A very small minority of less able pupils at this stage has some difficulties, for example in recognising the value of digits in decimal numbers. However, because of the extra support, which teachers generously provide after school, most of these are on track to achieve the expected level by the end of Key Stage 2.
114. The quality of teaching is good overall and teachers make effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy at both key stages. The school ensures that the more able, the gifted and talented make similar progress to other pupils because they receive work designed to meet their needs. During the inspection, the teaching in the lessons seen in Key Stage 1 was satisfactory, with some good teaching in one Year 2 class. However, classes were not grouped according to ability until after the inspection and the scrutiny of last year's work suggests that teaching becomes more effective once they are organised in this way. The most significant strength in better lessons is that teachers have high expectations of pupils' use of mathematical strategies and vocabulary and provide lively and imaginative activities that challenge them to think for themselves. In a very good Year 4 lesson, for example, the teacher organised colour-coded strips of card of different lengths to develop pupils' understanding of equilateral and isosceles triangles. Consequently, they enjoyed the work, co-operated very well with each other and made very good gains in their learning. The teaching assistant was also fully involved in the planning and helped the less able group to achieve very well.
115. Teachers throughout the school mark work regularly and conscientiously, and pupils respond by trying hard to finish activities and taking pride in their work. Their use of day-to-day marking as a means of showing pupils how they can improve their work, however, is not consistently effective. Numeracy is developed soundly through other subjects, such as geography, although opportunities are missed to extend mathematical skills through science. Teachers throughout the school make satisfactory use, overall, of information and communication technology to teach numeracy. Some make good use of the overhead projector, particularly at the beginning of lessons, although more frequent use could be made of some of the software available to support work in the activities session of the lesson. The school has recently acquired an interactive whiteboard and more confident teachers are beginning to use this well to support teaching and learning. The resources for teaching number work fully meet requirements, but practical equipment for work involving three-dimensional shapes is inadequate.
116. The two co-ordinators lead the subject well, principally by ensuring that colleagues are clear about the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. They analyse results in national and optional tests very carefully to identify weaknesses in the school's performance and look for ways of eradicating these through staff training sessions. This is having a positive effect on achievement overall and there has been good improvement in the subject since the last inspection. Teachers are developing systems for setting group targets, which they share with pupils. This practice is providing a solid platform for further improvement.

SCIENCE

117. In 2001, the teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2, and the test results at the end of Year 6, showed that standards in science were similar to the national average and the average of similar schools. Standards rose in 2002; at the end of Key Stage 1 almost all pupils achieved the expected level, with just over a fifth at the higher level. This was above the national average and that of similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils achieved the expected level with half achieving the higher level in national tests, a performance well above the national

average and that of similar schools. These results are an improvement when compared with previous years and above the level reported during the previous inspection. The issue to raise standards, identified at that time, has been addressed successfully. Standards at present are above average at the end of Key Stage 2 and similar to the average at the end of Key Stage 1.

118. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, but there is a wide variation. While the teaching is occasionally good, it is also occasionally unsatisfactory. It is unsatisfactory in the mixed-age classes where the teachers have not yet established appropriate learning habits, so that the pace of lessons is slow, the work is not well planned or challenging enough. Where the teaching is good, the pupils learn effectively because they have the opportunity to think carefully and are given time to explain their ideas well, while more able pupils are challenged to make connections with previous understanding. When sequencing the seven stages in a person's life, for example, the more able pupils in Year 1 thought about which features changed over time and which remained the same and coloured in pictures carefully to show this.
119. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are similar to the average, although work by the previous year's pupils suggests that better progress had been made in Year 1 than in Year 2. Pupils at the beginning of Year 2 recall in detail what they have learned about themselves and their senses, how they investigated forces by running toy cars down ramps of different heights and measuring how far they travelled. They have a sound understanding of the conditions needed for plants to grow well and exploring the properties of magnets and which materials they attract.
120. Teaching is considerably better at Key Stage 2, where it is always at least satisfactory and usually at least good. Consequently, the standards at the end of the key stage are above average. Pupils learn well because most topics are taught through practical activities and investigation. For example, pupils in Year 3 test different floor coverings to see which would be most durable. A heavy stone was dropped onto each to check its resistance to denting. Pupils confidently determined how to maintain fairness by using the same stone, dropped from the same height. All observed and recorded the outcome correctly. More able pupils were challenged to explain why the pile of the carpet meant it showed no dents. This is a good example of a fairly simple investigation being used effectively to challenge pupils of different abilities through using the results to explain their findings and draw conclusions from them. Similarly, a teacher in Year 6 encouraged the pupils to draw thoughtful conclusions from their observations of how well bean seeds had germinated in different conditions. These pupils had a good understanding of the need for a single variable, constants and a control when undertaking fair tests.
121. Work in science contributes well to the development of the pupils' literacy skills. Science texts are sometimes used effectively during literacy lessons. Throughout the school, pupils are taught how to record their investigations in a scientific format beginning with a simple prepared recording sheet, so that, by Year 6, most pupils record their work independently to a good standard. Pupils are taught to label diagrams properly. The libraries have a good stock of up-to-date books to support the curriculum, which are new and show little sign of use. Links with numeracy are less well developed. Pupils learn to use tables to record results. These are sometimes translated into simple block graphs and occasionally continuous line graphs. Few opportunities are identified to use different graphs. The more able pupils are capable of using scatter graphs to compare statistics. The use of information and communication technology is underdeveloped, with little evidence of its use either as a research tool or for data handling.
122. Science lessons make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development because many of them are planned so that pupils work together in pairs or small groups. In their earlier years, many pupils find it difficult to co-operate without squabbling, but, by the time they reach the upper juniors, most work together well and take good care of the materials and equipment they use. The challenges given to the more able pupils help them develop their thinking skills well. Those with special educational needs and pupils whose first language is not English are supported well to make the progress of which they are capable.
123. The curriculum and scheme of work are good and the subject is led well. The co-ordinator at Key Stage 2 has ensured that science is taught well through the investigation process. Teachers' medium-term planning is monitored by the co-ordinator to ensure consistency, progression and

continuity. Assessment procedures are good; they are built into each topic, where a particular activity is identified with pointers for grading the level of pupils' knowledge and their ability to undertake scientific investigation. Further assessment procedures are being tested, based on the published scheme being used. Resources are sufficient to meet the work covered. At Key Stage 2, these are stored very well for easy access, but at Key Stage 1 they are less tidy.

ART AND DESIGN

124. Only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. However, an observation of lessons at Key Stage 2, a scrutiny of pupils' previous work, and discussions with them, demonstrate that the standards pupils reach at the end of both key stages are similar to those expected for pupils of this age. Standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection. Pupils' achievements overall are satisfactory. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English, make satisfactory progress in developing different techniques and skills, and in their knowledge of the work of a range of different artists. The use of technical language was identified as a weakness of the previous inspection, and this shows only a limited improvement.
125. In Years 1 and 2, the standard of pupils' previous work reflects satisfactory teaching and learning. There are sound examples of pupils' response to a variety of ideas. An attractive example was seen in the different techniques used to capture the image of different flowers, using drawings, painting, collage and printing. Through examining the style of Van Gogh, the pupils in Year 2 carefully build their observational and technical skills to create their own competent self-portraits. They explain different techniques, such as creating tones of colour, but, at times, the completed result does not reflect a consistently good ability to use these skills.
126. There is a similar picture in Key Stage 2, where pupils are confident in what they have learned about different styles and techniques. They know how to use perspective when creating landscapes, and discuss the merits of using clay. Observational drawings show their increasing ability to use line and tone to improve their work, especially when capturing elements of facial expression and human figures. Pupils in Year 6 recreate the style of William Morris effectively by designing their own block prints. All the pupils have learned through a wide range of experiences and materials. Although their finished work is of a satisfactory standard, at times pupils' work lacks maturity and a boldness of style. The most attractive and well-produced efforts are found in Years 3 and 4, where pupils' work shows how, for example, they use different paper to re-create Victorian tiles. They successfully capture the vibrant colours and shapes of leaves. Pupils also show that they understand the principles of lightening and darkening shades. They use sketchbooks as a regular feature, but these are not sufficiently well organised, or annotated, to show pupils' progress.
127. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Curriculum plans show that lessons are planned suitably with clear ideas of what the pupils are to learn. This ensures the satisfactory use of materials and the teaching of a range of techniques. However, the lack of bold creativity in the outcomes of some of the pupils' work suggests that the pupils are not being extended sufficiently. An example of good teaching in Key Stage 2 ensured carefully planned opportunities for sharing ideas. Continual support and discussion by the teacher helped to extend pupils' understanding of the style of William Morris, alongside the use of different techniques. This also contributed to the enjoyment and concentration of pupils, who showed perseverance in applying themselves to their tasks.
128. In the only lesson observed at Key Stage 1, the teaching was unsatisfactory. There was a limited extension of the pupils' skills, because of the lack of sustained and worthwhile support. The lack of effective questioning and constructive encouragement to help pupils evaluate and improve their work resulted in unsatisfactory progress within the lesson. Without an appropriate challenge, pupils become restless and do not give of their best. Frequently lessons at both key stages are too long, which leads to some loss of concentration by pupils.
129. Overall, it is obvious from discussions that pupils enjoy their work in art and design. Pupils in Year 2 speak eagerly of what they have experienced, while a pupil in Year 6 states that 'it is good to talk about what we have done; it brings back good memories'. Art and design makes a satisfactory

contribution to pupils' personal development. At Key Stage 2, for example, the pupils work particularly well together and share ideas. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to their cultural development, through the knowledge of a range of western artists, and an examination of art from other cultures, such as African fabric printing, although this aspect of their cultural development is more limited.

130. The two co-ordinators are enthusiastic about art and design and are eager to raise the profile of the subject. They have evaluated the curriculum and successfully drawn up a new scheme of work to meet the needs of the school. The co-ordinators have appropriate plans to monitor the subject through an evaluation of teaching and a closer examination of pupils' work. Assessment procedures are in place, but there are no worthwhile portfolios of pupils' work in Key Stage 2 to show how well pupils achieve. Information and communication technology is used to create pictures and images, and seek information, but it has not been used sufficiently to have an impact on pupils' creative ability. The use of a digital camera in Key Stage 1, however, is a useful aid to pupils' understanding of making self-portraits. Similarly, the library is under-used to support pupils' learning in the subject. The extra-curricular art club provides additional opportunities for pupils with a special interest or ability in art, and this has produced some lively and colourful wall displays. The school has a good display policy, but at the time of the inspection there were limited attractive displays to celebrate pupils' work or provide stimulation.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

131. Few lessons in design and technology were observed, but other evidence shows that, by the end of both key stages, pupils attain standards typical for their age groups. They make satisfactory progress and the subject has maintained steady improvement since the time of the last inspection. All pupils enjoy their work because appropriate tasks are designed to include pupils of all abilities.
132. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. This is because teachers have high expectations and make good use of the whole design process. This means that pupils in both key stages understand how to design and evaluate what they have made, as well as appreciating these elements in made objects. Thus, when pupils design moving pictures, playground equipment, wheeled vehicles, sandwiches, and structures, teachers ensure that they consider the purpose, users and safety, for example of the finished article, from the very beginning. Focused tasks are planned well to practise certain skills, such as sewing for a money carrier. The pupils evaluate the finished product, but, sometimes, this occurs in insufficient depth. They also consider how they can change or modify their design, and, in some instances, carry this out.
133. The teachers make good use of the sessions at the end of lessons to reinforce learning and introduce the next tasks in the series. In this way, they build on pupils' skills. Pupils also have opportunities to consider problems and to help each other with solutions. A good example was seen in a class in Year 2, where pupils exchanged ideas and shared their difficulties. The pupils were very good at saying what they had found hard, and many solutions were offered by classmates to improve work. They proposed good ideas for methods of attachment, for example eyes, lines on a dress, or for attaching spiky hair. They thought hard about their puppets and how they would carry out the design brief. Older pupils focused on learning stitches they would need to join and decorate their money containers. Although the teacher had planned to demonstrate and practise many stitches, this focused practical task was successful in assessing the pupils' readiness for the next stage. In fact, they needed much more time and practice, and the teacher discussed this with them in the ending session of the lesson. This enabled them to see how to improve and helped to raise the self-esteem of those who felt they had failed to sew well.
134. A particularly good feature of the school's design and technology process is the in-depth study often carried out on a project. An interesting example was the way in which pupils in Year 6 had tackled the theme of structures. They had considered this topic from many angles, from a shelter for bikes, to one for use on a desert island. Dimensions of the wood they needed, lists and instructions were generally well laid out. However, throughout the school, pupils have too few opportunities to use information and communication technology within their design process. Whilst teachers ensure that pupils design well, they do not always consider giving sufficient opportunities to choose tools as well as materials.

135. The co-ordinators are both new to the post, and were not in the school at the time of the last inspection. They have good ideas and a vision for what they would like to achieve. They work well together and are confident leaders and positive managers. They have set out an achievable action plan, which includes opportunities for them to monitor what is taking place in each key stage. They have successfully put in place a structured curriculum plan that takes account of mixed-age classes. They have also adapted the national model schemes to fit more closely the topics in the school. Wherever possible, the co-ordinators encourage teachers to reinforce skills learned by pupils in literacy and numeracy, for example, lists and instructions, or accurate measurement. The work planned for pupils with special educational needs always has in mind their individual education plans, and they try to provide appropriate equipment for pupils who are left-handed, for example. Those whose first language is not English receive the support they need to develop their skills and knowledge soundly. Both co-ordinators have realistic judgements about the standards achieved in design and technology at present, and both possess the expertise, and commitment from the staff, to make improvements.

GEOGRAPHY

136. Pupils at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are achieving standards similar to those found in most schools and the school has maintained the standards reported in the last inspection. Pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are aware that temperatures vary in different parts of the world and talk about what sort of clothes they would need to pack in their suitcase to travel to different destinations. They develop a sound awareness of where Ilchester is in relation to other places in their own country such as London. Through the travels of *'Barnaby Bear'*, the pupils become familiar with the names and locations of places in the world and successfully point them out on a globe atlas. Most have a secure knowledge of the four main points on the compass, although some less able pupils have difficulty in using them accurately.
137. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils clearly appreciate the many uses of water and use appropriate technical language to explain the characteristics and behaviour of rivers. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 extend this secure understanding through the investigation of the importance of water internationally. This enables them to explore important environmental issues, such as pollution and disease, thoughtfully, and this makes a good contribution to their personal development. In the course of their work, most pupils develop reasonable map-reading skills and some more able pupils accurately use four-figure grid references, providing a useful extension to what they learn in numeracy lessons. A few, at this stage, have difficulty in recognising and naming principal rivers and continents. However, pupils with special educational needs are well supported, and those who speak English as an additional language also receive help, where appropriate, so that all pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils' learning also makes a positive contribution to the development of their writing skills, for example, when they are asked to write about why people chose particular locations for establishing a village or town.
138. The quality of teaching is sound overall, throughout the school. There is some good teaching at both key stages and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teachers introduce a range of imaginative ideas to stimulate pupils' interest and this has a positive impact on their achievement. Pupils in Year 2, for example, were given interesting maps and plans to study and this successfully developed their ability to recognise and discuss key features using the correct language. Similarly, a teacher of a class in Year 4 supplied useful photographs of an Indian villager so that the pupils could compare it with Ilchester, thus providing opportunities for pupils to develop further their technical vocabulary, as they grow older. In Key Stage 2 classes, teachers encourage the use of folders in which pupils can keep their work. This practice results in very positive attitudes from the majority of pupils, most of whom organise their work well and take pride in its presentation. Occasionally, the expectations of pupils' recording of their work is not as high as it could be, or the teachers' planning is limited by a lack of suitable resources.
139. The two co-ordinators have been recently appointed to their roles and are providing sound leadership. They have adapted the scheme of work to meet the most recent curriculum developments and a sound system of assessment is in place. The present school improvement

plan includes opportunities for them to monitor standards and create a portfolio of pupils' work, moderated against nationally agreed standards. There are some opportunities for teachers to develop pupils' technical skills, for example, through fieldwork, during residential visits, although these are not automatically included in teachers' planning for each year group. Similarly, teachers plan some opportunities for pupils to use computer technology, for example, when using world map software, although planning for the use of information and communication technology is not firmly established. The school library is not used regularly to promote pupils' research skills. The co-ordinators have begun to upgrade resources for the subject and new equipment is in regular use in Key Stage 1. The resources in Key Stage 2 do not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and are in need of renewal. The new co-ordinators both have the capacity to ensure these developments. There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection.

HISTORY

140. Although no history lessons were observed at Key Stage 1, it is apparent from other evidence that pupils reach levels that are below what would be expected at the end of both key stages. Their achievement, including that of pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English, is unsatisfactory. Standards have fallen since the previous inspection, when they were similar to those in other schools. This is because the curriculum has not been planned sufficiently well to develop the pupils' skills and knowledge to the expected level. The situation is improving in the Key Stage 2 classes, because there is a new scheme of work that is beginning to make a positive impact, but this has yet to be fully implemented in Key Stage 1.
141. Teachers use the local area, which is rich in Roman remains, to give the pupils throughout the school a basic understanding of life in Roman times. Scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with them show that they learn effectively in Year 1, but not in Year 2. The younger pupils, including those with special educational needs, make accurate use of the terms 'before' and 'after' and compare lives in the past. For instance, they talk thoughtfully about the life of children in Victorian times and how it differs from their own. They have a secure understanding about some of the social and industrial changes of the time and identify some of the famous people who lived in the past. Most pupils can put important events in their own lives in the correct order. They draw a picture timeline showing a baby, a toddler and a child, and identify toys they used to play with when they were younger.
142. However, pupils in Year 2 have not followed the National Curriculum programme of study. Their knowledge of history is limited by the choice of a topic they studied, which made little contribution to the development of their knowledge in the areas required by the National Curriculum. While these pupils have a sound understanding of how historical evidence is collected, and the work of archaeologists, they have not developed their understanding of change over time to the expected level, and their knowledge of famous people of the past is limited.
143. At Key Stage 2 the pupils' knowledge is also at a low level, but changes in the curriculum are already having an impact. All the classes studied the same topic, Victorian Britain, last year. However, the teachers in Years 3 and 4 planned together, as did those in Years 5 and 6, and the work set for the pupils was very similar. Consequently, the programme for the older and more able pupils was not demanding enough. The tasks did not explore the topic in sufficient depth and omitted some key areas of study, such as the impact of growing industrialisation. The pupils have a sound understanding of many of the changes, such as in schooling and transport, and contrast conditions for the rich and poor. However, they have little appreciation of the way in which changes during Victoria's reign altered the lives of the people of the time. Their understanding of the reasons behind actions taken during the period are very superficial and, apart from Lord Shaftesbury and Florence Nightingale, the pupils have little knowledge of the work and impact of famous individuals of the period.
144. No lessons were observed at Key Stage 1, because the subject was not being taught at this time in the term. However, the pupils have not received a satisfactory experience in the past because the curriculum was not planned to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum sufficiently. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is now sound and sometimes good, particularly for the older pupils; this is

beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' knowledge and understanding. The national model scheme of work has been implemented effectively and the teachers are now focusing their teaching, appropriately, on developing the pupils' attainment, through teaching them the skills needed for research, comparing and contrasting, and understanding how lives change over time. The pupils are now being challenged to think and to take a questioning attitude to historical sources.

145. Most teachers manage whole-class discussions well. Information is presented in a lively way, with good references to previous learning. Most pupils, therefore, concentrate well and are making sound progress in developing their factual knowledge. The teachers ask questions that reveal the level of pupils' understanding and help them to overcome any confusion. Pupils are keen to answer questions and show considerable curiosity. They want to know more and often ask additional questions. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are included well in class discussions and, frequently, show a willingness to offer suggestions. However, discussions in lessons are frequently hampered by the inability of many pupils to express themselves well, or to listen and respond appropriately.
146. In the best lessons, pupils are provided with a variety of source materials, which encourages their interest and helps them to develop research skills. In these lessons, pupils are keen to find out more and show good judgements about the type of information they need, recognising, for example, that not all sources are equally useful. The more able pupils are challenged by more complex and demanding sources and questions, developing their thinking and understanding to a higher level. This was demonstrated well in a very successful lesson with pupils in Year 6, where the pupils studied different sources of information about the Aztecs, and analysed them for bias. The teacher recognised the weaknesses in the pupils' speaking and listening skills and supported them well to express their views fully. Work in history is beginning to make a sound contribution to the development of the pupils' literacy skills, through their own recording of activities and the use of sources for research. In the past this was not the case and much of the work at both key stages was presented on unstimulating worksheets. Some use has been made of the Internet for research, but this has been sporadic and is not a consistent part of the curriculum.
147. The new co-ordinators are enthusiastic about the subject and have a good understanding of the essential skills pupils need to learn. The co-ordinators have already had a significant effect on the curriculum and teaching at Key Stage 2, and have a clear understanding of the weaknesses at Key Stage 1. The recommended scheme of work has been sensibly adapted, after discussions with class teachers. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 has been modified and will meet requirements when taught later in the year. The library has a good range of books for pupils' use and these are often used appropriately for research, but the sets of historical sources are out of date and there are relatively few historical artefacts to support pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

148. By the end of both key stages, pupils achieve standards typical of their age groups. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection, but circumstances within the school have moved on well, in order to keep up with current developments in the subject. The school's provision for information and communication technology equipment has improved significantly. New machines and new accommodation are now in place, but have not yet had time to improve standards further, although pupils of all abilities are building on skills, and making reasonable progress. Increased staff confidence, combined with the new machines and aids, ensures that pupils receive clear, helpful instructions. Learning support assistants have also received training and they are providing good support in many classes, not only to the pupils, but also to the teachers. This good teamwork leads to good learning.
149. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have acquired a competent range of skills, which enables them to exchange and share information. They have had opportunities to do this in many different ways, for instance through text, clipart, 'painting' and using graphs. They have, however, had limited opportunities to find things out. Teachers have planned appropriately for pupils to make things happen, for instance, through exploring houses and deciding which colours to use for the doors, for example. Some have made a programmable robot move around the floor, while others remembered talking about computer use in their own homes for things such as washing machines.

Pupils are developing a sound understanding of how computers can help them modify their work, by altering mistakes in typing, for instance. They have a satisfactory knowledge of how to log on and how to save, retrieve and print their work, but there is little evidence, at this stage, of them drafting then improving text, after discussions with others or the teacher.

150. The teaching is good overall at Key Stage 2, and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. There is clear progression in the acquisition of skills as pupils move through the school. By Year 6, pupils are finding things out on the Internet and using that information competently to make a presentation to a chosen audience. Many have become proficient in the use of the keyboard and mouse, although some still find it difficult to find the letters quickly. In the lesson observed, pupils moved successfully between two programs, cutting and pasting pictures and text. In discussions with pupils, they remembered controlling a screen pointer through a maze and making programs for moving an on-screen robot, as well as writing instructions to control traffic lights. Work on graphs and Venn diagrams, as well as databases, has taken place, but little evidence could be found for the use of spreadsheets. This type of work is planned in other subjects, but a systematic and careful scheme of themes which might involve other subjects, with corresponding assessment tasks, has not yet been devised. It is, appropriately, on the co-ordinators' current action plan for development.
151. In the lower Key Stage 2 classes, teachers plan well, for instance, to use text and clipart. Others offer good opportunities to change and order text. One very good lesson in Year 4 provided good opportunities for pupils to work at different levels, by the use of different complexity of text and instructions. The pupils all rose to their own challenges well. While teachers teach well and give clear instructions, a minority of pupils displays challenging behaviour and many do not have the maturity to share the machines or their ideas. Overall, the pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English make sound progress because they are given suitable support. The more able and gifted and talented make similar progress to others in their class. However, some pupils with special educational needs are particularly challenging in this environment and take a good deal of careful managing by the teacher. In several classes, boys try to dominate, often when paired with girls. They either sit in the seat opposite the mouse, or lean over to take the turn. Girls have to assert themselves in order to overcome this. However, this is not the case as the pupils reach the top of the school, where they do share computers and ideas and work together very amicably.
152. In an excellent lesson in Year 5, the teacher gave very good opportunities for pupils to compare different design packages for different uses, and pupils had to decide the relative merits of two programs. They did this effectively because the teacher had set up the lesson so well. After producing a snail, after the style of Matisse, they designed their own animals and were highly successful with elephants, frogs and dogs, for example. This inspirational session afforded many excellent opportunities for pupils to practise old skills and build up new ones.
153. A sound curriculum for information and communication technology is in place and contains all the required elements in the scheme of work. However, its use is still quite sparse, as teachers and pupils have been used to waiting until the weekly session in the suite. New machines have allowed older ones to be distributed around the school, and the mini-suite in the infant department offers opportunities for younger pupils to work on computers without the trek to the junior building. This new hardware has not yet had time to have a positive impact on teaching and learning and to have been used and developed adequately in other areas of the curriculum. The co-ordinators are keen, interested and committed. There have been inevitable teething problems with the new suite. The interactive whiteboard is a very good tool when it is properly aligned; however, the board is on wheels and is too easily moved at present. The room is light and airy, with a high ceiling, but it has a dual function, in that it has to be also used for music lessons. Consequently, there is a drum kit permanently set up between the teaching area and a row of computers along the back wall. This causes a problem for younger, smaller pupils sitting there, whose view is restricted in some circumstances, and for the teachers attempting to check their understanding.
154. At present, there is no clear way of assessing pupils' attainment and progress accurately. This is acknowledged as an area for development. Some introductory steps have been taken with recording sheets and a portfolio of work. However, work is not annotated and the examples do not

give a clear idea of what the pupils can do or what they need to do to improve. Thus, less experienced staff have no unambiguous illustrations of levels or competence.

MUSIC

155. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 reach similar standards to those seen in other schools. However, the standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are higher than is usual. This is similar to the situation at the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a sound knowledge of the difference between pulse and rhythm, and are able to demonstrate various rhythms using percussion instruments. They sing with a sense of the shape of the melody and use simple notation competently to enable them to repeat their own compositions. They appraise their own and others' work, and talk knowledgeably about ways to improve performance. The pupils at Key Stage 2 confidently identify how music reflects different intentions and improvise skilful melodic and rhythmic phrases as part of a group. Some more able pupils work at a high level, analysing and comparing musical features and evaluating how venue, occasion and purpose affect the way music is created. However, music makes insufficient contribution to the pupils' cultural development, as few pupils are able to name composers in the western classical tradition or any of their compositions.
156. Teaching at both key stages is at least satisfactory, or better, and often very good. Pupils have an evident sense of enjoyment in music making. Many learn instruments such as strings, brass, woodwind and percussion, taught by visiting music teachers. There are competent instrumental groups, both small and large, which enrich the musical life of the school. Many older pupils are enthusiastic members of the orchestra and there are recorder groups for all ages. There is also a choir for pupils in Key Stage 1. Pupils regularly have the chance to perform in assemblies and other school events, such as the annual 'Musical Evening' and this helps to foster a sense of self-worth.
157. Younger pupils respond well to music lessons. In a very good lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher encouraged the pupils to develop a 'soundscape' built up from claps, syllables and other non-instrumental sounds. The pupils followed signals that told them when to start and finish and listened carefully to other pupils, so that they knew how their part contributed to the whole piece. At the end of the lesson, pupils felt confident about suggesting how percussion instruments could be used to heighten the effect and develop the piece further. In a good lesson in Year 1, the pupils played percussion instruments at an appropriate volume and showed respect at all times for the instruments and other members of the class. When groups of pupils came to the front to demonstrate their playing, the other pupils listened attentively and commented sensibly on what they had heard. This lesson made a good contribution to the social development of the class.
158. The progress made by older pupils is good. For instance, pupils in Year 6 learned about creating cyclical rhythmic patterns, drawing on the model of African drumming that they had heard on a CD. The teacher developed their instrumental skills well by giving guidance about the various techniques for playing the wide range of percussion instruments used in the lesson. The pupils were aware of how their parts interacted with those of other pupils and the need to achieve an overall effect. They were able to refine and improve their work well, by evaluating it in a thoughtful way. Their teacher also helped to develop their literacy skills by making good use of technical terms such as 'ostinato' and 'cyclical'. In an assembly for the whole school, pupils sang in tune and maintained a vocal part well while other groups were singing different notes. Pupils have opportunities to develop composing skills and evaluate their performances.
159. Pupils express their likes and dislikes of various types of music thoughtfully and some recognise different instruments and use appropriate vocabulary to describe the sounds they make. Music is used as a stimulus for other artistic areas, and pupils have painted imaginatively as a response to a piece of music. The pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are supported appropriately and have full access to this part of the curriculum. The use of information and communication technology is being developed in this subject and teachers use interactive white boards in the lessons to illustrate techniques and show models for performance. Pupils also use some simple composition programs competently to help them develop their information and

communication technology skills. The way in which pupils work well together in small and large groups means that the subject makes a good contribution to their social development.

160. The co-ordinators are music specialists and are aware of the difficulties experienced by non-specialist teachers of the subject. They support colleagues well and have the expertise needed to resolve any difficulties. The school uses a commercial scheme of work as well as some of the projects from the national model scheme. The co-ordinator has adapted these as necessary and planning for the subject is clear. There is a system for assessing the progress that pupils make, but it is at an early stage of development in helping non-specialist teachers to become more familiar with the requirements of the National Curriculum. The resources for the subject are good and teachers have a wide range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments that they can draw on for their lessons. These are kept in a central, accessible location. There is a music room that is used for teaching music to pupils at Key Stage 2, which is also used by visiting music tutors. However, teachers who do not always keep to their timetabled times for using the room. This causes an unnecessary loss of teaching time and some disruption to physical education lessons being held in the hall next to the music room.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

161. The standards that pupils attain at the end of Key Stage 1 are as expected. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain standards that are higher than those expected. Pupils follow a planned programme that incorporates the elements of gymnastics, dance and games, and swimming is taught on a regular basis. The pupils' attainment reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The achievements of pupils at Key Stage 1 are satisfactory and are good at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, the pupils' listening skills have not been suitably addressed and, at times, this limits their progress. The high expectations and subject expertise of most teachers contributes greatly to the good progress made by pupils in Key Stage 2.
162. Pupils in Year 2 work enthusiastically in games and show a sound understanding of the basic tactics for controlling a ball. They know how to pass and intercept with ever-increasing skill, showing good control. They send and receive competently and are beginning to use simple defending tactics. In dance, pupils show that they have the potential for creative and controlled body movements, but their lack of listening skills and the lack of stimulation for creativity, hampers their progress. By the end of Year 6, pupils show considerable creativity in their dance when interpreting a musical stimulus. They are confident and self-assured and adapt their movements well to the music. Their skills for games are at a high level. When learning the skills for hockey, they show a good ability to defend and attack, controlling the ball with increasing dexterity and good techniques. Because they listen well to their teacher they are able to put into practise what they are learning and concentrate on continually improving their skills.
163. The older pupils were not observed in any gymnastics lessons, but the achievements of pupils in Year 4, for example, show that they are developing their sense of balance and co-ordination successfully and can perform a sequence of movements effectively, with control and grace. Pupils' achievements in swimming are a strong feature. Although pupils were not observed swimming, many pupils achieve the requirement to swim 25 metres competently, and gain the ASA National Curriculum Swimming Award. In all areas, pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, are integrated fully into lessons, and achieve well. Discussions with pupils at both key stages show that they have a good understanding of the effect of exercise on the body, and the need for safety when undertaking their lessons.
164. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good, overall, at Key Stage 2, but there was one example of unsatisfactory teaching in both key stages. At Key Stage 2, teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to excellent. At Key Stage 1, good teaching in one lesson ensured the acquisition of skills in a purposeful atmosphere, so that the pupils were keen to achieve and give of their best. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, there was insufficient opportunity for pupils to develop their dance skills and creativity through the thoughtful interpretation of music and the encouragement of a sensitive response. Some insecure management of pupils who find it difficult to listen leads to limited progress in learning.

165. The best teaching, such as an excellent lesson on games skills with pupils in Year 6, combined superb class management, excellent organisation and high expectations with challenging learning activities. This motivated pupils to co-operate in groups and employ strenuous effort to achieve the intentions of the lesson. A similar picture emerged in a Year 6 dance lesson. The good teaching of gymnastics in Year 4 incorporated a good range of activities, which built well on pupils' previous learning. Where teachers give pupils opportunities to evaluate each other's work, they do so with friendly and realistic criticism and suggestions about how performance can be improved. Where teaching was unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2, class management was not established securely, so that the pupils did not undertake tasks as planned and did not develop their skills to the level of which they were capable.
166. The subject contributes much to pupils' personal development, particularly at Key Stage 2. The pupils learn to co-operate and to work together as a team. Experiences, such as working together to create their own dance, enable pupils to reflect on their learning and value the effort of others. They begin to appreciate dances from their own culture and others.
167. The co-ordinators have good subject knowledge and the subject is led well. The experienced co-ordinator for Key Stage 2 has high expectations for teaching of the subject and for pupils' performance. The co-ordinator for Key Stage 1 has the necessary enthusiasm to promote the potential for higher attainment for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The scheme of work for Key Stage 1 has been evaluated and modified to meet the need of the pupils. It leads effectively into the scheme of work for Key Stage 2, which is based on national exemplar schemes of work. At Key Stage 1, however, the time allocation for lessons is not always adequate, and leads to some lessons that are rushed and, therefore, pupils' achievements are more limited. Assessment procedures are securely in place and pupils' achievements are recorded in line with the school's systems. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. These are extremely well supported by pupils, and staff give of their time to ensure the further development of pupils' skills. Parents also contribute positively to the subject by providing qualified support for swimming for older pupils. The school offers many opportunities for pupils' involvement in competitive sport at a local level, and there are very good opportunities to take part in adventurous outdoor activities at residential centres.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

168. Standards in religious education are consistent with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages. The pupils with special educational needs, and those whose first language is not English, achieve soundly, because they are supported to do as well as they can. At Key Stage 1, pupils have a secure knowledge about Christian beliefs and festivals and aspects of the Jewish faith. They learn about the Christian harvest festival and the Jewish festival of Sukkot. Pupils begin to develop a sound appreciation that some places have a special relevance to people. They know that there are special books. They have a satisfactory knowledge of stories from the Bible and of stories from the Torah when learning about some of the Jewish beliefs. Some opportunities are missed, however, to compare these with Christian practices and beliefs. Pupils are beginning to understand how and why they should care for others, by thinking of those who help them in school, and the people who care for them and make them feel special. They carefully compare creation stories, such as the Genesis story, and the Aboriginal Dream Song. They show a proper concern for the environment. Pupils learn what is right and wrong and understand the effect of their actions on others through reflecting on their own feelings.
169. At Key Stage 2, pupils steadily extend their knowledge of Christianity and Judaism and have a sound knowledge of Islam and some aspects of Buddhism and Sikhism. Pupils have some opportunity to compare similarities and differences between faiths, for example, between Christianity and Judaism. However, they have largely concentrated on the main facts of other faiths in isolation. Discussion with a group of pupils in Year 6 showed they have limited recall of these facts and often confuse different religions. Learning from religion is good. Pupils relate correct behaviour and attitudes through compiling their own set of rules for life and comparing these with the Ten Commandments. They consider the Great Commandment, to love one another and how this relates to everyday life. They have a sound understanding of the meaning of religious words,

such as 'forgiveness', 'harmony' and 'justice'. The written work of pupils who were in Year 6 last year shows some very perceptive understanding of personal responsibility and charity.

170. Teaching is very variable at both key stages but, overall, it is satisfactory. At each key stage there are examples of good, satisfactory and unsatisfactory teaching. Work in pupils' books from the previous year show that inconsistency has been a feature of all teaching. The teaching is good when the pupils are given the opportunity to reflect, for example, pupils in Year 6 were asked to define the qualities of good leadership, before recognising qualities in a contemporary person they admire. The teacher ensured that all pupils were fully engaged by targeting questions at pupils whose hands were not up to answer. The teaching is unsatisfactory when the planning is not followed, and the purpose of the lesson is unclear. Consequently, the pace of the lesson is slow so that the pupils lose interest and sometimes behave inappropriately.
171. The school has limited resources and artefacts to support religious education, especially when learning about different faiths. Teachers make an attempt to overcome this by borrowing artefacts and videos from the local diocesan resource centre. There are plans to improve the school's own resources as funds permit. The lack of artefacts makes it more difficult to enliven lessons and to make learning more meaningful for pupils, especially as opportunities to visit places of worship of all faiths is very limited and few opportunities exist for pupils to learn first-hand about other cultures. There is an adequate supply of books in the libraries to support learning about Christianity but there is little evidence of their use for research. Overall, resources are insufficient for learning about other faiths and cultures or exploring personal feelings.
172. Work in religious education makes a good contribution to the development of the pupils' literacy skills, particularly through the use of religious texts. Very good opportunities are made for different forms of writing, such as personal reflection, factual recall, note taking, bulleted lists, table of comparisons, imagined news report and labelled diagram. Using information and communication technology as a research tool, or for recording work, is not yet built into the scheme of work. Religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development through reflection, an understanding of right from wrong, and respect for others' feelings and beliefs. There has been some improvement since the last inspection, but standards at Key Stage 2 are lower than they were at that time. Religious education is used well to promote spirituality through the consideration of the impact of faith on the lives of believers.
173. The leadership and management of the subject are strong in both key stages. The co-ordinators have worked hard to achieve an improvement in spiritual development through the subject. They are now developing ways to improve spiritual development through other subjects. They make good use of the diocesan resource facilities to supplement the school's limited resources. They are evaluating the effectiveness of videos, books and artefacts before deciding how to spend a budget allocation to acquire these for the school. This is particularly important in a school that is far removed from access to people and places of worship of faiths other than Christianity.