

INSPECTION REPORT

FIVE WAYS SCHOOL

Cannock

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124070

Headteacher: Mr Roy Bowers

Reporting inspector: Rob Crompton
7230

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th February 2003

Inspection number: 248538

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Langholm Drive Heath Hayes Cannock
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Merry
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

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13874	Jane Chesterfield	Lay inspector		How high are standards? <i>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</i> How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11528	Mike Wainwright	Team inspector	Mathematics Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
27777	Rob Greenall	Team inspector	English Special educational needs English as an additional language	
32594	Sarah Wykes	Team inspector	Geography History Information and communication technology	
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is much bigger than most primary schools, with 636 boys and girls aged from four to eleven. Pupils mainly live locally. As they start school, children's attainment is typical of four-year-olds. There are three reception classes, plus a 'pre-reception' class which children attend on a part-time basis. Fifteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, most of whom have learning or behavioural difficulties. Seven pupils have a statement of special educational need. These figures are about the national average. Most pupils are white, with fifteen from other ethnic backgrounds. Five pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, although the school serves a broadly average socio-economic area. From Year 1 onwards, classes are based on pupils' prior attainment. In Years 3 to 6, pupils with higher, average and lower prior attainment are taught in three separate classes. Classes with lower attaining pupils are smaller and are assigned a learning assistant.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an excellent school. High quality teaching enables pupils to progress rapidly and attain very good standards in most subjects. Pupils work hard and behave very well. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and is extremely well supported by the deputy, assistant headteacher, senior managers and all other staff. He inspires staff and pupils to strive for success and his leadership makes a powerful contribution to sustaining the school's very positive ethos. All involved are committed to providing the best possible education for pupils. The school's extensive efforts to ensure children have equal opportunities to benefit from all that it offers are clear from pupils' positive attitudes and self-esteem. They know they are valued. Governors work hard on behalf of the school and fulfil their responsibilities very well. Parents hold the school in high regard. It gives excellent value for money.

What the school does well

- High quality teaching leads to well above average standards
- The head teacher provides excellent leadership and is extremely well supported by all staff
- The school successfully provides for all pupils and monitors their progress and development exceptionally well
- Very good provision for pupils' personal development contributes to their positive attitudes and behaviour
- The rich curriculum provides a very good range of learning opportunities and extra activities
- The school makes very good efforts to inform and consult parents

What could be improved

- There are no major areas for improvement.
- The school has already planned to improve playground facilities and to provide more resources for outdoor learning in the Foundation Stage.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was inspected in January 1998, improvement has been excellent. The quality of teaching has risen from good to very good. Standards have improved in the Foundation Stage¹, and in every subject; a remarkable achievement. Pupils are now much more independent and have much better research skills. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved. Music teaching has improved dramatically, moving from unsatisfactory to very good.

¹ The Foundation Stage is from the child's third birthday to the end of the reception year.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	A	A	C
mathematics	C	B	B	C
science	C	B	A	C

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

Children progress well and achieve good standards in the reception classes. Most exceed the expected levels in each area of learning. This means that they are well prepared for work in Year 1. Pupils achieve well across the board in Years 1 and 2, so that by the end of Year 2 standards are good in all subjects. The rate of progress accelerates in Years 3 to 6. Pupils do exceptionally well in science and achieve well above average standards by Year 6. They achieve very good standards in English, mathematics, ICT, art and design, design and technology, music and physical education (PE). Good progress in religious education (RE), geography and history leads to good standards by the end of Year 6. Because all pupils are well supported, pupils with special educational needs do well and those with the potential to achieve good standards generally do so. Pupils with English as an additional language make the same rapid progress as their peers.

Results of National Curriculum tests for seven and eleven year olds in 2002 were above those achieved nationally and in line with those of similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels was above the national average. However, when their results are compared with those they achieved at the end of Year 2, pupils appear not to have made the expected progress. This does not reflect the school's general performance. In previous years, progress through Years 3 to 6 has been above or well above average. Boys have tended to do better than girls in the tests for seven year olds, but there is no difference in the quality of the provision.

Trends in the school's National Curriculum test results have matched the national picture over the last five years. Challenging targets have been set for future performance and the school has the capacity to reach them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils of all ages are very keen to be involved in school life and very enthusiastic about their lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils show a great deal of maturity and self-discipline. They invariably meet the high standards of behaviour expected of them.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils across the school are very ready to take on responsibility, both for the school community and for their learning. They get on very well together and are very supportive of one another's efforts.
Attendance	Good. The school's level of attendance is above the national average. Punctuality is very good and pupils are rarely late for school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Very 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.

Teaching is very good overall. Excellent lessons were seen in many subjects, including English, mathematics, science and ICT where consistently effective teaching gives pupils a broad base of skills.

In the Foundation Stage, teachers and learning assistants combine to form a highly skilled team. Because the staff know the children so well, activities are carefully matched to their individual needs. Relationships are very good, so children feel confident to tackle new learning.

Teachers in Years 1 and 2 use imaginative approaches to stimulate pupils' interest. They motivate pupils to try hard and skilfully manage behaviour. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 have a wide range of expertise so lessons in most subjects go well. In each of the streams, pupils benefit from skilled teaching. The level of challenge is appropriate, expectations are high and pupils respond well. Teachers are skilled in teaching literacy and numeracy. They often provide opportunities for these skills to be developed in other subjects. Learning assistants make a very good contribution to teaching, particularly in art and design and design and technology.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Work is planned to meet the needs of all pupils. The curriculum is approached imaginatively and pupils' learning is enriched through extra-curricular activities. Personal, social and health education/citizenship (PSHE/Ct) is successfully integrated into day-to-day teaching.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school provides all pupils with the best possible opportunities. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good in-class support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked to ensure that they achieve as well as others. Additional provision is made when necessary.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Spiritual development is supported well. Assemblies and lessons provide opportunities for pupils to think about meaning and purpose in the natural world and in human achievement. Moral and social development is promoted very effectively through the day-to-day life of the school. Art, drama, and literature are used to promote cultural development and pupils have satisfactory opportunities to learn about the diversity of cultures in Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Systems for monitoring pupils' welfare and recording their personal development are excellent. Pupils receive excellent support and guidance throughout their school career.

The school's links with parents are very good. Parents are regularly consulted about aspects of the school's life and work, and their ideas are valued and incorporated into school development planning. Written information for parents is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher provides exemplary leadership. The deputy head, assistant headteacher and senior managers make a very strong contribution to management. Year group and subject teams function very well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body provides very good support to the school and fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. Governors bring an extensive range of expertise and take an active interest in the life and work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. Governors and senior managers keep performance under constant review. The school's detailed analysis of results enables governors to monitor performance carefully by comparing results with those achieved nationally and by similar schools.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school development plan clearly indicates how resources are to be used to improve standards. Funds are allocated carefully in line with priorities. The school applies the principles of best value carefully when making decisions about spending.

The school is staffed well. Resources for teaching are good overall. The accommodation is good for the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 but it is inadequate for Years 3 to 6 where there are an array of temporary buildings. Playgrounds are bleak and lack facilities for pupils to enjoy a variety of recreation activities. Provision for outdoor learning for the reception classes is limited.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school, they behave well and make good progress • Teaching is good, expectations are high and parents are kept well informed about their children's progress • The school works closely with parents and is open and welcoming • The school is well led and managed • The school helps children to become mature and responsible • The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons 	<p>A few parents expressed minor concerns but parents are generally very happy with all aspects of the school</p>

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The Foundation Stage

1. As they start school at four years of age, children's early skills in language and mathematics are in line with those generally found at this age. Their social, physical and creative development and knowledge of the world outside their immediate environment are similar to that of other children. Due to the effective provision in the reception classes, children's attainment is better than generally found at the start of Year 1. Most have acquired good social skills, communicate confidently and have a good grasp of mathematical ideas such as counting and shape. The wide range of interesting activities provided helps children to extend their general knowledge well. Progress in creative and physical development is steady, although somewhat restricted by the lack of facilities for outdoor learning.

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

2. Pupils build well on the good start made in the Foundation Stage. By Year 2, their attainment is above that expected in all subjects. Results of National Curriculum tests in reading, writing and mathematics have been consistently above average during recent years. Pupils last year were over a term ahead of those in other schools nationally. This level of attainment was reflected in lessons and in the work seen during the inspection. Pupils sustain a good rate of progress in all other subjects, achieving standards that are above the expectations for seven year olds.

Key Stage 2 (Years 3 - 6)

3. The picture is one of high standards. Overall results of National Curriculum tests were well above average in 2002. These standards were evident in the lessons and work seen during the inspection. In particular, pupils are making very rapid progress and achieving excellent standards in science. They have a very good knowledge of scientific ideas and processes and well-developed skills in investigative work. Very good standards are being achieved in English and mathematics. Pupils produce high quality written work and are adept at devising ways of approaching mathematical problems. They make very good progress in art and design, design and technology, ICT, music and physical education and achieve standards that are well above expectations for eleven year olds. Standards are good in geography, history and religious education.

Literacy and numeracy

4. Pupils' considerable skills in literacy and numeracy contribute to their learning in other subjects. They write for a variety of purposes using appropriate styles. For example, pupils' understanding of recording direct speech was consolidated during a highly imaginative history lesson in Year 2 involving role play. Joined script is learned from Year 1; teachers insist on careful presentation across all subjects and this contributes to the good standards in writing. Achievement in subjects such as science, ICT and design and technology is raised as pupils use their numeracy skills. For example, pupils' work in ICT was dependent on their very good understanding of co-ordinates.

Achievement of different groups of pupils

5. The school's system of organising most classes in relation to pupils' prior attainment successfully meets the needs of most pupils. Higher attaining pupils are constantly set challenging work. They rise to this and achieve very well. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in the National Curriculum tests for seven and eleven year olds was above average in 2002, indicating effective provision. Pupils of average prior attainment also do well, as indicated by the number achieving well within the expected Level 2 in the tests for seven year olds. Pupils with special educational needs or who are less confident are taught in smaller classes with additional support. As a result, they also make very good progress.
6. There is some difference from year to year in the attainment of boys and girls. The school tracks progress carefully to spot any variation to ensure that boys and girls get equal opportunities. Similarly, the progress of pupils born in the summer months is monitored to ensure that they are taught in the appropriate classes. The success of this process is illustrated in Year 6, where there is an appropriate distribution of pupils born at different times of the year in each class.
7. The wide range of activities is open to all and those pupils who have particular talents and abilities are given encouragement and support, particularly in sport and art. Individual pupils receive special coaching outside school and some special teaching is organised for pupils who have a flair for art. Similarly, the school's policy on inclusion means that pupils with specific physical disabilities enjoy the same variety of experiences as other pupils and do as well as they can. The school monitors the progress of pupils from minority ethnic groups carefully and these pupils do as well as their peers.

Trends

8. Improvements in test results have broadly matched the national picture over the last five years. In addition, since the last inspection, standards have risen in the Foundation Stage and in all other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs are making better progress. These changes indicate an extremely positive trend in achievement.
9. The school has tracked the progress of current Year 6 pupils and predicts that their results in this year's tests will reveal good progress since they were in Year 2. Because the school assesses and monitors progress so well, it is able to set appropriate targets for each year group. These were exceeded in English last year and met in mathematics. Reflecting inspectors' judgements about current standards in Year 6, the school has set the target of 90 per cent of pupils achieving the expected levels in English and mathematics in the 2003 tests. Given the high quality of teaching and pupils' positive attitudes, the school is well placed to achieve this goal.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The school has successfully maintained and built on the very high standards in this area of its work. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are still very good, and their personal development is now also very good. This is because pupils are being given lots more opportunities to be independent and to show responsibility for their learning as well as for their school, and they are reacting to this very positively.

Pupils enjoy school very much, and they are very keen to learn. Their self-motivation and self-discipline increase steadily as they get older, but even the youngest children in the school listen attentively and concentrate hard on their learning.

11. Pupils' behaviour is very good. In class, in assemblies and around the school it is often excellent. Pupils of all ages have a very clear sense of what is and is not acceptable and in many lessons teachers never have to spend any time at all establishing order. In the playground, behaviour is usually very good, though sometimes the ball games played by boys can become rather boisterous. This is because the playgrounds are in need of organisation and development, and the school is currently working on plans to do this. Bullying or similarly unpleasant behaviour is very rare, and is handled firmly by the school. There have been no exclusions since before the last inspection.
12. Relationships within the school are very good indeed. Boys and girls work and play very well together, older and younger pupils respect one another and the few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are very well integrated. Pupils are very ready to learn together and to share ideas, for example in PE. Most striking of all is the way that pupils value one another as individuals and are happy to celebrate others' achievements. This was especially evident in a Year 5 and 6 special assembly, where awards were given out. The audience of pupils was supportive and respectful throughout the assembly, helping to boost the confidence and self-esteem of their classmates who stood in front of them to talk about their successes.
13. Pupils who have special educational needs maintain very positive attitudes to school, and respond well to the very wide range of learning opportunities it offers them. The very small minority who have emotional and behavioural needs develop well socially and personally because the very good care and support they receive helps them to feel valued and secure in relationships.
14. Pupils respond positively to the very good provision the school makes for their personal development. The older children in particular have very many opportunities to take on responsibility, and their attitude to this is excellent. Pupils throughout take their roles as school council representatives, 'Eco reps' and class monitors very seriously, and carry out their duties without fuss. Year 6 pupils make an outstanding contribution to the smooth daily running of the school. At lunchtime, for example, they help organise the dinner sittings, answer phones, monitor doors and corridors and help teachers prepare for the afternoon session, and they always do this in a mature and sensible way.
15. The level of pupils' attendance at the school is good. It is above the national average and has improved since last year, and since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school and do not want to miss it. Most parents support the school by not taking their children away for holidays during term-time. Most absence is caused by illness and there is very little absence for unauthorised reasons. Punctuality is very good. Almost all pupils arrive very promptly each day so that the morning lessons can begin on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is a major strength. It is very good overall and means that pupils progress very well. Over half of the lessons were very good or excellent.
17. In the Foundation Stage, the teamwork between the teachers and support staff is exceptional. Support staff are very well briefed and highly skilled. Children's

progress is carefully tracked so that activities can be geared to their needs. Small group teaching in the morning is complemented by free choice activities in the afternoons. Relationships are very good and children's social development is promoted very well. They soon adapt to the routines and learn how to behave in a variety of situations. They are keen to learn and progress well.

18. Teachers plan work very well in Years 1 and 2. They use imaginative approaches to stimulate pupils' interest. Most lessons move at a brisk pace. The more experienced teachers are particularly skilled in managing behaviour and channelling pupils' energies into productive work. More recently qualified teachers work very hard to emulate their colleagues, although more time in their lessons has to be spent in getting pupils to pay attention and settle to work. Occasionally, introductions are too long which limits the time pupils spend working on things themselves.
19. The consistently high quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 owes much to teachers' confidence in a range of subjects. Literacy and numeracy are taught very well. Teachers are well versed in the national strategies and implement them imaginatively. Expectations in most lessons are high and the pace is brisk. Pupils are challenged through skilful questioning and basic skills are taught very well. Teachers manage lessons effectively and have very good relationships with pupils. Most lessons start with a review of previous learning and then move swiftly on to new work. Because teachers know how individual pupils are doing, they can set personal targets and they often refer to these during lessons. This means that pupils gain a good understanding of what they need to do to improve. Teachers check pupils' progress, knowledge and understanding on a day-to-day basis, using a good combination of quick-fire questions and extended discussions and by carefully marking their work. As a result, pupils receive good individual feedback and the data from assessments helps teachers to finely tune subsequent work. Homework is set regularly and helps pupils to practise and consolidate their learning, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
20. Very good or excellent teaching was observed in every year group. Excellent lessons were seen in English, mathematics, science, history, ICT, music, religious education and physical education, reflecting the broad range of expertise among the staff. This high level of confidence means that teachers can make subjects interesting and challenging. As a result, pupils enjoy most subjects and make very good progress. Pupils in each of the three streams benefit from highly skilled teaching, reflecting the school's success in providing the best possible teaching for all pupils. Just occasionally, there is room for more opportunities for pupils to tackle different work according to their prior attainment within the streamed classes. Teachers and learning assistants work closely together to make sure that pupils with special educational needs get all the help they need to reach their personal targets. Staff check individual progress carefully and share information to plan the next steps. The assistants have clear roles and are very skilful in promoting good learning both through attentive support and through helping pupils to think and work on their own. Similar high quality provision ensures very good learning for pupils whose first language is not English.
21. Teachers ensure that pupils practise and consolidate literacy and numeracy skills within subjects such as geography, religious education and science. Computer work is linked to current topics, although ICT is not fully integrated into pupils' learning because the programs available on the classroom computers are not as extensive as those in the ICT suites. Learning assistants play a major role in the teaching, particularly in art and design and design and technology; an assistant co-ordinates these subjects and does much of the teaching.

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

22. The quality and range of learning opportunities for all pupils is very good and has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Children in the Foundation Stage receive a very good purposeful education, designed around the six areas of learning. The teaching is imaginative. Learning across the school is meaningful. For instance when Year 1 pupils are introduced to the idea of area in mathematics they think about and suggest how adults make use of this knowledge. Great account is taken of the needs of the pupils when planning the curriculum. The time allocated to different subjects is generally appropriate and used very well. However the time set for some music lessons is overlong and the teacher has to use all her skill to the full in order to sustain activity and interest.
23. Pupils make use of their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills well in other subjects. For example, Year 3 pupils learned to write an ordered set of instructions in design and technology and older pupils measure accurately during science investigations. Very good links are made across subjects - for example, part of a Year 6 music lesson was based on Shakespeare's 'Macbeth'.
24. The school's excellent approach to educational inclusion has had a positive effect on pupils' personal development and the high standards attained in the school. The ethos and organisation promote inclusion in all its work and the school strives to help pupils of all abilities to reach the very highest standards possible. There is almost no withdrawal for pupils with special educational needs and the school provides a particularly good teacher pupil ratio for lower ability classes, which enables them to be fully involved in all curriculum activities. The school is developing very good software programs and other resources to provide for the range of specific learning difficulties.
25. There is great commitment to providing pupils with the widest range of opportunities. This extends to a very good range of extra curricular activities for which many of the staff volunteer their time. Activities include sport and music as well as art and computers. An annual residential visit for Year 6 provides further enhancement of PSHE/Ct. Opportunities for personal development are identified in all lessons. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their feelings and there is a high awareness of the environment and the community. Pupils use their musical talents to give pleasure to others in churches, shopping centres and residential homes. Year 6 pupils visit and help in local nursery schools. Visitors such as the crossing warden, members of local churches and sports clubs are welcomed into school. The curriculum is further enhanced by other visitors, for example, when pupils learn what life was like in the days of the Vikings and Tudors through working with educational theatre groups.
26. Pupils' spiritual development is encouraged by visits to churches and gurdwaras, while in assembly pupils reflect upon issues in their own lives and those of the wider community. Teachers sensitively handle important issues which children face in everyday life. On occasions, pupils chanting prayers tends to detract from the quality of the experience. Reflection upon spiritual issues is evident across the curriculum. An excellent example occurred in an English lesson where pupils probed the inner experiences of another person.
27. Moral development is well fostered by clear whole school and class rules. Other measures that support moral development include the weekly 'special assembly'

where pupils are singled out for praise. Staff set very good examples, using praise effectively to reinforce moral behaviour. Stories in assemblies encourage pupils' thoughts about the effect of their words on others, whilst stories like, 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf' are used to explore the issue of lying. 'Circle time' provides pupils with particularly good opportunities to share their worries; they are encouraged to listen carefully and show respect for one another.

28. Social development is promoted very well. Year 6 pupils have a wide range of jobs throughout the school. They are also positively encouraged to take responsibility in helping younger pupils, by organising voluntary games during the lunch hour and hearing readers. There are also very good opportunities provided to help Year 6 pupils to understand the importance of representing the school and the community. For example, when they visit local nurseries to offer their help and when representing the pupils' views on the school council. Teachers use displays very well to help the pupils develop an understanding of living in a community and reminding them of being kind and caring. At lunchtime, the dinner supervisors provide positive role models for the pupils, treating the pupils with respect, praising them for helping to tidy up and also for good behaviour. The pupils' social development is also very effectively encouraged, when pupils' attend old people's homes, to sing carols, which are very happily received.
29. The school makes very good links with other cultures throughout the curriculum. Pupils are given opportunities to appreciate their own culture, as well as the culture of others. They study the different styles of great artists and art and music from other cultures as indicated by the production of a Chinese dragon mask and the painting of their names in Japanese writing. Religious Education broadens the cultural understanding of the pupils as they learn about a variety of faiths. The school also fosters positive tolerance and respect for other cultures, by encouraging pupils from different faiths to discuss their experiences of their individual cultures. Fairy tales are well used to extend the pupils' understanding of the traditions of this country. Multicultural displays, such as those depicting the Chinese New Year help to promote an understanding of the cultural diversity of British society.
30. There are good links with other schools and colleges. The school welcomes trainee teachers from different institutions and links are developing well with an increasing number of high schools.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school provides its pupils with excellent support and guidance throughout their school career. It has maintained very high standards of care since the time of the last inspection. Systems for monitoring pupils' personal development are also excellent. Simple details are recorded by teachers throughout each year and passed on to the next teacher, so that staff can keep track of pupils' successes and their difficulties as they progress through the school.
32. Very good attention is given to pupils' welfare, health and safety at all times of the day. The school's very good policy for health and safety sets out specifically the staff's individual responsibilities and this translates very well into practice. It means that support staff have clearly defined duties and pupils know who to turn to when they need help. There are very good procedures for child protection; training is planned for new staff. There are clear guidelines for Internet safety. Arrangements for first aid are very good, so that pupils are well cared for if they are ill or injured. Daily routines are very well organised and pupils are closely supervised at break and lunchtimes. The playgrounds are rather bleak and empty. They lack designated

- areas and equipment for a range of different games and activities, or quiet areas where pupils can read and chat. The school is aware of this, and is planning to redevelop and improve the facilities, in consultation with pupils and governors.
33. The school promotes good behaviour very well. The systems for rewards and sanctions are straightforward and well known to pupils, who feel they are fair and consistently applied. The school has a good policy for race equality. Attendance is very well monitored. Highly efficient use is made of computerised systems to look at individual absence records and the school works closely with the educational welfare officer to try to nip any problems in the bud. As a result, the school improved on its already good attendance levels last year.
 34. The school provides a very high standard of care for pupils who have special educational needs, and also for those for whom English is an additional language. Working relationships between the school and specialised external services are good, and the co-ordinator for special needs uses them to secure expert assessments and necessary help for pupils with more complex needs. Staff use very good systems to record and track the progress of all pupils who find learning difficult. Excellent records are maintained and these inform the regular review and revision, involving parents and pupils, of individual education plans. Formal annual reviews take place for all pupils with more severe learning difficulties. The high quality provision enhances progress and helps all pupils with special educational needs to play a full and increasingly confident and successful part in all aspects of school life.
 35. Assessment strategies are excellent. Systems are manageable and do not lead to staff being over burdened with paper work. Teachers and year teams frequently review pupils' progress and use this information to plan what to teach next and to spot gaps in the curriculum. With the benefit of accurate assessment information, decisions about moving pupils from one ability stream to another are made sensitively in consultation with pupils and their parents. Information is used well on an individual level throughout the school. Pupils are very clear about what they need to do to improve because they agree personal targets with their teachers. On a wider scale, careful analysis of assessment data enables the school to set annual targets, to track the progress of year groups and to spot any significant differences or trends in the attainment of different groups.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. Parents are very happy with the school and what it offers their children. They find staff very friendly and helpful. Staff on duty at the doors or in the office deal with them in a welcoming and open way. Teachers are readily accessible at the end of the day and their relationships with parents are good. They try to work in partnership with the parents for the benefit of the children.
37. The school's links with parents continue to be very good, as they were at the time of the last inspection. This is because the school is genuinely interested in listening to parents' views and acting on them. Consultation with parents via questionnaires is a regular part of school life and concerns and issues are taken seriously. Parents' views are addressed by staff and governors when drawing up the annual development plan. A dedicated team of governors focus on links with parents and community, so that this is an area of constant development and improvement. The school knows that by strengthening links with parents they can improve children's learning, and focus their initiatives on achieving this. The popular parenting skills course, for example, has helped parents modify their children's behaviour. Similarly,

the Foundation Stage starting school booklet has helped parents prepare their children so that they can settle into the reception class more easily.

38. Information for parents is very good. Parents receive a wealth of different types of written documentation from the school, so that they always know what is going on. The prospectus is a very impressive and helpful publication, while the governors' annual report, the headteacher's regular newsletters and the pupils' termly magazine 'Inform' are of a high standard. The parent planning sheets, which tell parents what their children will be learning each term, are especially useful. They link in well to the school's system for reporting to parents, which is good. Parents receive a report at the end of each term confirming what their children have learned in each subject, together with a commentary on their progress in the core subjects at the end of the summer term. The school has recognised the need to include more detail in the reports on what children have achieved in each subject, and how well they are doing for their age. The school is planning to do this.
39. Parents make a good contribution to the school and to their children's learning. They hear their children read regularly and ensure that homework is completed on time. They uphold the school's values. Few take their children out of school for holidays during term-time. Some are able to give their time to the school, as parent governors, classroom helpers and members of the active parent, teachers and friends association (PTFA).
40. Parents of pupils with special educational needs warmly commend the quality of care and support that the school gives their children. They appreciate their increasing role in reviewing their children's progress, and in agreeing and supporting the targets of individual plans. The PTFA has helped to raise significant extra funds to improve the resources for special educational needs.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The school is extremely well led and managed. The headteacher has a clear view of the school's core values. He inspires staff to work together to seek continuous improvement. The deputy, assistant head and senior managers provide strong support. The first-rate system of self-evaluation involves management, curriculum and year group teams. These groups meet together regularly to discuss the outcomes of the highly effective monitoring activities. In consultation with parents, pupils and governors, priorities are identified. All involved know their specific role in pursuing these priorities. As a result, there is little overlap and everyone's skills and time are used efficiently. The impact of the continuing cycle of school development can be seen in the excellent improvement made since the last inspection, the high quality education offered to all pupils and in the very good standards achieved.
42. Governors carry out their responsibilities very well. They have a very good grasp of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and contribute significantly to evaluating its performance. Although money is tight, funds are allocated with considerable skill in order to sustain the quality of provision and to finance improvements whenever possible. Every opportunity is taken to secure additional funding - for example, the recent application for 'seed-challenge' money in order to improve outside play facilities. Governors receive very good support from office staff and in ensuring that financial procedures are closely followed. Good use is made of information technology to monitor spending.
43. The exemplary management of provision for pupils who have special educational needs makes a significant contribution to the successful work and caring life of the

school. The co-ordinator (SENCO), most teachers and support staff are very skilled in identifying concerns and providing effective support. Excellent teamwork and very good training programmes ensure increasingly effective support for different kinds and levels of need. The special needs governor and visiting specialists play vital parts within this teamwork. All key areas of provision are better now than when the school was last inspected. Resources are much better as a result of judicious spending.

44. Grants for specific purposes, such as staff training, are used to very good effect. As a result of the systematic monitoring of classroom teaching, the regular scrutiny of pupils' work and the analysis of assessment results, a training programme is devised. This is organised in an exemplary way by the deputy headteacher in order to address the school's priorities and to meet the individual development needs of staff. This complements the highly effective cycle of performance management. Newly qualified teachers also benefit from the school's support for professional development and the popularity of the school as base for trainee teachers is an indication of the high regard in which it is held as a centre of excellence.
45. The school's budget planning is very good and its finances are very carefully monitored and administrated. Staff, governors and parents are all involved in the school's strategic planning process, and the development plan is clearly costed and closely linked to the budget. Senior staff and governors consider the choices open to them within the constraints of their finances and make wise decisions. The school has surmounted financial problems in an imaginative way – for example, an ingenious system was set up to manage the premises when the school realised it could no longer afford to employ a caretaker.
46. The school applies the principles of best value very well. Regular, systematic consultation of all members of the school community including pupils and parents is a normal part of the way the school operates. Senior staff keep up to date with how other schools are run and how well they do. Governors, senior management and administrative staff ensure that the school obtains value for money from its purchases and services.
47. There has been a moderately high turnover of teaching staff in recent years, due to a number of promotions and other factors outside the school's control. This has been well managed by governors and senior managers who have worked hard at recruitment. The school is now well staffed with teachers and support staff. Excellent arrangements are established for performance management which are linked to whole school and personal development needs. Professional development is very well managed, predominantly from within the school's own expertise, but outside training is sought if needed. Teachers feel very well supported as well as being highly involved in training and supporting colleagues. Very successful arrangements support newly qualified teachers and those new to the school.
48. A strong contrast exists in the buildings within the school. A relatively new building, which is purpose built and attractive provides good accommodation. In contrast, the 1960's steel constructed building for older pupils presents a range of problems. The governors have a good grasp of these and the associated financial issues and are working round them creatively. The weaknesses already identified by the school, concerning the development of outside play areas for older pupils and resources for outside play for the Foundation Stage, are both already detailed in the school's development plan.
49. The school has addressed the problem, identified in the last inspection, of inadequate resources and is now generally well resourced. Book stocks are good

overall, although those in the junior library still do not represent different subjects and cultures in a balanced way.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. There are no major areas for improvement.

Minor area for improvement

The school has already planned to improve playground facilities (paragraph 48) and to provide more resources for outdoor learning in the Foundation Stage (paragraphs 48 and 56).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	92
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	14	36	35	7	0	0	0
Percentage	15	39	38	8	0	0	0

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

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)	610
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	23

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	94

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	36

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	41	38	79

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	41	38	39
	Girls	33	35	36
	Total	74	73	75
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (96)	92 (91)	95 (99)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	39	38	39
	Girls	34	34	34
	Total	73	72	73
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (96)	91 (99)	92 (96)
	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	31	44	75

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	28	31
	Girls	40	34	42
	Total	67	62	73
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (88)	83 (81)	97 (99)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	28	31
	Girls	36	34	43
	Total	64	62	74
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (86)	83 (84)	99 (100)
	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	595	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	4	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	27
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5
Average class size	27.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	334

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2
	£
Total income	1147700
Total expenditure	1099869
Expenditure per pupil	1740
Balance brought forward from previous year	36646
Balance carried forward to next year	47831

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	16.2

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	610
Number of questionnaires returned	188

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	18	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	74	24	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	71	29	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	44	3	1	2
The teaching is good.	76	24	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	39	4	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	22	1	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	22	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	53	42	4	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	75	23	1	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	28	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	41	10	1	10

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

50. Children achieve well and by the end of the reception year are on course to exceed the early learning goals in all areas of learning set for their age except for physical and creative development where they will be in line with expectations. This is good improvement since the last inspection.
51. The assistant head co-ordinates the Foundation Stage very well. Teaching is very good. Good team work utilises the skills of early years staff. This results in small teaching groups which, combined with the very good teaching of literacy and numeracy, contributes significantly to the children's achievements. Staff know the children well and relationships are very good, promoting enthusiasm for learning. There is not enough opportunity for children to experiment, explore and follow their own directions in some aspects of the curriculum.

Personal, social and emotional development

52. Teaching in this area is very good. In the pre-reception class, children are encouraged to be independent. They choose activities, concentrate well and move sensibly to other tasks. They share materials and resources well and due to sensitive teaching by the early years assistant, learn and use good manners in groups independently of adults. In reception classes, expectations of behaviour are high. In the afternoons children are encouraged to be independent and are very good at settling to tasks and working well without direct supervision. In the mornings, when the organisation of groups means that there are fewer opportunities for independence, children follow instructions well. Children are developing good respect for others within the school.

Communication, language and literacy

53. This area of learning is taught very well. For example, children are encouraged to describe objects and to talk about the taste, smell, texture and shape of the fruit they eat at snack time. Very good teaching of literacy results in good progress for the majority and very good progress for high attainers. Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to develop early skills in letter sounds and rhyming words. Through activities such as role-play and a puppet theatre children build on their knowledge of story which they represent well in their own writing. Older children write at length to retell stories with good detail; standards of spelling and handwriting are well above average. Younger children mostly copy over teachers' writing but also 'play write' during the afternoon activities. Children listen well to stories. Most children read well at their own level, confident with repetitive texts. They have good recall of books they have read before and some read fluently and discuss the characters and predict what will happen next. Most have a favourite book that they read at home. Home/school reading diaries contain comments by staff that enable parents to make a good contribution to their children's reading.

Mathematical development

54. Teaching is very good. The youngest children have a good all round experience in this area of development. Reception lessons proceed at good pace. Teachers

explain clearly and use resources well giving children plenty of practical experience. Children enjoy plays to challenge their thinking such as the teacher making a deliberate mistake. The majority of children count reliably, recognise numerals up to 20 and are learning to count in twos and threes. They have good grasp of subtraction and are beginning to apply mathematical language such as fewer and less. Older children count confidently up to 60 in tens and find all the combinations to add number bonds to 7. As a result of very effective questions, children are confident in making predictions about whether objects are heavier or lighter and test this out on scales, confidently recording what they find.

Knowledge and understanding

55. Teaching of this aspect is good. In the 'pre-reception' class, children learn about the role of the vet and how to care for sick animals in a very well planned role-play area that gives them maximum opportunity to play out their feelings. This activity also enables staff to promote personal safety and awareness of the dangers of drugs. Reception children develop a good body of knowledge. They sort materials and find out which will keep a teddy dry. They look for sources of light and natural things on a walk. With the aid of very good resources they make comparisons between household items from past and present. Children share ideas about how to play simple games on the computer. As part of their Three Bears topic they used a simple map to try to locate Goldilocks in the school grounds. Children draw items that they know need electricity, recording these using their own ideas. Children have a good introduction to traditional culture through stories and knowledge of Christianity and learn about other customs – for example, how Chinese people in Britain celebrate New Year.

Physical development

56. Teaching is good, but children's attainment is not more than satisfactory. The discrepancy between teaching and learning results from lack of regular access for children to an outside space equipped for them to move with confidence and imagination. Children control their use of materials as they play with dough and clay and use simple tools to make tarts and clay pots. They use construction toys well to create simple models. Most children have good fine motor control, they manage zips, buttons and laces when dressing themselves and use pencils properly. Physical education lessons start with good warm up exercises, the teacher explaining clearly the benefits of exercise. Step by step teaching works well because children are able to follow instructions – for example about how to roll and throw a ball.

Creative development

57. Overall teaching of this area is good. Provision for role-play is very good. In addition to the 'Vet' corner pre-reception boys and girls choose to play at cooking, dressing up and pushing prams. Reception children enthusiastically role play the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears and use the telephone and other equipment as they enact roles in the 'office'. Children experience a range of media and techniques in art but work is often too directed. Staff are skilled in leading activities such as painting patterns in different colours and in modelling clay pots but this is not balanced by an equal emphasis on experimentation and imagination. Too much time is given to tracing when children could draw for themselves. Music teaching is good. Children enjoy songs that often end lessons and know the words and actions. They benefit from specialist teaching, improving their understanding and use of pitch as they sing and play tuned instruments.

ENGLISH

58. Attainment in Year 2 is above average; in Year 6 it is well above average. Across the school, pupils achieve very well.
59. These standards are higher than at the time of the last inspection. This stems from significant improvement in teaching and learning, the quality of provision for literacy and the working partnership with parents. The searching analysis of assessment data and pupils' work also helps by identifying what is and what is not as good as it could be. The school does most things very well in English, but the factor that most decisively drives continuous improvement is the very high quality of the leadership and management of the subject. The co-ordinators work as a close and dynamic team with shared responsibilities that span the whole school. They check standards rigorously to identify areas that need strengthening and work with colleagues to identify any areas of concern. This has led to some imaginative developments, the effect of which has yet to show in the school's published results. The initiative to improve all pupils' understanding of the structures and ways of planning different kinds of texts is a very good example. Such developments take root securely across the school because of the very good systems for consulting, training and supporting all staff. All staff subscribe to the view that pupils are best served when teachers share and do the things that work best.
60. Standards in speaking and listening are high throughout the school. Teachers foster listening skills very well and have high expectations of pupils' attentiveness, courtesy and mutual support. The great majority of pupils meet these expectations well, and the relevance of their spoken responses shows a good grasp of what they have heard. They also respond very productively to the good opportunities they are given to develop their ideas on some specific point, such as the setting for a story, by talking intensely in small groups. The whole-class discussions that follow such activities are usually of high quality because of the teachers' skill in drawing all pupils into the talk and in using their ideas to build a coherent and shared understanding of what they have read or what they will write.
61. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and greatly improved since the last inspection, especially in Years 3 to 6. Over half the lessons were very good or excellent. Teachers use varied and stimulating methods, particularly their skilful questioning, for sparking and using pupils' ideas. They seldom waste a minute, and set time limits very effectively to motivate pupils and maintain a sense of urgency.
62. Teachers have effective methods for using pupils' talk to support their learning as readers and writers. For example, in a good lesson with Year 1 class, pupils used the notes they had written about the appearance, character and actions of the Big Bad Wolf as a basis for different spoken descriptions. They learned how to connect features to make these descriptions coherent. This gave them a strong basis for writing wanted posters about the Wolf. By such methods, pupils learn how to talk, as well as how to write, in a style that fits purpose. This interplay between talk and literacy continues throughout the school, often at a high level. It is made more effective by pupils' excellent attitudes to working together and by their eagerness to rise to a challenge. During an inspirational lesson with a Year 5 class, pupils explored an example of time slip, where past and present fused, in the novel, 'Children of Winter'. Through a variety of discussion activities, they learned how to use events in the story in a reasoned way to support their own interpretations of the experience of time slip. The focus was on developing reading skills at a very

- challenging level, but it was through different and demanding ways of talking that teacher and pupils shared the excitement of learning. Pupils adjusted their talk adeptly to each new context; it was urgent, purposeful, collaborative.
63. In reading, standards are high. The increasing use of ICT is leading to pupils developing better enquiry skills. Teachers check and record individual progress rigorously to ensure that books pose the right level of increasing demand so that pupils learn at their best rate. Good weekly routines, including the very effective use of homework, develop pupils' understanding, enjoyment and independent use of books and libraries.
 64. In Year 2, more confident pupils read quite advanced texts expressively and fluently. They understand how to 'read' punctuation. Lower attainers use their knowledge of the complex relationships between sounds and letters to tackle unfamiliar words. They can also explain why reading on to the end of the sentence helps.
 65. By Year 6, pupils identify many of the typical features of information books. Most know how to use a library system to find specific information and how to make notes to record it before reorganising it for their own purposes. Most pupils identify the different layers of meaning in a story text. These skills are the focus of a whole-school effort to raise reading standards. In response to an unseen story opening, pupils commented perceptively on how the author's choice of words created changing effects, and how the text was "like a film" in the way it changed "the way the reader sees the character".
 66. Standards in writing are above average and improving. The basic skills of spelling, punctuation, handwriting and presentation are all consistently very well taught and all pupils achieve very well. By Year 6, almost all pupils write neatly in ink in a fluent joined style. Pupils present work very well, emulating the high standard set by teachers in the quality of their literacy displays and resources, and in their meticulous marking of pupils' work. Pupils write in a motivated and disciplined way for a wide range of contexts. For example, as pupils in a Year 3 class followed a recipe to make a giant egg roll in food technology, they studied the structure and language features of the text. They reviewed their learning about the text and devised a framework together as a basis for writing their own recipes for 'a delicious sandwich for a dragon'. They all wrote with great imaginative excitement, but all their fantastic recipes showed a full critical understanding and use of the typical language and structure of the recipe.
 67. Improving pupils' writing is a continuing high priority across the school. Writing of all pupils shows the improving impact of the new strategies. Increasingly, they match language and structure to specific purpose, often in very interesting and expressive ways. The good system for marking pupils' work and setting them improvement targets is also resulting in pupils themselves being able to improve their own work.

MATHEMATICS

68. Standards by the end of Year 2 are above average. By the end of Year 6 they are well above average. Pupils are achieving very well. This reflects good improvement since the previous inspection. It is due to the excellent implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the very high quality teaching throughout the school. Teachers provide interesting and challenging lessons that are matched well to all pupils' needs. Lessons stimulate their thinking and promote enjoyment of the subject. In every year group, the pupils are challenged well so that progress is consistently very good.

69. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of number. Many of them count confidently in tens starting at various two and three-digit numbers. They know the difference between two and three-dimensional shapes and describe them by their properties. They draw graphs and interpret the information. Pupils, particularly the higher attainers, apply their understanding of number to problems, such as 'There are 17 biscuits left and 8 have been eaten, so how many were there at first?'
70. Year 6 pupils are very competent in carrying out investigations, both independently and sharing ideas with partners. They investigate rectangles and write 'scientific' reports including diagrams, the patterns observed, the results and the formula they arrive at. Pupils make use of their very good number skills by applying them to problems.
71. Several excellent lessons genuinely excited pupils and turned them on to mathematics. They thoroughly enjoyed the challenges presented, showing high levels of application and endeavour. Planning of lessons is excellent with teachers giving great thought to what pupils already know and how best to advance their learning. Pupils are often set different tasks based on the teacher's assessment of what is most suited to them. An excellent Year 5 lesson for lower attaining pupils presented them with ideal challenges. The teacher used a wide range of visual aids and approaches such as a 'stop/go button', which helped to maintain their full attention. Her excellent rapport with pupils enabled her to urge them along. A teaching assistant supported the pupils with learning difficulties very well, so that they played a full part in the lesson. There was a very purposeful atmosphere and a very good pace. Pupils were proud of their success in extending number sequences to include negative numbers.
72. Pupils know what they are learning. Teachers tell them at the start of lessons so that they understand the purpose. Mental and oral work at the beginning of lessons succeeds in gaining pupils' full attention and enthusiasm. For instance, a Year 1 class used number fans to reinforce their knowledge of odd and even numbers. The teacher challenged them very well asking pupils, for example, to double $9 - 1$. This keenness was also evident when Year 6 pupils showed a very high level of knowledge responding with 'yes/no' cards to a wide range of mathematical statements and terminology.
73. When pupils record work, the vast majority do so with great care and pride. This reflects the very high expectations of all teachers. Marking of work is always at least satisfactory and sometimes very good. Teachers write encouraging comments and sometimes offer guidance for further progress or check understanding. Pupils are encouraged to show their working when tackling problems, so that the teachers can see what may be the cause of a wrong answer. Pupils use their skills in numeracy in other subjects. For example they measure accurately in science lessons. In geography they look at statistics involving numbers in millions. ICT is used to provide pupils with experience and practice in data handling.
74. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 know what they are good at because the teacher tells them. The teacher's very good relationship with the pupils is supported by excellent subject knowledge. There is a very good atmosphere of everyone sharing in learning. He constantly questions their understanding so that they have to explain. The competitive mental starter game is carried out with tremendous enthusiasm and in the very best spirit. Pupils relate very well to each other, co-operate and have a sense of fair play. The teacher sets challenging tasks and time limits so that pupils work hard and concentrate well, sharing understanding with partners to their mutual benefit. He knows them well so that one is urged to work quickly, another not too

quickly, to read carefully, check answers and so on. The pupils share and reflect the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject and there is an excellent pace to their learning.

75. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The team of co-ordinators works well together so that there is a clear picture of how pupils are doing. Strengths and weaknesses in pupils' knowledge are identified and any problems are addressed collectively. This approach makes an important contribution to raising standards.

SCIENCE

76. Standards in science have improved substantially since the last inspection. The main reason for this is the development of a very good science management team. They have produced very detailed plans and provide very good support to teachers. Because of this and their rigorous monitoring of standards, all areas of science are developed systematically and pupils' achievement through the school is excellent.
77. Pupils in Year 2 reach above average standards, with a good number of pupils reaching the higher Level 3. Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made excellent progress from Year 3 and reach very high standards, with boys and girls doing equally well.
78. Year 2 pupils can predict, plan, observe, measure and draw conclusions with adult support. They have a broad idea of the meaning of fair testing. They write their results in table form, but there is little evidence of graphs being used. In a Year 2 lesson for example, pupils were investigating which type of paper had the best absorbency. Pupils predicted, planned and observed, dipping different strips of paper into water and with adult help, ensured that the test was fair by timing and dipping to the same extent. They measured and recorded results and conclusions in table form. They have good knowledge of science facts. They understand, for example, that materials may change shape by pushing, pulling or stretching and have carried out investigations linked to friction and gravity. They classify materials into natural and manufactured, solids and liquids and reversible and non-reversible changes.
79. Knowledge and skills develop very well in Years 3 to 6. By the end of Year 6, around half of the pupils are working at the higher Level 5 and almost all of the rest at the expected Level 4. Middle-ability pupils work at an above average level because the level of challenge is high. In one lesson in Year 6 for example, pupils were thinking creatively to give scientific explanations when investigating pulse rates during different types of exercise. Pupils made sensible comments about fair tests and could spot odd results.
80. The quality of teaching in science is very good overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. The learning in all areas of science is very good, as a result of high quality of teaching. The scientific knowledge of teachers is very good, which enables them to explain difficult concepts. The sorting and classification of plants and investigating characteristics is one such example being undertaken by a Year 5 class. They had used 'branching' activities to classify animals and understood the meaning of main and sub groups.
81. Homework is used very well to support science. For example, pupils had been asked to research plant classification at home. This made a good contribution to the learning in the subsequent lesson. Teachers' expectations are very high and because of the very good attitudes of pupils, they are enthused and eager to meet these expectations. They present their work neatly and methodically using

appropriate scientific vocabulary. Pupils benefit from very good feedback about what is good and what needs to be improved. Because relationships are very good, lessons run smoothly with good pace and pupils work well independently.

ART AND DESIGN

82. Standards in art have risen throughout the school since the last inspection and the main reason for this is the very good management of the subject. Standards are now above those expected at the end of Year 2 and well above those expected at the end of Year 6. There is a particularly good focus on the work of famous artists and this is a strength throughout the school.
83. Teaching is very good overall and consequently the learning is very good. Particular strengths are the teaching of skills and teachers' knowledge and understanding of art. For example, when a Year 2 class was looking at the work of Hogarth and making close observational drawings of an arrangement of fruit and a bottle, they were reminded of previously taught skills about the quality of lines and different ways of shading. Teachers train pupils to use their sketch books successfully to generate, record and develop ideas. The focus on a range of artists' work means that pupils have a wide experience of methods and approaches. They have a good understanding for example, of how colour can affect mood. The work of Georgia O'Keefe was studied in Year 4 and pupils produced high quality, vibrant pictures of flowers.
84. Good links are made with the local art gallery and through this, pupils learn very well and develop a very good understanding of modern art. Pupils in Year 6 use planning sheets to stimulate and develop ideas to obtain a three-dimensional effect from a two-dimensional image. Pupils plan and develop their ideas very effectively to produce a sculpture from a drawing. Music is sometimes used successfully to inspire feelings and moods in relation to colours, line and form. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils had studied the work of Kandinsky and were considering his second phase of colours and moods in abstract paintings. Very effective use of a variety of music, helped pupils to respond in their chosen colour, line and form. Pupils enjoy their art and take care and pride in their work.
85. Because of the very effective management of the subject, pupils' art skills develop systematically. Detailed guidance supports teachers very well. Besides informal support for teachers, demonstration lessons are undertaken and there is monitoring of lessons, followed by feedback. All of these make a strong contribution to the very good standards achieved.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

86. Standards have shown very good improvement since the last inspection. At the end of Year 2 standards are above those expected and by the end of Year 6, they are well above those expected. The main reason for this is the very good leadership from the subject manager. Although employed as a learning assistant, the manager undertakes much of the teaching in Years 3 to 6.
87. In Year 1, the pupils successfully learn about specifications, how to design and make a product and how to use levers. Pupils have evaluated pop-up commercial books and they were making their own three-dimensional effect 'pigs', by skilfully folding and rolling paper and previously have made moving pictures using levers. They had previously made moving pictures through using paper levers. In Year 2, pupils learn different ways of joining materials, including the use of woodworking tools where they use these when making wooden frames for calendars. They measure and cut

accurately and use their knowledge of wheels and axles to make wheeled vehicles. During Year 6, pupils gain a very good understanding of different methods of construction, different types of linkage and mechanisms. They use this in their construction of robots where there are very good links with ICT. Pupils use computer programs for their design process which enables all pupils to produce good quality designs. They use a multimedia presentation program to very good effect to illustrate the design sequence.

88. Teaching is very good overall. Teachers are well supported by the subject manager and have developed very good subject knowledge. In Year 5 for example, the teacher had excellent knowledge of a range of gears and how they worked. This meant that she could explain complicated gears simply using pupils to represent clockwise and anti-clockwise movements and connections. At the end of the lesson, lower attaining pupils had a good grasp of how gears work and how they can be used to make things turn. Resources are well organised and appropriate for the task. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils used thimbles, needle threaders and textile prints for example, to construct and make seats for their deck chair designs. The level of challenge is high for pupils of all abilities and they enjoy their work. They show enthusiasm and precision in both planning and making to produce high quality products of which they are justifiably proud.

GEOGRAPHY

89. Standards are above expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Older pupils are now given good opportunities to use data and search for information themselves.
90. Teaching has improved and is now consistently good or very good. Teachers' good subject knowledge helps pupils to progress well, for instance through using accurate geographical terms. Work is planned well to provide an appropriate level of challenge for all pupils. During a Year 1 lesson, pupils had a good knowledge of maps and the relevant symbols used. Spurred on by the teacher, they were eager to suggest their own symbols for a map of an imaginary place.
91. Pupils are encouraged to think of ways to improve the school environment. For example, Year 2, pupils redesigned their playground, taking account of the needs of all the people who would be using it. The 'eco-schools' initiative also encourages pupils to think about their environment, by recycling items and making areas more attractive. This approach to environmental issues continues in Years 3 to 6. Pupils consider life in other countries. During a very good Year 5 lesson, pupils studied St Lucia and very effectively used a map to explore the location. Year 6 pupils are well supported to undertake independent work using books and the Internet.
92. The subject is led well by two enthusiastic coordinators. Resources are generally good, enabling the teachers to fulfil the demands of the curriculum.

HISTORY

93. The standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above national expectations and this indicates that there has been some improvement since the previous inspection.
94. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is at least satisfactory and sometimes outstanding, whilst in Years 3 to 6 it is consistently good or better. The teachers' subject knowledge is good and they generally plan effective lessons. Occasionally, too much is planned for one lesson. Resources are good and used well by teachers. Good links are made with other subjects, especially with English and geography. Older pupils give appropriate reasons for why we should consider history when seeking to understand

- present times. Effective marking provides pupils with an understanding of their achievement and helps them to know how they can improve their work.
95. Displays contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, a display in a Year 4 class included simple, historical language describing Elizabethan times. Timelines enhance pupils' understanding of the sequence of historical events. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils used timelines well to explore history from a personal viewpoint. They discussed how things have changed since their grandparents were young and showed a particular interest in the toys with which their grandparents may have played. They understood that materials, such as plastic, might not have been so readily available. In an excellent Year 2 lesson, pupils empathised with the feelings of the sailors on board the ship 'Pinta' as they imagined what it might have been like to feel that they were about to fall off the edge of the world.
 96. During one very good Year 6 lesson, lower attaining pupils studied recent decades through listening to music from 1940 onwards. Nearly all talked with understanding about why people in the Second World War might have needed some 'cheering up,' and how the rationing of food ended in the 1950s. The good progress made by pupils with special educational needs was clearly evident during this lesson.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

97. By the end of Year 2 standards are good and by the end of Year 6 the standards are very good. The standards are higher than at the previous inspection. The good quality and range of resources, together with the expertise of those teaching ICT, ensure that all aspects of the subject are taught very well.
98. Pupils develop very good computer skills as they progress through the school. Most teaching is undertaken in the ICT suites, by the coordinator and assistant coordinator, who form a very effective team. Lessons are structured carefully to enable pupils to build systematically on their knowledge, skills and understanding. This gives the pupils the confidence to tackle the tasks set. There is a very good balance between teacher demonstration and pupil activity, which is well adapted to support the needs of each group of pupils. Pupils from Year 2 upwards log on independently and most locate, open, save and retrieve information without help. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
99. Teachers have high expectations of positive involvement, to which the pupils respond very well; they are keen to contribute ideas and answer questions. Pupils work very hard, concentrate well and persevere. Very good strategies are employed to encourage them to solve problems. Lower attaining pupils explain their tasks and have a very good knowledge of their own levels of achievement. Higher attaining pupils are skilful in describing the differing ways to solve complex problems.
100. The wide variety of the pupils' work indicates their rapidly developing skills. There are very good links with other subjects. For example, in one ICT lesson in Year 2, pupils were studying the work of the artist Mondrian. They emulated the artist's style, accurately using a painting program. The excellent display of work in the ICT suite by Year 6 shows how these pupils have used multimedia presentations to explain their robot designs which were developed in design and technology. Mathematics is also very well supported by ICT, for example, pupils in Year 3 made squares and rectangles on screen by sequencing a set of commands to move the marker around. During a Year 5 lesson, pupils undertook challenging work designing a bedroom, using a computer model. They were very well supported both by the teacher and their peers.

101. The subject is very well led and supported by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic ICT team. Teachers' confidence and competence have improved because of extensive training. Few lessons were observed which made use of ICT in the classroom. The ICT coordinator is aware of this and anticipates that the planned networking of the computers throughout the school will enable pupils to access the full range of software in classrooms. A lunch-time computer club offers additional opportunities for pupils to use the facilities in the suites.

MUSIC

102. Standards are above those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils are achieving very well. The appointment of a highly talented musician has transformed the subject so that there has been excellent improvement since the previous inspection when it was found unsatisfactory in all aspects. Overall provision for the subject is now very good.
103. Year 2 pupils have a good sense of rhythm and pulse. In lessons they sing tunefully and enthusiastically. Pupils know the names of musical instruments and the 'families' to which they belong. They name percussion instruments and play them correctly, selecting the appropriate beaters. Pupils use technical vocabulary with understanding, knowing that metal gives a more *sustained* sound than wood because of the *vibration*. They are good listeners, identifying, for example, when recordings include a flute and a harp.
104. Pupils in Year 6 name pieces of music and the composer, such as 'Night on a Bare Mountain' by Mussorgsky. They listen with 'musical ears' so that they recognise that the jerkiness of the music is the rhythm. They have a good sense of keeping time, shown by stamping and clapping. Some add improvised rhythmic patterns on various un-pitched percussion instruments. Musical vocabulary is understood well and a number of pupils explain what they think is the purpose of 'lyrics'. When they sing in two parts they know that it starts to go wrong 'because we are getting faster'. An excellent feature on a recent CD involving every pupil in the school is the clarity of diction. However, the good quality of singing in lessons is not replicated in assemblies.
105. A specialist teaches most of the classes. Her teaching is consistently of a very high quality. Consequently learning is very good throughout the school. Lessons are rather lengthy but the teacher uses the time extremely effectively by planning a variety of activities. Her lively approach keeps the lessons swinging along, to the evident enjoyment of almost all pupils. She provides an excellent role model for the pupils and transmits her love of the subject to them. In an excellent lesson with a Year 4 class the pupils recognised the particular piece of music from 'Peer Gynt' and recounted aspects of the story and music. The teacher uses musical language throughout so that pupils understand words such as *legato* and know that *piano* and *forte* mean soft and loud. Opportunities are taken to follow pupils' interests. Pupils are invited to perform individually on the recorder or keyboard.
106. The co-ordinator has raised the profile of the subject to a high level. There are various groups for singing and learning recorders in out-of-school hours. Groups have performed publicly, including singing at the Royal Albert Hall. All pupils in Year 3 learn the recorder. Efforts are being made to increase opportunities for pupils to learn to play musical instruments such as guitar and violin. Good links are made with other subjects such as science, when pupils think about the production of sound, and literacy, with stories such as Peer Gynt and Macbeth. The well-resourced music

room provides excellent facilities. The subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

107. Standards in physical education have improved well since the last inspection. This is mainly through very good management. Teaching has improved and standards have risen. At the end of Year 2, standards are above those expected and at the end of Year 6, they are well above those expected.
108. Pupils enjoy lessons and improve their skills systematically as they move through the school. During a Year 1 lesson, pupils were able to contrast actions with stillness, hold stretched and tucked positions and had developed good control of basic actions such as jumping and landing with bent knees. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrated improved understanding and control through actions such as bouncing a ball to specific heights from the different positions of kneeling and standing. They were able to apply the right amount of force to control the ball well.
109. Sequences of movements develop well in Years 3 to 6 in gymnastic lessons. In Year 4, pupils produced linked sequences of movements, incorporating balances on small and large parts of the body and forward or side rolls. Games skills also develop very well with pupils making good progress in learning shoulder, chest and bounce passes. The very high standards reached in Year 6 are illustrated by the high proportion of good swimmers. Additionally, a number of pupils are identified as talented in gymnastics and games. Some of them perform at county and national level. Very good levels of attainment were seen in a Year 6 gymnastics lesson. Pupils were working very well co-operatively in groups of four or five, which involved the skills of counterbalancing. Pupils joined two small group balances to create a larger counter balance, recognising the need for trust and collaboration. Their evaluation skills were very well developed and they were able to identify their own and others' strengths and weaknesses clearly and supportively.
110. Teaching is very good. Lessons are taken at a brisk pace and are structured well. There is a very good emphasis on teaching specific skills systematically, such as rolls, balances and games skills. Teachers give a clear lead themselves and use pupils well to demonstrate. Pupils' evaluation skills are developed systematically, which is illustrated by a Year 6 lesson where pupils were given well defined questions to aid their purposeful and accurate evaluations. Lessons are very well managed. Resources and equipment are organised well and carried safely and efficiently. Pupils enjoy physical education lessons and are involved and enthusiastic. Both girls and boys for example, were reluctant to finish an outside games lesson which was about developing tactics, while practising a range of previously taught throwing passes.
111. The range of clubs offered to pupils is wide and gives pupils extra opportunities for coaching and involvement in matches and competitions. These are very well supported reflecting the enthusiasm shown by pupils for all physical activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

112. Standards are above those expected by the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is good improvement on the previous inspection.
113. Teachers use a variety of approaches which results in interesting and lively work by pupils. Pupils' notebooks indicate good understanding of Christian customs and a

developing knowledge of the customs and beliefs of other world religions. Assemblies make a good contribution to Christian beliefs but opportunities are missed to draw upon other faiths in the wider community.

114. In Year 2, pupils begin to make links between different world religions as they write a prayer for a baby, learn about Hindu birth customs and the Christmas story. They know some parables and retell the stories. They know about different holy books such as the Qur'an, the language in which it is written and explain how it is cared for by Muslims.
115. Pupils make good progress from Year 3 to 6, particularly in their knowledge of ceremonies and customs. They have less understanding of what beliefs mean to different communities. Effective teaching enables them to use sources from other curriculum areas very well. For example, Year 5 pupils studied the paintings of Fra Angelico and linked this with extracts from St Luke's Gospel. Pupils develop their literacy skills well, exemplified by poems written to God that express feelings.
116. Teaching is good overall and some is excellent. The choice of stimulating resources such as the film 'Jesus of Nazareth' had an impact on Year 6 pupils' interest in miracles, which the teacher helped them to relate to modern day life. Year 3 pupils know why symbols and artefacts are important to Christians. Information is presented in lively and interesting ways to Year 1 and 2 pupils, who for example, participate in a role-play of a wedding. Sometimes pupils are given worksheets to record what they know when they are well able to do this through their own drawings and writing. Good use is made of the local church.
117. Management of the subject is very good. There is a clear sense of direction and coordinators take responsibility for planning for colleagues and in teaching some of their lessons. This ensures progression and continuity in pupils' learning and utilises expertise. The school takes good care to enable pupils whose parents do not wish them to participate in lessons to pursue their own studies.