

INSPECTION REPORT

DOVE BANK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kidsgrove, Stoke-on-Trent

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124089

Headteacher: Mrs S. Mitchell

Reporting inspector: Mrs Julia Coop
31862

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 5th December 2002

Inspection number: 248546

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:	5-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Off Rutland Road Kidsgrove Stoke-on-Trent
Postcode:	ST7 4AP
Telephone number:	01782 296786
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Graham Burn
Date of previous inspection:	19 th June 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
31862	Julia Coop	Registered Inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils are taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
20932	Timothy Boyce	Team Inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education	
15023	Ali Haouas	Team Inspector	English History Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23026	Monica Mullen	Team Inspector	Mathematics Geography Religious education	Pupils' attitudes values and personal development.
31754	Charlotte Roberson	Lay Inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in Kidsgrove, north of Stoke on Trent. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds, but the social and economic circumstances of the area are below average due to the decline in local employment opportunities. The local education authority has bid for priority funding but the school is not yet in receipt of any additional money. There are 188 pupils on roll between the ages of four and eleven. This represents a fall in pupil numbers since the last inspection, due to the declining birth rate in the area. All pupils are of white ethnicity and no pupils speak English as an additional language. The ratio of boys to girls is high and leads to an imbalance of numbers in some classes. Assessment data shows that children's level of attainment when they start school is well below average, but it varies from year to year, especially in terms of language skills. Twenty one per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly average. Twelve per cent of pupils have been identified as having some learning difficulties, which is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with more complex learning difficulties, 1.5%, is in line with the national average. Since the last inspection, there has been a significant change in teaching staff and the accommodation has been enhanced.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Its many strengths now far outweigh the aspects which require improvement. The excellent leadership of the headteacher has played a pivotal role in developing and improving teaching and the academic and personal standards pupils achieve. Results in National tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have improved because of the good quality of teaching. Pupils' achieve well as a result. Children make a very good start to their education in the reception class, because of very effective teaching and the very supportive learning environment. There is a very positive and happy ethos in the school and the academic development, welfare and well-being of pupils is nurtured very well. The school provides good value for money when compared with schools of a similar type in Staffordshire.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities in most subjects by the end of Year 6, because of the consistently good teaching.
- Children in the reception class get an exceptional start to their education because the teaching is consistently very good and often excellent.
- Standards in music and science are above average at the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership and has rapidly established very good teamwork amongst staff. This results in a very clear purpose for the school.
- Very good relationships and very good provision for pupils' social and moral development contribute very effectively to very good attitudes and to pupils' enjoyment of learning.
- A very good range of extra curricular activities and very good links with other schools adds to the quality of learning and educational experiences.
- Very good procedures are in place for ensuring pupils' welfare and well-being. Assessment procedures are used very effectively to support learning.
- The school values parents highly and has established very good links. The very high quality of information provided to parents enhances pupils learning very well.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) for older pupils in the school.
- Standards of speaking and listening skills.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress since the time of the last inspection in June 2000 when it was judged to have serious weaknesses. The leadership and management are now considerable strengths. The quality of teaching has significantly improved, with a much higher incidence of good and very good teaching. Standards in science are now above average at the end of Years 2, 6. Pupils are taught ICT more regularly, and pupils at the end of Year 2 attain expected levels. Standards in ICT remain low for older pupils mainly due to their limited past experiences. Music continues to be a strength of the school. Children in the reception class now make a very good start to their education. The quality of the curriculum is good overall. Teachers' planning is very detailed, and helps pupils to develop their skills very effectively. The school has

worked hard to develop its links with parents, which are now very good. This is a very caring school and all previous minor issues relating to health and safety of pupils have been successfully addressed. The accommodation and resources have improved, so enabling teaching to be more effective. The school has been successful in maintaining the strengths identified in the last report and with the excellent leadership of the headteacher and the commitment of all staff is now extremely well placed for continued and further development.

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	A	B	A	A*
mathematics	C	D	D	B
science	D	D	B	A

Key	
top 5% nationally	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Results in the 2002 National curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 are well above the national average in English, above average in science and below average in mathematics. In all three subjects, pupils' performance was significantly better than that found in similar schools. Results have improved more rapidly than the national trend in all three subjects. Attainment of the current Year 6 is above average in science and average in English and mathematics. This does not indicate that standards are falling, as there are more, less able pupils, in the current Year 6 who are still working hard to develop basic skills. The improvement in mathematics is due to the focus by teachers to raise standards for more able pupils and the concentration on practical work. The improvement in science is a direct result of the concentration on practical and experimental aspects of the subject. Standards in reading and writing are stronger than speaking and listening where standards are below average. Overall, pupils are achieving well, given their attainment levels when they start school. Standards in ICT are well below average due to lack of prior experiences and limited teacher confidence in the subject. Standards in all other subjects are at average levels, except music, where standards are above average. Boys do better than girls in mathematics and science, although the gap is closing steadily.

Results at the end of Year 2 in the national curriculum tests were well above average in mathematics, average in reading and below average in writing. Compared to similar schools, results were very high in mathematics, above average in reading and average in writing. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are above average in mathematics and science because of the practical way these subjects are taught. Standards remain below average in English. This is because there is a significant number of less able pupils who have difficulties expressing themselves when speaking and this effects their attainment when writing. Pupils are making good progress and achieve well in relation to their well below average abilities when they started school. Children in the reception class who started with well below average attainment in most areas of learning are making very rapid progress because of the highly effective teaching they are receiving. As a result, the majority are in line to attain the early learning goals by the end of reception year. Pupils with learning difficulties make the same progress as others in their class, due to the careful planning by teachers who make sure that suitable targets are identified so that all pupils are fully included in activities.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The majority of pupils enjoy school and are eager to learn. A small number of older pupils lack motivation to learn in some lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are courteous and respectful to each other, staff and visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very good. Pupils follow the very good role models of adults at school to develop very good caring relationships.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are satisfactory because of the school's careful checks. A significant number of parents take holidays in term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Significant changes of teaching staff have helped standards to rise. Teaching is consistently very good and often excellent in the reception class and this makes a very significant contribution to the very good progress that all these children make. All activities are used very effectively to support and develop children's language skills. Teaching in science is very good and is consistently good in English and mathematics, with some very good practice across the school. Teaching is at its best when the tasks are challenging and pupils are provided with opportunities to learn through practical and relevant problem solving activities. Teachers effectively promote the use of subject specific vocabulary in lessons. Whilst they plan suitable opportunities in English for pupils to speak in a variety of styles and situations, planning does not always take sufficient account of how pupils spoken language skills can be developed in other subjects. The school teaches mathematics in sets in Years 3 to 6 for three days a week. This initiative, overall, has proved successful, especially in challenging more able pupils, as work is being more closely targeted to individual needs. Although teachers generally have good subject knowledge this is limited in ICT and this has affected the overall standards that pupils attain. Specialist music teaching is effective and results in high standards. Very good relationships and effective pupil management ensure that most pupils try hard and maintain concentration in lessons. Although there are some good examples of pupils' work being marked in such a way as to outline clearly what pupils need to do to improve, this practice is not consistent across the school. As a result, in some subjects, pupils repeat mistakes or are not sufficiently aware of how they could improve their work further. Teachers have a close relationship with pupils with learning difficulties and particular care is taken to ensure that activities are matched to abilities. Support staff make a considerable contribution to pupils' learning when they are available.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. A very good range of extra-curricular activities and strong links to other schools enriches a good range of learning opportunities. Opportunities to develop speaking skills are not sufficiently developed in all subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision. The provision is well managed and personal support is strong. Individual Education Plans (IEP's) need to be more specific to support teachers more effectively in their planning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Opportunities to promote spiritual development and awareness of different cultures are good. This provision has a very positive impact on pupils' personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. There is very careful monitoring of pupils' progress. Assessment procedures are good overall and are used very well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED.

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and together with other key staff there is a very effective team. Staff have a shared vision and a very strong commitment to further improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are very supportive of the headteacher. They are keen to play an active role in the school. Their role in the strategic management of the school is developing.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. This is a learning school, that reflects very effectively on its performance. Monitoring by the headteacher is rigorous and there is a very good understanding of any strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Very good use is made of available funds to enhance the pupils' education. Educational priorities are supported through very good financial planning. The principles of best value are applied well.

Resources are adequate, but there is an insufficient range of computer software that has affected standards. Accommodation has improved and new staff have made a significant contribution to the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that their child likes school. • Their children become mature and responsible. • The quality of teaching and good leadership. • The expectations that are set. • The level of information they receive. • They approachability of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents would like more information from the school. • A few parents would like more homework and extra curricular activities.

The inspection findings fully endorse the parents' positive views of the school. The school has worked hard to improve its links with parents and provides very good levels of information. Homework and the very good range of extra curricular activities significantly enrich the pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. This is an improving school. Since the previous inspection, standards have risen faster than the national average and similar schools in the area. As a result, in 2001, the school was presented with a school achievement award. The results of the 2002 national tests show the school achieving its best ever test results in terms of the percentage of pupils attaining the expected levels by the end of Year 6.
2. Inspection findings show that attainment, by the end of Year 6, is average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The difference in attainment between science and the other subjects can be explained by the fact that pupils have been encouraged for the past eighteen months, to develop their skills through a practical problem solving approach and this is having a positive effect on learning. This is also a major factor in the improvement in the standards attained this year in mathematics. There is now a much greater emphasis on pupils' developing the ability to solve mathematical problems.
3. The difference between inspection findings and standards attained in the 2002 national test results is not an indication of a decline in standards, but is due to the different ability levels found in some year groups. Overall, pupils of all abilities are achieving well in relation to their well below abilities when they started school and are making good progress. More able pupils, in particular, are now challenged more effectively in mathematics and this is another factor in the rise in standards in this subject. However, in most year groups, despite trying hard and being interested in learning, many pupils find it difficult to express themselves clearly when speaking. Despite focussing well on the development and use of subject specific vocabulary, opportunities are not always fully developed in other subjects.
4. The school's commitment to raising standards and the rigorous use of test and assessment data to set targets for improvement have made an invaluable contribution to the improvement in attainment. The school has been very alert to ensure that the relative underachievement of girls in mathematics and science is carefully monitored through a very thorough analysis of the data and from lesson observations. It has acted quickly to address this issue. Indications are that the various strategies that the school has implemented, such as sometimes teaching in single gender groups, are having a positive effect on the motivation of the girls. As a result, girls are more responsive in lessons and the gap between their attainment and that of boys is now very small. The school also has an effective policy on the education of gifted and talented pupils. Through a programme of relevant support, a gifted mathematician gained a level 6 in the 2002 national mathematics tests. Although currently not identifying any gifted or talented pupils the school is constantly alert and ready to support and challenge them.
5. The attainment of children, when they start school in the reception class varies each year. It is generally well below expected levels especially in the key areas of communication language and literacy, and personal and social development. The deputy headteacher has completely revised and adapted planning and this has had a very positive affect on standards. As a result, all children in the current reception class are making very rapid progress. Most children are now in line to attain the early learning goals in all areas of learning when they start in Year 1. However, despite this very positive start a small number of very immature children who started with a limited ability to communicate will not attain these levels. The school is investigating ways to more effectively support and develop the language skills for this group of children.
6. Inspection evidence indicates that children did not make such good progress in the reception class in the past, due to a limited understanding by previous staff of how to plan a learning environment to meet the specific needs and abilities of young children. In particular, their language skills remained underdeveloped. These pupils also had an unsettled start in Year 1. This has had an impact on the standards older and less able pupils in Year 2 are currently attaining in all aspects of English, especially their speaking and listening skills. Despite this unsatisfactory start to their education,

pupils' overall attainment at the end of Year 2 has improved considerably, because of the significant improvements in teaching and learning.

7. Standards, in reading in the 2002 national tests are average. They have improved considerably from a well below average level in the 2001 tests. This is because the school has placed a greater emphasis on the development of pupil's knowledge of letter sounds. Standards in writing remain below average overall. Although standards in writing do not appear to have improved, in reality, the number of pupils attaining the expected level 2 has risen and a higher than average number of pupils, attained level 2 B. However, no pupils attained the higher level 3, because pupils previously had limited opportunities to practice their writing at length. In addition, pupils' limited language skills hampered their progress and they remained unable to explain their ideas fully when writing.
8. Despite this generally positive picture, inspection findings show that standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are below average in the current Year 2 class. This is because a significant number of pupils in the current Year 2 still have a limited vocabulary and find it difficult to express themselves. This affects their ability to put their thoughts down when writing and affects their ability to sound out unfamiliar words when reading. The school is working on the development of speaking and listening and is rightly emphasising the importance of listening to each other and continually finding ways to practice and develop speaking skills, for example, through role-play and drama activities in English. However, more could be done to plan a range of activities to speak in different situations in other subjects. The school's analysis of the assessment data has also been used very effectively to adapt planning. As a result, pupils now have more opportunities to practice and develop their writing at length and a number of more able pupils are already attaining the higher level 3 in writing.
9. Inspection findings show that standards are above average in mathematics and science, by the end of Year 2. This does not represent a decline in standards, which were well above average in the 2002 national test, but is because there are more less able pupils in the current Year 2 than in the previous year. Standards are however higher in these subjects than in English because of the very practical way that teachers develop learning in these subjects. In particular, pupils are encouraged to use a range of practical equipment, which motivates them well and does not involve too much written recording. As a result, pupils' skills in carrying out scientific and mathematical enquires are above average and are having a beneficial impact on the standards attained in other aspects of these subjects.
10. Standards in music are above average, at the end of Year 2 and 6, because of skilled teaching and good range of activities planned. Standards in all other subjects including religious education are average at the end of Year 2. Similarly, standards are average in all subjects except in information and communication technology (ICT) at the end of Year 6. Pupils however enjoy learning, make good progress and are achieving well in relation to their abilities when they started school, because teaching is now consistently good and the quality of curriculum planning has improved.
11. Standards in ICT are well below average at the end of Year 6. This is a direct result of pupils' previous lack of experience and limited computer resources. Although resources have now improved and pupils are able to access computers on a regular basis in their classrooms, their limited basic skills are preventing them from attaining expected levels. In addition, teachers have not yet had all the required training and some still lack confidence. Despite these factors, computers are used appropriately to support pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils are developing their skills in art and design and science. However, this practice is not as effective as it could be due to a lack of appropriate software to enhance learning further. The school is fully aware of this situation and new software has been ordered and is now starting to be used.
12. A strength of the school is the manner in which it addresses the issue of inclusion. Teaching and learning ensure that all pupils regardless of ability take a full and active part in learning and make a valuable contribution to the life of the school as a community. As a result, the school supports pupils with learning difficulties well and they are now identified early, which is an improvement from the last inspection. Support for pupils with more complex needs is also good especially when they receive individual help as part of their planned learning programmes. Sensitive and caring support from teachers in lessons is having a beneficial effect on pupils' self-esteem. Teachers know

individual pupils very well and the lack of focussed targets on pupils' individual education plans, (IEP's) does not prevent them from planning activities matched to their abilities. As a result, pupils with learning difficulties are generally making the same progress as their friends in lessons and are achieving well in relation to their abilities.

13. The school has a very clear awareness of the issues that need to be tackled to improve standards further. Neither the staff nor governors show any sense of complacency. Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the school has a real commitment to improvement and is very well placed to continue to improve the quality of education that it provides.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The attitudes, values and personal development of pupils across the school are very good. This is similar to the previous inspection. Parents also express positive views on these aspects of their children's education. They are right to think that their children are keen to come to school and to learn in the secure environment provided.
15. Children in the reception class have very good attitudes to learning. They show high levels of interest and concentration in all the activities that they take part in and behave very well. These factors, together with the consistently very high standard of teaching, add much to the quality of children's learning.
16. Pupils generally have very good attitudes in lessons and towards other aspects of school life. They respond positively to adults, particularly where teachers have made good efforts to plan exciting lessons. Pupils sit quietly when required, and concentrate well. This makes an important contribution to the quality of learning and the progress they make. Most pupils enjoy school and really try hard to complete their work successfully. However, some older and less able pupils are sometimes reluctant to start tasks or to take a full and active part in lessons. It is due to the good quality of teaching and very effective classroom management procedures that these pupils do not disrupt the learning of others in the class.
17. Behaviour, including the incidences of exclusion, is very good. Pupils work very well together, especially in the many practical activities planned. As a result, the busy and orderly, working atmosphere, ensures that all pupils make good progress. Pupils respect all members of staff, they respond very well to the systems of praise and rewards and as a result are extremely keen to earn team points. Pupils respond well to instructions and treat others with respect. When approached they speak politely and open doors for visitors. Lunchtime is a pleasant social occasion and because pupils have helped devise the rules, they respond quickly to the 'traffic light' noise control system. All pupils know that high standards of behaviour are expected and try hard to co-operate.
18. Pupils with learning difficulties also behave very well especially in lessons where classroom assistants support pupils during whole class activities and rephrase questions for pupils. This enables them to take a full and active part in whole class work. More challenging behaviour is very effectively managed so that pupils with more complex needs also participate fully in lessons. Pupils show growing confidence when their spoken contributions are asked for and valued, although on occasions teachers do not provide enough time for pupils to respond and tend to answer for them, which has a negative impact on their self-confidence and learning.
19. Pupils' personal development is very good. There are very good relationships between pupils and all members of staff. Staff are always ready to help and guide pupils who greatly appreciate this. Pupils respect the values and beliefs of their classmates and they share work and materials with each other very well. Opportunities to undertake responsibilities are eagerly taken by pupils, and in these ways, they grow in confidence. For example, some have regular responsibility for registers, football equipment and the overhead projector. Girls and boys generally mix well at work and play and enjoy friendly relationships throughout the school. This is a result of the positive way the school promotes pupils' personal development and the successful efforts of staff to develop the confidence of girls. The two residential visits that older pupils take part in as well as the wide range of extra curricular activities are other very good examples of the way in which the school seeks to develop pupil's personal as well as academic development. The Year 6 pupils are also 'buddies' to younger pupils

and they enjoy this supportive role. This gives older pupils a sense of responsibility towards younger members of the school and helps develop mature and responsible attitudes.

20. Attendance, maintained since the previous inspection, remains satisfactory. The majority of absences come from a very small number of pupils who are regularly absent or pupils who are unwell. Most pupils have a good or very good rate of attendance and are punctual. Parents are regularly reminded of the importance of good attendance but there remains a significant number of families who take holidays during school time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. The quality of teaching is good overall. The change in teaching staff has made a considerable difference to the quality of teaching since the last inspection when teaching was judged to have significant weaknesses. In addition, the headteacher has closely monitored all teachers and this has developed the confidence and skills of the existing staff. During the inspection, teaching was good or better in almost eight out of every ten lessons observed. Very good and excellent teaching was seen across the school, but particularly in the reception class. Teaching is rarely unsatisfactory, and when it is; it is due to a lack of subject knowledge. The consistently good quality of teaching is making a considerable contribution to pupils' enjoyment in lessons and the progress they make.
22. The teaching in the reception class is never less than very good and often excellent, and makes a very significant contribution to the children's enjoyment of learning and the tremendous progress they are making. Activities are very appropriate for children of this age and ability. For example, there is a very good balance, between tasks that are teacher directed, and tasks that the children choose for themselves. A particular strength is the way the teacher brings learning alive and makes links between all the activities. This means children delight in learning that is 'seamless' and that their creativity is encouraged and nurtured. Language development in particular, is ongoing and every opportunity is taken by staff to develop and encourage children's knowledge and use of language. This is highly appropriate when many children have very limited spoken language skills. Very good emphasis is placed on developing children's personal and social development as this is an area of weakness when many children start school. Children are encouraged to develop self-confidence through praise and high expectations, and as a result, they are beginning to make sensible choices and take responsibility for certain aspects of their learning.
23. Particular strengths in teaching across the school are highly detailed planning, and teacher's very good management of pupils. Teachers use praise and rewards very effectively to motivate and encourage pupils, and this ensures that pupils want to work hard to please their teachers. Relationships are a particular strength, and this means that pupils are confident to have a go and are not afraid to make mistakes. Practical activities, such as those observed in design and technology lessons in Year 6 and in Year 2, give pupils very good opportunities to work together, and because of the very sensitive and encouraging support of the staff, they worked collaboratively to design and make shelters and vehicles. Throughout the school, pupils' personal and social development is very well supported in lessons when they are regularly required to work together in various groups.
24. Assessment, is used very effectively by teachers to monitor pupils' progress and to plan activities that are well matched to individual abilities, especially in English, mathematics and science. Teachers know pupils very well and this helps them to plan suitable activities in other subjects. A further strength is the way that teachers use practical activities to reinforce learning. This is particularly successful in science, where pupils are often given problems to solve. In this way, they gain a clear understanding of the subject and begin to think like 'young scientists' from an early age. Teachers use their knowledge and interest of subjects to enthuse and interest pupils. This was observed in an excellent history lesson, for example, when the teacher encouraged pupils to consider the impact of the Viking invasion and to consider the Anglo Saxons as refugees. Linking this to current day events, pupils clearly began to appreciate the dilemmas faced at the time that very effectively supported pupils' moral development.
25. Teachers often provide good verbal support in lessons and generally handle misconceptions clearly and sensitively. There are also some good examples of pupils' work being marked in a constructive

manner, which leads to an improvement in pupils' work or levels of presentation. However, this is not consistent in all year groups or all subjects. In some cases, marking is cursory and opportunities to reinforce pupils' knowledge of their learning or progress towards individual targets are not fully or effectively exploited.

26. Literacy skills are taught well and most Literacy lessons are well paced and interesting. Teachers take every opportunity to develop pupils' use of specific vocabulary and to correct pupils understanding of grammar and punctuation in lessons. Increasingly pupils are given opportunities to write at length, as a result, more pupils are attaining expected standards. However, pupils' spoken language skills, which are generally weak, are not always well planned for or promoted in other subjects and this restricts learning in this important aspect of the curriculum. It also limits the range of vocabulary that pupils use when writing which has a knock on effect on writing standards. Although some teachers use a range of good quality open questions to encourage pupils to clarify their thinking, often teachers miss these opportunities, asking questions that require only one-word answers.
27. Numeracy skills are taught well and pupils enjoy the quick pace of the mental start in lessons. The ends of lessons are better than were reported in the previous inspection and are used successfully to consolidate learning, in a fun way. The emphasis on practical activities, that encourage pupils to solve problems by manipulating and handling information, linked to the consistent good quality of teaching, has led to an improvement in standards at the end of Year 6. The school sets by ability three days a week in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is particularly strong for more able, older pupils. As a result, more pupils in this group are attaining the higher levels. However, some older, less able pupils are not always motivated to learn, especially when placed with younger pupils in the lower ability groups. Teachers have to work very hard to motivate these pupils and this affects the pace of some lessons. There is no malice in this behaviour however and it is a positive factor of teaching that this 'silly' behaviour does not detract younger pupils from learning. It is however, a direct result of some pupils finding basic skills difficult and their limited abilities to express their feelings clearly.
28. Until recently, there were insufficient computers in the school and ICT was not taught regularly. This has meant that older pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to learn many basic computer skills. The teaching of ICT is currently satisfactory because initial basic training and improved schemes of work have helped to develop the confidence of teachers to support learning in other subjects. However, some teachers still lack sufficient subject knowledge to develop pupils' specific computer skills and further training has been arranged to improve this.
29. In Years 3 to 6, teachers who have particular expertise often take responsibility for teaching a subject to most classes. For example, teaching in religious education by the co-ordinator is effective because it is based on a clear knowledge and understanding of the subject and an ability to make it interesting for pupils. Similarly, standards in music are high because of the good quality teaching by the co-ordinator that enables pupils to develop their skills well. Homework is set regularly and often encourages pupils to research projects at home. For example, all pupils worked very hard to find different examples of shelters and photographs of people moving, for art and design. These were well presented and labelled carefully by pupils showing pride in their efforts. Activities such as this ensure that pupils are motivated and have a good basis on which to plan their work. Pupils invariably rise to the challenge and enjoy the responsibility of finding things out for themselves.
30. Teachers are supportive and encouraging of pupils with general and more complex learning difficulties. They try hard to ensure that they are always fully included in activities and encourage them to work with more able friends, in practical activities. When available, classroom assistants are used well to support pupils' learning and individual work is well thought out by specialist tutors. However, teachers do not currently write pupils individual learning plans. In addition, targets are not clear or specific enough to support teachers' planning as well as they could.

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

31. The quality and range of the curriculum is good. It has substantially improved since the last inspection, when it was unsatisfactory. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and the requirements of the locally agreed religious education syllabus. With the exception of speaking skills that require further development, key skills are now fully integrated into curriculum planning. An important aspect of improvement is the way in which the school has put emphasis on a practical curriculum that is relevant to the specific needs of pupils. This significantly enhances all pupils learning. The curriculum is also enriched by a number of special days and very good links with local schools, which provide pupils with a wide range of hands on experiences. In addition, the development of small working areas in the school has enabled opportunities to extend independent learning.
32. The curriculum in the reception class has also improved and is now a strength of the school. Activities are very carefully planned around the key areas of learning and many opportunities are provided for children to learn through investigative, practical and open-ended tasks, as well as ones that are more formal. All activities have a specific learning objective and every opportunity is used to develop children's communication skills.
33. The school's strategy for teaching Numeracy skills is good. Increasingly pupils are able to practice their skills, to investigate and solve problems in well-planned numeracy lessons and in other subjects, such as science and design and technology. This has resulted in pupils developing their basic skills and growing in confidence. The pupils have adapted well to the structure of the lesson, clearly enjoy their work and this linked to the improved quality of teaching has led to an improvement in standards.
34. The school's strategy for teaching Literacy, good in lessons, is satisfactory overall, as planned opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills in subjects other than English are more limited. Although there are some good examples where these skills are effectively developed and special attention is given to introducing and explaining specific subject vocabulary, there are insufficient opportunities to ensure that pupils speak in a variety of situations and styles. For example, to use extended talk in group discussions, make oral presentations to a specific audience or participate in educational drama lessons. However, pupils' reading and writing skills are carefully promoted in other subjects. Younger pupils for example have researched 'what babies need, in order to grow', in science, and with support, write their findings. By Year 6, pupils' research and writing skills have been well developed in other subjects, such as geography and history.
35. The curriculum provision for ICT is now satisfactory. It has recently improved with the installation of 'mini' computer suites in each room and in two other small rooms in the school. Small groups of pupils can now be taught specific skills and because computers are situated within classrooms, they are being increasingly used to support pupils' work in other areas of the curriculum.
36. The provision for extra curricular activities is very good and significantly enhances the curriculum, as there is a wide range of academic, creative and physical activities on offer. External coaches provide extra sports activities including tag rugby and short tennis. In addition to these clubs, pupils in Year 4 and 5 go on a residential journey to Pendine in Wales and pupils in Year 6 attend a local residential centre. Pupils also benefit from many other additional activities that enrich their learning in lessons. For example, pupils have enjoyed and learned much in a science day and arts week and have participated in a wide range of visits, for instance to the local supermarket, a doctor's surgery, and the local war memorial. Pupils have also met a wide range of visitors including local authors; an Indian dancer and musician; and representatives from other faith groups; as part of their work. The school has put a great emphasis on raising standards and pupils' enjoyment of learning through this aspect of the school's work.
37. All pupils irrespective of their background have full access to the curriculum including activities organised outside the school day. Boys and girls participate equally in most of the extra curricular activities on offer with an effective system used to monitor the rate of participation. The school caters effectively for pupils of different abilities through well-planned activities. Achievement of girls is specifically focussed on to ensure that they work to their maximum potential.

38. The provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good overall. Good links with outside agencies ensure that relevant advice and guidance is received. The school acts quickly to use this advice to the benefit of the pupils. Staff are supportive and generally plan activities that are suitable for the different abilities in lessons. Targets on pupil's IEP's are improving but more could be done to make them more specific, measurable, attainable and relevant so that they can be more easily shared with pupils and parents. Pupils, however, are aware of their targets, and this helps them to understand what they need to do to improve.
39. Provision for personal, social, and health education including sex and relationship education and drug misuse is satisfactory. It is appropriately planned within a termly topic. This includes some opportunities for role-play to help pupils gain a greater understanding of the issues being dealt with. The school nurse who provides specific sessions on sex and relationship education and drug awareness for Year 5 and 6 provides additional and relevant support to the school and its pupils.
40. The school is continuing to develop and promote a range of links within the community, which are now very good. This is an even better picture to that reported in 2000. There is a particularly good working partnership with the local secondary school and some shared access to its resources. Many pupils in Year 6, for example, attend this school one evening a week accompanied by the design and technology co-ordinator. This enables them to use a much wider range of technology equipment, which ensures they are challenged. There are very strong links with a nursery school and staff visit and share ideas and good practice. Partnerships with industry are also a growing feature. Staff are outward looking and recognise clearly the benefits all these links can bring.
41. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. This represents an improvement in all aspects since the previous inspection. The school meets statutory requirements and provides a daily act of collective worship.
42. Opportunities for spiritual awareness are good. Throughout the school, strong emphasis is placed on reflecting upon the pupils' own unique place in the world. In the reception class, skilful teaching promotes a pure delight in learning, for example, as children experience the wonders of discovering clues planted around the school grounds. Many lessons give pupils the chance to reflect thoughtfully about the feelings and needs of those around them and to experience the joy and wonder of discovering things for themselves. A strong element in the well-planned, daily assemblies and lessons is the spirit of understanding that is promoted, as pupils become aware of the difficulties people in the past and in modern times experience. In addition, religious education lessons play an important role in encouraging pupils to have respect for the varying religious faiths the things they have in common and things that differ. Because of these many good opportunities, pupils have developed a caring and thoughtful consideration for others.
43. Provision for moral development is very good. Very clear messages, such as the right way to behave are continually presented to pupils. Teachers set high standards, as well as setting very good examples themselves. The strong emphasis on 'right and wrong' is encouraged at all times, and results in very good behaviour. Various reward systems are in place, which constantly remind pupils as to what is appropriate and acceptable behaviour. Stories in class and in assemblies are often ones that highlight moral dilemmas and teachers are quick to grasp the opportunity to enhance pupil's moral development. Virtues, such as charity towards others, are very well promoted. For example, pupils have been informed through discussions, stories and videos about poor children in some Eastern European countries who are not as well fed or provided for at Christmas. As a result, many pupils have been moved to collect an impressive array of Christmas 'shoe boxes', containing small gifts, for distribution to these children.
44. The school's provision for social development is very good. A real atmosphere of care and security is provided. Within this safe environment, pupils develop into well-mannered and polite young people. From the time they start school, pupils are taught to work with each other and take turns fairly. Some classrooms display written reminders, such as how to sit, behave and treat others well and pupils respond very positively to them. Pupils are encouraged to consider environmental issues, such as the problem of rubbish, and to behave well at all times. Many pupils also benefit from the rich experience of mixing socially as they take part in day and residential trips. Very good

involvement with the community, through a broad range of activities, also helps pupils become sociable and friendly and act in a mature and responsible way.

45. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn about their own culture, as well as about life in the wider world. For example, they learn about the people of India, and the aboriginal culture of Australia through examining paintings and books, as well listening to visitors from different faith groups. For example, a visitor from the Jewish faith was able to show and talk about the religious artefacts and a visitor from Gambia worked alongside pupils in cooking and mask making. Musical appreciation is also well developed, for example a “composer of the week” is chosen and pupils are encouraged to learn about and appreciate a wide range of different musical styles. Additional experiences such as multicultural rhythmic drumming also extend pupils cultural awareness well.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The school’s procedures for the care and welfare of pupils are very good. Weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been fully addressed.
47. Procedures to ensure pupils’ welfare are very good. A very thorough audit of health and safety has been undertaken and the policy is regularly reviewed and monitored closely. Risk assessments are helpful and undertaken regularly. Everyone works together to ensure pupils work and play in a safe, healthy environment. For example; there are three named first aiders in the school, incidents are properly recorded and parents and carers always told of any bumps to the head and in addition, all staff have been trained in the safe administration of asthma inhalers. Record keeping is manageable and effective and a safe use of the Internet policy is in place, known about and effectively implemented.
48. Arrangements for child protection are very good. A very watchful eye is kept on any pupil who may be going through any difficulties at home or at school. Procedures for child protection follow local guidance and the named person, plus one other, have both been fully trained. The nurse and the education welfare officer are effective in supporting pupils and families, and ‘drop in’ sessions have just commenced. There are currently no pupils who are ‘looked after’ by the local authority and although there is a named person who would oversee their needs, she has not yet had any formal guidance. Two of the great strengths however, are the way care and guidance of pupils permeates all areas of school life and the openness with which any problems that arise are tackled through consultation with parents and pupils.
49. Procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour are very successful. The headteacher takes a key role in monitoring behaviour and this enables the school to identify any negative patterns or trends and to improve the motivation of more reluctant learners. She and all staff respond to all pupils’ worries and concerns with great care and sensitivity. All members of staff accept their responsibilities for establishing and teaching acceptable codes of behaviour. Pupils themselves understand very clearly, what the school expects and talk with insight about the importance of following rules, which they have devised themselves. They behave very sensibly and believe that when on occasions they step out of line, things are dealt with properly by everyone, especially the headteacher. Bullying as a result is very rare.
50. Procedures to record and monitor attendance are good. The few pupils who have low rates of attendance are supported appropriately by the education welfare service. The headteacher is fully aware of who is not in school and why. Parents are given frequent reminders and are always encouraged to support good attendance.
51. Arrangements to support pupils’ personal development are good. Target setting is well established in the school. Parents and pupils know these targets, which are regularly reviewed. As well as individual targets to address personal development there are whole school targets, for example, to encourage pupils to attend extra curricular activities. However, there are no formal records of personal achievement. The school is rightly reviewing its policy and practice with a view to establishing individual records of achievement.

52. Pupils with more complex learning difficulties are well supported and annual reviews of their progress are held according to guidelines. Detailed records of their progress and achievement are kept and regular meetings are held with parents and all relevant people to ensure that they receive the best possible support and guidance. Individual tuition is implemented effectively according to their statements. The school is fully inclusive and is very quick to identify and act upon any issues regarding differences in progress or attainment of this group of pupils.
53. Assessment procedures have improved since the previous inspection and are now good overall. Formal procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment in the English, mathematics and science are very good. This is having a very positive impact on pupils' learning in these subjects. Formal procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment in other subjects including religious education are currently undergoing review prior to the introduction of new improved systems. They are satisfactory overall. Staff have very effective informal procedures and have a good knowledge of exactly how well each pupil is doing, therefore lessons are consistently well matched to the prior attainment of pupils.
54. Staff complete a very detailed analysis of all assessment information, and this ensures that each year group is performing to its potential and that the provision for specific groups of pupils is appropriate. For example, after a detailed analysis of its Year 6 assessment information the school became aware that in some subjects, the boys were outperforming the girls. As a response, the school made changes to the curriculum, has been able to raise the performance of the girls, and has closed the gap. The school makes very good use of all available assessment data and are able to track the progress of each pupil accurately, from the time they enter the reception class to the point where they leave the school at the end of Year 6. In this way they are able to target and quickly support specific pupils to ensure that they achieve their potential.
55. Targets are set for each pupil in English and mathematics and these targets are shared with both the pupils and their parents. In this way, the school ensures that each pupil has an accurate understanding of their own performance and that parents are fully involved in the education of their child. Teachers maintain accurate records for each pupil, which are passed on from class to class. This ensures that no time is wasted re-establishing levels of attainment at the start of each year and pupils are thus able to settle quickly to appropriately matched work in their new class.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

56. The school has improved its partnerships and communication with parents and carers and it values their contribution very highly. An outstanding feature is the effort taken, by the school, to consult with parents and seek their views. Because it seeks an active and genuine partnership, a growing number of parents are getting involved in school life. Benefits to all are very noticeable. The criticisms at the time of the previous inspection have been fully rectified and written annual reports are now good. They are more consistent and give a clear and detailed picture of what pupils can and cannot do. They are especially helpful in identifying the next steps in learning.
57. Parents' and carers' views of the school are very positive. Parents consulted were almost unanimous in their views that the school is well led, that everyone works hard, and that it is a very happy place to be. They believe it wants to work closely with them for the benefit of their children. They feel able to approach teachers and the headteacher for advice and guidance as necessary.
58. The deputy headteacher has implemented many exciting initiatives which has enabled a close and effective relationship to develop. This is especially noticeable in the very high quality and range of written information, which is now being sent to all families, some of which is excellent. This is informing and bringing parents and the community even closer together for the benefit of pupils. For example, frequent and very detailed newsletters provide clear information about school events. In September, each teacher provides parents with a booklet about the coming year. A specially designed 'Home School Link Book' includes a wide range of very relevant information. It is used well by staff, parents and pupils and is an example of the very best practice. The annual report from governors however is not as detailed as it should be, but the school is now aware of the latest requirements.

59. The school actively encourages pupils to attend parent evenings. A crèche is organised for this and other events such as Family Learning initiatives. Together with the Home School Partnership Group and the Parent Teacher Association, there are regular opportunities for parents to get involved in school life. Many volunteer helpers who enjoy their work in the school come in nearly every day. They too receive very good information in a well-written booklet and this helps them to support pupils well. Overall, links with parents are a strong feature of the school, which contributes very positively to all achievements that pupils make.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The leadership and management of the headteacher are excellent. Since her appointment sixteen months ago, she has developed a highly effective senior management team and maintained staff moral in a difficult period for the school. Her role has been pivotal in addressing the serious weaknesses in the school that were identified at the last inspection. The manner with which she identifies and tackles problems is impressive. She is rigorous and professional in her approach but at the same time ensures that the ethos of the school remains very caring and supportive of pupils. She is determined that the school will continue to develop and improve. She has been very successful in appointing high quality new staff that has ensured that previous unsatisfactory aspects in the school are now of a good quality. At the same time, she has developed the confidence and skills of existing teachers to form a team of staff that increasingly share her high expectations and value the excellent leadership that she provides. As a result, the school has made very good improvement since the previous inspection in 2000. The commitment shown by all staff and governors to make further improvement in standards indicates that the school is very well placed to continue its cycle of development and improvement.
61. The new deputy headteacher, very ably supports the headteacher. An outstanding teacher she sets a very clear example of classroom practice to the staff. It is because of her determination to improve the provision for reception children that in the last few weeks this has been completely 'turned around' and is now a strength of the school. She takes an active, and increasingly influential role in management matters, and, together with the headteacher, has formed a very effective team that is rapidly moving the school forward. They are well supported by other members of the senior management team who meet regularly to discuss issues pertinent to the schools improvement. All staff are consulted before decisions are embedded in school practice. New initiatives are carefully monitored to ensure that they are having the desired positive impact on improving pupils' learning.
62. Subject co-ordinators lead their subjects effectively. The headteacher has enabled them to gain an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses that exist in their various areas of responsibility. She is now pertinently planning to develop their role further, through performance management procedures and further training to ensure that they have an even more positive impact on the schools overall development.
63. Very good procedures are in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in English mathematics and science. The headteacher, co-ordinators, deputy headteacher and advisors from the Local Education Authority (LEA), have formally observed teaching and focussed on specific aspects, providing informal and formal feedback, followed up regularly to ensure that teachers practice has improved. Teachers have received sensitive but proactive support to improve their professional performance and have had the opportunity to observe 'best practice'. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved. Whilst the school has rightly focussed on these key subjects, opportunities have not yet been made available for subject leaders to monitor teaching and learning in other subjects. However, all staff have been trained to analyse pupils' work in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. This has resulted in improved teaching across the school that is beginning to have a positive effect on standards.
64. The School Development Plan, developed with the advice from the LEA, contains a very accurate and detailed assessment of the issues that need to be addressed to further improve the school. It demonstrates clearly that this is a school that recognises its strengths and weaknesses. Initiatives are carefully costed and procedures to identify success and monitor progress towards the targets are rigorous. Whilst this level of detail is a strength, the current format is complex and is not easily used

as a working document. The headteacher is considering the development of her own style of whole school planning. Her aims: “to maintain the rigour, whilst developing a clearer and more concise style, that easily exemplifies and prioritises the working vision, by which the school is to raise standards”, is spot on.

65. The school has an appropriate number of well-qualified and experienced teaching and non-teaching staff to meet the needs of the curriculum and to provide a small amount of specialist teaching in physical education, music and religious education in Years 3 to 6. New staff complete a very thorough induction process. As a result they quickly and effectively settle into their roles and areas of responsibility. Performance management procedures are securely established and all staff are set appropriate targets for their on-going professional development. These are closely linked to the school’s priorities and training follows. A good example of this is the improvement in teachers’ confidence and expertise in the teaching of science resulting in improved standards. The small numbers of support staff also make a significant and positive impact on the learning of the pupils.
66. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities appropriately. They have developed their role since the last inspection and because of the support and sensitive guidance from the headteacher have a clearer understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. They visit the school on a regular basis, have developed links with subject areas, and established a committee structure to monitor the work of the school. The governor’s role in shaping the direction of the school as a result, is satisfactory. However, the governors rely on the headteacher to take an active lead in their work. They are aware of this and agree that whilst they are now more confident in their approach to their roles, their knowledge of and involvement in supporting and monitoring school the improvement planning requires further development.
67. The management of the special needs provision is effective and helps to ensure that pupils progress at a similar rate to their classmates. The school has fully implemented the revised Code of Practice. Good links with outside agencies and the full involvement of parents are factors that contribute to the good quality provision. The co-ordinator has sufficient non-teaching time to fulfil all the administration duties, which she does diligently. The provision, however, could be further enhanced through more proactive support for individual or groups of pupils within lessons and improved IEP’s that include targets that are specific and more easily shared with pupils. For example, many younger children have language difficulties that would benefit from more specific and specialist support. The school acknowledges the importance of equalities in its aims and has an inclusive ethos. It has already reviewed its policy for racial equality and inclusion in line with recent requirements.
68. Financial planning is of a very good standard. The headteacher has very effectively established procedures to appraise carefully, all new initiatives in relation to likely costs and implications for the school. It is very carefully linked to development planning and the educational needs of the pupils. The school’s costs are in line with those of similar schools in the authority and the standards attained compare favourably with them. The budget, placed under considerable pressure by the decision of the previous management to support a small cohort of pupils in a single year group, has been carefully managed. Very careful financial control has ensured that the school will not have a deficit budget this financial year. The immediate effect is that spending on resources had to be suspended for a while. However, this decision was only undertaken after a full and frank appraisal of the situation and the likely impact on teaching and learning. The specific grants received by the school are however used wisely for their intended purpose, such as improving ICT provision or developing links with parents to ensure that they are better able to support their children’s learning. The headteacher has been very astute in gaining maximum benefit for the pupils from limited funds.
69. The school applies the principles of best value well. In particular, the headteacher very carefully analyses performance and uses data very effectively to evaluate the standards that pupils are achieving and to target where improvements are needed. This has resulted in an improvement in national curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and good and sometimes very good levels of achievement in relation to the low standards on entry to the school. She has a very clear understanding, and well thought out rationale, for ensuring the school gets good value for money. However, whilst the governors have a good level of understanding about seeking best value when purchasing goods and services, their evaluation tends to focus on a ‘job done’ rather than an analysis of the impact of their decisions on the standards attained.

70. Accommodation and resources have improved since the previous inspection and are adequate to support learning. For example, a number of areas in the school can now be used for independent learning. Many rooms have been redecorated and new furniture has enhanced the learning environment. The hall is well used and displays throughout the school make it an attractive environment for pupils. Now that the whole school site is securely fenced, the school is rightly planning to develop its grounds further to provide increased learning opportunities. ICT resources however, although improved, require further development as not all strands of the subject can be taught. The school has however acted quickly to rectify this shortage and resources are on order.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. In order to build upon the improvements which have taken place since the last inspection and to raise standards of attainment further the school needs to:

***1) Raise standards in information and communication technology by:**

- Providing an increased range of software to support learning.
- Providing additional training to enable staff to teach all strands and necessary skills.

(paragraphs 11, 28, 100, 117, 128, 133, 134, 152)

***2) Raise standards in speaking and listening by:**

- Providing pupils with an improved and better range of opportunities to speak at length.
- Systematically planning more frequent opportunities for pupils to speak in a range of situations, in all subjects.

(paragraphs 3, 8, 31, 34, 88, 100, 108, 122, 144, 151)

In addition these other minor issues should be considered by the school for inclusion in their action plan. The school should:

- Further, develop the governors role as ‘critical friend’ of the school;
(paragraphs 66, 69)
- Ensure that teachers’ marking is constructive and consistent;
(paragraphs 25, 93, 113, 127)
- *Continue to develop and implement assessment procedures in subjects other than English, mathematics and science;
(paragraphs 33, 114, 119, 123, 134, 140, 146, 152)
- Improve the quality of individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties.
(paragraphs 30, 37, 66)

* The school has already identified these issues as part of their school development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	8	9	18	7	1		
Percentage	19	21	42	16	2		

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	188
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	38

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	22

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	14	10	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	14
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	21	21	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (80)	88 (80)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	14	14
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	22	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (87)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	11	22	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	10	10
	Girls	21	16	21
	Total	32	26	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (76)	79 (59)	94 (82)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	10
	Girls	16	16	17
	Total	24	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (71)	82 (74)	82 (85)
	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	188	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5
Average class size	26.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	95

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	446637
Total expenditure	470129
Expenditure per pupil	2351
Balance brought forward from previous year	49850
Balance carried forward to next year	26358

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

188

Number of questionnaires returned

55

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	84	14	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	31	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	27	0	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	38	13	2	2
The teaching is good.	63	31	0	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	33	12	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	27	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	55	43	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	76	18	0	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	27	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	75	19	2	2	2

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

72. Very good and very recent improvement has resulted in the quality of the provision for children in the reception class now being strength of the school. It is a centre of exemplary early year's practice that ensures that children receive a very effective start to their education. The recently appointed deputy headteacher now very effectively leads the provision. She has worked extremely hard in a very short time to revise planning and the curriculum. She is a dedicated and experienced professional who is rightly seeking advice about ways to support the children with very low levels of language development.
73. The school admits children to the reception class in the September of the year they are five. They enter the class with very varied abilities and pre-school experiences. Overall, when they start, the majority of children are attaining standards well below average in most areas of learning. There are also a small but significant number of children attaining very low standards especially in their language skills. Staff have worked exceedingly hard to develop the provision and provide a rich and varied range of learning experiences. These are based on a very clear understanding of the needs of young children. As a result, children enjoy coming to school, delight in learning and try very hard at all times. This ensures that all children including those with learning difficulties have made very good progress and achieve very well in relation to their abilities when they started. By the time the children currently in the reception class start in Year 1 most, but not all children, will attain the early learning goals.
74. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. It is consistently very good overall and often excellent, and this leads to very good learning. Staff work very effectively as a team, and have high expectations of the children. The excellent, caring and supportive relationship developed between staff and children, ensures that children feel confident, secure, and thus able to benefit fully from the varied and interesting activities planned. This very positive approach is a significant factor in the very good progress children make.
75. The record keeping system and assessment procedures are very clear and manageable and give staff a well-informed basis on which to plan work. Children's progress is regularly monitored and analysed closely to track progress, set individual learning targets and to plan activities. As a result, children who are a cause for concern are quickly identified, and relevant advice is sought. Children with learning difficulties are sensitively supported so they make the same progress as other children.
76. The accommodation, resources and outside play area have also improved since the last inspection. These ensure that children have a wide range of activities with which to develop their learning. The small outside area is pleasant and staff plan fun, but very effective activities, that provide an additional dimension to their learning.

Personal and social development

77. Children start with levels of personal and social skills that are well below average. Because staff have created a very secure, supportive and happy environment with high levels of care, all children make very good progress. Staff treat children politely and with respect and are excellent role models. Teaching is consistently very good; as a result, children follow class routines very well, and because staff have high expectations and consistently and sensitively reinforce the classroom rules, there is a real sense of community in the class, especially when children help tidy up for example.
78. Children dress and undress for activities with minimal help, due to the gentle encouragement of staff and children increasingly share activities with each other. This positive and inclusive learning environment ensures that children become increasingly independent, however, a number of children choose to play along side each other, preferring to play silently and in isolation. Staff are encouraging and sensitive to this group of children, who are making very good progress and rapidly gaining in confidence and maturity. However, although most children will have attained the early

learning goals in this area of development by the time they start in Year 1, this small group of less able children, will not yet have achieved this level.

Communication, language and literacy

79. Children start with levels of ability well below those expected for this age. In particular, the speaking skills of a small number of children are very immature. This affects their attainment in all areas of learning. All children however make very good progress and because of highly effective teaching that is often exemplary, they are rapidly developing their language skills. By the time, they start in Year 1 most children are in line to attain expected standards. However, a small number of children with immature speech, despite very effective support, will not attain the early learning goals in this area of learning.
80. Every opportunity is taken to interact with children to question and to encourage children to talk about their activities. For example, in two excellent lessons, when children made birthday cards for Travelling Ted, and when children excitedly explored the 'Blue Bean bag trail', they delighted in learning and increasingly used a range of interesting word to describe their activities. These were just some of the highly effective ways staff used to develop children's language and understanding of the letter sound 'b'. Throughout all activities, staff ask simple but relevant questions, praise and encourage children's efforts and take every opportunity to model language. They are always supporting and extending children's vocabulary, and areas in the classroom are also used very effectively to encourage children to talk in 'real situations', such as the 'post office'. Because of this very effective teaching approach, although some less able children remain reluctant to talk, the majority of children increasingly begin to use sentences when talking to staff or each other.
81. All children delight in hearing stories and many children are beginning to recognise and write some letter sounds. Staff continually provide interesting and fun activities and this is a strength in the teaching that very positively supports the progress children make, as children are continually challenged and excited about learning. For example, in the small outside area, children have many opportunities to practice their emerging writing skills by using large sheets of paper, and thick pens or chalk. Inside, paints, sand trays and modelling materials are used to enable children to explore making letter shapes and children who at the beginning of the inspection week did not recognise 'b' by the end were able to write the letter and talk about many words that had this sound in them.

Mathematical development

82. Very good teaching supports this area of learning very effectively and children make very good progress. One of the strengths is the way in which all staff promotes mathematical language and skills through exciting activities and play. During the inspection, children began to explore 3D shapes. Through participating in games, and activities that were carefully matched to children's different abilities, more able children began to recognise and describe the properties of shapes using correct terminology. One child, for example, first described a cone as "like a chip cone". At the end of the activities, most children were accurately describing the shape as having a curved face. Less able children delighted in exploring printing with shapes, sensitively supported, they too made very good progress and began to recognise simple shapes and colours. Again staff always encourage and challenge children and every opportunity is taken to develop counting skills, for example, children counted the shapes, and played counting games. More able children are confident when counting to 10 and beyond. Although a small number of children will not attain the early learning goals in this area of learning, most children are in line to attain the expected level of skills.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

83. Very good teaching and a wide variety of carefully planned activities, encourage children to use all their senses, when they are introduced to a world of meaningful experiences which they enjoy immensely and from which they learn very well. Through a regularly changed topic focus, children are encouraged to make links in their learning and this is another strength of the teaching which ensures that children make very good progress.

84. During the topic 'celebrations' children learned about birthdays in the past when they talked to their 'nanas' who visited the class. They learned about Diwali celebrations when they listened to a visitor's personal experiences, tasted different foods and made 'Diwali' lamps. Making jelly for Travelling Ted's birthday they experienced changes in materials and learned about the work of the Post Office, through exploring the Post Office imaginative play area, wrapping birthday parcels and delivering them for the party. They walked to a local supermarket and explored the different food on display, buying, and then using the ingredients to make soup and bread. Children also use the computers confidently and can drag shapes across the screen using the mouse in a simple matching game. Because of the very effective approach that uses practical resources to interest them; most children are in line to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning when they start in year 1.

Physical development

85. When children start they have well below average skills in this area of learning. They make very good progress because of consistent high quality teaching. Staff work hard to provide a wide range of learning opportunities and both outside and indoor areas are used very effectively to support children's physical development. Children have timetabled opportunities to use the school hall and are regularly able to use the outside area. Because of sensitive and encouraging support and praise, coupled with high expectations of behaviour, they increasingly move with appropriate control, balance, and a growing awareness of space and each other. In one excellent lesson for example, children played 'stuck in the mud' and became aware of how their heart beats faster after exercise. They avoided each other sensibly when playing games and at the end of the lesson, most were able to throw and catch blue beanbags carefully. Children's fine hand movements are less well developed. Many children struggle to cut out shapes and hold pencils correctly but because of the very many opportunities available to them, increasingly develop their skills. The majority of children because of this high quality support are in line to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning when they start in Year 1.

Creative development

86. Children's creative development is very effectively promoted through art, role-play and musical activities. Supportive relationships and very good teaching based on a very good understanding of this area of learning ensures that children grow in confidence to try out different experiences. This has a very positive impact on learning. Children, for example, practiced songs accompanied by instruments, for the birthday celebrations. They delighted in listening to the sounds of the different musical instruments and developed their skills when playing the instruments because of the very clear demonstrations by the teacher. They also move expressively to music as they dance to the birthday music in the hall, following their teacher very carefully to 'blow out' the birthday candles in a delightfully expressive way. Children also designed and made birthday cards, and made 'dough biscuits' with buttons encouraged to count and talk about the shapes, they also, as a result, developed their mathematical and language skills very effectively. Every opportunity is taken to encourage children's creative development, and this ensures that children make very good progress and most are in line to attain the early learning goals when they start in Year 1.

ENGLISH

87. Results in the 2002 National tests showed that standards have improved and at the end of Year 2, were average in reading. In writing, standards remained below average. At the end of Year 6, standards were well above the national average and there was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Evidence from the inspection indicates that standards are below average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. This is because there are more pupils in both year groups with limited literacy skills than in the previous year. In particular, speaking and listening skills are below average across the school. However, all pupils, including those with general and more complex learning difficulties, achieve well against their prior attainment and this is mainly because of an improvement in teaching and better use of assessment information.
88. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is below the national average. By the end of Year 2, more able pupils listen and speak confidently in response to teachers'

questions. A significant proportion, however, are more tentative when attempting to speak and need, for example, a lot of prompting for instance when describing different shapes which other pupils have to draw. In Year 6, pupils of above average ability, when they are given the opportunity, engage well in speaking and listening activities. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, in the oral phase; pupils showed accurate and effective use of mathematical vocabulary and later quickly explained areas of shape. However, this example was incidental and on the whole, while teachers encourage pupils to use subject specific words in lessons, there are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to talk for a range of purposes and different audiences. In addition, pupils' answers are usually simple sentences or one-word answers, they are rarely extended and many do not listen carefully to others answers and tend to 'jump in' without thinking carefully about their responses. As a result, many pupils speaking and listening skills remain below average. Although the school has identified specific sessions for younger pupils, the content is not embedded within a topic or a subject to make it authentic and purposeful.

89. Attainment in reading by the end of Year 2 is below the national average. More able pupils enjoy reading and are able to talk about the plot. They read with confidence and with some expression. Average pupils read many words accurately but need help with unfamiliar words and they are not forthcoming when invited to comment on the book. They also do not use what they read to predict what might happen. A high proportion of less able pupils, however, struggle with simple words. This is because pupils' limited spoken language is affecting their progress in reading, as they do not have a clear knowledge and understanding of many of the word being read. Pupils, do have a good understanding of the mechanics of reading, recognise, and use letter sounds and enjoy using these skills in word games for example, because these skills have been well taught. However, overall less able pupils lack confidence to use these skills when reading words in books and their reading skills remain hesitant as a result.
90. Attainment in reading at the end of Year 6 is average. The majority of pupils read fluently and accurately and use a range of strategies to help them in their reading. More able pupils, predict what might happen using their knowledge of the plot and characters and justify their predictions. They recall with some detail a range of books they have read. Pupils have developed skills in using books to retrieve information. Assessment is effectively used to identify where extra support is needed and this ensures that less able pupils and pupils with more complex learning difficulties also make good progress.
91. Attainment in writing at the end of Year 2 is below average. More able pupils develop their ideas in sequence, use capital letters with most words spelt correctly and begin to use joined up writing. They write in a range of styles with good examples of instructional writing and writing about favourite characters. However, whilst many pupils manage to communicate meaning, a high proportion of pupils do not write in sentences, sustain ideas and develop them sufficiently. Again, this is due to their limited spoken expression.
92. By the end of Year 6, attainment in writing is average and the majority of pupils write in a range of styles including play scripts, letters, advertisements and autobiographies and with a range of audiences in mind. They write, using paragraphs and manage to capture the voice of characters. Most pupils spell accurately and write in a legible joined up script. However, less able pupils tend to 'write as they speak' and their use of imaginative vocabulary is more limited. Pupils' overall achievement, is enhanced because they have positive attitudes to learning. They are keen, highly motivated and engage well with activities. Many work collaboratively when given the opportunity and enjoy helping and supporting each other. For example in Year 5, pupils in the role of journalists helped each other to take notes about people's experience of a storm. In this way, the subject is often used well to support pupils' social development.
93. The quality of teaching is good. It has improved since the previous inspection, especially in Years 1 and 2. Learning objectives are thoroughly explained in lessons, to focus pupils' attention and these are then revisited at the end to check understanding. Basic skills are taught well and questioning is used well to consolidate understanding of text features. Demonstrations of writing skills are a strength of teaching that are used effectively to enable pupils to develop their own writing skills in different styles. For instance in one effective lesson in Year 2, pupils watched their teacher writing instructions. Because the teacher carefully reminded pupils and wrote down ideas, pupils were able

to follow this style to write their own instructions. Another strength, is the way that teachers use their knowledge of pupils to plan work well matched to different abilities and that is also challenging. There were some examples of good marking which clearly identifies strengths and areas in which pupils need to improve. Often, some of this marking includes further questions to which pupils respond, establishing a useful dialogue with the teacher. However, this is not always consistent with examples seen where the marking was superficial and unhelpful. In addition, sometimes teachers do not make the most of opportunities to extend pupils' speaking skills. Sometimes teachers 'do the talking' for pupils and do not give enough opportunities for pupils to explain what they are doing. As a result, pupils' answers are often not extended to give detail nor are they challenged often enough to justify their explanations.

94. The use of ICT to support writing is well planned. All pupils now have opportunities to extend their writing using the computers in their classrooms; however, older pupils lack the confidence and skills to edit their work and combine graphics to make their work more interesting.
95. The subject leader is enthusiastic and is well supported by the senior management. She has a good overview of the subject's development through her monitoring of lessons and pupils' work. She has acted quickly to improve the range of writing opportunities for younger pupils. She has ensured that teachers teach and model the use of subject specific vocabulary but there is now a need to systematically plan and develop the range of speaking skills in all subjects.

MATHEMATICS

96. Attainment in mathematics in the 2002 National tests at the end of Year 6 is below the national average. Inspection findings show that the attainment of pupils currently in Year 6, has improved and is in line with the national average. This is partly due to more challenging teaching and improved planning, which has resulted in more pupils currently working well at the higher level 5. Standards at the end of Year 6, have fluctuated in recent years, but they are now back to the satisfactory level found during the previous inspection. The results of the 2002 tests at the end of Year 2 were well above the national average. Inspection evidence confirms that the standards attained at the end of the current Year 2 are above average. Although this is a positive finding, it differs from the previous years results. This is because; there are more pupils in the current Year 2 class, who have below average skills. Standards at the end of Year 2 have improved notably since the previous inspection because of improved teaching that uses a practical approach well. As a result, pupils are confident to use their skills and given the low ability of many pupils when they started school, all pupils make at least good progress and achieve well for their capabilities.
97. Pupils in Year 1 have quickly caught up after their difficult start in the reception class due to effective teaching. Because of this, pupils quickly acquire a sound knowledge of basic number values and most pupils are now able to count and work reliably with numbers up to ten. They undertake a good deal of effective practical work. This is very successful in enabling them to develop a good understanding of shape, space and measure. In Year 2, the great majority of pupils are confident in handling and using numbers as the activities are also of a practical nature. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and confidently carry out basic addition, subtraction, multiplication and division well, although a few still struggle with basic work. Most are able to estimate and measure length and use these skills well when making models for example. Teaching is challenging and as a result, pupils are also beginning to understand and use halves and quarters accurately. This is helpful as they are introduced to measuring time on a traditional clock face. Pupils are able to read the time and set their clocks in half-hours correctly when required. Many can also translate these readings to a digital clock format quite easily.
98. Pupils' abilities to work things out in their heads improve steadily as they move through the school. Their progress and thinking is greatly supported by their continuing good understanding of mathematical vocabulary. Although this successfully enables pupils to use these key words appropriately when describing their work, many pupils find it difficult to explain their ideas clearly in extended sentences. By Year 6, most pupils can mentally calculate in double figures accurately and have a sound understanding of fractions. Teachers make sure that they are able to tackle such problems at speed and this motivates pupils. Pupils also estimate and measure angles accurately.

However, some less able pupils remain confused with ideas about perimeter. The school has recognised that pupils' understanding of shape, space and measure requires further development and has focussed successfully on this aspect in practical lessons. In addition, much of the learning in mathematics in Years 3 to 6, is organised in ability sets. This is generally effective, particularly in ensuring that more able pupils are well challenged. For example, more able pupils in Years 5 and 6 make an excellent start in tackling problems in algebra. They are able to manipulate numbers and proportions, using several different methods, to express the area of a shape accurately. These pupils frequently make very good progress in using a variety of strategies to arrive at correct answers.

99. The quality of teaching is very good for pupils in Years 1 and 2, and good overall for older pupils. However, there are examples of excellent teaching across the school. Planning of work is particularly strong throughout. This ensures that teachers are able to conduct their lessons very efficiently to meet the varying learning needs of the pupils. Most of the staff have a good knowledge of the subject, and maintain a sharp focus on what is to be covered. Some try to make the learning fun, as in "Bingo" type games in Years 3 and 6. In the best teaching observed in Years 1 and 2, very clear explanations are given and there is a strong emphasis on providing practical experience, which motivates and extends learning very effectively. With older pupils, the very best teaching is characterised by a fast, demanding approach. This is successfully supported by the very clear use of a rich and relevant language, which greatly fosters pupils' thinking, and the discussion of ideas. Although in some lessons, teachers do not make the most of these opportunities. Teachers manage their pupils very well and insist on good attention and effort at all times. As a result, most pupils have very good attitudes. They take the subject seriously and seek to do as well as they can. Older more able pupils work with particular enthusiasm and display a shared enjoyment of the subject.
100. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable co-ordinator who is also a talented teacher of mathematics. Leadership is therefore doubly strengthened by the presence of both good organisation and notable teaching competence. Assessment of pupils' standards and progress is very good and data is used carefully to ensure that pupils' widely differing abilities are well understood and well met. However, the school is carefully analysing the current ability grouping arrangement in Years 3 to 6, as it results in less able older pupils working with Year 3 pupils and this is not always successful at motivating older pupils with learning difficulties. In addition, the use of ICT is undeveloped in this subject. There are currently insufficient useful opportunities and additional software programs to further pupils' skills.

SCIENCE

101. Pupils make very good progress, and by the end of Year 2 attain standards that are above the national expectations. This standard is not quite as good as that attained by pupils in the 2002 teacher assessments, when standards were judged to be well above average. This is mainly because the current Year 2 class contains fewer more able pupils and there is also a higher proportion of pupils with general learning difficulties. Despite this slight decline, standards at the end of Year 2 are better than those found in the previous inspection when they were judged to be below the national expectation and the raising of standards in science was identified as a key issue for action.
102. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils attain above average standards. This is a similar standard to that attained in the 2002 National tests and is a much higher standard to that found in the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be well below average. The overall improvement in standards has been due to major improvements in the curriculum and the quality of teaching, with a much greater emphasis being given to the completion of practical work and scientific investigation, which has greatly increased the pupils' understanding of scientific approaches and ideas.
103. Pupils in the Year 1 class, in their study of magnets, demonstrate a good understanding of the topic and they predict the outcomes of simple experiments quickly and accurately. Because of high quality teaching, most pupils quickly identify that most magnetic materials are metal, whilst more able pupils appreciate that magnets have different strengths and that some small magnets are stronger than large ones. Pupils in Year 2, predict, with reasonable accuracy, that certain materials will melt if they are heated, before testing their predictions in controlled ways. More able pupils can also suggest which

materials can be changed back to their prior state. Pupils are motivated by these practical activities, which support learning very effectively.

104. This practical teaching approach continues throughout the school. As a result, pupils in Year 3 investigate the properties of different materials and, using their knowledge that materials can be transparent, translucent or opaque, they are able to make informed decisions about which material would make the most effective curtains. Pupils in Year 4 have developed a good knowledge of different forces and are gaining an understanding that friction slows down moving objects because they have a suitable understanding of a fair test and conduct their experiments with care and precision. By Year 6, pupils have used keys to discriminate between different living things and through careful observation, over time, they have investigated the conditions required for life and understand well how living organisms depend on each other to survive.
105. The quality of teaching is very good overall. It is particularly strong in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 5 and 6. This is a much better quality of teaching than was found in the last inspection. The strength of teaching is the practical approach taken to develop pupils' understanding. Because of this change of emphasis, pupils develop effective research techniques and can carry out experiments in a way that gives them reliable and accurate results. Consequently, pupils make predictions and then independently test them out extending their knowledge of fair testing by changing the variables. They are increasingly confident when undertaking such work because of the very clear teaching approach that is supportive without being over directed. This also effectively supports pupils' social skills, when they have to work co-operatively and safely.
106. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and plan lessons in detail, ensuring that pupils are very effectively introduced to the vocabulary essential to the subject. They know their pupils very well and make very good use of all the available assessment, ensuring that work set is very well matched to pupils' prior attainment. Teachers form very good relationships with their pupils and because of this, pupils are confident learners who are prepared to share their predictions without fear of comment or criticism. Pupils respond to this very effective teaching by applying themselves enthusiastically and trying their very hardest and this has a very positive impact on the progress they make. However, although more able pupils can explain their ideas clearly, many pupils in each class although understanding the scientific concepts find it difficult to explain their ideas clearly. When teaching is weaker, it is because teachers tend to 'take over' discussions and do not always enable pupils to develop their ideas when speaking. In addition, although teachers make use of carefully graded questions to re-enforce learning, some teachers are too accepting of one-word answers.
107. The subject leader has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and provides his colleagues with very effective support. He monitors all aspects of teaching and learning with great care and uses the information gathered to improve the quality of teaching and learning. A recent sequence of monitoring identified, for example, that staff were not sufficiently encouraging pupils to make predictions and draw out conclusions from the data they gathered and that girls lacked confidence. This has now been addressed, to very good effect. There is now little difference between boys and girls and the effective use of prediction was a key aspect of many of the lessons observed.
108. Under the careful management of the subject leader, and with the help of the Staffordshire advisory service, the subject has become a significant strength of the school's provision. Whilst the school has sufficient resources to support teaching and learning in most areas of the subject, it is only just acquiring the computer programs to support related areas. The subject leader is also aware that more needs to be done to improve the use of the school grounds as a teaching and learning resource.

ART AND DESIGN

109. No teaching was observed during the inspection. Judgements are based on the quality of work, teachers planning and discussions with pupils. Standards in art and design as found at the last inspection are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils including those with general and more complex learning difficulties are achieving well in relation to their well

below average abilities when they started school as teachers' planning and resources have improved to better support learning.

110. By the end of Year 2, pupils have acquired a satisfactory range of drawing, painting and design skills. Colour use is bold and pupils are beginning to develop their own distinctive styles in some imaginative and creative self-portraits. Clear links have been to other subjects, when for example, pupils' in Year 1 explored a range of natural and man made materials to create faces as part of their science work. In Year 2 pupils' have explored sculpture and designed, and created some interesting three-dimensional 'chair people'. Clearly motivated and proud of their work pupils insisted that they be permanently displayed. Currently pupils in Year 2 are developing their skills through a computer-drawing program. Abstract art in the style of Jackson Pollock is imaginative with pupils' individual styles evident as teaching encourages creativity and this is reflected in all of their work, although currently younger pupils do not have sketchbooks in order to practice and explore their ideas.
111. By the end of Year 6, pupils' skills have been appropriately developed and they also have had the opportunity to transfer their skills to other areas of the curriculum, such as design and technology and geography, where their work on journeys has been enhanced through detailed sketches and designs for their own map symbols. The recent use of a digital camera is providing further scope to experiment with new forms of art and was used successfully in Year 4 to explore different viewpoints around the school. Finished detailed sketches were creative and interesting; although some pupils drawing skills remain naïve. Teachers are encouraging of pupils' own ideas. All work, whatever standard, is celebrated in interesting displays and pupils are clearly proud of their efforts. Pupils in Year 6 have recently been engaged with the problem of representing movement in two dimensions and this taxed their drawing skills to the limit. While some work is mature and there is some imaginative and creative work on display, many pupils work remains immature and they are inhibited by their limited drawing techniques.
112. Teaching is judged to be at least satisfactory. Links made to other subjects being a strength. Over time, pupils experience the full range of artistic experience that add to their knowledge. Homework is used appropriately to encourage research and gain pupils' interest. Teachers know individual pupils well and use this information to celebrate pupils work and encourage pupils to develop their own ideas. In Years 3 to 6, sketchbooks are used well to support pupils' developing skills, although teachers' marking in these books does not always support the development of these skills. The subject supports pupils' cultural development well through well-planned opportunities to examine art and craft's from around the world such as Australian Aboriginal art. In addition, a wide number of pupils enthusiastically attend the Art club and this supports these pupils' social skills effectively.
113. The newly appointed co-ordinator has had a positive affect on the subject. The scheme of work and resources have been much improved to better support teaching and learning. A subject specialist, she has also supported staff and developed the use of sketchbooks for older pupils. She is rightly planning to introduce these for younger pupils. The school has plans to put in place procedures to assess and monitor pupils' progress and to develop a portfolio of work to support non-specialist teachers' knowledge and understanding of different levels of skills evident in pupils' work. These are appropriate areas for development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

114. Pupils' attainment as in the previous inspection is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 6 and Year 2. All Pupils, including those with general and more complex learning difficulties, make good progress as they move through the school because teaching and the curriculum has improved.
115. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' acquire suitable skills of cutting, shaping and joining materials. They are able to describe in simple terms what they intend to do and with the support of simple but effective design frames are able to plan their work and select the materials and tools that they will need. However, their below average speaking skills provides a barrier to the evaluation of their work. This was seen in Year 2 when pupils clearly motivated were busy following their design sheets to select and make 'cardboard box vehicles', with either fixed or turning axles. Increasingly because the teacher encouraged and effectively modelled the specific vocabulary, pupils used these terms

accurately. However, when asked to evaluate their work, pupils found it difficult to express themselves and this prevented higher standards being attained.

116. Opportunities for older pupils in Years 3 to 6 to investigate and evaluate their finished products have been developed well since the last inspection. In Years 5, pupils researched, evaluated and explored various musical instruments, whilst Year 6 pupils examined shelters, prior to designing their own with detailed labelled sketches, considering carefully the nature of the design process. As a result of good teaching, pupils are now much more concerned about the outcomes and most, but not all pupils produce acceptable designs. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were engaged in a collaborative project to design and produce model shelters for the playground. The lesson was a hive of activity, with pupils co-operating with each other well. This successfully helped foster pupils social skills, although girls tended to work together and be much more concerned about taking care in the making process than the boys. All pupils select and use tools with due regard to safety and they have a grasp of adding strength to joints with triangles and struts. Pupils with learning difficulties sensitively supported throughout, were fully included in the activities. Pupils' evaluations are developing, but tend to focus on what they like about the finished product rather than on clear evaluations of the result in relation to the intended purpose.
117. The overall quality of teaching is good and much improved from the last inspection. Teachers are now more confident in their subject knowledge and follow a much clearer scheme of work that effectively progresses pupils' skills. Additional staff and parental support are used effectively to develop learning, and support less able pupils so that they can also achieve success. The majority of pupils show great interest in the subject and work with enthusiasm. Teachers' ongoing evaluations of pupils' work is used effectively in lessons to encourage pupils to think about their work and support pupils' skills. Links with other schools effectively enhance learning opportunities and older pupils who attend a technology club in the local High school spoke enthusiastically about the challenging projects that they work on whilst there. The use of ICT as a tool to aid design, research and presentation of their work is not fully developed as the school lacks sufficient software. However, the school borrows resources and older pupils are thus able to use control technology equipment.
118. The subject is well led, and as a result, good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Teachers make good use of their knowledge of pupils to evaluate pupils' progress and match tasks to abilities. Whilst this is good practice, the school is rightly planning to develop more formal assessment systems.

GEOGRAPHY

119. Standards in geography as found in the previous inspection are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils including those with general and more complex learning difficulties are achieving well in relation to their well below average abilities when they started school.
120. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are becoming aware of the significant features of their own home and school area. They have developed their skills effectively when undertaking practical work outside the school. For example, they have explored the changing nature of the local area by examining houses, as well as visiting the local supermarket. They have observed and recorded their own ideas adequately, and they are able in simple terms to compare their own town and homes with those in other countries such as Africa. Through the experiences provided by an "African Day", they are able to consider how peoples lives, such as the style of their homes and food they eat, are effected by the environment and climate in the local area. Although such practical and meaningful activities effectively develop pupils' awareness of other cultures, at present not enough work is completed by this age group for standards in geography to rise.
121. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' mapping skills develop adequately through progressive tasks and topics. For example, pupils have looked at maps and aerial photographs of their locality. They have used the information obtained to study co-ordinates and link with maps of the wider world. Emphasis is placed on appreciating the importance of the environment and the responsibilities that individuals

have for its care, which effectively promotes pupils moral development. Pupils in Year 4 know that the weather affects the way people are able to use their leisure time and they are beginning to think carefully about the problems of building new leisure facilities while sensibly considering the arguments of space and finance. By Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of several European countries. They are able to conduct relevant research effectively and produce some comprehensive facts about a chosen holiday destination.

122. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. There are strengths in the good emphasis placed on a practical approach and since the previous inspection, more use is made of the local area to support learning and motivate pupils. Visitors to the school are encouraged and all these aspects are effective in presenting geography as a living, developing study. Research skills are suitably developed and pupils are consequently given a range of opportunities to become independent in their learning. Older pupils are sometimes given good opportunities to present their own findings to an audience and teaching emphasises the use of correct subject vocabulary. However, although pupils are then able to use this vocabulary when explaining their ideas, not all pupils are able to express and logically develop their ideas when speaking as suitable opportunities are not systematically planned to enable pupils to discuss or present their work in a variety of ways. Teachers manage pupils well in geography lessons and enjoy very good relationships with them. This is effective in ensuring good attitudes to the subject and a willingness to work well which effectively supports pupils' moral and social development.
123. The recently appointed co-ordinator is aware that there are weaknesses in the unevenness of provision throughout the school, as the subject is not tackled with equal rigour in all classes. Assessment procedures are currently informal and the school is considering the best way to develop these.

HISTORY

124. No teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2. Evidence from an analysis of work, teachers planning and from discussion with pupils indicate that standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and 6 and all pupils including those with general learning difficulties achieve well in relation to their low abilities when they started school. Overall, standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
125. Pupils in Year 1 recognise that life in the past was different when they examined old toys and a playroom from a long time ago and because of these practical activities are able to say what items are different from today. In Year 2, pupils have a general knowledge and understanding of key features and events surrounding the Great Fire of London and can write simple captions describing the causes of the fire and how it spread. They also identify and describe in simple terms the achievements of famous figures such as Florence Nightingale, Mary Seacole and Louis Braille. Visitors such as World War II veterans from the British Legion, help pupils to understand the importance of some more recent events in history and the sacrifices made so that they can enjoy their lives today. Pupils were clearly interested in this topic and spoke in some detail about Remembrance Day and its meaning.
126. In Year 4, pupils demonstrate very good understanding and knowledge of the Vikings because of exemplary teaching that clearly motivates and enthuses pupils. They describe accurately, using appropriate vocabulary how the Vikings started as raiders and became warriors and settlers. Pupils show skills in using different sources of information including books and CD ROMs to look for specific information. More able pupils select information effectively, explain how the Vikings had to change their tactics and use a map of Europe to identify lands where they settled. By the end of Year 6, pupils have increased their awareness of history but need quite a lot of prompting to recall or retell the periods of history they have studied. Pupils have a sound factual awareness for example of the Tudors and Egyptians but are not secure in realising that events in history might be portrayed differently depending upon your point of view.
127. Overall, the quality of teaching is judged to be satisfactory, with an excellent lesson observed during the inspection. Teachers make good use of resources available to them to bring history alive for pupils and is at its best when teachers encourage pupils to carry out historical research, find things

out, or explain why things happened in the past as they did. Although there were some good examples of pupils' work being marked in a way that clearly outlines what is needed to improve, this good practice is not as consistent as it could be. Teachers are conscientious in developing pupils subject vocabulary and some opportunities are planned for pupils to talk about their studies in a variety of ways such as 'hot seating', but more could be planned to bring history alive for pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and to gain confidence to speak in a variety of ways.

128. The subject leader is enthusiastic and has very good subject knowledge which he uses well to guide colleagues. The history curriculum is effectively enhanced through visitors and visits and this effectively supports pupils' awareness of the development of their own cultural heritage. Pupils have searched the world wide web for information but in general the use of ICT to enhance pupils' learning is underdeveloped as the school lacks sufficient software.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

129. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and the majority of them are on course to reach the national expectation by the time that they reach the end of Year 2. This is a better situation than that found in the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be below average. With improving subject knowledge, much better computers and an appropriate range of software programs now available to them, teaching staff are now more able to provide these younger pupils with an appropriate range of activities. As a result, there has been a raising of standards in the past year and a half. All pupils, including those with general and more complex learning difficulties make similar progress and there is no difference in the attainment of girls and boys.
130. Whilst progress in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 is broadly satisfactory, standards of attainment at the end of Year 6 are well below average. This is mainly because the school's improved provision has not been in place long enough to improve overall standards, and almost all pupils arrived in Year 6 with very limited skills. Since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be below average, national expectations have risen in ICT, and until now only limited progress has been possible at the school. All pupils, whatever their ability or gender make similar progress but younger pupils are generally more enthusiastic and focused than some of the older ones and this supports pupils' learning well.
131. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now gaining more familiarity with the keyboard and are developing basic skills that enable them to write simple pieces of work and draw pictures, using various paint and draw facilities such as line draw, in-fill and paint spray. Good use is made of parent helpers who are often to be found supervising pupils at the small banks of computers now available in both infant classrooms.
132. Most pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 have only slightly higher levels of skill than are being found in Years 1 and 2, and this is mainly because they have only had the same amount of structured skills teaching as the pupils in these younger year groups. Pupils in Year 3, for example, are able to enter text using a simple word processing program, but do not, for example, have most of the skills required to edit that text if mistakes are made. In addition to their lack of basic skills, the progress for these older pupils is also hampered, in several classes, by a lack of teacher confidence. This situation has not been helped by a lack of computer software that is limiting progress in certain aspects of the subject, including data logging and control technology in Years 5 and 6 but these aspects are now being improved. The school is aware of these weaknesses and more training is scheduled in the period following the inspection.
133. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but significant improvements still need to be made to subject confidence and expertise and in software provision if the current steady rate of progress is to be maintained. Pupils are quite enthusiastic about their work in the subject and apply themselves well to their studies, but many older pupils are aware of their own shortcomings and are quite hesitant and unsure when asked to complete tasks at the computer. The co-ordinator is working hard to rectify this lack of confidence among the older pupils and to stimulate interest by inviting older pupils to regular computer club sessions where they receive very high quality specialist teaching. This enables them to support their classmates when ICT activities are completed in other lessons.

134. The curriculum is broad and balanced and contains all of the required elements, but has not, to date been delivered to most of the pupils in Years 5 and 6, where many pupils are meeting quite basic applications for the first time. Basic assessment procedures are being satisfactorily implemented. The co-ordinator is keen that assessment and recording give a clearer picture of individual progress and attainment in key subject skills rather than recording what has been covered.
135. The management of the subject is satisfactory, but is improving rapidly. The co-ordinator, who is new to her post, has very good subject knowledge and her monitoring of planning and outcomes has revealed a very clear understanding of the areas, which require further development. This information is now being acted upon with great energy and enthusiasm and the overall situation is now improving at a good rate.

MUSIC

136. Pupils' attainment in music is above average at the end of Years 2 and 6, and has been maintained since the last inspection. The majority of pupils including those with general learning difficulties make good progress especially by the end of Year 6 as they have many opportunities to experience a wide range of music making activities. It is to the school's credit that high standards have been maintained and the subject further developed through improved resources and planning, during a difficult period when the school rightly concentrated on addressing other areas of significant weakness identified during the previous inspection.
137. Pupils in Year 2 sing in tune and know a range of songs from memory. They learn to use actions and change between singing and actions, gradually omitting lines until the whole song is mimed. They play simple tunes on the recorder and begin to produce different simple rhythmic patterns to accompany their singing. In Year 3, pupils show a good understanding and control of pitch. They have a good understanding of rhythm and keep the beat as they clap to music and vary this using different parts of the body, different speeds, silence and rests. Much of this practice is effectively used when pupils apply this knowledge to playing the recorder. They identify different notes and produce sequences following different rhythmic patterns. In Year 5, pupils read musical notation well when playing the recorder. They recognise notes played by the teacher and attempt to replay notes they hear played on a glockenspiel. Pupils' ability to listen to and consider different styles of music are developing but is the weakest element in the subject, as pupils find it difficult to express their ideas clearly.
138. The quality of teaching is good overall. Lessons are effectively structured with good opportunities for pupils to learn the recorder from reception onwards. In this context, much of the musical knowledge arises naturally from practice, which enables pupils to develop a good grasp of musical elements. Effective explanations and demonstrations enable pupils to develop a good grasp of the key skills. Teaching builds effectively on skills and knowledge acquired previously and provides ample opportunities for pupils to practice and improve their performance. Good subject knowledge and high expectations enable pupils to work effectively on group compositions, which they share with their friends including solo presentations.
139. Pupils' attitudes also contribute positively to the standards being achieved. They participate in lessons with real enjoyment, and persevere in their effort to improve their performance, especially when being taught by the co-ordinator in his role as specialist teacher. Because he is enthusiastic about the subject this 'rubs off' on the pupils who as a result, work well together showing great deal of respect for each other and this enables them to collaborate effectively in-group performances. They treat instruments with care and readily help when they need to be moved or stored away. In this way music makes a considerable contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.
140. The subject leader has good subject knowledge, which he uses well to guide other staff and is reflected in the progress pupils make. Assessment procedures in the subject are good but need to be linked more closely to the levels of attainment of the National Curriculum. The school has good resources such as programmable key boards which are used well. Computer software has recently been purchased but has not yet been installed.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

141. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school and the majority attain standards that are average in all elements of the subject. The one exception, is in the development of games skills, where the attainment of the majority is above average. This is a better situation to that found in the previous inspection, which judged attainment in gymnastics, dance and games to be average, but found shortcomings in the standards attained in swimming. These problems have now been rectified and over ninety per cent of pupils now attain the required standard in swimming by the time they leave the school.
142. There are some differences in the levels of achievement of boys and girls, with girls often out performing the boys in dance and gymnastics activities. Pupils of all abilities generally make similar progress, but some lessons do not always consistently challenge the abilities of the most able pupils. This is because current teaching arrangements means that relatively inexperienced staff are required to teach classes other than their own.
143. Pupils in the Year 1 class make rapid progress after what was a difficult start for them in the reception class, and whilst they are still quite heavy on their feet, they have a suitable awareness of space and are moving with good levels of balance and poise. Pupils in a Year 4 gymnastics lesson do not move with such confidence and are generally heavy and rather clumsy in their movements. Whilst individual pupils, particularly the girls, have considerable gymnastic skill, the quality of performance is barely satisfactory with insufficient care being given to the quality of finish. Pupils in the Year 6 class plan their dance activities carefully and demonstrate clearly that they are used to completing work of this type. They evaluate their own performances and the performance of others well, but the overall quality of movement demonstrated was no better than satisfactory and lacked poise and refinement. This is due to a lack of motivation on the part of some boys who do not appear to enjoy dance and are not enthused by 'traditional folk dances'.
144. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan their lessons very carefully, taking great care of safety implications and ensuring that all the required elements are included. In better lessons, pupils are encouraged to evaluate their performances and pupils are all enabled to build upon their prior learning and to make at least satisfactory progress. However, opportunities for pupils to evaluate and talk about their work and so improve their performances are not always fully developed. Teachers do not always encourage all pupils to contribute their ideas and opportunities to develop pupils speaking skills are also lost. Pupils however, generally enjoy their work in the subject, particularly when the focus of the lesson is the development of games skills. Older pupils do not, however, always apply themselves with such purpose and enthusiasm in some dance and gymnastics lessons because some staff lack confidence.
145. The curriculum is broad and balanced and contains all of the required elements. The curriculum is enhanced, for some pupils by the wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities. These have a very positive impact on the learning and the standards attained by those pupils who chose to take part. There are regular matches against neighbouring schools and an annual residential visit to an Outdoor Education Centre, where pupils experience orienteering and outdoor pursuits. These activities make a good contribution to pupils' social skills as pupils develop a keen sense of fair play and sportsmanship.
146. The management of the subject is satisfactory and the co-ordinator, who is relatively new to the school, is aware that there is scope for further development, particularly for older pupils. She has monitored quality and standards in Years 1 and 2 and has provided significant support to those staff who lack subject confidence. She has ambitious plans for the future development and intends working toward the Active School Mark and Health Promoting School status. Lesson plans include the identification of regular assessment opportunities but the individual attainment and progress of pupils is not yet consistently assessed and recorded. The co-ordinator is aware that this is an important area for development and has plans to introduce a simple but effective system after Christmas.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

147. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress throughout the school and meet the expectations of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education at the end of Year 2 and 6. This is a similar finding to the judgements of the previous inspection report.
148. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a developing knowledge of some of the traditional stories of the Bible and aspects of the Creation. Pupils also have a sound re-call of stories from the bible, such as “Noah’s Ark.” They know something of the events surrounding the Christmas story, and are able to relate adequately some of the important details. They have a satisfactory understanding of the meaning of Advent and its traditions. Pupils are also aware of a few of the similarities and differences between the Christian and Jewish faiths because of the practical approach to teaching.
149. In Years 3 to 6, pupils become much more familiar with the texts of the Old and New Testaments. For example, they are very effectively introduced to the circumstances connected to the Exodus and pupils are able to consider some of the pressures faced by the Israelites and compare them with the misfortunes of present day refugees. This effectively promotes pupils’ moral and social awareness. They are also aware of the similarity of circumstances in the Gospel story of the Flight into Egypt. Many are able to pose relevant questions and write a modern day account of the experience.
150. An understanding of the beliefs of non-Christian religions is suitably in place, most particularly Judaism and Islam. For example, pupils have worked satisfactorily on such topics as a Jewish Bar Mitzvar ceremony and learnt of its place in the culture of that religion. They have also looked at the Five Pillars around which the duties of devout Moslems revolve. Activities such as these effectively support pupils’ spiritual and cultural awareness.
151. As found at the previous inspection, the quality of teaching is good. There are strengths in the good subject knowledge that many teachers have, especially the subject specialist who teaches most classes. Teachers take a confident, and frequently novel, approach that helps keep lessons alive and interesting for pupils. Texts and artefacts are used very effectively to ensure pupils have a clearer understanding of the topic. Related vocabulary is always well provided, which helps improve pupils’ abilities to understand and remember. Teachers also ensure that pupils make suitable contributions to discussion and are able to present their personal emerging ideas freely, although the limited language skills of some pupils inhibit the expression of their ideas. However, most pupils enjoy their lessons and respond well to the teaching. Whilst discussions are frequent, opportunities for pupils to dramatise events and stories or to present their ideas following independent research are not fully developed. This prevents pupils from gaining a deeper awareness of the significance of belonging to different faith communities and the impact this has on their lives.
152. The subject is soundly managed, with a good range of resources and artefacts available to promote learning of a variety of differing faiths and cultures, however, currently there are insufficient computer software programs to support pupils’ independent research skills and assessments are informal.