

INSPECTION REPORT

ST STEPHEN'S C OF E (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

South Godstone

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125187

Headteacher: Mrs Mary Watts

Reporting inspector: Peter Payne
12155

Dates of inspection: 21 - 24 October 2002

Inspection number: 248674

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

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Hunters Chase
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Godstone
Surrey

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Mike Boyd

Date of previous inspection: 1 June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
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14508	Krycia Baczala	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography	
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
THE WORK OF THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED UNIT	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Stephen's Church of England Primary School serves the village of South Godstone and neighbouring communities. The pupils are from a diverse range of backgrounds. The school is about the same size as other primary schools with 199 full-time and 22 part-time pupils aged four to 11 in seven mixed ability classes. The attainment of children when they start their school careers is similar to that of other local schools, with an even spread across the full range of ability, including children with special needs and potentially high achievers. The school is almost fully subscribed. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (9.5 per cent) is broadly in line with the national average and there are no pupils speaking English as an additional language. The number of pupils with special educational needs (22.1 per cent) is broadly in line with the national average. The school has a unit for visually impaired unit that currently has nine pupils on roll. Because of this, the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need (6.3 per cent) is well above the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective. It gives children a very good start to their education and helps them to achieve well. Pupils are enthusiastic about their school and are keen to learn. Most, including those pupils with special needs, make good progress. Their attitudes and behaviour are good. The teaching is now good throughout the school and stimulating lessons enable good learning to take place. The leadership and management of the school are very good, and it is well governed. There are good arrangements to support pupils and care for them. The school has a strong partnership with its parents and keeps them well informed. Taking into account the substantial progress made since the last inspection, the standards now reached by the pupils, the quality of teaching and the curriculum provided, the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- it lives up to its mission statement and is a particularly welcoming and inclusive school
- the quality of teaching and learning is now consistently high
- leadership and management are very good
- support for pupils with special educational needs in the main school and in the unit for visually impaired pupils is very effective
- relationships, attitudes and behaviour are good
- the partnership with its parents is strong

What could be improved

- standards in elements of the core subjects of English and mathematics
- opportunities for pupils to develop their geographical knowledge and 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 was last inspected in June 1998, and has very effectively addressed the key issues that were raised. The sixteen per cent of unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and all of the lessons observed during the inspection were at least satisfactory, which is a substantial improvement. Standards observed in the core subjects are now as expected, and progress in Years 1 and 2 is now satisfactory. The effect of the improved teaching and learning is not yet fully reflected in the school's performance at the end of Year 6, particularly in literacy and numeracy. There are curriculum co-ordinators for each subject although some are recently appointed and are beginning to develop their role. A programme for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning is in place and is carried out by the headteacher and some subject co-ordinators. A very positive programme of continuing professional development of staff is part of the programme. A programme of personal, health and social education has been introduced into the curriculum. Strategies to address the apparent underachievement

of girls towards the end of their primary education and for extending the more able pupils have been developed. The use of assessment information to clarify future curriculum plans is developing well. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development has improved and is now good.

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
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	C	C	C
Mathematics	B	D	E	E
Science	C	C	D	D

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

The table shows that the standards achieved by all pupils in Year 6 in English in 2001 were about the national average, in mathematics were well below the national average and in science were below the national average. In the same year, pupils aged seven achieved standards in reading, writing and mathematics that were all above the national average. When the Year 6 results are compared to the results of similar schools, the pattern is the same. The standards achieved in these subjects over the last five years are broadly in line with the national trend in both key stages except for the dip in mathematics for 11-year-olds in 2001. Standards of work seen during the inspection in mathematics and science in the current Year 6 class are broadly in line with the national expectation. The school has agreed challenging targets for the performance of 11-year-olds in 2002 and 2003 that are based on their recorded progress. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and most have achieved the national early learning goals in all areas of learning by the age of five, preparing them well for the start of their formal education. In the other subjects, pupils achieve above expected standards in art, design and technology, music and physical education. Their achievement is as expected in history and information and communication technology, but below expectation for geography by the age of 11. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils make good progress in relation to their abilities.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They approach their work with interest and enthusiasm and take a pride in the work that they do. They participate eagerly in all the activities that the school offers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good both in the lessons and about the school at breaks and lunchtime. Pupils are courteous, orderly and considerate.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils act responsibly and understand how their actions affect others. They show respect for the values and beliefs of others and form very good relationships with each other and with adults.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Although attendance has improved and is at the national average, there is still some unauthorised absence. Regular and punctual attendance has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress. The pupils arrive punctually for school, and move promptly for lessons.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching is now a strength of the school and shows a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Teaching is consistently good throughout the school and no unsatisfactory lessons were observed during the inspection. In over three-quarters of lessons the teaching was good or better. Teachers provide interesting lessons and, because of their good subject knowledge and very positive relationships, the learning is effective. Teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good. Particular strengths of teaching include high expectations, good use of time, and sharing the learning intentions of the lesson with the pupils so that they are clear about what they are going to learn. Pupils of all ages are able to increase their knowledge and understanding and develop their skills. The provision for pupils with special needs is very good and the impressive teamwork between the class and specialist teachers and the teaching assistants ensures that these pupils make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is a broad range of worthwhile activities that meet the interests, aptitudes and needs of the pupils. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented successfully.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with special educational needs, particularly those with visual impairment, have full access to all aspects of the curriculum and, where necessary, receive very high quality support from their teachers and teaching assistants. They are able to develop confidence and make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for the pupils' personal development is good. Provision for spiritual, social and cultural development is good and for moral development it is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The caring ethos is a significant feature of school life and is valued by all those who teach and learn there. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development is good and pupils are given very good educational and personal support and guidance.

The school has a strong relationship with its parents and carers and maintains an effective partnership with them. They are particularly supportive of the school and comment on the improvement in behaviour and the high expectation of work. Arrangements for sharing information about progress and achievements made are very good. There is a genuine open-door policy and the school welcomes parents in to share information and to ensure that their children are happy and learning effectively. The curriculum meets all the statutory requirements and is genuinely open to all pupils, regardless of their needs and abilities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The excellent leadership of the headteacher provides a sense of direction for the school. Staff and governors are encouraged and enabled to contribute to the development of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities, are actively involved in school life and provide highly committed support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by the head and the senior staff is well established and performance objectives have been agreed. Good use is made of statutory and non-statutory tests to monitor the progress of individuals, identify under-performing groups, and to compare them with similar schools.
The strategic use of resources	The deployment and management of the resources available to the school are good. Good use is made of new technology and budgetary decisions are made prudently.

There are sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers to deliver the Foundation Stage curriculum in Year R and the National Curriculum and religious education in Years 1 to 6. The very effective team of specialist teachers and teaching assistants plays an important part in ensuring the good quality of learning available to every pupil. Good use is made of the available accommodation and it is maintained to a high standard. The outdoor play areas are good but, although imminent, the secure area adjoining the Foundation Stage classroom has yet to be constructed. The exception is geography, where resources are currently poor. Resources for teaching are very good in science, art and music, good in English, mathematics, design and technology and physical education and satisfactory in information and communication technology and history. Financial management is good. The governors have an effective policy of achieving best value in their transactions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their children like school • the expectation that children will work hard and achieve their best • children are helped to become mature and responsible • the good behaviour in the school • the good quality of the teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the range of activities outside the classroom • information about their child's progress

The inspectors endorse the parents' positive views about the school. The range of clubs, groups and sporting activities provided over a year was found to be better than is generally found in schools of this type and size. Inspectors reviewed the quality of information available to parents, particularly about the progress of their children, and found it to be very good. The partnership between the parents and the school is strong and makes a very positive contribution to the education of the children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The levels of attainment of the children upon entry to the Foundation Stage are consistent with an even spread across the full range of ability, including children with learning difficulties and potentially high attainers. It is broadly similar to that in other local schools. The group varies from year to year, for example the current Year R has a very high proportion of younger children. At the time of the inspection there were a few individual children with high attainment for their age who had already reached the early learning goals for children aged five in several parts of the curriculum. Children make good progress in the reception class and, by the age of five, most children have achieved the national early learning goals in all areas of learning and are ready to begin the National Curriculum. Because of their positive attitudes and the commitment and expectation of their teachers and teaching assistants, most children work at or near to their capacity.
2. In the 2001 SATs tests, the percentage of seven-year-old pupils achieving the expected level in reading, writing, mathematics and science was above the national average. The pattern was the same when compared to the performance of similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher than expected standards was above the national average in reading and writing and close to the national average in mathematics. Over the last five years, the performance of seven-year-olds dipped in 1998 and has improved consistently each year since. Boys have consistently outperformed girls over this period but not by a significant difference.
3. In 2001, the results for 11-year-olds were in line with the national average in English, below average in science and well below in mathematics. When compared to the performance of similar schools, standards were close to the average for English, below average for science and well below average for mathematics. The performance of pupils reaching the higher than expected standards was close to the national average in English, below the national average in science and well below the average in mathematics. Over the last five years, the overall performance of 11-year-olds has been consistently close to the national trend, although in 2001 their performance in mathematics fell to well below the national average.
4. Standards of work seen during the inspection in English, mathematics and science were at least as expected at age seven and age 11. This is an improvement upon the 2001 performance as a result of the improved quality of teaching. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum, the standards of work seen from pupils up to age seven are above expectation in art, design and technology, music and physical education and as expected in geography, history and information and communication technology. For pupils up to age 11 they are above expectation in art, design and technology, music and physical education. They are as expected in history and information and communication technology but below expectation in geography by the age of 11. This is a very considerable improvement since the last inspection when attainment in the majority of subjects, including English, mathematics and science, was below expectation.
5. The school has set challenging targets for 11-year-olds in 2002 and 2003. These were carefully established and reflect the performance of the year group through the school, including the proportion of pupils with special needs.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in learning and achieve standards that are at least in line with their individual abilities in both key stages. Although their attainment is

often below that expected from pupils of a similar age, the majority of pupils with special educational needs meet the targets set in their individual education plans. Pupils with statements of educational need meet the targets established in their annual reviews.

7. The impact of the literacy hour on the development of basic skills is evident across the curriculum and in all classes. There are impressive examples of speaking and listening skills used to promote and extend thinking and to clarify the pupils' understanding of their work. Good quality discussion takes place, particularly in science, history and personal and social education where the thoughts and ideas of the pupils are developed and valued. Pupils use their numeracy skills in the production of graphs in science and nets in design and technology. Computers are used for data handling. As the facilities have been extended, pupils have been able to make increasingly effective use of the tools of information and communication technology to support their learning and the Internet and CD-ROMs to find information for a growing range of subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good and these high standards have been maintained since the last inspection. They enjoy school and are eager to learn. In classes, pupils settle quickly to work. They listen well to each other and to adults and are always willing to answer questions and discuss their ideas. Most pupils show good levels of concentration. For example, pupils in a Year 6 class were totally engrossed in their work on mathematics when using a computer program and they co-operated well in pairs.
9. Behaviour in and around the school is very good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. High standards are set and pupils respond well. There have been no exclusions in the past academic year. Children play and work well together. There is no evidence of bullying and little of inappropriate behaviour. When this does occur, it is dealt with swiftly, effectively and consistently by staff. Pupils are polite and friendly to each other, to staff and to visitors alike. There is no damage or litter around the school buildings and pupils use resources well.
10. Relationships amongst pupils and between staff and pupils continue to be very good. This has a considerable impact on pupils' learning. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their values and beliefs in religious education and acts of collective worship. They learn about and develop respect for the values and beliefs of other cultures and religions; for example Judaism and Islam. The personal development of pupils is good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The school council, where pupils from Years 5 and 6 represent the views of the whole school, is beginning to have a significant impact on the work of the school and is applauded by both pupils and parents. The vast majority of parents agree that the school is helping their children to become mature individuals. Pupils learn the school routines quickly and soon settle happily into the school community. They respond well to opportunities for them to use their own initiative. Pupils exercise responsibility in class as they prepare for lessons and perform duties sensibly, for example by clearing away after lessons and helping adults at play and lunchtimes.
11. Attendance continues to be satisfactory. The rate of authorised absences is at the national average, which is an improvement since the last inspection. There are a small number of pupils whose parents insist on taking family holidays during term time. This is having an adverse impact on their attainment. Most pupils are punctual and lessons start and finish on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching is good with a high proportion of very good teaching and a significant number of excellent lessons. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. This is a substantial improvement since the last inspection and it is reflected in the improving learning of pupils in all year groups.
13. Children under five are taught well and this helps them to make a good start at school. They are well supported in the classroom by the teachers and teaching assistants who work very well together as a team and are sensitive to the needs of the pupils. The Foundation Stage staff work hard to create an atmosphere that is supportive, safe and promotes learning.
14. In Years 1 and 2 the quality of teaching is consistently good. It is grounded on very good classroom management, good control of pupils and the development of a relationship, based on mutual respect, that supports learning. The curriculum is well planned and there is evidence of close co-operation between teachers in the delivery of the curriculum. Teaching assistants are well integrated into the teaching and learning programmes. The quality of learning is good because of the pupils' attitudes to their work, the good match of tasks to the wide range of ability to be found in all classes and the way in which lessons are presented to pupils with verve and enthusiasm.
15. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching continues to be good. Teachers plan their work conscientiously and co-operatively, and make use of a range of teaching strategies. For example, they establish the objectives of the lesson, explain concepts clearly, demonstrate processes effectively and make effective use of questions to further pupils' learning. Pupils are well managed and relationships within the classrooms are good. The work of the teaching assistants is a strong feature of the good teaching in the school. They are well integrated into the planning and delivery of the curriculum, have good relationships with the pupils and make a real and beneficial impact upon pupils' learning. Pupils learn well because of the structured approach and the very impressive use of questions and reflection to develop their understanding. In many lessons their earlier experiences and knowledge were drawn upon and developed in the current work.
16. Literacy is taught consistently well. Lessons are well planned, and texts are chosen that often engage pupils' attention and interest. Because the pupils are closely involved, they identify with the themes and undertake their tasks with confidence. Teachers have a good knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and are adept at teaching appropriate reading and writing skills.
17. The teaching of numeracy is good. Lessons are well planned and based firmly on the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy. Good teaching is exemplified by lessons that are thoroughly and imaginatively planned to provide pupils with a variety of challenging and interesting tasks. The initial use of short sessions of calculation under pressure has developed their confidence and the accuracy of their calculation. The teaching of information and communication technology skills is good, and pupils are able to use these skills in their work in other subjects, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
18. Throughout the school, teaching is characterised by good and effective classroom management. Teachers are particularly adept at maintaining good relationships and promoting co-operative work between pupils. Pupils are provided with an opportunity to work on joint tasks, and these are often assisted by skilful intervention by the teaching assistants. Teachers are skilled at explaining to pupils how they are doing and exploring with them what could be done to improve

a piece of work. Because of this, pupils are able to undertake their tasks with confidence and the quality of their learning across all classes in the school is good.

19. Teachers take the range of pupil ability and their earlier achievements into account both in planning and in the tasks presented to them. Lessons are often characterised by interesting tasks that engage pupils' interest. They are usually conducted at a brisk pace and time is well used. The use of well-chosen resources to support learning is good throughout the school. Teachers' expectations of both behaviour and attainment are good throughout the school. Homework is used to reinforce and practise skills.
20. New initiatives for learning are being implemented as a result of careful analysis of assessment findings. These are impacting upon pupils' learning and during the inspection better work was seen as a result of improved teaching methods. For example phonics practice during literacy hour is continued from Year 2 into Years 3 and 4 and, as a result, pupils' spelling is getting better. Similarly a glossary of scientific words is introduced in Year 3 so that pupils become familiar with the use of the appropriate terms. There is a group activity for able mathematicians in Year 6 and the identification of areas in mathematics where some girls do not achieve as well as boys has resulted in additional focused group work for them. The effects of these new strategies have not had sufficient time to be reflected in the standards reached in all subjects.
21. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. They achieve well and make good progress in their learning because teachers have a good understanding of their various needs and carefully match tasks and expectations to their attainment levels. Higher attaining pupils are provided with more challenging extension activities, particularly in English, maths, science and design and technology. The quality of extended planning and modification of teaching resources for the visually impaired pupils, through co-operation between the class teacher and specialist unit teachers, is particularly impressive. Teaching assistants are well informed about pupils' special educational needs and work closely with class teachers to help pupils to achieve their targets. This effective and sustained support of identified pupils makes a significant impact upon their learning and achievement.

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

22. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage provides children with a good range of learning experiences and introduces them to school life well. The quality of learning that results from these activities is good. In Years 1 to 6 the curriculum is good and provides a wide range of relevant opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is a programme of personal, social and health education that includes opportunities for pupils to learn about sex education and the misuse of drugs. A notable feature of the formal and informal curriculum is that all pupils have access to all activities. Appropriate and imaginative adult help and support is organised where necessary to make sure that this happens.
23. Curriculum planning is good and has improved since the last inspection. Schemes of work guide teachers in their termly planning and provide a framework to deliver the requirements of all subjects. Links between subjects are developing and provide opportunities to apply learning in different contexts. There have been improvements in all subjects since the last inspection, although geography is still not as well developed. The literacy and numeracy strategies are well developed and established. Basic skills are taught with confidence and are increasingly seen in the other subjects. Investigative work is now well established in science and pupils are able to

devise their own experiments with confidence by the end of Year 6. Subject co-ordinators have a good overview of the strengths and development needs of their subjects and have the knowledge and expertise to be able to support their colleagues.

24. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is very good throughout the school. Their needs are identified early and the special needs co-ordinator works with teachers to develop effective programmes of work that are monitored regularly. Targets are shared with teaching assistants who play an effective role in supporting pupils in most subjects. There is a good balance between individual and small group work on specific difficulties and classroom support to maintain the full range of curriculum opportunities. The school has recognised the need to plan to extend gifted and talented pupils. There is scope for extension within many subjects but the lack of planned activities for this group means that they are not always systematically challenged.
25. There are clubs for academic interests, including art, drama and mental mathematics and cultural activities such as recorder, guitar and choir groups. Sporting activities offered include athletics, football, netball, rounders, swimming and Unihoc. This range of out-of-class activities mainly benefits older pupils but there is better provision than is generally found for this age range in schools of a similar size.
26. The curriculum is extended through a good range of visits, visitors and other activities. These experiences are used well to stimulate interest and raise attainment in the subjects concerned. Older pupils go on a residential visit that extends their learning and independence. There are good relations with the local community. Pupils visit significant sites to support study in geography and history. A range of visitors from local churches and other walks of life present good role models of citizenship. There are contacts with the neighbouring secondary school to ensure a smooth integration of Year 6 pupils to Year 7 and to negotiate curriculum provision in the next stage of their education. The pre-school group is actually housed in St. Stephen's building and this eases the induction of children to the reception class.
27. The provision for pupils' personal development is good, which is an improvement on the last inspection. Circle time and other activities, for example health education, are planned and delivered by staff and outside visitors in subjects across the curriculum.
28. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good which is a significant improvement on the last inspection. School and year group assemblies are well planned to promote spiritual development through an act of worship that includes singing, reflection and a focused prayer. Themes are chosen to reflect aspects of the curriculum and are delivered in a dramatic way that involves pupils across the age range and gives them much to think about. This thoughtful and appreciative approach continues into their lessons, notably in art. Pupils were amazed at leaf impressions they had created in the Year R class and at the stained glass models they had produced in Year 1. In formal and informal ways, teachers show that they value pupils' ideas. Class discussions in circle time are used particularly effectively to develop knowledge and insight into other people's values and beliefs.
29. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good which is a significant improvement on the previous inspection. Moral concerns are very well integrated into the ethos of the school. Formal rules exist, but given a low profile because pupils behave very well and show care for the physical and emotional well-being of others. Teachers control behaviour through encouragement, stressing principles of fairness and self-respect and encouraging reflection on

the consequences of one's actions. Adults promote values of honesty, fairness and truthfulness in their caring relationships with pupils.

30. Provision for pupils' social development continues to be good. Pupils develop good social skills by working productively in pairs and groups in the positive, harmonious atmosphere of most lessons. When asked to work independently, they begin quickly and stay on task for extended periods of time. All help with routine classroom tasks and their level of responsibility increases as they progress through the school. Pupils develop wider understanding of citizenship through taking part in charitable fund-raising and hearing of the experiences of a wide range of visiting adults.
31. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good which is an improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of British and other cultures. They are prepared for life in a diverse multi-cultural society. Pupils visit the locality and go further afield as part of their studies in geography and history. The music and art of different times and traditions is appreciated and used as a stimulus for pupils' own creativity. The principles and practices of two world faiths are studied in religious education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. During the school day there is good provision for the needs of pupils and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are respected and valued as individuals and are well known by all staff who have very good relationships with them. There is a friendly, family atmosphere in the school. The school has satisfactory arrangements for child protection. There is a named person responsible on the staff and all adults at the school are aware of the procedures to follow should the need arise. The school has an effective health and safety policy that is implemented appropriately. Pupils are well cared for.
33. The school has the necessary arrangements in place to protect pupils from inappropriate materials on the Internet. The service provider maintains a block that filters inappropriate material and all the children and their parents read and sign a contract regarding proper use of the Internet.
34. Children in the reception class are cared for very well. They are made to feel welcome and secure as they enter school and they readily adapt to school routine. Those children who are timid, particularly if they have not had previous experience in a playgroup or nursery, are sensitively helped to take part in school life.
35. There are good procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Registration procedures meet statutory requirements but unexplained absences are not always followed up quickly enough. There are good links with the educational welfare officer in dealing with individual problems when they arise.
36. The school's behaviour policy is based on positive encouragement. There are well-established routines in place for managing poor behaviour both in class and on the playground. However, there is rarely any need to implement these. This was endorsed by lunchtime assistants who, whilst knowing the sequence of procedures for dealing with persistent misbehaviour, found that they rarely had to go beyond the initial step. Good work and behaviour are encouraged by rewards.

37. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development is good. The teachers and all the school staff provide very good educational and personal support and guidance. Pupils know whom to turn to if they have any questions or problems.
38. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. There is a clear and detailed assessment policy and the procedures it describes are used consistently and to good effect across the school. In the core subjects of English, maths and science, the performance of pupils is tracked meticulously. Appropriately challenging targets for improvement are set. Assessment is less well developed in information and communication technology and in the other subjects of the curriculum. For example in information and communication technology, there is no clear overview of how many pupils are on track to reach expected levels by the time they reach the age of 11 and how many are likely to reach higher than expected levels. Assessment in the Foundation Stage, where performance is measured against progress towards the early learning goals for children by the age of five, is good.
39. Assessment information is used well to guide curricular planning. For example, when recent test results showed that girls in a particular year group did not do as well as expected in mathematics, a number of additional measures such as extra support in class were put in to place with good effect. The analysis and interpretation of pupil performance and school results, when measured against national data, is good.
40. Annual reports to parents are detailed and give a clear picture of what the pupils know, understand and can do. Parents are given the opportunity to comment on reports and most do. A particularly good feature of the reports is the opportunity that is given for children to write comments about their own performance. Even the youngest children 'sign' their reports and are encouraged to understand the responsibility they share for their own learning.
41. Individual education plans (IEPs) for children with special educational needs are very good. They are very detailed and precise about outcomes, with specific review dates built in. In accordance with the new code of practice, parents and pupils are given the opportunity to be fully involved in the development of each individual education plan. There is good liaison with local medical and social services. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) manages the development, implementation and review of individual education plans very well.
42. The school provides a very high standard of care for pupils with special educational needs. The support that they receive, particularly for those pupils in the visually impaired unit, is a significant strength of the school. The progress of pupils with special needs is carefully monitored and adjustments are made to their individual education plans so that future lessons meet their needs. The modification of resources, particularly for the visually handicapped pupils so that they can take a full part in the mainstream activities, is exceptional.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents consider this to be a good school and this is an improvement on the last inspection. They are happy with what the school provides and achieves. Most parents feel welcomed into the school and say that the school works closely with parents. The school has recently carried out its own survey of parents to establish their views and ideas. Their comments provide information to influence the school development plan.
44. The school has good procedures in place for working with parents to help them prepare their children for entry in to school. The reception class teacher visits the homes of the children before they begin school. Parents are provided with helpful information about the school and how they can help their children to make a good start.
45. A good number of parents attend consultation evenings, curriculum events and parent workshops. They come into school to help with tasks such as listening to children read and library duties. The Friends of St. Stephen's School Association is very active in securing funds to buy resources for the school and is currently underwriting the upkeep of the school's swimming pool.
46. The quantity and quality of information provided for parents continues to be very good. A regular newsletter and a home-school liaison book for pupils in Years R to 6 serve as regular dialogues between home and school. Most parents support their child's learning at home and this has a positive impact on standards achieved by pupils. The end-of-year academic reports are very good and an improvement on those seen at the previous inspection. They explain what pupils are able to do and set out targets for pupils to achieve. Parents find this very helpful. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are informative, but lack minor details which are required, such as the attendance rates. The school has recognised this and has rectified the omission.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides the excellent leadership that has ensured the recent success of the school. She is well supported by the staff and governors who share a very positive commitment to the development of the school and to the raising of standards. There is a very clear sense of direction and purpose.
48. The school's aims and values are published and widely distributed. The behaviour, diligence and high quality of relationships at all levels about the school demonstrate the commitment of pupils and adults to live up to them. Significant features of the aims are an explicit commitment to realise each individual's potential, promoting tolerance, understanding and respect for others within a secure and caring community. The school is a particularly inclusive community with a commitment to policies and practices that promote the inclusion of every pupil in the educational opportunities that it provides. There is an explicit commitment of staff, governors, pupils and parents to live up to the aims of the school.
49. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and some subject co-ordinators monitor the quality of teaching in classrooms by observation or by evaluation of the work of pupils. Outside agencies are also brought in to validate the quality of work in the classrooms. This is a significant development since the last inspection. The school evaluates the performance data produced by national tests and its own internal testing. This information is used to establish realistic and challenging performance targets, particularly at the end of Year 6.

50. The day to day management of the school is good. All staff have current job descriptions which establish their roles and the expectations of them. The headteacher is supported by an effective deputy who has clearly defined areas of responsibility. There is very good delegation of responsibility to the subject co-ordinators, enabling them to manage and develop their own areas of operation. Several have recently changed their subject responsibility and are beginning to develop the monitoring of standards in their new subjects. A very comprehensive programme of performance management for teachers is in place. Their targets are reviewed and agreed. Continuing professional development is a strong feature of the school's philosophy. Training areas are identified with regard to both the individual and the school's needs.
51. The governing body is effective. They fulfil their statutory duties. Governors play an active part in the school life and provide strong and highly committed support. The committee structure is logical and well organised with clear terms of reference that are reviewed to confirm their continuing effectiveness. The governors receive good quality information about the school's performance and have a clear vision for the development of the school. A very positive feature of the early development planning process is the active involvement of all the staff, governors and representatives of the parents. From this meeting the educational priorities are established by staff and governors into the formal development plan which is supported by the prudent use of funds.
52. The school is well staffed and there is a good match of qualifications and experience to deliver the curriculum. Very good induction processes are in place to support teachers and teaching assistants who are new to the school. Mid-day supervisors are effectively trained and deployed. They play an important part in ensuring the quality of learning and good behaviour. A real strength of the supervisors is their ability to help pupils to structure their play activities.
53. The overall quality and extent of the accommodation are very good. The staff have created very positive learning environments and they make good use of the variety of spaces and corners created in the corridors and library areas. The outdoor play spaces are very good. Resources for teaching and learning are good and readily accessible although there are some inadequacies in teaching resources for geography. The outdoor resources for children in the Foundation Stage are being developed. The high quality of the learning environment and the school surroundings owe much to the care and pride in their school shown by the pupils and adults alike.
54. The financial management of the school is good. The finance committee of governors is provided with accurate information by the bursar through analysis of the monitoring statements provided by the local authority. Good use is made of new technologies to track and monitor the budget and for other administrative purposes. When it is necessary, firm action is taken to avoid overspending. The governors' policy of achieving best value in their transactions is effective.
55. The school has been successful in attracting additional funding and specific grants, such as the New Opportunities Fund and the National Grid for Learning, and makes good use of them. Additional funds and grants are wholly applied to their designated purposes and sometimes supplemented from the school's budget. The members of the administrative staff are effective, enabling the day-to-day procedures of the school to operate smoothly. This allows the headteacher and staff to focus upon teaching and learning. The school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. In order to sustain the momentum of improvement of standards, the headteacher, staff and governors should

- (1) Continue to improve the standards in the core subjects of English and mathematics by:
 - improving the variety and quality of writing, particularly in Years 3 to 6, ensuring that writing tasks are sufficiently varied to challenge all groups of learners;
(Paragraphs 105, 109 and 111) *
 - developing independent work in mathematics.
(Paragraph 129) *
- (2) Improve opportunities for pupils to develop their geographical knowledge and skills.
(Paragraphs 4, 23, 149, 151, 152 and 153)

* *These issues have been identified as priorities by the school and they feature in the School Development Plan*

THE WORK OF THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED UNIT

57. The unit is an integral part of the school and caters for nine pupils, three of whom are blind and the remaining six have some residual vision. The main aim of the unit is to enable the pupils to take a full and active part in the life of the main school and to attend lessons in the same way as sighted pupils. The unit also aims to promote confidence, fulfilment and achievement amongst its pupils. In these aims the unit is very successful. The pupils are so much a part of the main school that for much of the time it is difficult to identify them as being any different from the other pupils. This is a reflection of the great effort and success of all staff and pupils to include these pupils with special educational needs in the whole life of the school.
58. Pupils have positive attitudes towards school and show a keen enthusiasm for school and lessons. They are interested in their lessons and are keen to ask and answer questions. They take a full part in class activities. Occasionally pupils are withdrawn from the main lessons to receive additional special support. This is often the case when teaching individual skills concerning literacy and numeracy. For example, pupils are withdrawn for specific teaching both reading and writing of Braille. The pupils are sometimes withdrawn for the teaching of number skills, especially when their visual impairment has resulted in their being 'behind' the rest of the class. In these special lessons the quality of teaching is very good and sometimes excellent. There are excellent relationships between the teachers and the pupils. Pupils are treated with the greatest dignity and teachers have very high expectations of the pupils during lessons.
59. There is a wide variety of teaching strategies employed and the pupils respond well to them. For example, a mathematical task set for the pupils was to produce a time line of the school day. The visually impaired pupils worked separately and produced a very effective tactile time line. Getting out of bed was represented by a small crocheted square to feel like a bed quilt; the journey to school was represented by a small model car like a taxi; lunchtime was a plastic plate and plastic cutlery etc. The results were accurate and effective. These time lines were especially effective as they could be read by visually impaired or sighted pupils alike. In another excellent session, a lesson to teach addition and subtraction of numbers was made into a game where the pupil took a full role in the acting out of the questions and answers and enjoyed it immensely.
60. The behaviour of the pupils is very good. They mix well with their peers in the main school and, with the help of support staff and pupils, they take part in activities outside of lessons. At break times they mix with the other pupils and enjoy their friendship. However, if they wish to have a bit of quiet time and space to themselves, they can go into the courtyard where there is a sensory garden. This is newly planted but is developing well and, when the plants and shrubs mature, they will offer a host of different smells and textures for the pupils to enjoy. There is also a pergola which will offer shade for the pupils who are light sensitive, when the climbing plants are more established.
61. Relationships are very good between pupils, teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils are given the opportunity and are able to discuss their behaviour and how it affects other people. They are able to reflect sensibly upon the events of the day, their feelings and their beliefs. Pupils are given responsibilities and respond well to this. For example, with a little verbal guidance from the teacher, a blind boy was expected to walk across the room and collect equipment that was needed. He was successful and his help was appreciated by the teacher and fellow pupils. There are very high levels of respect between staff and pupils and vice versa.
62. The aims of the unit are celebrated very well as the visually impaired pupils get complete access to all subjects being taught, or they have an appropriate alternative. For example, visually

impaired pupils go horse riding to give them the physical education and physiotherapy that they need and to which they are entitled. This activity replaces some of the physical education sessions within the school and is more appropriate for them. The teachers and assistants work well to support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. A notable feature is their visits to the nearby woods to enjoy the wonders of the world, catching the falling leaves, climbing the trees and playing hide and seek. Social development is encouraged through the social communication sessions. Pupils learn to pick up sound cues to enable them to judge a person's feelings correctly. They learn to recognise sad, happy, serious and friendly intonation in speech. Through role play they develop their social skills and for some pupils who have behavioural difficulties, there are specific targets for them to work together, share equipment, time and attention.

63. Teachers work hard to ensure that the pupils have the opportunities to visit places of interest and culture. So much so that the staff do a 'pre-visit' to make sure that the place is suitable for the visually impaired pupils. In some cases they are able to persuade the curators to allow their pupils to touch and in some cases climb upon exhibits, which for sighted pupils would not be allowed. This happened when the pupils visited the site of Roman remains at Fishbourne, where they were allowed to crawl all over the precious mosaic floor. Pupils also visit the British Museum where there is a special handling session. Cultural development is also enriched through music, dance and drama. Great care is taken to ensure that all visits are conducted safely. There is always one adult to each pupil and risk assessment has been conducted prior to any visit.
64. Their curriculum is socially inclusive. The lessons are carefully planned by the teachers in the main school and then the staff from the visually impaired unit make modifications to ensure that the pupils with visual impairment can gain the maximum from the lessons. Special books are made by the staff with large print or Braille to make them appropriate and any written information that the teacher presents during a lesson is either produced in large print or Braille. In many situations it is necessary to do both. Planning also takes into account the fact that some of the visually impaired pupils do not have such advanced reading skills as their peers and extra help is made available or the language is modified to suit. The staff from the unit meet with the teachers from the main school each week to discuss the planning of lessons.
65. The visually impaired pupils receive a rich and varied curriculum that is made even better by the strong links that there are with the community and other organisations. The school works closely with the Surrey Sensory Support Service and the South East Area co-ordinator for visual impairment works closely between school and home. Another area co-ordinator helps the school to access the latest equipment that is available for the teaching of these pupils with special educational needs. Other organisations support the school by providing mobility training for the pupils, specially prepared exercise books and paper with dark lines. Speech and language therapy is available to those who need it, whilst physiotherapists and occupational therapists advise staff and pupils. They also monitor the progress of the pupils and help formulate special programmes for them. On the whole, the community and other organisations have a very considerable impact on pupils' learning and this has a positive impact on the progress that the pupils make.

66. The unit makes very good use of information and communication technology. It is very well advised and very well resourced. The range of equipment available in the unit enables special books to be prepared using scanners, printers and both mechanical and electronic Braille. There is also an embossing machine that produces tactile drawings and diagrams when they are needed and a device that will translate Braille into the ordinary written text. Of course none of this would benefit the pupils were it not for the dedication of the team of staff who work to teach and support these pupils. All pupils have access to a desktop or laptop computer and they learn to use special programs for visually impaired pupils. Much of the information and communication technology equipment benefits not only the visually impaired pupils but also the rest of the pupils in the school. All school staff value the work of the unit highly and recognise that the close working relationships are beneficial to all.
67. The unit has strong relationships with other similar institutions and this enables appropriate transition to take place. The close links with the RNIB are also very beneficial to the unit.
68. The unit's procedures for monitoring its pupils' academic performance are very good. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is based on procedures that are now well established. The assessment begins as pupils are admitted to the unit. Previous records are scrutinised and basic tests are carried out to determine pupils' standards of achievement. From this information, for all pupils in the unit, an individual education plan is prepared. These plans take into account the special needs of the pupils, their age and their ability. Targets are set, which are carefully designed to be achievable and still challenging. These are a direct result of the targets that are written on pupils' statements of special educational needs, but are made more specific to the lesson situation. The regular review of these targets is good and the teachers keep very good records each day of the progress that pupils have made. The teachers make very effective use of assessment information to guide their lesson planning in all subjects. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are very good and these policies are implemented consistently across the school. In this unit, teaching includes very good procedures for assessment, recording and monitoring attainment and progress.
69. The unit works closely with the education psychologist who attends all annual reviews and supports the pupils and teachers well. Very detailed records are kept and these are up to date. This is good improvement since the last inspection.
70. Parents are very positive about the unit and there are close links between parents and the school. The school now includes a special section within the school brochure for the benefit of the visually impaired and makes audiotapes of the documents available to parents if they need them. This is excellent practice.
71. The unit is very well led and the staff work extremely well together. The teacher in charge provides very strong and clear direction that ensures that the unit is integral to the work of the whole school. She is a highly skilled teacher and a very effective manager who leads a team of hard working and committed staff. The quality of leadership is a reflection of the published aims and values of the unit. The way responsibilities are delegated to staff is very good and all staff know what needs to be done and in what order. Within the governing body there are those who have a specific responsibility to ensure that the work of the unit is fully understood and recognised. They also have a very clear monitoring role as governors and keep a careful watch over the work of the unit.
72. The unit is well managed financially by the teacher in charge who always ensures that principles of best value are applied. She is responsible for the staffing and the resources, which are

carefully matched to the needs of the pupils. There is sufficient staff to meet the needs of the pupils and the demands of the curriculum. The resources within the unit are very good, of high quality and very well managed to make sure that they are fully accessible and are fully utilised. The accommodation has been improved recently and this has made a great difference to the unit. It is now light, well furnished, in excellent condition and provides a suitable space for the pupils and the staff. There is an excellent atmosphere that is highly conducive to work.

73. The work of the unit is of a very high standard and offers very good opportunities to the pupils who are visually impaired. These opportunities not only provide high quality teaching but also the ability to be a part of the whole school, a total inclusion package. From this provision, all pupils and staff benefit. Mainstream staff and pupils benefit as they learn to work with and socialise with visually impaired pupils. Visually impaired pupils benefit from the inclusion experiences that they have at every possible opportunity.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	3	12	27	10	0	0	0
Percentage	6	23	52	19	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents about 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)	210
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	14
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	35

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	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9
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
	2001	17	10	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
	Girls	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
	Total	25	25	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (97)	93 (97)	96 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
	Girls	N/a*	N/a*	N/a*
	Total	25	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (97)	96 (97)	96 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. *Because the number of girls in the year group was less than eleven, the comparative figures are not included.

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
	2001	15	26	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	14
	Girls	24	13	24
	Total	34	24	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (76)	59 (69)	93 (85)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	12
	Girls	23	21	20
	Total	33	32	32
Percentage of pupils	School	80 (66)	78 (78)	80 (83)

at NC level 4 or above	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	157	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	12	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	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	1	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)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.7
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	158

Qualified teachers and support staff: Visual Impairment Unit

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	4.5
Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	130
Number of pupils per FTE adult	1.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001 - 2002
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	£
Total income	574,158
Total expenditure	551,560
Expenditure per pupil	2,772
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,596
Balance carried forward to next year	22,598

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	221
Number of questionnaires returned	113

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	40	2	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	36	52	5	2	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	55	2	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	49	11	3	7
The teaching is good.	45	48	3	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	43	15	2	7
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	30	7	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	48	0	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	38	45	11	1	5
The school is well led and managed.	48	42	8	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	58	0	1	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	45	15	3	7

Other issues raised by parents

At their meeting, the parents were very positive about their relationship with the school and the quality of provision that was made for their children.

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

74. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children are cared for very well by suitably qualified and experienced staff. The curriculum is broad and provides a good range of activities that are suitable for young children. It is planned in accordance with the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The teaching staff know the early learning goals well and plan the curriculum to promote them. The quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection.
75. According to assessment teachers make as children enter the school, the attainment of the majority of children is broadly similar to that in other local schools. At the time of the inspection, just before half term in the autumn term, there were a few individual children with high attainment for their age, who had already reached the early learning goals for children aged five in several parts of the curriculum. Appropriate activities are planned for these high attaining children, which take them on to the next steps in learning and which include parts of the programme of study from Year 1 of the National Curriculum. They continue to be taught in a way that is entirely appropriate for very young children.
76. The majority of children in the class are on track to meet the early learning goals for children aged five by the time they reach the end of their year in reception class. The majority of children in the group have been in local nursery or playgroups for about two terms and as a result they have personal and social skills that are well developed for their age. A few individual children have below average attainment and are likely to be assessed for special educational needs.
77. The quality of teaching was judged as good in the last inspection and this has been maintained. The current quality of teaching is good and has some very good features. For example the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is very good in the reception class. The teacher uses a good variety of teaching methods, which are well matched to the age of the children, offering them many practical hands-on activities. The teacher assesses children's work accurately and regularly and uses these observations to plan thoroughly for the next steps in learning. Reports to parents at the end of the reception year are very good and are very clear about what the children know, understand and can do in each of the areas of learning. They also detail what the children cannot do and how parents can help children with areas of difficulty. Relationships with local nurseries and playgroups are good.
78. The teaching assistants are deployed effectively. They play a significant role in ensuring the care and welfare of the children and help them with many learning activities. They have good communication with the teacher and they make a very positive contribution to standards and the quality of learning in the Foundation Stage.
79. The reception class children benefit from the support of a number of adults from the local community, such as grandparents, who visit the class on a regular and voluntary basis. They help with the provision of extra activities such as gardening and help the children develop speaking and listening skills by, for example, working with them at a puppet theatre. They make a good contribution to the enrichment of the curriculum for the children.

80. Parents' views of the work of the school are very positive and the co-operation between the parents and teaching team in the reception class helps to establish a pleasant and purposeful learning atmosphere. Behaviour in the Foundation Stage is good. The children have good attitudes to attending school, are happy and secure in the school environment and respond well to an ethos of encouragement and support.

Personal, social and emotional development

81. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development is good. The children are taught how to behave appropriately and quickly settle and feel secure in the school routine. For example, they are taught how to listen as part of a group without calling out, to share equipment and to help each other. They learn rules such as 'to keep our hands and feet to ourselves' and are praised for appropriate behaviour and for good manners. During registration and other times when the children are together as a group, the teaching staff often discuss matters relating to personal interaction with them. For example, on one occasion observed during the inspection, the children were reminded that it is considered polite to look at someone and make eye contact with them when being spoken to.
82. Children are encouraged to reflect on their own development, their well-being and that of others in activities such as 'circle time'. For example, during the inspection, they took part in a lesson where they sat in a circle and passed a toy bear from person to person. When it was their turn to hold the bear they had to say who was a special person to them and why. Although shy at speaking in public at first, the majority of children did speak and made sensible contributions. They could single out a parent or friend for special mention and say why this was so. The session was very effective in developing pupils' confidence and in causing them to think about the importance of interpersonal relationships.
83. The teacher provides a wide range of good activities, which offer the children new experiences, stimulate curiosity and encourage them to role-play. For example, during the inspection, groups of children were taking it in turns to staff a 'shoe shop' that had been created in part of the classroom. Children alternately acted as 'shopkeeper' and as 'customer', learning to greet and thank each other as is customary and to act out having a conversation and paying for goods.
84. Most children have a positive self-image and make good progress in personal development. They become increasingly independent in organising their own belongings such as coats and book bags, they can attend to matters of personal hygiene and most can change their clothes for physical education unaided, although some still take a very long time to dress, or become confused as to which shoe belongs on which foot, or if clothing has turned inside out as they change. Most of the children can tidy up after themselves after a range of activities. They gain confidence in finding their way around the school such as when taking it in turns to take the register to the office. They learn from the example set by the older pupils how they should behave in shared areas of the school, for example when they attend a whole school assembly. Taken together, these and other well-planned activities effectively support the children's personal, social and emotional development. Most will achieve the expected early learning goals by the end of their foundation year.

Communication, language and literacy

85. On entering school, the children have an attainment that varies widely. A few individual children can speak, read and write well for their age, recognising and writing some letters, and one child could read simple words. Most of the children can say the sound of a few letters and have had some experience of handling books and being read to by an adult. A very few children do not know any letters or sounds, and find it difficult to speak to others and have a poor vocabulary

86. The teacher plans and teaches the part of the curriculum that deals with communication, language and literacy very well and the needs of the children are met, whatever their ability. The classroom is organised so as to provide children with many planned and unplanned opportunities to handle and read books and to write using a good range of mark making materials. Children can use these independently to carry out activities such as making a shopping list. There are attractive displays of the alphabet, letters and words around the room. The children listen to and tell stories and learn and can recite simple rhymes. They have access to recorded stories they can listen to using earphones. During the inspection, the children were working with a small finger puppet theatre that the teacher had provided. The children were very drawn to this activity and quickly became quite skilled at acting out and telling stories, or participating as part of the 'audience'. This was particularly affective at encouraging them to develop good speaking skills. Another group were working with a teaching assistant and looking at books. They could work out which way up a book should be looked at and most could point to where the title could be found and where the book began, knowing that books go from left to right. They could say the title of some familiar books and whether they contained information or stories. They could use the pictures in the books to make sensible predictions about what the book contained.

87. Taken together, the quality of teaching and the activities provided lead to good progress being made by the children in this part of the curriculum. By the time they reach the end of Foundation Stage, the majority of children listen well when people speak or read to them, express their own ideas, speak clearly in sentences and have significantly extended their vocabulary. The majority of children can hear, say and write the sounds at the beginning and end of words and most of them know the sounds two letters make when joined together and can recognise and read common words. Children are confident in their early attempts at handwriting. Most can write letters clearly and a few children can write recognisable words and sentences. Most children recognise and write their own name and they can recite nursery rhymes and short poems from memory. Most will achieve the expected early learning goals by the end of their foundation year.

Mathematical development

88. The attainment of children when they enter the reception class varies widely. At the time of the inspection, about half way through their first term in school, most of the children could count to ten and recognise and order these numbers displayed on a smartboard. They could name some simple two-dimensional shapes and knew some of their properties, for example that a triangle has three sides. They knew some very simple fractions such as a half. They observed the passage of time by using an egg timer and played with large clocks, pointing to the numbers and moving the hands. The children could use an increasing range of words associated with mathematical language such as longer or shorter, higher or lower and could follow patterns and arrange objects in sequence well.

89. The teaching of mathematical development is good. In the Year R classroom, the teacher uses a good range of resources, which promote mathematical understanding well. There are objects to sort and count, number lines and number squares, clocks, shapes, measuring and weighing equipment and coins. Children are provided with opportunities to explore capacity by pouring and measuring water and sand. The teacher focuses on groups in turn, checking for understanding and helping to clarify any misconceptions.
90. The quality of teaching and learning has a positive impact on the progress made by the children. The majority reach the expected standard in mathematical development by the end of the second term in the Foundation Stage and some, about a quarter, go on to exceed this level.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

91. The teacher in the reception class provides well for the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world. A wide range of activities is planned to help children find out more about their surroundings and how they inter-react with them. During the inspection some good teaching was seen which promoted progress towards this early learning goal very well.
92. The children can make sensible observations about what is going on around them. They had recently been on a walk around the school grounds and could describe the things they had seen which indicated a change of season. They collected fruits of trees such as some horse chestnuts and acorns, which together with cones from other trees were displayed in the class. They could say that many leaves changed to a different colour and that most fell from the trees in autumn. In a session that built on this work, they learned about hibernation and could give an example of a hedgehog as an animal that went to sleep in the winter. The children can make sensible observations of changes in the weather and can use the right words to say if it is cloudy, sunny, windy or raining.
93. The children have an early historical understanding. They look with interest at pictures of themselves and their friends as babies and toddlers and can talk about time passing, using words such as yesterday, last year and long ago.
94. Children are given many opportunities to design and make things and most can cut out, arrange and stick simple pictures. During the inspection, one group was making a range of objects out of salt dough, learning how to mould and shape the three-dimensional material. They could use a rolling pin to smooth out the material and could use cutters to press out shapes. Another group were making flags out of paper which would flutter out in the breeze. They made good attempts to cut them out, to make holes using a hole-punch and to thread wool unaided through the holes. Most of them were successful and could tie the paper to a tree outside.
95. Some good opportunities are created for children to increase their technological awareness. They see technology such as a radio, CD player and smartboard being used around them and have access to the use of a computer to support a range of learning activities. Most children know how to locate a cursor on a screen by using a mouse and know they must 'click' to make something happen. They know some of the words associated with the computer such as mouse, screen and keyboard and can use simple programs.
96. Children respond well to early opportunities to reflect on life and participate in collective worship during prayer at school assemblies. For example during the inspection, pupils attended an assembly taken by a visiting member of clergy. Although they did not understand all of the content of the assembly they were able to say that to pray means 'to talk to God' and they

knew they should say 'Amen' at the end of a prayer. They can say that 'The Bible' is the name for a special book that has stories about Jesus. They can line up well and sit quietly as part of the much larger whole school group. They respond with interest to these activities and behave very well when taking part. Most will achieve the expected early learning goals by the end of their foundation year.

Physical development

97. Children's physical skills are developed well through a range of appropriate activities. The teaching of this part of the curriculum is good because it is well planned and activities build on each other, allowing for suitable progress. Most children reach the expected level of development by the time they reach the end of reception year.
98. The children have many opportunities to practise fine manipulation skills by drawing, cutting, threading, sorting, sticking and building. They gain increasing control when using crayons, pencils and paint and in using tools such as scissors.
99. Many opportunities are provided for children to increase their awareness of space, their physical co-ordination and their strength and stamina. In physical education lessons they are provided with a good range of activity that helps them learn to balance, jump and hop. For example in one lesson observed during the inspection children were playing the 'bean game' where they have to respond with a particular style of movement when the teacher calls out 'runner bean', 'jelly bean', 'string bean', etc. They could follow instructions well, running on the spot, stopping, starting, moving forwards and backwards, or changing direction as required. Children enjoy and look forward to active lessons and behave very well.
100. There is no fenced secure outdoor area where children in the Foundation Stage can play safely. The need for such an area has been recognised in the school development plan. At the time of the inspection the construction of such an area, adjacent to their classroom, was imminent. In the meantime, children do have access to a paved area where, under close supervision, they have opportunities to develop their strength, stamina and co-ordination by riding tricycles, playing with large and small balls and aiming at a 'basketball hoop'. There are currently no opportunities for them to climb and slide or move on equipment that has a change of level.

Creative development

101. Children make good progress in creative development. Activities are well resourced and planned to offer a diverse and stimulating programme. This promotes progress in all aspects of this early learning goal such as art and music.
102. The children are able to use a wide range of artistic materials sensibly. They can use pencils, pens and crayons with which to draw and can use paint to fill in shapes and to print. Children can make pictures using jigsaws, complete patterns using a range of coloured shapes and say the names of most colours. During the inspection, a group of children were using the leaves they had collected on their walk around the school to make leaf rubbings by using wax crayons. The children were fascinated by the emergence of the pattern of the leaf on the page as they rubbed and were struck by a sense of wonder as the image appeared.
103. Children learn new songs enthusiastically, can remember the words to several songs and hymns and can clap and do other simple actions in time to music. They sing together at various moments during the day, for example at morning registration they join hands and sing 'How are

you?’ as a way of greeting each other. Most sing clearly and in tune. The children can name several musical instruments such as claves and bells and can recognise the sounds they make. During the inspection the reception class took part in a whole school music assembly. They sang and played simple instruments in front of the whole school and had an opportunity to listen to older children sing and play music in many different ways. This was an excellent opportunity for them to develop an appreciation of different forms of musical performance.

104. The quality of teaching in creative development is good overall. The teacher plans for the widest possible range of creative experiences. The teacher has high expectations of the children and instructs them well. As a result, the quality of learning in creative development is good and the majority of children reach the early learning goals for creative development before the end of the Foundation Stage.

ENGLISH

105. Overall attainment is satisfactory with weaknesses in writing that are reflected in the results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6. In 2002 the standards reached were below expectations in writing for seven year olds and below in English for 11-year-olds. However the 2002 cohort at the end of Year 6 was much smaller than in 2001 when results were in line with national averages and also with similar schools. Results of 11-year-olds have been in line since the last inspection and results obtained by seven-year-olds show marked improvement from below average to in line or above the national average most recently. Pupils with special needs make good progress because the learning support they receive enables them to access every aspect of the National Curriculum. Visually impaired pupils achieve well because they are well integrated into lessons and are set appropriate tasks so that they can succeed.
106. In Years 1 and 2 pupils’ attainment in lessons is in line with national averages. Pupils’ writing is orderly as they develop a story line or a set of instructions. All pupils observed worked productively and at a good pace showing unusual maturity for their age because they are encouraged to speak at length about their ideas and plans so that they formulate a clear pattern for their writing before they begin. For example, pupils in Year 1 understand that it is important to make their writing interesting for their readers so they choose verbs to explain to an imaginary alien how to clean teeth by ‘squeezing’ the toothpaste on to the brush.
107. Pupils make good progress and by Year 2 their writing becomes more expressive. The language chosen to tell the story of ‘the little red lighthouse’ shows they understand the importance of setting their characters in time and space with a purpose for their actions. For example, one boy wrote ‘It was the lighthouses job to makshr the bots don’t crash’. The pupil gets the message across securely and clear understanding is established. Standards of reading are in line with the national average and some pupils achieve above the national average by the end of Year 2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 read clearly, explain characters and events in the story and some are able to predict what may happen next. They use a range of cues to find meaning, often deducing from the pictures in the text.
108. Standards of reading are in line with the national average by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 read accurately but few can recall events from the story in detail. Most pupils in Year 6 read fluently. Higher attainers explain the sequence of complicated stories with a precise understanding especially of the Harry Potter books but average attaining pupils have difficulty inferring the meaning from the text. There was less evidence of pupils reading non-fiction books for pleasure but pupils make good use of the excellent library and older pupils explain confidently how to use the referencing systems for researching and retrieving information. They are less secure in analysing information from a text. Several pupils explained in detail how to retrieve

information from the Internet because this is their preferred form of researching information for topics.

109. Attainment in lessons seen in Years 3 to 6 was in line with expectations but with some weaknesses in writing. Pupils answer well in class, know and understand the tasks set but the written outcomes that follow do not reach the required standard for all pupils. For example, pieces of writing are not always completed, except by higher attaining pupils, and too little is produced in the time allowed. There are inconsistencies in the quality of handwriting and competent use of grammar. The school is tackling these problems with a series of well-planned strategies. For example, Year 3 pupils related their learning about 'teeth' in a science lesson to writing an informative text. Pupils in Year 4 match the characters in their stories to their settings using worksheets to help them with their writing. By Year 5 pupils are challenged to explain the emotions and feelings of the characters studied. There are good links with history as pupils find out more about the poor living conditions of the ordinary people in Victorian times. In Year 6 pupils role play characters from the 'The Silver Sword' to help them understand the characters of Ruth and Edek before beginning to write their character studies. This planned support for pupils' writing is reinforced with booster classes and reading recovery programmes but some pupils are still marking time. These low standards in written work are due partly to the legacy of unsatisfactory learning in some classes resulting from long periods with supply teachers. Therefore, to raise standards teachers should offer plenty of practice across a wider variety of writing tasks and encourage pupils to begin their writing earlier in the lesson allowing time for them to consolidate their understanding by the writing habit. Progress of pupils in Years 3 and 4 varies from year to year and a number of pupils join the school in Year 3 with low achievement. Progress is satisfactory by the end of Year 6 although pupils' achievements in writing are below averages expected.
110. Pupils in all year groups develop their literacy skills across all curriculum subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 used technical words well as they explored the ways their winding mechanisms worked during a design and technology lesson. Pupils in Year 4 used appropriate language to explain how to cut and paste items for information and communication technology presentations of their work. By Year 6 pupils employ their literacy skills profitably to complete an evaluation sheet to record their weekly progress in mathematics. They explain different ways of balancing safely on apparatus in a physical education lesson. They used technical vocabulary confidently in a science lesson to explain how some solids dissolve in water while others do not.
111. Teaching is always satisfactory and often good with some very good lessons seen and excellent teaching in Year 2, which results in the good learning and progress made by seven year olds. Pupils' efforts vary in Years 3 and 4 and this is reflected in the very wide differences in attainment making teaching such mixed ability groups always demanding and often difficult. All teachers share good subject knowledge enthusiastically and plan effectively to meet the learning needs of all groups of pupils. Classes are managed competently and teachers' sensitivity is a major factor in the learning progress made by pupils. Despite this encouragement, standards of pupils' writing are unacceptably low and, although some positive improvement was seen in Year 6, it will take time for the good teaching that pupils now receive to be reflected in their achievements. In all lessons seen pupils are alert and answer well at the beginning of the lesson but some cannot sustain concentration through to written work if the teacher's introduction is too long or the tasks set are not sufficiently varied to encourage the learning of all groups of pupils. In the best lessons pupils were involved actively after a brief introduction and learning was reinforced regularly throughout allowing plenty of time for pupils to practise their writing and use the skills they had been taught. All teachers mark pupils' work carefully indicating ways in which pupils can improve and their learning is well supported by regular homework.

112. Pupils were working confidently on word processors in every lesson seen. Examples are celebrated throughout the school with some delightful displays in the Hogwarts Library area in the Year 5 classroom. Teachers take every opportunity to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness of the world around them stressing the need to help others sensitively by being tolerant of their difficulties and sharing their successes. Especially good examples were seen in Years 3 and 5 when visually impaired pupils took part joyously in role play activities.
113. Procedures for assessment are being used to guide curricular planning and to track pupils' progress throughout the school. Teachers know their pupils well and review their progress weekly and every half term. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate and record their own performance on their 'Reach for the Stars' charts.
114. Teachers use resources constructively, especially the excellent library facilities for both the juniors and the infants. Learning for the younger pupils is promoted by story sacks packed with attractive picture books and games to excite pupils' interest in reading, which can be borrowed for home use. Teaching assistants make a major contribution to pupils' learning because they plan closely with class teachers to ensure that all pupils get maximum benefit from their lessons.
115. English teaching is very well managed by the literacy co-ordinators. They provide a good role model for teachers introducing new methods and strategies to enhance learning and raise standards of attainment for all groups of pupils. All aspects of literacy have improved since the last inspection and the staff are committed to further improvement in the future.

MATHEMATICS

116. Standards in mathematics have not improved in line with the national trend. In 2001, the last year for which national comparative data is available, standards for pupils aged seven were above the national average when compared with all schools and were broadly in line with schools in similar contexts. The proportion of pupils reaching higher than expected levels, 33 per cent, was above the national average. Boys' performance marginally exceeded national levels and girls' performance fell just below. In the standard assessment tasks for pupils aged seven in 2002, 89 per cent of pupils reached National Curriculum Level 2, the expected level.
117. However, standards for pupils aged 11 were well below the national average when compared to all schools in the year 2001, the last year for which national comparative data is available. Standards were also well below average when compared to similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching higher than expected levels, 10 per cent, was well below the national average. The performance of boys exceeded the national average by 0.9 points and the performance of girls fell below the national average by 1.3 points, which is contrary to the national trend.
118. In the Standard Assessment Tasks for pupils aged 11 in 2002, 57 per cent of pupils reached National Curriculum Level 4, the expected level. The proportion of pupils reaching higher than expected levels was 8.7 per cent. 13 per cent of boys and 39.3 per cent of girls reached the expected level. The school did not meet the target set, which was for 77 per cent of pupils to reach Level 4.
119. Pupils do best in the parts of the National Curriculum that deal with using and applying maths. Pupils with special educational needs, including visually impaired children, are supported well and make good progress.

120. Care must be taken when interpreting these statistics, as each pupil in a small year group can represent a figure of three or four per cent. The figures for 11-year-olds in 2001 included a child who was severely visually impaired. In the Year 6 group, there was a very high turnover of pupils. 11 pupils joined and thirteen pupils left the school in the years leading up to the tests. Many of these pupils had insufficient time in the school to benefit from the improved teaching. The figures for seven-year-olds in 2002 include two children who were partially sighted, one of whom also had severe learning difficulties.
121. Standards of work seen in the school during the inspection are broadly in line with the national expectation and the majority of pupils in Year 2 are on track to reach expected levels. By the age of seven pupils can apply their numeracy skills well to work in a range of subjects and in all parts of the mathematics National Curriculum (using and applying maths, number and algebra and shape space and measure). They can add and subtract numbers to twenty and some can order numbers to a hundred, working in hundreds, tens and units. More able pupils can write out the different strategies that they can use to calculate accurately. The majority of children know their two, five and ten times tables and can use them confidently to double or halve numbers. They can recognise and name two and three-dimensional shapes and describe some of the properties of these. They know how to measure distance in centimetres and metres and become increasingly confident at telling the time accurately to the nearest quarter of an hour. They can recognise and name the value of coins. The pupils make good progress in the infant department.
122. Standards of work seen in Year 6 during the inspection are broadly in line with the national expectation. The majority of pupils are on track to reach expected levels although one or two individual pupils with special educational needs are unlikely to do so. Eight pupils, about a quarter of the pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to reach higher than expected levels.
123. By the time they are 11, the majority of pupils are confident in numeracy and all parts of the mathematics National Curriculum including data handling. Pupils can use all number operations. They can multiply by ten, one hundred and a thousand and can add by estimating. Pupils use and understand mathematical language such as average, factor and reverse operation and know how to use mathematical conventions such as rounding up numbers. They understand simple fractions and decimals and can correctly multiply and divide decimals by ten and a hundred. They can match time on an analogue clock and a twenty-four hour clock and can calculate the perimeter of regular shapes. Pupils generally make good progress but are less successful at tackling one and two-step problems. Additional opportunities have been included in the curriculum to help them to develop problem-solving skills.
124. Pupils can use their numeracy skills to help them in other parts of the National Curriculum. For example during the week of the inspection, Year 5 pupils were making graphs in a science lesson, recording the changes in pulse rate associated with exercise.
125. Improvement in mathematics since the last inspection is satisfactory. Although standards in recent years have been below the national average, the quality of teaching and learning has improved and the pupils now moving through the school are beginning to benefit.
126. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is good across the school and numeracy skills are taught well. In Years 1 and 2 there is no unsatisfactory teaching and all of it is good. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly in accordance with the structure recommended by the National Numeracy Strategy. They prepare appropriate resources and manage their classes well. Lessons waste little time and teachers give clear explanations and instructions to their pupils so that they know exactly what to do and how long they have to do it. For example in one lesson seen during the inspection, children were learning to count in twos and had to mark even

numbers up to 50 on to a chart. Their efforts were spurred on because a time target of fifteen minutes had been set. The children settled quickly, concentrated hard and most completed the work within the time given. In another lesson, where pupils were learning to tell the time, the teacher used a range of modern technologies and well planned activities to make the lesson interesting and motivating for the children. Teachers make particularly good use of the last part of the numeracy lessons where they summarise learning points with the children, clarify any misconceptions and explain what they will go on to in the next lesson.

127. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching and learning is very good. Twenty five per cent of lessons are good and 75 per cent are very good. Teaching is particularly good in the classes for the oldest children. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and communicate the importance of numeracy and their enthusiasm for mathematics to the pupils well. They check frequently to make sure that pupils understand and that the learning aim is being achieved. Good use is made of homework. Marking and assessment are thorough.
128. For example, in one lesson where teaching was very good the pupils were introduced to the language of decimals. They learned that a fraction such as six-tenths would be represented by the decimal 'nought point six' and that a whole number would be read as 'one point nought'. The teacher gave a clear and precise introduction to the lesson, explaining the purpose, the structure and how much time was to be spent on each part. The teacher had very good subject knowledge and was able to clarify any pupil misconception sensitively. Questions to pupils were of good quality, in a logical sequence and designed to help pupils move swiftly to the next learning point. Good use was made of praise. Visually impaired pupils were fully included in the lesson and supported well by thoroughly briefed teaching assistants. Overall the teaching methods were very effective. The very positive atmosphere had a direct impact on the quality of learning and the progress pupils made.
129. Within the context of many strengths in the teaching of mathematics, there are, nevertheless, some minor points for improvement. Pupils would benefit from increased opportunities to use their mathematical skills to become more confident in working out their own solutions. Opportunities should be provided for them to try, and perhaps to fail, and to develop increased independence in applying what they have learned to the solving of mathematical and other related problems.
130. Pupils behave well in mathematics lessons and have good attitudes to the subject. They set out their work accurately and neatly. They look forward to their lessons and enjoy them. They work hard, concentrate well and raise their hands enthusiastically, putting in a great deal of effort. They become increasingly personally organised and co-operate with their teachers. They do not call out unless asked to do so, they stick to the activity they have been asked to do. The classrooms have a purposeful working atmosphere.
131. Resources for mathematics are good and increasing use is made of computers to support learning. The subject is well led by the subject co-ordinators who monitor the quality of teaching and pupil progress. More still needs to be done to analyse and act on the increasing amount of statistical evidence available and to apply what is learned to the continuous drive to raise standards.

SCIENCE

132. The 2001 teacher assessments for pupils aged seven showed attainment in science to be above the national average and the number reaching the higher than expected level to be close to the national standard. The work seen during the inspection suggests that the attainment of the seven

year olds in 2002 will be maintained. The results of the 2001 national tests for pupils aged 11 show attainment to be close to the national average although the number of pupils achieving at higher levels in science was below the national average. The performance of 11-year-olds is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Evidence from observations during the inspection shows that attainment now is at least as expected, and in some cases is above expectation. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection when attainment throughout the school was below the national expectation.

133. By the time that they are seven, pupils record the results of their observations and investigations through the use of pictures, charts and their own brief written text. They are beginning to make predictions about expected outcomes, for example, when investigating the behaviour of a shoe travelling over a variety of resistant surfaces as part of a study of forces. They know how humans and mammals change as they grow and what the young animals need in order to grow.
134. By the time that they are 11, pupils are recording investigations in a consistent format, designing investigations to ensure that they are fair, making informed predictions about results and then controlling these through the limited introduction of variables. They know the names and functions of the major organs of the body and the types of food needed to maintain health. They have investigated the specific properties of materials, the nature of solids, liquids and gases and the physical requirements for changes in state. They are familiar with apparatus, scientific terms and the need for accuracy in quantification while conducting their research.
135. Literacy skills are employed and practised as pupils follow instructions and experience many opportunities to develop their own factual writing skills in their science notebooks. After analysis of the performance of Years 5 and 6 in tests, the accurate understanding and use of scientific terms was identified as a weakness, and a science word book has recently been introduced from Year 3 to remedy this. Worksheets are used judiciously throughout the school and pupils of all abilities are encouraged to write their own accounts of their investigations. This is a strength of the school, and contributes a great deal to the lively response that pupils demonstrate to the subject. Their attitudes towards science are very good, and they demonstrate a good level of co-operation in carrying out their investigations. As a result, their investigative skills are developing well. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
136. Throughout the school, pupils make suitable use of their numeracy skills as they use accurate measurement to record quantities and demonstrate the ability to construct line graphs from numerical data. For example, in Year 6 pupils investigated the proportion of air space in a range of aggregates and had to find reliable ways of measuring volumes. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support learning within the subject either for information, for example, when Year 3 were learning about the function of the human skeleton and consulted a CD-ROM, or for handling data, for example, when some pupils in Year 5 presented their data in graphical form using a computer program.
137. Pupils listen particularly well to their teachers and to the contributions of others. They demonstrate very good recall of scientific vocabulary and previous learning and can relate this to topics under discussion. Pupils enjoy their science lessons, work eagerly and enthusiastically at the practical activities and show high levels of concentration and co-operation. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants within the classroom. This enables them to make good progress in science. However, there is scope for further challenge for the most able pupils in Years 5 and 6.

138. The quality of teaching in science is good, which is an improvement since the last inspection when it was described as generally sound. The strengths of the teaching are grounded in good pupil management, secure subject knowledge, good relationships with pupils, good planning of the science curriculum and careful use of appropriate vocabulary in lessons. Teachers deliver the lessons in an exciting way. Very effective use is made of questioning by teachers to extend pupils' thinking. Homework is used effectively to reinforce and extend the knowledge of pupils.
139. The science curriculum is well planned to a consistent format that delivers the requirements of the National Curriculum. Assessment of pupils' progress is good. The pupils' work is marked conscientiously, although there are variations in the amount of advice given to pupils through teachers' marking as to how they could improve their work.
140. The subject is well managed. There has been some classroom observation to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the school, but this has yet to be fully developed. Resources to support science are very good. Equipment and consumable items are modern and attractive to use, which contributes to the enthusiasm of the pupils for the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

141. The standards achieved in art and design throughout the school are above expectations and examples of work seen demonstrate that pupils develop their skills and make steady progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Some of the finished work seen in books and the abundance of displays was of a very high quality. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use colour and materials confidently. They have observed the nature and shape of artefacts and everyday objects in close detail and drawn them very accurately. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 demonstrate a good development of skills with some impressive examples of observational drawing with very close attention to details of shape, colour, light and shade using pencil and pastels. They have learned about colour mixing and have applied their knowledge to create paintings of good quality. They have created and printed pictures on the computer using appropriate painting programs. Sketchbooks are used, sometimes very effectively, but the quality of work in them varies from class to class. Work with clay is a strength and a display of clay artefacts from all classes illustrated the progression of their skills. Art techniques are used throughout the school to support work in other subjects.
142. In the small sample of lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good and this, together with evidence from teachers' planning and scrutiny of work displayed in classrooms and about the school, indicate that the overall quality of teaching is good. In the lessons observed, the teachers had a good understanding of the activity, challenged the pupils to reflect upon their work and encouraged them to discuss it with others in their class. The pupils were keen to succeed and all of them, including the higher-attaining pupils and those with special needs, were able to do so because the work was carefully chosen and they received good support. The pupils with visual impairment were able to make good progress because of the thoughtful and imaginative adaptations planned for them. The pupils' response to the tasks and their ability to co-operate with one another were very impressive.
143. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator has good subject expertise and is able to support colleagues with advice and resources. Planning for art across the school is logical and well structured. The range of activities is ambitious. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has not been able to monitor the quality of teaching in lessons, but has monitored the half-termly planning and finished artwork through displays. Resources are very good for drawing, painting, printing and three-dimensional work. Opportunities are taken to draw

inspiration and technical skills from art of other cultures. A notable feature of the corridors and shared spaces is the way in which framed examples of the work of established artists are interspersed with framed examples of the pupils' own art work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

144. Standards in design and technology are above the national expectation throughout the school, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils have very positive attitudes to design and technology. They speak enthusiastically about activities and can describe how they have designed and made things. In the Year 1 and 2 classes, pupils are able to generate simple ideas and use a range of techniques in the correct way. For example, pupils in Year 2 were challenged to produce a device to raise or lower a spider in a well, exploring their ideas and saying what they would need in order to make them. Pupils can use tools such as scissors and staplers safely and can choose suitable materials like paper, card, straws or fabric from which to make items. They know how to join things in a variety of ways such as gluing, taping, stapling or tying.
145. By the age of 11, pupils can explain the elements of the design process confidently. They understand the importance of planning and can explain that ideas need to be sketched out and refined first. They can use words such as 'improve' or 'modify' correctly when speaking about designing. They can evaluate the performance of the things they have made, for example, in Year 3 when considering the relative merits of four differently flavoured breads that they had made and making suggestions for improvement. Year 5 pupils had researched, designed and constructed mechanical toys using spindles and cams. No work had been done by the current Year 6, though last year they had researched, designed and made either slippers or cuddly toys for an identified person. This necessitated researching both the fitness of the object for its purpose and meeting the need of the intended recipient.
146. During the inspection only two design and technology lessons were observed. The quality of teaching and learning in these lessons was satisfactory in one and very good in the other. In both lessons, pupils were very focused on the activity, able to try out ideas and consider why some were less successful than others. Evidence from these lessons, the scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work, discussion with pupils and teachers, the plentiful evidence of finished projects and products and photographic records of activity confirm that the quality of teaching and learning in design and technology is good across the school.
147. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator who has a good understanding of the requirements of the curriculum for design and technology. Classrooms have sufficient power points and working surfaces with access to larger workspaces if the activity requires this. Equipment and consumable resources to support the subject are good and, where it is necessary, the issues of health and safety are carefully addressed.

GEOGRAPHY

148. During the inspection it was not possible to see any geography lessons being taught. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of teachers' planning and of pupils' work, a review of books and resources and discussion with teachers and with the subject co-ordinator for geography.
149. At the time of the last inspection standards and progress were below the national expectation for pupils aged seven and in line with the national expectation for pupils aged 11. Resources were judged as poor. There has been some improvement since the last inspection but this has been insufficient overall.

150. The standards currently achieved by pupils aged seven are comparable with the national expectation. Pupils can understand and make simple maps and know how to recognise and use symbols correctly. They develop an increasing awareness of their own geographical location, can give the address of their home and school and say where this is located in England. They can follow routes on maps, such as the way from the local church to their school. They can describe the characteristic features of their area, such as the different types of homes people live in. Pupils can explain that life is different in other places around the world and can make sensible observations about how life there is different. For example, they can explain what an island is, name and find several islands around the world using maps, and can describe differences between them in simple terms, saying that some islands have a warmer climate than others.
151. The standards achieved by pupils aged 11 are below the national expectation in the part of the geography curriculum that deals with the development of geographical skills. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to use good quality primary and secondary sources of evidence to carry out their own investigations and communicate their findings using appropriate vocabulary. Pupils do have a reasonable level of geographical knowledge. They know where places are and have some understanding of the lifestyle of the people who live in these places. For example as a result of topic work linked to history, they can say what life in Egypt and Greece was like in ancient time and how it has changed in the present day. They can compare life in a distant location such as Kenya to their own circumstances. Pupils have reasonable knowledge of physical processes such as those associated with rivers and coastlines.

152. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in the infant part of the school. It is unsatisfactory in the junior part of the school because of the lack of planned opportunities for pupils to develop independent study skills in geography. The use of assessment in geography is largely informal and is not well developed.
153. Geographical resources are poor. Pupils do not have access to a good range of high quality sets of maps, atlases, aerial photographs, compasses, weather measuring and recording instruments or computer software that can help them carry out geographical investigations in depth. The school has recognised this lack and a budget for resources has been allocated through the School Development Plan. Older pupils benefit from the opportunity to extend their geographical studies by taking part in a residential journey to a different location in England when they are in Year 6. At the time of the inspection, there were some very attractive displays of work related to geography in evidence around the school.
154. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject of geography and enjoy learning about other places. They speak with enthusiasm about the studies they have undertaken and work in books is neatly presented.
155. Leadership of the subject is developing satisfactorily. Until recently, there has been no policy for the teaching of geography and no detailed scheme of work. There is now a new subject co-ordinator for geography who has made a good start in tackling what needs to be done. A policy has been drafted. A curriculum plan has been written, outlining the coverage plan for National Curriculum geography over the six years the children are at the school. A draft scheme of work is almost completed and a review of resources has been undertaken. The monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject has not yet been developed.

HISTORY

156. Attainment is satisfactory overall in all year groups. Standards in lessons are in line with what might reasonably be expected. Pupils in Year 1 discover ways to record the past by sequencing events in time. They construct their own timeline of the 'school day' giving an account of each activity and illustrating this with lively colourful drawings. These establish the first steps towards historical enquiry through sifting and sorting information to record events in the past. In Year 2, pupils make good progress using their literacy skills to research, review and record information as they look at the lives of other people in other times comparing and contrasting these with the present day. Pupils make steady progress in Years 3 and 4. Year 3 made some exciting discoveries about the Ancient Egyptians as they learned about archaeologists discovering the tomb of Tutankhamun. Pupils looked at a range of secondary source material making good use of the Internet, reference books and a small replica of a mummy concealed in a tomb. All this prepared pupils well for their forthcoming visit to the British Museum where they will be able to handle some primary source material. Teaching assistants prepared some artefacts for the visually impaired pupils including them in enjoyable experiences similar to the other pupils in the class. Pupils in Year 4 compared Roman and Celtic lifestyles. They learned that because the Romans planned more efficiently, built roads and bridges and were better armed, they were able to conquer the Celts and other peoples quite easily. Pupils in Year 5 study more recent history comparing and contrasting living conditions in Victorian Britain with life in Britain today. Pupils in Year 6 focus on the most recent past, studying conditions in Britain since the end of the Second World War. As a result, pupils develop an understanding of how past events shape the society of Britain today. Pupils' progress is satisfactory in Year 6.
157. Teaching is good overall because pupils learn well developing the skills of historical enquiry by discovering ways of researching and recording information. Pupils' work is celebrated in the

colourful wall displays in every classroom and around the school. Pupils enjoy their history lessons because teachers plan activities carefully to make learning enjoyable as well as informative. This is good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in Years 1 and 2.

158. The curriculum is broad and balanced, providing good opportunities for pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural development as they reflect upon the actions of great leaders of the past and the impact that key events made on the everyday lives of ordinary people.
159. The subject is well led by a skilled co-ordinator who also co-ordinates English so cross-curricular skills are well developed. For example, texts studied in literacy in Year 5 provide information about poverty and overcrowding in the cities of Britain and pupils gain insights into the work of social philanthropists such as Lord Shaftsbury by researching his work to relieve the suffering of the poor in the early 19th century. Pupils in Year 6 focus on story texts about the problems faced by children in the Second World War, using speaking and listening skills to interview two of the characters from 'The Silver Sword'. As a result of this linking between literacy and history studies, pupils' learning is enriched because they have a broader understanding of other people and other times.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

160. At the last inspection, standards in information and communication technology were below the national expectation for pupils aged 11 and there was insufficient evidence available to make a judgement about standards achieved by pupils aged seven. Resources were described as inadequate and the inspectors said that little use was made of information and communication technology. It was reported that arrangements for access by visually impaired pupils to information and communication technology were unclear.
161. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Standards have risen and the number of computers available for pupils to use in classrooms now matches that found nationally. The installation of an information and communication technology suite is imminent. Better use is made of computers and visually impaired pupils have impressive access to information and communication technology.
162. By the time they reach the age of seven, pupils in the infants have made satisfactory progress and the majority reach the National Curriculum Level 2, the expected level. Pupils know the vocabulary associated with computers such as mouse, keyboard, cursor, icon and laptop. They know how to access computers and can save, retrieve and print work they have created. They can write and improve simple texts, changing the style, size and font. They understand that computers are used beyond school for a variety of purposes in daily life and can give examples such as the keeping of pupil records in the school office. They can use equipment like a cassette player and earphones and are familiar with equipment such as a radio and CD player that are used in the classroom.
163. Standards reached by pupils at the age of 11 are broadly in line with the national expectation and pupils meet most of the requirements of the National Curriculum Level 4, the expected level. However there is a mixed picture. Pupils do best in the part of the curriculum that deals with word processing, creating and accessing files and information. Their ability to create graphs and charts, to desktop publish and to use graphic design or art programs is as expected for their age.
164. Pupils do less well in the part of the information and communication technology National Curriculum that deals with control technology. Although there are opportunities in the school for

pupils to operate programmable floor robots such as a 'Roamer' they do not have experience of operating other remote equipment. Pupils do not have individual access to e-mail at school and routine use of the Internet to support investigative work in other subjects is underdeveloped. Most pupils have a wide range of experience of technology in their daily lives and they speak with confidence of the use of televisions, video recorders, mobile telephones including text messaging, the use of digital cameras, DVDs and games of many kinds.

165. During the inspection it was only possible to see a limited amount of information and communication technology teaching. Teachers' planning and pupils' work were scrutinised and discussions were held with pupils about their work in information and communication technology. The quality of teaching was good in the three lessons observed and is good across the school. Teachers' lesson plans are good and reflect the intentions of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. Teachers explain the learning purpose of activities to pupils succinctly and manage access to computers by pupils well.
166. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology in some other subjects. For example during the inspection, pupils were observed using appropriate software in English and mathematics. One group were word processing text to produce attractive labels for a presentation. Year 1 pupils were being taught using a smart board to illustrate the movement of a clock in a lesson about telling the time. Another group were plotting the perimeters of quadrilaterals and the oldest pupils were using a program that developed their understanding of multiplication and division using decimals. Taken together, these and other activities provide pupils with good opportunities to learn how to use information and communication technology effectively as a tool to support their learning. In some subjects such as geography, there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop independent information and communication technology research skills.
167. Teachers have worked very hard to increase their own levels of information and communication technology competence, undertaking personal study and attending training courses. They help each other to learn and make good use of resources available for teachers on educational websites. This has resulted in teachers having greater confidence to incorporate information and communication technology activities into lessons and routines. Further training is planned in order to make all teachers familiar with the use of the information and communication technology suite.
168. The quality of learning is good across the school. Pupils keep a record of their work in information and communication technology books and are helped to understand what they have achieved by sticking strips of words into their books that summarise the learning point; for example ' I can print in many colours'. Pupils acquire information and communication technology skills and knowledge at a good pace and are keen to know more. The quality of learning and the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and by gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory.
169. Pupils have positive attitudes to the use of information and communication technology and are well behaved and careful when using computers. They share sensibly and help each other when required. They are aware of their own progress and are proud of what they have achieved. The school has made the necessary arrangements to ensure pupils are protected from inappropriate e-mail or Internet material.
170. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The development plan for improving information and communication technology in the school matches the schools' priorities and

there is a shared commitment to succeed. The subject co-ordinator monitors the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms effectively. Improvement points and ideas are fed back to teachers. The co-ordinator is developing a clear picture of the standards achieved by pupils by the age of seven and 11 and of the proportions of children on track to achieve or exceed these.

171. At the time of the inspection, there was no technician support for the increasing number of computers, smart boards, printers and other hardware in the school. This results in frequent calls upon the time of the information and communication technology co-ordinator to help other teachers when equipment fails, a practice that may increase when an information and communication technology suite has been installed. This detracts from the primary teaching purpose of the co-ordinator whose main responsibilities lie elsewhere. The governors and managers of the school might consider making appropriate arrangements for information and communication technology technical support.

MUSIC

172. Attainment in music is good, which is an improvement since the last inspection, when it was unsatisfactory. In all year groups pupils share their joy in singing together which enriches their cultural experience and inspires their learning. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 because they understand the importance of listening carefully so that they can join in at the appropriate time. Pupils in Years 5 can identify the differences in discordant and concordant sounds using pitched percussion instruments to make the contrasting notes. In Year 6 pupils can identify changes from major to minor keys and put this knowledge to use in part singing. They use simple musical terms correctly as they discover how to combine the elements of music such as pitch and duration across different forms. There are good cross-curricular links with literacy because the song chosen tells of David Copperfield's experiences with his dangerous friend, Steerforth.
173. Teaching is good. All groups of pupils learn well because teachers provide good opportunities for them to sing a variety of different songs from exciting 'raps' to traditional folk songs. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn how to use their voices expressively and suggest actions to match the words of the song. Teachers use the pupils' interest and involvement to extend their learning. As a result when 'Puff the Magic Dragon frolics in the autumn mist' one boy in Year 2 explained that 'he' (Puff) was playing in the 'misty morning'. Pupils in Year 5 enjoy making their own accompaniment to the part-singing of Frère Jacques. They develop a good sense of phrasing as each group holds their phrase when the next group joins in. Pupils in Year 6 develop their skills by repeating, improving and practising to achieve a good effect for performance to an audience. Pupils with special needs and those with visual impairment make good progress because their learning is enhanced as they share in the creativity of the music making. The main focus of the learning is on singing but there is a good stock of instruments in the designated music room, which provides a very good learning environment for creative music making by pupils from all age groups.
174. The subject is effectively led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who conducts the school choir and manages the provision for learning well, sharing her skills with non-specialist teachers and organising the use of published schemes for music making in schools. Resources for music are very good, which is a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when they were described as "barely adequate". As a result, all groups of pupils are actively involved in music making.

175. The successful outcomes of the music provision were seen and heard in the musical assembly on the last day of the inspection. This celebration of singing and music making captured the spirit of the school as it is reflected in the mission statement. It was an excellent example of the spirituality that pervades the school and inspires the teaching and learning in all subjects.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

176. Pupils throughout the school achieve standards that are above expectation for their ages. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. From an early age pupils are taught to work safely and co-operatively. This means that they are able to use small apparatus showing good levels of confidence. They are aware of space and use it well in lessons. In Years 1 and 2, pupils know the importance of warming up and cooling down after exercise. They take part in the activities enthusiastically and make good progress. They are good at performing basic skills and actions in gymnastics. They can balance, take off and land, turn and roll. They are able to perform short sequences to link these actions, move in different directions and vary the speed. They observe the way that their partners and other members of the class perform and can suggest ways in which improvements might be made. This helps them to improve their own performance.
177. In Years 3 to 6, good progress continues and their sequences in gymnastics are more fluent, using the floor and apparatus. In a games lesson they were able to develop the skills of ball control. They are able to work well with others and understand the need to use team members through passing a ball and moving to gain an advantage. They are enthusiastic and able to sustain a satisfactory work rate throughout lessons. There is no evidence of the domination of boys, which was reported in the last inspection.
178. Teaching is good with very good and excellent teaching observed in Years 3 to 6. The main strength of the teaching is a good knowledge and understanding of the subject that enables the teachers to plan effective lessons, coupled with a genuine enthusiasm to take part and extend the skills of their pupils. They have high expectations of behaviour and performance, manage pupils very well and match activities to the pupils' needs. Teachers explain clearly what they want pupils to do, help them to reflect on what they have learned and discuss what they can do to improve their performance. Teachers use time particularly well and have a particularly good awareness of safety issues. The younger pupils change quickly in their classrooms while the older pupils are able to use the changing rooms. They move to and from the hall in an orderly fashion, and are quickly ready to work.
179. Pupils learn well and make good progress because of the consistently good teaching. Their attitude to all aspects of the subject is good. They work hard in lessons and try hard to improve their skills and level of performance. Their behaviour is good. Boys and girls perform equally well and this subject makes a very strong contribution to the school's aim for inclusion and equal opportunity for all. A particular strength is that pupils of all abilities participate and those with special needs are very effectively supported by their teaching assistants. They make good progress and derive a real sense of pleasure and achievement. There is a very wide range of extra curricular activities for pupils that includes athletics, football, hockey and netball. Teams take part in competitions with other local schools.
180. The range of opportunities in physical education is good. The school provides the full range of activities required for the National Curriculum and provides swimming on site as part of the programme. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of physical education and leads the subject

well. The range and quality of resources and facilities for gymnastics, dance, swimming and games are very good.