

INSPECTION REPORT

THOMAS A BECKET MIDDLE SCHOOL

Worthing

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 125955

Headteacher: Mr C Bugden

Reporting inspector: Mr D Manuel
21090

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 5th June 2003

Inspection number: 248726

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed primary

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 8 to 12 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Glebeside Avenue
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West Sussex

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A R Cohen

Date of previous inspection: January 1998

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21090	Mr D Manuel	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Music Religious education Educational inclusion, including race equality	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9942	Ms S Stevens	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
24019	Mr K Parry	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education	
21171	Ms S Handford	Team inspector	English Special educational needs English as an additional language	
13307	Mr I Hancock	Team inspector	Design and technology Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
10827	Mr M Marjoram	Team inspector	Science Modern foreign languages	
32941	Ms D Harber	Team inspector	Art and design History	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Thomas A Becket School is a middle school, deemed primary, for children aged between eight and twelve years. The school is situated in Worthing in West Sussex and mainly serves the surrounding area. The area is a mixture of middle income private housing and rented accommodation. The school has 800 pupils on roll, well above average size. These are organised into 25 classes, with six classes in each of Years 4, 5 and 6 and seven in Year 7. The school is currently over-subscribed with a waiting list for all year groups. There are 99 pupils identified with special educational needs under the Code of Practice (12 per cent, below average), with nine pupils having statements of special educational need (above average). Twenty-two pupils are identified as being eligible for free school meals, three per cent, well below the national average. There are 42 pupils from minority ethnic groups; 14 pupils speak English as an additional language, but none at an early stage of acquisition. The main languages spoken are Bengali, Chinese, Urdu and Spanish. Attainment on entry indicates that children are broadly average, coming from two main feeder first schools. However, there have been very significant variations since 1999. In the past three years, standards in mathematics and writing have been below average on entry. The school is involved in a number of national and local initiatives including gaining Beacon School status, Investor in People status, and Activemark Gold award in sport.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Thomas A Becket is a very good school which provides a stimulating learning environment for all its pupils. The school is led and managed very well and all staff work very effectively as a team showing strong commitment to provide the best learning opportunities for pupils. Excellent provision is made for the all round development of pupils enabling them to achieve their full potential in many areas. Standards are above or well above average in ten subjects by the end of Year 6 and in nine subjects by Year 7 when pupils leave the school. Governors and parents acknowledge the considerable strengths in the school and pupils themselves speak highly of their enjoyment of learning and the caring staff. Taking all factors into account, the school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above or well above average in ten subjects by the end of Year 6 and in nine subjects by the end of Year 7.
- The quality of teaching is very good overall.
- The school is very well led and managed.
- The quality and the range of the curriculum are very good and contribute significantly to the excellent personal development of pupils.
- There is a strong shared commitment by all staff to succeed and do the best for all pupils.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to their work and relationships throughout the school are excellent.
- The school has developed a very good partnership with parents and the parents' own views of the school are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English should be higher.
- Standards in mathematics should be higher.

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 January 1998. Since then good improvement has taken place in the weaknesses identified in the previous report. Curriculum planning has been improved by creating clear guidance for what should be taught in all subjects through medium-term plans. This guidance has

developed into a common approach by teachers when planning individual lessons. The monitoring and evaluation of planning has improved and has provided good support for developing the previous shortfalls in teachers' subject expertise, particularly in design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT). Statutory requirements are now met in ICT and significant improvements in resources, teachers' subject knowledge and pupils' achievement have raised standards from below average to above average. In addition to improvements related to the previous key issues, the school has improved in a good number of areas, particularly in leadership and management, the quality of the curriculum provided, provision for the personal development of pupils, the quality of teaching and the number of subjects which are now above expected levels.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The school's results in the National Curriculum tests in 2002 for eleven-year-olds in Year 6 were average in science but below average in English and mathematics. When compared to similar schools, results were well below average in English, mathematics and science. The school was well aware that standards would be lower than previous results due to the higher proportions of lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs. Trends over the past three years have exceeded the national average in English and science but are below average in mathematics.

Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 6, all pupils achieve well and attain above expected levels in science, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, physical education and religious education and well above expected levels in music. In English and mathematics standards are at expected levels, although standards in writing are below expected levels. By the end of Year 7 when pupils leave the school, the good achievement of pupils continues and standards are maintained at above and well above expected levels except in English, mathematics and science which are at expected levels.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are excellent. They participate in activities with great enthusiasm and interest.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in classes and around the school; pupils are polite and courteous.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is excellent. The relationships they have with each other and with their teachers are excellent and strengths of the school.

Attendance	The levels of attendance are good.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 4 – 6	Year 7
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good

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

The overall quality of teaching is very good and most teaching meets the needs of pupils well. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in all but one lesson with just over two-fifths of lessons being good and just over two-fifths of lessons being very good or excellent. Teachers value all pupils equally as individuals, whatever their needs, and use a wide range of strategies to enable them to achieve their full potential in a wide range of subjects. Excellent provision is made to promote children's personal development and excellent relationships are evident.

Particular strengths include very good management of pupils' behaviour and high expectations of what all pupils should achieve. These factors create a purposeful working atmosphere in lessons. The relationships between teachers and other adults in these lessons are excellent and have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning. Teachers plan very good links between subjects and provide stimulating activities which pupils enjoy very much. The teaching of basic literacy skills is good. Numeracy skills are taught well and number work is effectively promoted. In a small number of lessons that were satisfactory overall, relative weaknesses include providing insufficient opportunities to enable pupils to develop independent approaches to their learning and not always giving sufficient attention to ensuring that the full range of needs are met.

Teachers make excellent provision for the all round development of pupils, providing a very caring and inclusive environment which enables most pupils to achieve their full potential in many areas. Most pupils make very good progress in their learning due to the very good teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school successfully provides a very broad, relevant curriculum of good quality for its pupils. The range of coverage is good and there are strong links between many subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and enables them to make very good progress towards their set targets. This effective support takes place within lessons and in targeted withdrawal sessions.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for these pupils is very good. Most have good fluency in English and perform at the same levels as their classmates.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' all round personal development is excellent. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is excellent and provision for pupils' cultural development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The level of care provided for pupils is very high and a strength of the school. This enables all pupils to feel valued, to develop confidence and to be happy in their learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides a very clear and stimulating direction for the work of the school and is very well supported by the strong team commitment of all staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has a clear understanding of its strategic role and provides very effective support. The governors successfully fulfil their statutory responsibilities and help to foster very good links in the community.
The school's evaluation of its performance	All staff and governors have developed well-structured procedures to review the work of the school and have agreed relevant future priorities to improve performance.
The strategic use of resources	Overall resources are good and are used well to support pupils' learning. There are a good number of well-qualified teachers, supported by well-trained teaching assistants. The good quality accommodation supports all areas of the curriculum well.

The school applies the principles of best value very well, seeking to improve the whole-school performance. Taking into account the very high levels of personal development, and the above average standards attained by pupils, the school provides very good value for money.

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. • Their children make good progress. • Behaviour in school is good. • Teaching is good. • The school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps their children become more mature and responsible. • The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right amount of work to do at home.

Inspectors agree with all the areas that please parents most; many of these areas are very good or excellent. With regard to what parents would like to see improved, inspectors judge that in most subjects the regularity and relevance of the homework set is good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests in 2002 for eleven-year-olds in Year 6 were average in science but below the national average in English and mathematics. When compared to similar schools, results were well below average in English, mathematics and science. The school was well aware that standards would be lower than previous tests due to the higher than normal proportions of lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs. Targets for 2002 were related to the lower than average potential of the pupils and results were close to predictions. Targets for the current Year 6 are expected to be a little higher than last year. The school is committed to raising standards further and is well placed to do so. Trends over the past three years have exceeded the national average in English and science but are below average in mathematics.
2. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 6, all pupils achieve very well and attain above expected levels in science, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, physical education and religious education and well above expected levels in music. In English and mathematics standards are at expected levels.
3. In English, standards in speaking and listening are above expected levels, as in the previous inspection. Reading standards by the end of Year 6 are above expected levels, however, the standard of writing is below expected levels, which is a reduction in standards since the previous inspection. In English overall, the school has not kept pace with the rising national standards. In mathematics, standards are at expected levels in Year 6. At the time of the previous inspection they were above average. Although most groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are now achieving well, higher attaining pupils frequently do not make sufficient progress because not enough is expected of them. In science, most pupils make very good progress and their standards of attainment are above expected levels. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were in line with national expectations.
4. By the end of Year 7 when pupils leave the school, the very good achievement continues and the pupils who produced the below average results last year at the end of Year 6, now attain expected levels in English, mathematics and science. They also attain above expected levels in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, physical education, religious education and French and well above expected levels in music. These achievements represent very good progress which is due to the strong emphasis that the school has placed on developing a wide range of skills. In English and mathematics in particular, the school recognised the need to raise standards and in the past year a good deal of effort has been made to improve the provision for literacy and numeracy. Strategies are already beginning to have a positive influence on standards of pupils' work, reaching the levels expected for their ages. In science, standards are at expected levels, compared to the previous inspection when

Year 7 pupils were judged to be above expected levels. The drop in standards is due to the lower proportion of higher attaining pupils within this cohort of pupils.

5. All pupils achieve well and build systematically on their knowledge and understanding in all subjects. Pupils develop their ICT skills effectively to support literacy, numeracy and scientific skills and in most other subjects, particularly in design and technology, geography, history, and art and design.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and attain standards expected for their capabilities, many at expected levels for their ages. This success is due to the good support which focuses on developing literacy and numeracy skills in the well-managed groups in all subjects. As a result, pupils with special educational needs have developed the same excellent attitudes and enthusiasm for learning. The school has a small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups, who all speak English fluently and achieve at the same levels as their classmates. The very small proportion of pupils in public care achieve equally well.
7. Teachers value all pupils equally and carefully identify those who are disadvantaged or need additional support. However, higher attaining pupils still need to be further extended to enable them to reach their full potential in English and mathematics.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes to school, their work ethos and the relationships they have with each other, and with their teachers, are excellent and strengths of the school. There is a climate of high standards of values, self-discipline, expected behaviour and friendliness which embodies the quality of life in the school. Parents endorse the excellent attitudes promoted by the school and praise the culture which enables each pupil to build on his or her strengths and receive guidance for areas of weakness so that no-one feels left out. The pupils' attitudes have been maintained well since the previous report. Pupils show mature, sensible behaviour and are eager to participate in activities with enthusiasm and interest. These positive features create a happy and friendly community in which pupils feel valued and respected as individuals.
9. The school embraces all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups. In conversation with pupils, they express great pleasure in the team work between teachers and pupils which enables lessons to be creative and interesting and where everyone is happy to try something new and learn to improve from their mistakes. Pupils affirm that there is always someone to help and staff are careful to sit more confident pupils with less confident peers and give them thinking time. Everyone is prepared to go that extra mile in a very open and friendly atmosphere.
10. Behaviour is very good throughout the school, with pupils aware of the effect of their actions on others, helping each other during group sessions, sharing resources and ideas with good humour and showing mature tolerance of those who are slower learners. Pupils have a clear understanding of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour within the school community. They respect the school and class rules, showing very good levels of self-moderation in their respect for these systems. They value the incremental awards and try hard to achieve them. Pupils listen and concentrate very well in lessons and, in assemblies, their behaviour is exemplary. In a few lessons, where the pace is slow, or when teachers' strategies of class management are less effective, some pupils become restless and bored. Such instances are in a very small minority of lessons in a school where there is a very high

level of happy interaction and where boundaries for good behaviour are rarely exceeded. The parents who responded to the questionnaire and those interviewed during the inspection endorsed the very high standard of behaviour of the pupils and the influence the school's excellent social and moral provision has on their children. Pupils behave well because they have absorbed and accepted the school's ethos of fairness and care for others. There were no instances of fighting or bullying behaviour seen during the inspection. There were five fixed, short-period exclusions in the last academic year, which were carefully considered steps to support the school's high expectations of pupils' behaviour.

11. The pupils' personal development is excellent. The excellent relationships they have with each other and with their teachers create a happy and well-ordered atmosphere in the school in which pupils feel safe and gain in confidence. Pupils accept criticism in a constructive and mature manner and strive to improve knowing that teachers and fellow pupils take care to save embarrassment to anyone. Group and pair work is very effective with pupils organising their tasks to achieve the objective of the lesson. However, in a few lessons, pupils are not given the opportunity to explore ideas for themselves or are too reliant on the directive of the class teacher. Pupils carry out a range of responsibilities sensibly and very competently, such as staffing the reception area during the lunchtime break or choreographing and staging a new routine for the lower school assembly with visitors and parents in attendance.
12. Pupils take part in a very wide range of competitive sports and extra-curricular activities and are proud of their many successes. They show very good levels of mature sportsmanship when, in conversation, the pupils speak of always keeping their heads up even when the side is losing. The school council acts as a forum to consider ideas and suggestions put forward, which are taken up if they feel they are good enough. Their decisions are respected by fellow pupils, who know they can trust the council members to assist if they have a problem. Instances of bullying are very rare and are not tolerated by the school. Parents endorse the speed with which any such behaviour is tackled by the school. The levels of maturity seen in the majority of pupils is reflected in their self-esteem and confidence as they move about the school, holding doors open for others or exchanging a laugh and joke with members of staff.
13. The levels of attendance are good in the school with pupils eager to attend on time. There is minimal truancy but the relatively high level of unauthorised absence reflects the numbers of holidays in term time, which extend beyond the statutory agreed period of ten days in the school year. There are few latecomers, registration is quick and efficient and lessons start promptly in the morning and afternoon.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The overall quality of teaching is very good and meets the needs of most pupils very well. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in every lesson but one, with just over two-fifths of lessons being good and two-fifths of lessons being very good or excellent. Teachers value all pupils equally as individuals, whatever their needs, and use a wide range of strategies to enable them to achieve their full potential in a wide range of subjects.
15. The characteristics of the best teaching include very good management of pupils' behaviour and high expectations of what all pupils should achieve. These factors create a purposeful working atmosphere in lessons. The relationships between teachers and other adults in these lessons are very good, occasionally excellent and have a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to learning. Teachers question and prompt skilfully, ensuring

that pupils of all capabilities are fully involved in whole-class discussions by phrasing questions in different ways. These particular strategies were used very well in a Year 5 numeracy lesson, when pupils were asked to explain their methods of subtraction involving decimals. Other strengths include very good subject knowledge and the use of subject specific vocabulary to extend pupils' learning significantly. These strengths were demonstrated well in a Year 7 music lesson which required pupils to learn about different major chords and harmony. In most lessons, resources are used effectively to support the activities. This was evident, for example, in a Year 4 science lesson when pupils investigated mini-beasts. Teachers' subject knowledge is used very well in the joint planning of lessons and very good links are made between subjects. However, in a very small number of lessons which were satisfactory overall, relative weaknesses include insufficient opportunities to enable pupils to develop independent approaches to their learning. Another area for improvement is that teachers' planning does not always give sufficient attention to ensuring that the full range of needs are met.

16. The teaching of basic literacy skills is good. Teachers implement the National Literacy Strategy effectively by providing a good range of activities that develop pupils' communication skills and gain their interest. Teachers plan opportunities in subjects other than English, to develop pupils' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Many good initiatives have been introduced to support the development of reading skills and to give extra help to lower attaining readers. Additional support from teaching assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinators helps those pupils with weaker literacy skills. However, work is not sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of all pupils so that they can achieve greater success. Higher attaining pupils are not given enough opportunities to excel, particularly in writing.
17. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented satisfactorily. Much of the recent training and support has focused on the school's use of the National Numeracy Strategy and in particular the adoption of the unit plans to guide teachers' planning. However, there are still variations, for example, in teachers' interpretations of the mental mathematics starter session and the review phase of lessons and in teachers' awareness of what is to be expected of pupils in each year. One of the main issues now is to achieve greater consistency in the way that the strategy is implemented throughout the school by sharing the very good ideas seen in some lessons. In a few lessons, which are satisfactory overall, teachers do not allow enough thinking time when asking questions. These lessons are too closely directed by teachers and, therefore, do not give pupils the chance to develop their own strategies.
18. Pupils' learning is supported well in many areas by teachers' clear understanding of how skills in one subject can be consolidated by experiences in another subject, as in links between mathematics and ICT when pupils collected data on spreadsheets and produced graphs showing comparisons and preferences in a range of criteria. Pupils are positively encouraged to work independently and in pairs, sharing ideas. These opportunities help them increase their levels of social and moral development successfully.
19. Teachers make very effective use of the teaching assistants to provide additional instruction and guidance for pupils who need individual help. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in classes and also when given targeted teaching and extra support outside the classroom either on an individual basis or in small focused groups for subjects such as English and mathematics. Specialist teachers, outside agencies and well-trained teaching support staff work very closely with the special needs co-ordinators and class teachers to monitor pupils' learning. As a result,

the overall achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school.

20. Teachers' day-to-day assessment, marking and verbal feedback relate to learning objectives and are used effectively by most teachers to inform pupils of how well they have done and how they might improve. Excellent provision for the all round development of pupils supports the very strong inclusive approach of the school and helps to create the excellent relationships and attitudes throughout the school. Homework is set regularly and all pupils have regular practice in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and a range of other subjects and this successfully consolidates their learning in lessons.

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

21. The school successfully provides a very good and distinctively relevant curriculum for its pupils, which is broad and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum in addition to religious education and French in Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs have very good access to the curriculum. A large proportion of time has been allocated to the teaching of the non-core subjects, such as physical education, design and technology, ICT, music and religious education to successfully achieve the school's commitment to raising standards. Good use is made of teachers' expertise by changing classes to teach specialist subjects. However, insufficient time has been allocated to the teaching of literacy, which has a negative impact on writing standards. The programme for religious education fully meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
22. Since the previous inspection, when the subject did not meet statutory requirements, the provision for ICT has significantly improved. The school now has three well equipped computer suites and teachers are well trained and confident to teach the subject. These factors have had a very positive impact on developing pupils' skills and contribute well to the above average standards of attainment in the subject. High priority has been given to improving curriculum planning since the previous inspection. There is a very strong commitment to review coverage and practice of all curriculum subjects. Teachers plan their work effectively, related to pupils' experiences whenever possible. Good cross-curricular links are made to provide a rich and relevant curriculum for all pupils to succeed well.
23. Very high priority is given to the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, which is very good. The whole staff work hard to provide a very calm environment, involving regular routines to help improve pupils' self-esteem. Personal, social and health education are an integral part of the curriculum where the school takes very good pastoral care of its pupils and encourages them to work very well together in class and around the school. The school has recently produced a new comprehensive sex and relationship education policy with the help of the county adviser and in full consultation with parents. This policy gives detailed guidance on sex education, issues of drug misuse, relationships, decision making and problem-solving activities associated with all aspects of personal development. These are very effectively integrated into discussions during circle times, assemblies and numerous lessons including science and physical education.
24. The school's curriculum is greatly enriched by numerous visits to local places of interest to support topics studied, such as local excursions to Wittering, Tarring, Worthing, Brighton, Fishbourne and Pulborough Brooks and residential trips to

Swanage and Osmington. Visitors such as theatre groups, sports coaches, artists, musicians, dancers and a guest speaker talking about experiences in Kenya, are regularly invited to enrich curricular activities. The school provides an outstanding and extensive range of extra-curricular activities, which have been broadened since the previous inspection, and involves many staff and outside visitors. The performing arts continues to be a strength of the school, as in the previous inspection, where major productions are regularly held both in school and in the community involving the choir and orchestra. The school is justifiably proud of its achievements, which effectively support many parts of the curriculum, particularly music and drama.

25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Reading recovery sessions have been established and enable identified pupils to make good progress in their reading skills. Teaching assistants provide very good support through a range of effective strategies to develop pupils' confidence and broaden their vocabulary. These very good strategies help pupils achieve well in a wide range of subjects.
26. Good links have been established with the local community to support curricular links including the police, fire service, nurses and local residents to talk about world religions. The school has been successful in acquiring a minibus through sponsorship from local businesses to transport pupils on visits. The very strong partnership established with Worthing High School and other feeder schools makes a very positive contribution to many aspects of the curriculum. Good opportunities are provided for the headteacher and co-ordinators to discuss various subjects in order to agree coverage of different areas of the curriculum. Constructive relationships are being developed with local first schools to help pupils settle into school. Students from Chichester University are welcomed for teaching practice. The governors are well informed of provision, visit regularly and fully support numerous curricular activities.
27. The school makes excellent provision for the personal development of pupils, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, thereby emphasising its very strong inclusive approach. Pupils' spiritual development is excellent. It is promoted very effectively through religious education, in acts of collective worship and in the very caring approach within many lessons. Teachers value pupils' views and contributions highly and use very sensitive strategies to help them to reflect on their own feelings and behaviour. This was observed in an excellent Year 6 lesson when pupils worked together in pairs to play different roles, such as a sculptor and a sculpture. Pupils were encouraged to express a range of emotions and feelings which they did extremely well with high levels of self-control. Teachers provide a very good range of opportunities to encourage pupils to explore and develop what interests and stimulates them. This is consistently demonstrated in the stimulating opportunities provided for music, drama, art, technology and physical education. The school has developed an exemplary ethos in which pupils flourish and respect each other and their different talents. This ethos is also promoted very effectively through excellent assemblies which acknowledge the special achievements and efforts of particular pupils and also provide opportunities for pupils to share their creative talents with each other.
28. Provision for pupils' moral development is excellent and is reflected in the highest levels of conduct and consideration for others. A strong moral code is taught through a whole-school culture and all adults implement it consistently throughout the life of the school. This high quality approach forms the basis of the excellent relationships evident throughout the school. Teachers and teaching assistants provide excellent role models by dealing with pupils in a calm and sensitive manner and as a result, pupils respond in a similar way. The school's values are reflected in the school rules that are displayed clearly. Pupils are encouraged to respond to these rules and show very high levels of

respect for each other and all adults in the school. Each class is also encouraged to add its own ideas for promoting all forms of equality and care of property through an agreed set of class rules. Teachers encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions and respect the different cultures represented within the school. In preparation for pupils' transfer to secondary school, teachers provide very good opportunities in the curriculum to explore moral concepts such as vegetarianism and how to respond to peer pressure.

29. The excellent provision for pupils' social development is firmly rooted in the school's strong, inclusive approach. The school fosters these qualities through its statement of aims on which school life is based. This high level of provision is acknowledged strongly by parents and the pupils themselves. Pupils thrive in a community where everyone is valued. Pupils are encouraged to share and work co-operatively in social and racial harmony and this is clearly evident throughout the school. Pupils understand that there are people less fortunate than themselves and are encouraged to raise money for charities, such as the Diabetic Association. This caring attitude supports pupils' social development very well. In the playground, pupils are encouraged to share their activities together. In one session, a young pupil was seen to fall over and another older pupil went straight to her assistance and helped her into the school to receive first-aid. Well-organised educational visits, team competitions and participation in school productions and musical festivals provide excellent opportunities for pupils to extend their social interaction, while at the same time extending their learning in a range of subjects. Pupils in Years 5 and 7 also visit residential activity centres and participate in a range of activities. These experiences, complemented by a good range of visitors, help pupils to grow in confidence and to become more aware of the many opportunities available within the wider world.
30. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Pupils are provided with very good opportunities to learn about their own culture through visits in the locality, such as places of worship and the River Adur. Pupils investigate past and present uses of the river and wildlife of the area. They visit the museums at Fishbourne and Bignor to learn about their own cultural heritage and how it has developed. The school makes very good provision for learning about other cultures. Visitors include African dancers and speakers about the different and similar values experienced during the Year 4 enrichment week about India. Pupils are also encouraged to debate the positive and negative issues when learning about life in a Kenyan village. In art and design, pupils are introduced to the different styles of European and Asian artists. They create pictures in the style of Henri Rousseau and design and make jewellery. Pupils are also encouraged to appreciate and learn about other faiths, such as Hinduism, Judaism and Islam and their special festivals and traditions. The very good provision is woven into the planning for different subjects, such as geography, history and religious education, and helps pupils develop a very good awareness of the multicultural society in Britain. Provision also prepares them very well for playing an active role as citizens of the future.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The pastoral care for pupils is a strength of the school and enables all pupils to feel valued, to develop confidence and to be happy in their learning. Pupils enjoy an orderly, warm environment where courtesy, respect and good humour are encouraged. Teachers and all staff are very sensitive to the needs of those in their charge; they know the pupils well and work hard to care for and guide them. Pupils develop in self-

esteem and are respected as individuals by their teachers. The excellent relationships between class teachers, teachers' assistants and pupils are an important element in the quality of care and personal guidance provided. The findings of the previous report have been maintained and strengthened. There is very good liaison between the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers, pupils with special educational needs and parents to review progress and set achievable targets. Parents confirm the high quality of the personal support and guidance for pupils and the reassuring team spirit in the school which encourages pupils and affects their happiness and desire to be in school. Pupils develop very good work and behaviour ethics.

32. There are very clear health and safety strategies and procedures which are consistently good. Regular, formal risk assessments are carried out and first-aid provision, with well-trained staff, is very good. Evacuation and emergency drills are monitored and logged half-termly with all emergency exits well marked and free from clutter. The designated member of staff for child protection is trained and knowledgeable, follows the area guidelines and receives very good local agency support as required. The school has a very good anti-racist policy which is consistently supported by all adults. There are very clear and agreed procedures for supervising pupils' access to the Internet.
33. Breaks and lunchtimes are supervised well by staff who are well-trained in behaviour management techniques. The excellent procedures and guidelines for promoting and monitoring very good behaviour are followed by all staff who set high standards of mature, sensible behaviour. Support for pupils with special educational needs is sensitive and focused, enabling these pupils to be fully included in all aspects of the daily life in the school. Individual education plans are detailed and contain appropriate targets which are regularly reviewed. Simplified versions of the plans are provided for pupils to share with adults at home.
34. Teachers and their assistants place much verbal emphasis on praise for respectful and considerate behaviour both in lessons and at play. The school council monitors pupils' behaviour and class representatives consider any concerns which have been brought to them from other pupils at their weekly meetings. The pupils are set very good role models by their teachers and other staff who are consistent in their expectations and praise for thoughtful behaviour. Lessons in personal, social and health education encourage pupils to talk through their problems, celebrate personal achievement or present a programme for the 'Thought for the Week' sessions, such as how to respond to peer pressure and their experiences of being a vegetarian. Pupils are confident that bullying and other forms of poor behaviour will not be tolerated and trust staff to let them sort things out between themselves, whenever possible, shaking hands at the conclusion. Adult intervention is known to be available at all times should pupil mediation prove unsuccessful.
35. Attendance is monitored well, with unexplained absence followed up by a telephone call to home within half an hour of the close of registers. Most parents comply with the request to contact the school to inform them of the reason for absence. Telephone calls are logged, registers marked and tallied daily and latecomers sign in at reception on arrival. Registration procedures are efficient, prompt and held twice daily, complying with statutory requirements. The school works closely with the local education welfare officer. Holiday leave in term time is actively discouraged, although the school is sympathetic to the financial constraints of many families who would otherwise not be able to take family leave.

36. Overall, the procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievement are very good. The arrangements for English, mathematics and science are well established. In addition, teachers now undertake regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress in all other subjects with the exception of art and design, which has no subject co-ordinator at present. These assessments are completed with varying degrees of consistency and frequency throughout the school. Results of the national tests and tests set by the school are analysed effectively to measure the school's performance. Care is taken to examine how all groups of pupils are getting on. The progress of boys and girls, minority ethnic pupils, pupils in public care and those with special educational needs is very effectively monitored. Procedures for pupils with special educational needs are very good because teachers use assessment data effectively when preparing or reviewing the individual education plans for these pupils.
37. The school makes effective use of the information it gathers through the assessment process and uses it carefully to identify areas of the curriculum where improvement is needed. For example, as a result of its data analysis relating to reading and mathematics, the school formed teaching groups for English within classes and set ability groups in mathematics in Years 5, 6 and 7. A further good example of the school's analysis of performance and the effective use of data relates to Year 5. Using the results of pupils' performance in tests, lower achievers in mathematics were identified and then given a welcome boost through more sharply focused teaching. However, a weakness in the mathematics groupings is that teachers do not always take sufficient account of the broad range of capability. Consequently, the levels of work planned are not accurately matched to need. As a result, some pupils do not make sufficient progress in their learning.
38. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are very good. The school has developed effective systems for target setting and tracking the progress of classes and individuals across most subjects. For example, each class has targets in reading, writing, spelling and mathematics that are based on the previous year's standards. The progress that pupils make towards achieving these targets is kept under continuous review. In mathematics, teachers are motivated further to ensure that pupils achieve well. This is because there are links between the performance management targets that the school has set for them and the results that their pupils obtain in the subject. There are good examples of target setting and pupil tracking in other subjects. Pupils' own evaluations and self-assessments frequently accompany these. Generally these analyses are of high quality and contribute well towards pupils' developing a secure knowledge of their levels of work and to a better understanding of how they can improve. A good feature of the assessment of scientific investigation is that levels are described in child-friendly language that is more easily understood by pupils.
39. The school maintains a comprehensive range of portfolios of work that show attainment at each level in subjects, thus reflecting national standards. The various samples of work show the context and background of the work and are annotated accurately. The portfolios are a good feature of assessment because they represent a clear demonstration of the standards that are achieved in the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. Parents have very positive views about the school, which has the confidence of the community it serves including several families of minority ethnic groups. Parents acknowledge that all staff have high expectations of the pupils, and share in their success, both sporting and academic. Parents praise the commitment and

accessibility of the staff and their team spirit, which is highly valued by both parents and pupils in the school.

41. The excellent quality of the information provided for parents keeps them very well informed about the school. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are detailed and very informative about all areas of school life and regular school and class newsletters supplement day-to-day information as required. Information about the curriculum is very good and includes meetings and termly details of work to be covered. The high quality of the pupils' annual reports gives clear information about work covered, setting targets and giving praise or highlighting areas for greater endeavour which are pertinent to each individual pupil. The homework diaries are a useful addition to the exchange of information between home and school on a daily basis. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the decision-making process and review meetings concerning their children. The school has worked hard at maintaining all aspects of parental confidence and partnership. Parents are consulted and encouraged to participate in discussions about provision, progress and future intentions for their children's education. Parents are well informed about their children's special educational needs and are aware of their children's assessments at reviews so that targets can be set as appropriate. As a result, a very positive partnership is established with any new pupil and family and strengthened for those already in the school. The requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act are fully met.
42. The school is fully committed to parental involvement in their children's learning and in the life of the school. The staff believe in the two-way dialogue of effective communication with parents and carers. All adults work hard to maintain a very good partnership which the school values as having a positive influence on the pupils' learning. Parents have opportunities for an informal chat at the beginning and end of the day, and formal meetings twice a year to discuss any problems or view the progress their child is making. Parents feel comfortable approaching the school with any concerns and value the ease of access to staff and the headteacher. There are a small number of parents who help regularly in school and they feel that they are well-briefed, always greeted with smiles and their work is appreciated. They agree that there is a very happy well-organised parent/school partnership. Parents and grandparents attend class assemblies, often with younger siblings accompanying them and speak about children wanting to attend school even when they are not very well.
43. Parents' contributions to their children's learning, at school and at home are very good. The majority support their children with any homework set and the school is currently working to a new format to ensure that the homework policy is consistently maintained across the school. Parents are consulted regularly through the use of questionnaires and are involved appropriately in the school's decision making. They praise the excellent documentation given to them covering the residential trips, for example, 'It was run like a military campaign', with everyone knowing exactly what to do. This has a very positive effect on the quality of the children's behaviour and their enjoyment of the visits. Families from the local ethnic community are fully embraced in all aspects of this fully inclusive family school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides a very clear and stimulating direction for the work of the school and is very well supported by all staff and governors. Following the previous inspection, the school was awarded the status of a Beacon school. The continuing very good provision has

created high levels of staff morale, team spirit, collaborative planning and a very strong team commitment from teaching staff and teaching assistants to continuous improvement. The headteacher has brought the best out of all staff to create a very stimulating learning environment and a very inclusive approach that is naturally incorporated within the daily life of the school.

45. Very good levels of delegation have been agreed and involve two deputy headteachers, year group leaders and subject co-ordinators. The senior management team is regularly involved in evaluating the school's performance and taking relevant action. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators observe all teachers and monitor standards of teaching and learning. Good and very good practice is shared for the benefit of all.
46. The management of the school's arrangements for pupils who have special educational and other needs is very good. The two co-ordinators are experienced and knowledgeable. Very good and relevant training is provided for teaching assistants. Record keeping is very good and provides a complete picture of the needs of the different pupils, how these needs should be met and what is achieved. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs has a very clear understanding of the Code of Practice and of the organisation of special needs support in the school.
47. The governing body has a clear understanding of its strategic role and provides very effective support. The school improvement plan for 2002/5 identifies a range of short-medium- and long-term priorities and targets very clearly, focusing on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Individual governors play a very active part in the life of the school. The governors successfully fulfil their statutory responsibilities and help to foster very good links in the community. The school's stated aims and values are very relevant and very effectively communicated to staff and parents, reflecting the very positive team commitment among staff, governors and parents. All staff and governors have a good understanding of well-structured procedures to review the work of the school and have agreed relevant future priorities to improve performance.
48. The school has a good number of qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of all pupils and cover the full requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. The monitoring of teaching and learning is closely linked to the school's own appraisal procedures, which meet statutory requirements for performance management. Staff have a very good range of individual strengths in subject knowledge and these are very effectively shared to contribute to whole-school development in the curriculum and teaching. Induction procedures are very good and new members of staff, including newly qualified teachers, feel very well supported when they join the school, enabling them to settle quickly and successfully into their new roles.
49. Teachers and pupils are very well supported by a good number of suitably trained and very effective teaching assistants. They make very good contributions to the work of the school and in particular to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups. Following the previous report which identified weaknesses in the provision for ICT, all staff have received computer training and this contributes to the very good improvements which have taken place in the teaching and learning of ICT. Support staff and lunchtime staff supervise activities well at playtimes and this adds to pupils' enjoyment as well as encouraging their social interaction. The very efficient administrative staff, meals supervisors, premises manager and cleaners are valued team members and contribute significantly to the smooth running of the school.

50. There is a generous amount of accommodation available to the school and it is very well maintained both inside and outside. Work areas, such as the three computer suites, library, food technology and design and technology rooms are very well laid out. Selected classrooms, one in each year group, also have interactive whiteboards which are used to very good effect. The hall and gymnasium make very positive contributions to the standards attained by pupils in physical education and indoor sports. The computer-operated lighting and stage in the hall enable the orchestra and dramatic productions to be accommodated well. There are large playing fields and hard playground areas, one of which is of barely adequate size, but is furnished with seating. A large grassed area, plentifully planted with trees and shrubs, has seating for parents' use while waiting for their children and as a quiet shade area for pupils on a hot day. The extensive playing field, with all-weather practice nets and a wicket makes a positive contribution to the considerable success the pupils achieve in a variety of competitive sports. The attractive environmental area, with well-stocked pond, is used extensively for field studies and as a source of many varieties of mini-beasts. There are many attractive trees, shrubs and planted areas around the school and grounds.
51. Overall resources for subjects are very good, with those for physical education being excellent. In mathematics and religious education, resources are sufficient for the teaching of these aspects of the curriculum. The range and quality of the books in the library are good and they are displayed well allowing ease of access to pupils. The design and technology room and the computer suites are bright, very well set out and spacious, as is the food technology room, with very good quality equipment available to the pupils in all these areas.
52. The overall efficiency of the school is very good. The headteacher and governors have developed well-structured procedures that effectively support the school's educational priorities. This is a process that now involves all members of staff in an annual review of the work of the school in order to identify and agree future priorities. Very good use is made of new technology in all aspects of school life to improve efficiency levels and to support the curriculum. Specific funding, such as that for special educational needs, minority ethnic pupils and the national funding for ICT, has been used very efficiently and resources acquired are used very effectively to support teaching and learning.
53. The school applies the principles of best value for money very well and regularly consults and involves all those concerned in decision-making about spending, including staff, parents and pupils. Full consideration is given to alternative providers for services and resources in order to acquire cost effectiveness and, as a result, money is spent efficiently. The school's day-to-day financial controls and procedures are excellent, enabling the headteacher and governors to closely monitor and evaluate spending decisions, such as the provision of extra teaching support to help raise standards. The most recent financial audit took place a year ago and acknowledged the very well-managed financial controls.
54. Taking into account the good achievement by pupils, the very good teaching and learning which take place, the stimulating quality of education provided and the average unit costs, the school provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to improve further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Raise standards in English by:

- (a) improving planning provision to meet the needs of pupils of different capabilities so that they can all achieve greater success; (paragraphs 15, 16, 59 and 60)
 - (b) giving particular emphasis to challenging higher attaining pupils, particularly in writing; (paragraphs 3, 7 and 60)
 - (c) considering the provision of more time in the timetable for pupils to edit and re-draft their work so as to improve it. (paragraph 59)
- (2) Raise standards in mathematics by:
- (a) providing greater consistency in teachers' interpretations of the mental mathematics starter session and the review phase of lessons by sharing good practice; (paragraphs 17 and 63)
 - (b) increasing teachers' awareness of what is to be expected of pupils in each year and improving planning of a sufficiently wide range of tasks to match the range of capability found within the sets; (paragraphs 7, 15, 62 and 64)
 - (c) giving pupils the chance to develop their own strategies and to learn by building constructively on their mistakes. (paragraphs 15, 17 and 66)

It is acknowledged that these priorities are already in the school development plan and some progress has already been made.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	100
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	8	33	41	17	1	0	0
Percentage	8	33	41	17	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	800
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	99

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	14

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

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	6.1
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National comparative data	0.3
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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 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	106	117	223

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	72	73	98
	Girls	86	71	109
	Total	158	144	207
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (82)	65 (69)	93 (92)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	72	74	95
	Girls	84	71	105
	Total	156	145	200
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (65)	65 (60)	90 (73)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
750	4	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
7	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
5	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0

Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

0
3
15
7

0	0
0	0
0	0
1	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y4 – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	33
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.1
Average class size	31.7

Education support staff: Y4 – Y7

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	270

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	1,661,483
Total expenditure	1,649,300
Expenditure per pupil	1,992
Balance brought forward from previous year	39,325
Balance carried forward to next year	51,508

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9.75
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8.9
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	800
Number of questionnaires returned	460

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	44	5	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	51	44	3	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	45	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	56	13	3	1
The teaching is good.	54	42	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	47	8	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	30	2	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	28	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	50	8	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	67	30	1	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	35	2	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	57	35	5	0	3

[Some rows may not total 100 due to rounding up and rounding down within each category]

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

56. Standards achieved in English by the end of Year 6 and Year 7 are similar to the expected levels. The strengths found in the quality of speaking and listening in the previous inspection have been maintained. Reading standards by the end of Year 6 are above expected levels, however, the standard of writing is below expected levels, which is a reduction in standards since the previous inspection. In English overall, the school has not kept pace with the rising national standards. By the end of Year 7, standards are at expected levels. This is below the levels found in the previous inspection, but represents good progress from the below average results achieved in English in the 2002 national tests by the same pupils.
57. Attainment in speaking and listening by the end of Year 6 and in Year 7 is above expected levels and pupils make good progress because of the very good emphasis that the school places on developing these skills. Pupils are given very good opportunities for performance and the oral presentation of their work. In an outstanding lesson in Year 6, pupils had conducted their own research into Victorian reformers, in order to present their findings to their schoolmates. Their rehearsals showed that they had been very well prepared by the teacher, so that different groups had worked hard to put together lively and thoughtful presentations. One very effective presentation was to use the 'This is Your Life' formula to tell the story of Dr Livingstone – returned by courtesy of a time machine! Pupils showed in their evaluation of their own and others' work, that they had an excellent awareness of the skills needed to involve and maintain the interest of an audience. Throughout the school, pupils are confident to share their ideas, in English and in other subjects, such as history. They speak clearly and audibly, and back up their opinions with reasons. The teaching assistants give pupils with special educational needs very good support, so that they can rehearse and refine their ideas and so gain confidence in speaking. Pupils in Year 7 achieve well. They develop their ability to explain and communicate their ideas well, because teachers' questioning probes and challenges them.
58. Pupils' reading skills are above expected levels by the end of Year 6 and in Year 7. This is a similar judgement to that made in the previous inspection. A significant factor in the good progress pupils' make in reading is the very good opportunities pupils are given for developing their research skills. The library is well stocked and lessons in the library provide very well for pupils to learn about the classification of books, how to find information from them and to widen their reading tastes. In an outstanding Year 5 lesson, pupils used a variety of skills to determine whether a selection of books came under a particular genre. There were lively discussions between pupils about the clues provided by the cover illustration, the author and the blurb to help them to fill in a well-prepared prompt sheet. The teacher challenged pupils to look for extra clues and to check their first impressions. This helped the pupils to successfully develop the skills of skimming and scanning and to kindle an interest in reading books outside their usual interests. The research skills pupils acquire are meaningfully built on throughout the school in other subjects, such as history and geography. They are demonstrated effectively in the projects that they work on at school and at home, for example, Year 5 research into elements of Tudor life. In Year 7, pupils develop the higher skills of analysis, by studying stories and poetry. They scrutinise the messages behind advertisements, so as to produce their own effective advertising posters. The majority of pupils are confident readers, who read with good fluency and expression. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special literacy needs are helped to develop their skills

through initiatives such as a reading recovery programme, which enables them to make accelerated progress.

59. Pupils' writing skills by the end of Year 6 are below expected levels and are not high enough. There is good evidence that improvements in the curriculum at Year 4 ensure that these pupils make good progress and achieve the expected standards. These improvements should now be extended to Years 5 and 6 where not enough pupils are developing writing that shows complexity and the imaginative use of a range of vocabulary, although their speaking skills show that they are capable of this. One reason for this is that there is not enough time allocated for pupils to edit and re-draft their work so as to improve it, whether in literacy sessions or in other subjects. Where pupils are challenged to use their imagination to find interesting words and prepared well for the structure of what they are to write, they achieve well. This was evident in a Year 4 lesson, in which the teacher demonstrated well the style of a Haiku, and so the pupils produced effective results. Progress is good in Year 7 so that pupils' attainment is at the expected level. An example of this is the extended story they are writing called 'The Escape from Kraznir'. The story is developed through the pupils learning how a particular grammar or narrative structure is more appropriate to a different section of the story. The results enhance their writing well, for example catching the readers' attention in the opening, using dialogue to enliven the story. Throughout the school, where pupils with special educational needs are helped by the teaching assistants and teachers, they achieve well but some of the activities are not sufficiently adapted to allow those of lower attainment to complete work as well as they might. A strength in writing is that work is always presented well, dictionaries are available and pupils use them successfully to check spellings and search for words.
60. There are considerable strengths in teaching in Years 4 to 6. In the lessons seen, the majority of teaching was good or better, with a third of teaching being very good or excellent and similar to that seen in the previous inspection. However, looking at teaching over time, teaching is only satisfactory rather than good, because of the weaknesses in the level of challenge to meet the needs of all pupils, which contribute to the underachievement in writing by the end of Year 6. Teaching is consistently good in Year 7 and the consistent quality of this teaching ensures that pupils achieve well. Across the school, in the most effective lessons, the pace of the teaching is good and promotes good learning. Questioning is used very well to encourage pupils to think and reflect on their learning. Sessions in the library are very well organised and pupils achieve well because of the very good teaching collaboration between the class teachers and the librarian. Pupils are managed very well, and relationships between adults and pupils are exceptional, so that a positive climate for learning is fostered. Year 7 teachers encourage independent learning effectively. There is good evidence that teachers encourage pupils to review and evaluate their work, so that they learn how they might improve it. Teaching assistants make good contributions to pupils' learning, particularly to those pupils with special educational needs. However, across the school there is insufficient attention to meeting the needs of pupils of different capabilities. Work is not well enough adapted to meet the needs of lower attaining pupils so that they can achieve greater success. Higher attaining pupils are not given enough opportunities to excel, particularly in writing.
61. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinators have established good routines for assessing pupils and tracking their progress. A good development is the collection of samples of pupils' written work, which is moderated to assess the levels they are achieving. The co-ordinators should ensure that this will help teachers gain a more secure understanding of what improvements are needed to help pupils achieve to their full ability. Many good initiatives have been introduced to support

the development of reading skills and to give extra help to lower attaining readers. Additional support from teaching assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinators helps those pupils with weaker literacy skills. A review of the curriculum and teaching strategies in Year 4 and Year 7 has led to pupils in these year groups in particular, making good progress, and teachers have a clear understanding of the literacy strategy so that these pupils attain the expected standards. There is a need to extend this work into Years 5 and 6 in order to raise standards of writing to a level closer to pupils' capabilities. The time allocated in the curriculum to the National Literacy Strategy is less than found in many schools, and consideration should be given to allocating additional time in literacy or other subjects for the better development and consolidation of the skills needed to raise standards in writing.

MATHEMATICS

62. Standards are at expected levels by the end of Year 6 and Year 7. At the time of the previous inspection they were above expected levels. Soon after the inspection, when the number of pupils on roll increased, the proportion of lower attaining pupils also increased. This accounts for the drop in standards in recent years. However, the school recognises that standards could be higher and in the past year a good deal of effort has been put in to improve the provision for mathematics. This has included training and support to improve teaching. It is already beginning to have a positive impact on standards of pupils' work. For example, standards in Year 6 last year were below average. The same pupils, now in Year 7, are making good progress and reaching the levels expected for their ages. Although most groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are now achieving well, higher attaining pupils frequently do not make sufficient progress because not enough is expected of them.
63. Much of the recent training and support has focused on the school's use of the National Numeracy Strategy and in particular the adoption of the unit plans to guide teachers' planning. However, there are still wide variations, for example in teachers' interpretations of the mental mathematics starter session and the review phase of lessons and in teachers' awareness of what is to be expected of pupils in each year. One of the main issues now is to achieve greater consistency in the way that the strategy is implemented throughout the school by sharing the very good ideas seen in some lessons. The very good arrangements for checking pupils' progress have been strengthened this year by the introduction of the 'I Can Do' system to involve pupils more actively in assessing their own learning. Where this is successful it makes a significant contribution to the mature attitudes to their learning demonstrated by pupils in most lessons. The school has also begun to tackle weaknesses in pupils' problem-solving skills that were identified by the co-ordinator as part of her monitoring role. It is clear from teachers' plans and pupils' books that more opportunities are now being provided to develop these skills.
64. In Years 5, 6 and 7, pupils benefit from being taught in sets of similar attainment and consideration is being given to extending this to Year 4. Overall, this arrangement works well but in most cases teachers are not planning a sufficiently wide range of tasks to match the range of capability found within the sets. By Year 6 most pupils have acquired a sound range of written methods to add, subtract, multiply and divide and show a secure understanding of the relationship between these operations. They calculate area and perimeter and construct and interpret line graphs. In Year 7, very good teaching prepares pupils well for their transfer to high school. About a quarter of pupils attain higher standards, working with formulae in Year 6 for instance and confidently using co-ordinates in all four quadrants to translate and enlarge two-

dimensional shapes in Year 7. A similar proportion in both Year 6 and Year 7 is working below these expected levels.

65. The quality of teaching and learning are good. In the lessons seen they ranged from satisfactory to excellent. Teachers' day-to-day assessment, including marking and the quality of feedback they provide for pupils, is a particular strength. This is further enhanced by the opportunities they provide for pupils to assess their own work, both orally during lessons and by using the school's chosen traffic light system to check and record their progress. Teachers have high expectations about the way that pupils present their work. The frequent reminders and clear guidelines encourage pupils to take pride in their books and lead to careful and accurate work. The strongest teaching was seen in lessons in Year 7. One was highlighted by the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject and this was effectively communicated to the higher attaining set who thoroughly enjoyed investigating a challenge entitled '*The amazing adventures of Pegfish*'. Lower attaining pupils in the same age group were equally motivated by the teacher's good humour and confident knowledge of mathematics that provoked lots of lively discussion. Good examples were seen of the emphasis that teachers place on the systematic development of pupils' understanding of the processes involved in their calculations. As a result, in Year 5 for example, they gained in confidence making few errors when subtracting to two decimal places. In Year 6, skilful questioning to check pupils' understanding of simple formulae helped to ensure high levels of concentration throughout the lesson. Homework is used well to reinforce pupils' learning.
66. In some lessons, which are satisfactory overall, teachers do not allow enough thinking time when asking questions. In others, they do not target individuals with their questions, relying too heavily on those who volunteer an answer by putting their hands up. Each of these factors reduces the opportunities for pupils to become more fully and actively involved in the lesson. Many lessons are too closely directed by teachers and therefore do not give pupils the chance to develop their own strategies and to learn by building constructively on their mistakes. This also restricts their development as independent learners and limits more rapid progress by higher attaining pupils.
67. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and her management role has developed well since her recent appointment. She has gained a clear overview of the subject and provides perceptive feedback from her monitoring of teaching, sampling of pupils' work and her analysis of test results. These are important factors in the school's drive to raise standards. There are very thorough arrangements in place for assessment that provide a bank of useful information, which is used well to develop the curriculum, form teaching groups and set targets for improvement. It is not yet being used to its full potential to match tasks more closely to the needs of all individuals in lessons. A good start has been made in using ICT, including computers, calculators and overhead projectors to support and extend learning.

SCIENCE

68. By the end of Year 6, most pupils make good progress in science and their standards of attainment are above the expected levels. This is better than the previous inspection that judged that standards were in line with expected levels. Improvement is due to the good quality of the curriculum and assessment procedures that have developed well over the past five years and to better teaching. By the end of Year 7, pupils' standards are at expected levels compared to the previous inspection when Year 7 pupils were

judged to be above expected levels. The drop in standards is due to the lower proportion of higher attaining pupils within this large year group of pupils. This was also evident in their National Curriculum tests in science undertaken in 2002.

69. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is because of the good quality support that they receive in classes from their teachers, teaching assistants and, in Year 7 in particular, the highly competent laboratory technician.
70. Year 4 pupils develop good skills relating to the experimental and investigative aspects of science. For example, they investigate the habitats and conditions in which a variety of different mini beasts prefer to live and study their food preferences. Most use a write-up format successfully for guidance and to help ensure that their investigation is conducted fairly. This latter element is a crucial aspect of scientific investigation. Very good cross-curricular links to ICT are developed through pupils' accurate use of the microscope and their printing of computerised images of the mini- beasts. Through applying the good skills developed in the speaking and listening elements of English, they identify and describe in detail some key features of their selected mini beast, for example, the function of the mantle or outer fold of skin that encloses a mollusc's viscera. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is enhanced, when they work collaboratively and sensitively handling delicate creatures, showing due regard and respect for the wonders of nature.
71. Pupils' good skills in the experimental and investigative elements of science are developed further in Years 5 and 6. For example, Year 5 pupils show a clear understanding of the conditions needed for undertaking a fair test when studying sound. They make sensible predictions about the possible outcomes of their investigations. In effect, they learn that sounds are produced when objects vibrate and that the pitch of stringed instruments depends on the length, thickness and tightness of the string. In their investigations they learn and apply appropriate scientific vocabulary such as vibration, pitch and frequency showing good understanding of meaning. In effective links to English, many explain their findings accurately and concisely. By Year 6, pupils are even more highly motivated to learn and share their knowledge about their work. This was seen most noticeably in the study relating to emulsions. Working collaboratively in groups, pupils used the equipment sensibly and discussed their ideas logically. Subsequently they reported accurately their findings relating to formulating and testing their hypotheses to the whole class.
72. Pupils in Year 7 learn about the distinctive features of friction. For example, that friction is a force that can be useful or not, that it can be increased or decreased and that it depends on the materials in contact. In work related to both friction and forces, pupils use Newton meters competently. They discover that the extension of a spring is proportional to the weight that is hung on it. In presenting their results, pupils successfully apply a range of skills learned in other areas. For example, they apply mathematical knowledge effectively to produce graphical representation when charting their findings. They use knowledge of spreadsheets learned in ICT to show their results. Pupils' linguistic skills are well developed and consequently many articulate a rational explanation of their work.
73. The quality of teaching in Years 4 to 6 is good overall. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. In the two lessons observed in Year 7 teaching was very good. High quality teaching is characterised by teachers' own good subject knowledge, thorough planning and high expectations of pupils. There is clear evidence of the school's inclusive approach. This was seen in lessons throughout the school. In both lessons in Year 7 for example, pupils of all capabilities were effectively challenged at their levels of need.

Teaching assistants and the laboratory technician provided support of very good quality particularly for lower attaining pupils. Consequently this group of pupils made good progress and achieved well in relation to their capabilities. Similarly, the class teachers were able to challenge pupils of average and above average levels. A distinctive feature of all teaching is the very good provision that is made to develop the investigative and experimental aspects of science.

74. The enthusiastic co-ordinator for science is very proficient. Over time he has developed a curriculum and associated assessment and recording procedures that are of high quality. The school analyses all test data thoroughly in order to identify and improve areas of weakness. Teachers evaluate the attainment of individual pupils and track their progress effectively. A good feature of the assessment process is that Year 7 pupils themselves are actively engaged in self-evaluation. Consequently they have a good understanding of their own levels of attainment and know what to do in order to improve. Consistency in assessment is helped because teachers level and moderate work that is retained in year group portfolios.
75. Resources are good in quality and range and are used effectively to promote learning. The school has recently established its own environmental area to further support and extend learning. Work in science is celebrated well through various displays in classes and public areas of the school. Competing against much older pupils a number of higher attaining Year 7 pupils recently won the University Prize at the Salters' Festival of Chemistry (University of Brighton). This was a fine achievement.

ART AND DESIGN

76. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 and Year 7. As a result of a well-planned programme of work and good teaching, the school has maintained the standards reported at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils of all capabilities make good progress because they are well motivated by the rich array of artwork which is all around them. Lessons are interesting and enjoyable and pupils have very good opportunities to explore ideas and be creative. Pupils make good progress in drawing, and mixed-media work is of a very high standard. Since the previous inspection, medium-term plans have been improved and pupils are taught well about the lives and works of famous artists.
77. By Year 6, pupils have acquired a comprehensive range of skills and they confidently use techniques to good effect. Knowledge of space and shape is used to repeat, rotate and enlarge patterns for wallpaper designs, and pupils demonstrate accuracy of scale and form in detailed pencil drawings of Victorian artefacts and ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. ICT links are made when pupils design their own Victorian gardens and mazes. In Year 7, Pop Art captures the imagination of pupils and, as a result, they research the subject well and produce impressive computer-generated designs in the style of Andy Warhol in good links with ICT. Pupils in all year groups make effective use of sketchbooks to try out ideas, experiment with media and record observations.
78. Year 4 pupils use crayons and dye effectively to make images on fabric. Working from designs based on observational drawings of mini beasts, they blend and change colours by mixing dye and adding water. Their finished products are bold, striking and of good quality. Pupils make attractive mosaic collages and flags which incorporate detailed and careful appliqué work. In well-structured lessons, Year 5 pupils study the techniques of 'The Fauves' artists to discover how masters such as Matisse, Braque, Derain and Dufy created impressions of colour, tone and shade by varying the

frequency of paint marks. They learn to mix paint in a variety of ways, make block prints and achieve remarkable effects by weaving with wool, thread and natural materials.

79. Pupils in all year groups make effective use of sketchbooks to try out ideas, experiment with media and record observations. Cross-curricular work and enrichment activities, such as the recent Year 5 'Kenya week', contribute significantly to the quality of learning. Such events help pupils to understand the relationships between art and design and other subjects and to appreciate the diversity of their own and other cultures. ICT is not used enough by pupils in Years 4, 5, and 6 to record observations or employ digital images.
80. Teaching and learning are good overall and there is some very good teaching. Lessons are well planned and they provide good opportunities for pupils to explore ideas and experiment with techniques and materials. Teachers' probing questions prompt pupils to explain their answers and pose questions of their own. Pupils are encouraged to express preferences in the subjects they choose but too few lessons include opportunities for them to select from a range of materials and tools. Where teaching is most successful, lessons have a good pace and include an effective balance of direct teaching, practical work and evaluation, as in a Year 7 lesson about the life and work of Henri Rousseau, when pupils made very good progress. Pupils' work is marked regularly but assessment procedures in art and design are not systematic.
81. The subject makes outstanding contributions to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enabling them to flourish and respect each other's different talents. Pupils' attitudes to work are very good. They share ideas and resources and help each other by making constructive comments and stimulating themselves and others. They are proud of their work and appreciate the help they receive from teachers to present and display it well. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well, enjoy the subject greatly and achieve similar standards to other pupils.
82. There is no co-ordinator for art and design at present. Standards have not been adversely affected because teachers work co-operatively and support each other well. Those who have good subject knowledge help and advise colleagues. Resources are of good quantity and quality and are used well to enhance learning. The implementation of systematic procedures for assessment, and review of the subject development plan are priorities.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

83. Standards of attainment in design and technology are above expected levels by the end of Year 6 and Year 7. Standards have improved significantly since the previous inspection when they were reported to be average throughout the school. Since that time high priority has been given to developing pupils' skills and setting challenging tasks related to topics studied. As a result, pupils' books are detailed and very well presented. Many pupils achieve high standards of finished products in both design and technology and food technology. Very good resources, excellent purpose-built accommodation, good time allocation and small group activities have a very positive influence on the consistently high standards of attainment seen throughout the school.
84. Pupils in Year 4 learn how simple mechanisms are used when they apply their knowledge of levers well to make pop-up cards. Good links are made with history where needlework skills are effectively used to design and make Roman banners using various fabrics. In Year 5 pupils carefully follow their own detailed plans to assemble, join and combine materials using a variety of tools to make their own authentic African

instruments where good multicultural awareness is developed. When completed, each instrument is played to evaluate its function and quality. In Year 6, pupils' skills are extended to design and make a controllable vehicle incorporating a motor. Very good links are made with science to produce an electrical circuit. Pupils' ICT skills are used effectively to control a program of sequenced actions on a Ferris wheel. In Year 7, pupils' work from detailed plans, which they adapt as necessary, to make their own trebuchet as part of their work in medieval history. Many select their own joining techniques to produce detailed models, which they test for effectiveness and durability and compare thoughtfully to their original designs. Pupils in Years 6 and 7 have very good opportunities to use the food technology room where they confidently work independently following various recipes. They take great pride in their food produced such as shortbread and scones as seen during inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in relation to their individual needs and they too achieve good standards.

85. The quality of teaching is very good overall and has significantly improved since the previous inspection when it was reported to be sound. During the inspection all lessons were judged to be at least good with a high proportion very good. This has a very significant effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour, which are very positive, enabling them to use their creative talents and imagination to solve problems. All pupils thoroughly enjoy the very good opportunities and challenges provided by teachers. They are very responsive to instructions, persevere well and are enthusiastic to participate in practical activities. They generate ideas successfully, using their knowledge of materials and tools well from their own detailed plans. All teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and very careful planning ensures that previously learnt skills are built on and extended to support pupils' learning. There are very good cross-curricular links to ensure that activities are relevant and purposeful and give good opportunities for independent work. Time is used very effectively and the pace of lessons is brisk. Very good use is made of homework and the plenary sessions at the end of lessons to evaluate products critically and use this information to direct future learning. The co-ordinator provides good leadership, is fully committed and gives good informed support to promote design and technology throughout the school. He has worked hard and given much time including organising a design and technology club for older pupils. The technicians are well trained and give excellent support to teachers and very effectively support pupils' learning.

GEOGRAPHY

86. Standards of attainment in geography are above expected levels by the end of Year 6 and Year 7 and have improved since the previous inspection where they were reported to be average. Teachers have worked hard to review curriculum coverage to ensure that whenever possible, work is planned to give first-hand experiences relevant to the needs of pupils. This has a very positive impact on pupils' personal development and ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning.
87. Pupils in Year 4 develop a good understanding of their own environment by an investigation to improve the school grounds where they effectively use aerial photographs and a plan. They also compare and contrast location, climate, physical and human features of their own area with those in India. Very good multicultural awareness is developed in the enrichment week on India, which is extended to Kenya in Year 5 where many visitors are invited into school to enrich pupils' experiences. Year 5 pupils also compare local coastlines of Worthing and West Wittering and look at and compare coastal landforms during their residential trip to Swanage. Pupils in Year 6 confidently use ordnance survey maps to identify features using six-figure grid

references. Such skills are put to good use during the local river fieldwork study of the River Adur. Pupils identify the main features of the river and investigate past and present uses, erosion and wildlife of the area. Older pupils in Year 7 extend their learning by comparing the River Adur to the River Amazon during their work on the rainforests in Brazil. As part of their transfer materials to the high schools, pupils participate in an open-ended investigation into a route for a cycle rally, where many geographical skills are effectively used together with literacy and ICT to produce a detailed and comprehensive booklet.

88. The quality of teaching is good overall with a high proportion of very good lessons observed during inspection. Teaching has significantly improved since the previous inspection and has a positive influence on pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs who are given focused support to enable them to achieve equally well. The use of fieldwork and open-ended investigations is a motivating factor and enhances pupils' learning by giving good opportunities for first-hand experiences. Teachers manage their pupils very well and plan very effectively. They have good subject knowledge, high expectations, and use time and quality resources very well to support pupils' learning. This results in pupils having very positive attitudes towards their work in geography. They behave very well and work co-operatively in groups sharing resources and enjoying practical activities. Many higher attainers confidently use geographical vocabulary when answering questions. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and fully committed to raise the profile of the subject. He has effectively monitored subject provision and has a good understanding of how geography is taught throughout the school. He encourages visits including residential trips where pupils have good opportunities to develop and practice their geographical skills. Resources are of good quantity and quality and are used well to support pupils' learning. Assessment procedures are well established and homework used effectively to support pupils' learning. The subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

HISTORY

89. By the end of Year 6 and Year 7, standards are above expected levels and a significant percentage of pupils achieve standards which are well above national expectations. Teachers have successfully maintained the good standards achieved at the time of the previous inspection by following a well-structured and coherent curriculum plan. Inspired by lively teaching and very good opportunities to conduct their own research, pupils of all abilities enjoy history and make good progress. Assessment procedures have been improved since the previous inspection. As a result, pupils take an active part in assessing their attainment and progress and setting targets for improvement.
90. In Year 6, pupils have a good sense of chronology and a wealth of knowledge and understanding about people and events of the past. They realise that the past is represented and interpreted in different ways and use a good range of sources, including video material and personal experiences, to offer reasons and draw conclusions. They learn effectively through role-play, artefacts and photographs about the lives of Victorian children, and recall feelings and emotions as well as factual accounts to explain the changes in society. By Year 7, pupils have acquired a wide range of enquiry skills and they identify appropriate research questions. They have considerable freedom to pursue lines of enquiry which are of particular interest and are well monitored in the process. Pupils' attitudes to history are very good. The subject captures their imagination and gives them scope to develop and demonstrate independence. Most pupils participate confidently in discussions and apply themselves well to their work. History topic books are invariably well presented and some are

outstanding. Teachers' high expectations for achievement are met, and some impressive work on medieval realms was seen during the inspection.

91. Year 4 pupils benefit from the strong emphasis on history in cross-curricular topics. They learn about the effects of Roman settlement on Britain and have very good opportunities to explore the cultural traditions of ancient civilisations through visits and works of art. In Year 5, pupils use library skills effectively to find information about Tudor monarchs and confidently select material from appropriate websites for their work in good links with ICT which enhance their computer and enquiry skills. They show an increasing awareness of the importance of effective communication and learn how to select and organise information in order to present an argument. Pupils with special educational needs are given very focused support in these skills and as a result they achieve as well as other pupils.
92. Teaching and learning are good, overall, and features of very good teaching are found in many lessons. As a result of effective assessment, activities are closely matched to the learning needs and interests of all pupils, including higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Teachers manage lessons very well and use a very good range of strategies and resources to ensure that all pupils do their best, as in a successful Year 4 lesson on Greek gods when focused teaching and peer support was used to good effect to help a pupil with special educational needs. Teachers' good subject knowledge is evident in the probing questions they ask and the explanations they give. Pupils are expected to use their imagination and are challenged to think like historians. Homework is used purposefully to prepare for teaching and give pupils time to reflect on what they have learned in school.
93. The co-ordinator gives very good support to a committed team. He maintains a well-organised bank of relevant and up-to-date resources for teaching which are of good quality. History is well audited, and effective monitoring and evaluation are carefully linked to action planning. Recent changes to assessment procedures are beginning to have a positive impact on standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

94. The school's provision for ICT is very good and by the end of Year 6 and Year 7 pupils achieve well and attain above expected levels. This is very good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be below average, planning was insufficiently developed, coverage was inadequate and the subject did not meet statutory requirements.
95. The very good improvements which have taken place have created a new stimulating learning environment for the subject. This includes the provision of two extra computer rooms in addition to the original one. Selected classrooms have interactive whiteboards and these are used very well by the teachers involved to demonstrate skills, involve pupils and extend their technological skills very effectively. The co-ordinators have led very effective staff development in the subject. As a result, all teachers have greater confidence and expertise and use the new resources to very good effect. Better planning, guided by a new plan of work to be covered, provides detailed learning objectives to meet the needs of all pupils in each year group. As a result, standards in the subject have risen considerably.
96. Following the guidance of the new learning objectives, teachers plan a wide range of experiences for pupils throughout the school, linked to most other subjects. Year 4 pupils develop good skills when accessing information on a selected website to gather

information about mini-beasts to support their science work. They create posters by copying pictures and amending text to produce their own preferred style of presentation. They also learn control skills when predicting and tracking sequences of commands to enable a screen turtle to draw shapes on the computer screen. Year 5 pupils extend their communication skills when gathering information about the Tudors to support history work and writing interesting features about Jane Seymour and Anne Boleyn. In mathematics, pupils reinforce data handling skills to present and analyse information about pupils in the class. Teachers provide stimulating learning experiences and all pupils are highly motivated by the new developments in the subject, discuss their work enthusiastically, share ideas and have very good attitudes to technology.

97. By Year 6, pupils build systematically on their knowledge and understanding to support their learning in literacy and history when writing imaginative stories about Victorian life in the form of titles such as *'My first trip on a train.'* They use computers to extend their sequencing of instructions when modelling real-life situations such as traffic lights or a security system. By the end of Year 6, pupils are very aware of the importance of ICT in their lives when accessing the Internet and CD-Roms to gather information in a range of subjects and extend their knowledge of key technological skills. Most attain standards above expected levels.
98. Year 7 pupils develop information skills and literacy skills well when using a publishing program to write articles for the school magazine. These include good examples of persuasive writing on such topics as *'Should we have a school uniform?'* They also develop skills of artistic design when participating in an advertising project. All pupils are inspired by the good guidance from the teachers to develop their skills. They share ideas well and support each other very positively. As a result of the determination of the school to do its best for all individuals regardless of their background or prior attainment, all pupils are confident in their use of computers. A high proportion attain above expected levels. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning due to specific support from teachers and classroom assistants. More than half attain above expected levels in the development of new skills.
99. The quality of teaching is very good overall. During lessons, all teaching was good or very good. The direct teaching and reinforcement of skills takes place in a focused session each week. Very good opportunities are provided during other lessons to enable pupils to put their ideas into practice, in the context of other subjects. Teachers and support assistants have a very good knowledge of computing and plan very good and meaningful links with almost every other curriculum subject. Pupils work very well individually and also share ideas with each other. This successfully promotes their social development and ensures that all are included in well-planned tasks. Resources are very good and much improved since the previous inspection with the new computer rooms. Teachers make good use of listening stations in Year 4 and in the library to support reading. Digital cameras are used effectively to extend learning at appropriate points in the progression of skills and understanding, and sensors are used in science to support control work. The two co-ordinators provide very good support and leadership and have significantly raised the status of the subject. The school has a range of planned assessment procedures that help teachers match work more accurately to the individual needs of the pupils. As a result, teachers provide constant challenge for pupils of all capabilities.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

100. Although the teaching of a modern foreign language is not a compulsory part of the National Curriculum for pupils aged from eight to eleven, the school chooses to teach French to pupils in Year 6 as an additional subject. It does so very effectively. This provides valuable educational, social and cultural experiences for the pupils and contributes well to the achievement of above average standards of attainment by pupils in Year 7, where French is part of the statutory curriculum. These good standards have been maintained successfully since the previous inspection.
101. Year 6 pupils achieve well. They develop effective communication skills in speaking and listening, and responding, that lay a secure foundation for future learning. In listening for example, many understand the teacher's repetitive questions relating to their homes that are posed at near normal speed. In reply to questions such as ' C'est quelle piece?' many are able to articulate short simple responses such as 'C'est la cuisine' and 'Chez-moi il y a une cuisine'. These are delivered confidently and with increasing fluency, pronunciation and intonation. In reading and responding, pupils develop a suitable range of vocabulary, for example through using a glossary to find new words. Mathematical knowledge is applied successfully to compile graphs and charts showing the commonality of pets in different households.
102. Year 7 pupils reach above average standards of attainment. In speaking and listening, and responding, many engage competently in an extended conversation, building on their prior learning about themselves, their families and the school. High standards in written work show clearly that many adapt known expressions, phraseology and vocabulary to produce extended pieces of writing across a range of topics. In lessons, most pupils listen attentively and respond accurately to tape-recorded instructions that are given at near normal speed and with an authentic French accent. In a cross-curricular context, the spring term topic Au Café links to the work undertaken in literacy that relates to Fast Food and Advertising. Pupils apply wordprocessing skills learned in ICT to draft and edit their work successfully in this topic.
103. The quality of teaching is consistently good and is sometimes very good. Teachers' planning is thorough and builds systematically on pupils' prior learning. Teachers provide a broad range of activities that enables pupils to develop and apply new language across all the elements of speaking and listening and responding, reading and writing. This enhances pupils' confidence and competence because they progress incrementally and at a good pace of learning. Teachers themselves are specialists in the subject and their use of the target language provides a very good model for the pupils. As a result, almost all pupils are confident to communicate in the language and do so willingly and accurately. Most pupils are themselves developing authentic accents. Pupils with special educational needs are given levels of support appropriate to their needs and as a result most achieve well and enjoy the subject.
104. The experienced co-ordinator has been in post for two years and has initiated several improvements during this period. Consequently, good arrangements are in place for the management of the curriculum and its associated assessment, recording and reporting procedures. As a result of liaison meetings with other middle and high schools the co-ordinator has introduced a core text which is common to all. She has developed an excellent portfolio of moderated work that exemplifies clearly standards in the subject. Targets for individual pupils are set and reviewed regularly with pupils themselves engaged in self-evaluation. This is good practice because it follows that they also have a better understanding of their level of work and of what they need to do in order to improve. Resources are good in range and quality and are used effectively. The co-ordinator has developed a specialist teaching room that helps to create an authentic

atmosphere because it is used effectively to celebrate French language, history and culture and to promote further improvements in pupils' learning.

MUSIC

105. By the end of Year 6 and the end of Year 7, pupils achieve very well and attain standards which are well above expected levels. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards by the end of Year 6 and Year 7 were above expected levels. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and pupils benefit greatly from the very good subject knowledge amongst staff. Pupils perform in assemblies, concerts and festivals with confidence and enthusiasm. Pupils with special educational needs also enjoy the subject greatly and make very good progress. Boys and girls achieve equally well and with high levels of enthusiasm.
106. Pupils in Year 4 learn about the different sounds made by instruments of the orchestra and in the lesson observed, correctly identified the parts played by horns, clarinets and violins in Mozart's Horn Concerto. They then learnt the phrases of each instrument and sang them to the accompaniment of the piano with good pitch and timbre. They were then challenged by the teacher to sing the phrases in two parts and did so very well, maintaining their own parts very clearly and with good harmony. The teacher then introduced percussion instruments and different rhythms were practised. The final performance at the end of the lesson was outstanding in its interpretation of the different beats and rhythms. Year 5 pupils extend their skills by listening to and appraising music and identifying different sound patterns. Pupils created their own compositions representing the different characteristics of the moon, stars and a comet. They played tuned and untuned percussion instruments, including cymbals, glockenspiels, shakers and rain sticks fitting the rhythms together very well and adding voice crescendo sounds. They performed their compositions to others with confidence.
107. Year 6 pupils further extend their listening, appraising, composing and performing skills by practising and refining their ideas in small groups and playing to each other, musical phrases which represent a river wandering through the countryside. Performances are of very good quality and show the high levels of confidence and pleasure that all pupils gain from the subject. Very good subject knowledge and sensitive prompts by the teacher and very good use of praise, encourages all pupils to attain well above expected levels. Year 7 pupils were observed preparing their own compositions to accompany their Kraznir stories in literacy. Such is the very good provision of resources, that every pupil had access to an electronic keyboard as they practised playing different major chords in very good harmony. They were then extended by the teacher to switch their machines to play in the different styles of instruments such as, pianos and trumpets, to experiment with the different timbre and dynamics of the chords. Standards attained by Year 7 pupils are well above expected levels.
108. In addition to class lessons, all pupils are given opportunities to learn individual instruments from Year 4. They learn to play in small groups at different times of the day, some in their own time. Many pupils choose to do so and are encouraged to play in the school orchestra. Pupils play a wide range of individual instruments including trumpets, horns, saxophones, clarinets, keyboards, flutes, violins cellos, oboes and drums. In one rehearsal observed, pupils' repertoire included, '*James Bond Theme*', '*Money, Money, Money*' and '*Can You Feel The Love Tonight*' from '*The Lion King*'. The quality of performance was very high, the pupils' commitment and enjoyment very apparent and the excellent subject knowledge of the teacher was very evident. His skills were used in a sensitive but constantly challenging way to stimulate all pupils and bring out the best from them.

109. The quality of teaching and learning is very good throughout the school. Most teaching is done by specialist teachers but some class teachers take their own lessons. The quality of teaching ranged from very good to excellent and makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved. Teachers with particular expertise help colleagues in their planning. The subject co-ordinator provides excellent leadership and has built very well on the good work of the school since the previous inspection. Teachers use the subject very well to promote pupils' personal development. There is a strong emphasis in lessons on evaluating performance, so that pupils are used to evaluating their own work and telling others about how they might improve their work. Levels of discussion are very good as pupils work hard to improve their performances. Teachers lead very successful whole-class discussions and develop pupils' self-esteem. Pupils speak very confidently and accept the helpful criticisms very well.
110. Pupils have many opportunities to perform. Concerts and drama productions each year involve all pupils and many pupils play in assemblies. The curriculum is very broad and enriched with good, relevant links to other subjects. Good use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Assessment procedures are detailed and help teachers match activities more accurately to the individual needs of the pupils. Resources are of very good quantity and quality and are used regularly by pupils of all ages and capabilities.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

111. Standards in both Year 6 and Year 7 are above expected levels. In lessons, a significant proportion of pupils reach standards that are well above average. In swimming almost all pupils leave the school reaching or exceeding the expected 25 metres. Teams and individuals representing the school achieve considerable success in competitions. A key factor in maintaining these high standards since the previous inspection is the large proportion of specialist teaching that takes place. In addition, non-specialists are very well supported by a detailed scheme of work and the advice and guidance provided by the co-ordinator. This support ensures that the systematic development of basic skills is at the heart of all teaching.
112. Physical education has a very high status within the school and provision for the subject is outstanding. Of particular note is the exceptionally rich curriculum with a fine balance between promoting excellence and providing a wide variety of experiences for all pupils. The subject makes a powerful contribution to pupils' personal development. As a result, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well. There is no difference in the standards reached by boys and girls. During the inspection, athletics (indoor and outdoor), dance, games and gymnastics were observed.
113. In Year 4, pupils were inspired by the teacher's excellent technical knowledge and made rapid gains in their high jump skills. They listened attentively and learned quickly how to measure their run-up, to distinguish between leading and trailing legs and to choose the angle of approach. In Year 5 they showed precision and control in a variety of indoor athletics events. As in all lessons, their skills of evaluating their own performances and those of their classmates and then using the information to improve their techniques were a particular strength. Pupils experience a wide range of games activities in Years 6 and 7, including cricket, rounders and tennis as well as athletics. These sessions are based on the successful teamwork of teachers who ensure that all pupils are fully and actively involved in their lessons. Games are suitably modified and

adapted in line with the school's intention to develop pupils' awareness of skills and tactics that will transfer to different contexts within physical education. Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to competition, enjoying and celebrating their classmates' successes as well as their own. In Year 7, pupils collaborate in a very mature and responsible way making very effective use of coaching cards to improve their sprinting techniques. The majority develop a well balanced style with good levels of fluency and control.

114. The teaching and learning are very good overall with some examples of excellent teaching. Teachers are very positive role models and relationships with pupils are excellent. This forms the basis of the skilful management of behaviour that ensures that pupils' natural enthusiasm and exuberance is channelled into successful learning. Lessons are very well structured with a strong emphasis on the need to prepare for and recover from vigorous exercise. Older pupils take much of the responsibility for warm-ups. They know that *'Head to toe is the way to go'* as they identify and work on their biceps, triceps, quads and hamstrings. They have a clear understanding of the links between exercise, fitness and health. In the most effective lesson, pupils in Year 4 showed complete trust and confidence in the teacher as they were introduced to the high jump. They were captivated by his descriptions of the athletic prowess of grasshoppers and fleas and by the end of the lesson all had succeeded in approaching and going over the bar with well co-ordinated leg lifts. Teachers have high expectations. In an indoor athletics lesson, pupils in Year 7 were challenged to beat their personal bests set in earlier sessions. Higher attainers enjoyed competing against the county records in speed bounces, sprints, standing long jumps and other events. All pupils persevered well and gave of their best.
115. While there are no significant weaknesses in teaching, occasionally, teachers explanations are too detailed and do not allow pupils to extend their own thinking and understanding. In some lessons, teachers' emphasis on developing pupils' skills, for example in throwing, is at the expense of introducing a competitive or fun element into the lesson.
116. With the strong support of the headteacher, the co-ordinator provides very good leadership. He also enjoys the support of his colleagues and between them they are responsible for an excellent range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. He has produced a comprehensive and detailed scheme of work that is used consistently by teachers to guide their planning. A particularly interesting initiative is that the scheme has been installed on computer with very helpful video links to guide less confident teachers. A very good start has been made on checking and recording pupils' progress against the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils' involvement in this process is a major factor in promoting their highly developed skills of self- assessment and evaluation. Resources and facilities for physical education are excellent and, to its credit, the school is determined to continue to develop this positive picture. For example, funding to build new changing accommodation has been awarded, and work has just been completed on a low ropes course to extend provision for outdoor and adventurous activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

117. By the end of Year 6 and Year 7 pupils achieve well and attain standards which are above the national expectations of the non-statutory guidance for the subject and above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were at expected levels. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make similar good progress overall in the acquisition of

knowledge about different world faiths and events in the Bible. They also develop good skills in their ability to recognise similarities and differences between the different religions studied and learn from their experiences.

118. Teachers make lessons interesting and enjoyable by involving members of the community in lessons and taking pupils on visits to places of interest such as the local church and a mosque. As a result, pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good. For example, they behave very well during a variety of lessons that include such activities as drama, discussions, stories and a range of visitors to the school. This means that teachers are able to use different and interesting strategies, confident that pupils will join in and respect each other's viewpoints. Consequently, pupils achieve well and make good progress in lessons.
119. Year 4 pupils learn about Hinduism and the story of its creation involving Vishnu and Brahma. The customs and traditions of this different culture are celebrated through an enrichment week about India supported by visitors from the community. Pupils also learn about Christianity and learn about the life of Jesus and discuss why he was so special. In one lesson observed they shared their views very thoughtfully and sensitively about the characteristics of the people that Jesus might choose to be his disciples. They compared ideas very maturely about what influenced people's lives in those times. Year 5 pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of signs and symbols of different religions. They write very sensitive accounts of the Gospels and how Jesus taught through prayer and what prayers can teach people.
120. Year 6 pupils learn about Judaism and have a good knowledge about the places of worship used by a range of faiths. They describe the principal features of these places and what these mean to the followers of those religions. A major part of the learning for Year 6 pupils involves understanding that people who follow a particular faith have feelings and emotions that can be expressed in different ways. These were emphasised very well in an excellent lesson when pupils worked in pairs, sharing views on how feelings and emotions could be shown in facial expressions, body language and tone of voice. These emotions were effectively linked to how people express themselves through art, music, poetry and sculpture and the lesson ended with each 'sculptor' arranging his or her partner into a posed 'sculpture' to show feelings such as fear, joy and surprise. The levels of response and self-control were excellent.
121. Year 7 pupils learn more about Christianity and other major world religions, in particular Islam, and make clear links between human experiences and what religious people believe and do. They are provided with good opportunities to respond thoughtfully and evaluate what they have learnt about religion, celebration and values. Through their study of world religions they learn that ethical and moral questions rarely have clear-cut answers. Pupils learn that at critical times in their lives, many people turn to their own God for help and support. Pupils have learnt about a wide range of charities and discussed the importance of the support these charities provide for the starving and under-privileged. They have written some very informed, reflective and personal responses to questions such as 'Who Am I?' All pupils show excellent attitudes to tasks and attain standards above expected levels. Pupils from minority ethnic groups share feelings about their own faiths. Pupils with special educational needs achieve similarly to their peers and effectively meet the targets in their education plans.
122. The quality of teaching and learning is very good throughout the school. Teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve are very high and, as a result, pupils' respond very well. Very good opportunities are provided to encourage the sharing and understanding of the views of others. Pupils benefit from the teachers' sensitivity and

their ability to help pupils understand concepts and ideas that are often complex. Teachers use the subject very well to provide very strong support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. The study of world faiths and religions broadens pupils' knowledge and understanding of other people's beliefs, customs and traditions. Literacy skills are promoted well, particularly pupils' speaking and writing skills. They are encouraged to join in discussions and express their views and opinions, and to write at length on different aspects.

123. The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator. She provides good support for teachers as they plan their lessons and guidance on stimulating activities to suit pupils' ages and capabilities. She has monitored and evaluated provision well, with the result that the curriculum is based firmly on the locally agreed syllabus and provides for the progressive development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding between year groups. Additional strengths are the sensitivity and spirituality that are evident in lessons. Good use is made of visitors to the school, and visits by the school to places of worship. Guidance on planning the curriculum is good and the co-ordinator manages developments in the subject well. Good links are made between religious education, assemblies and 'Thought for the Week' sessions when classes discuss a range of issues. Assessment procedures are good and the information gathered gives the co-ordinator and class teachers a well-informed view of strengths and areas for improvement in pupils' standards. Pupils are also encouraged to carry out their own self-assessment at the end of each term. Resources are of good quality and quantity and well matched to the areas covered in the curriculum.