

INSPECTION REPORT

LAINESMEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Swindon

LEA area: Swindon

Unique reference number: 126228

Headteacher: Mrs J J Turner

Reporting inspector: Mr C Kessell
20695

Dates of inspection: 10th - 13th March 2003

Inspection number: 248743

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Southview Avenue Swindon
Postcode:	SN3 1EA
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Baylay
Date of previous inspection:	January 2001

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20695	Mr C Kessell	Registered inspector	Physical education	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
19664	Mr J Bayliss	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works with parents
22397	Mr S Fowler	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology	The quality of the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
18709	Ms N Bee	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Art and design	
27240	Mr W Hooper	Team inspector	English Music	Provision for pupils with English as an additional language
25775	Mrs V Wilson	Team inspector	Science Geography History	Special educational needs
22841	Miss P Jackson	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education	Educational inclusion

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REPORT CONTENTS

Page

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

6-9

Information about the school
How good the school is
What the school does well
What could be improved
How the school has improved since its last inspection
Standards
Pupils' attitudes and values
Teaching and learning
Other aspects of the school
How well the school is led and managed
Parents' and carers' views of the school

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

10-12

The school's results and pupils' achievements
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12-14

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

14-17

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

17-19

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

19-20

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

20-23

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

23

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

24-27

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

28-45

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Lainesmead Primary School is situated in east Swindon and serves an area of private and rented housing. It is larger than most other primary schools, with 316 pupils on roll. The school provides education for pupils between the ages of 4 and 11. The majority of pupils come from white ethnic backgrounds, although a small number of other ethnic groups are represented. Seven per cent of pupils use English as an additional language and a few pupils are at the early stages of learning English as a result of the school receiving a small number of refugees. At 21 per cent, the proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is about average. Twelve per cent of pupils are assessed as having special educational needs; this is below average. The majority of these pupils are identified as having learning difficulties, physical needs or behavioural problems. Two pupils have a statement of special educational needs which is below average. The percentage of pupils who leave or join the school during the academic year is above average. Children start school with attainment that is similar to that expected for their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a popular, caring school that provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Although standards in English, mathematics and science are below average, they are improving. Pupils' progress is currently satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides good leadership and along with the deputy head, the staff and governors, they are working hard to improve the quality of education provided for the pupils. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is well led and managed by the headteacher who is ensuring that the school continues to develop and improve.
- The pupils' good attitudes and behaviour and the very good relationships, seen throughout the school, are well supported by the school's good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Provision for pupils, personal, social and health education is very good.
- The quality of information provided for parents is very good. The school's links with parents are very strong.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The use of assessment information to plan lessons and monitor pupils' progress.
- The balance of the school curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

At the time of the previous inspection in January 2001, the school was judged to be underachieving. This is no longer the case and the school is providing its pupils with an acceptable level of education although standards are still low, particularly in English, mathematics and science. The school has made some good progress against the key issues for the previous inspection. Standards have improved in information and communication technology, geography and history through the school. Pupils' attainment in religious education and music in Year 2 have also risen. However, standards in religious education and art and design are still not high enough in Year 6. There has been some improvement in the standards of writing, but pupils' presentation of their work is still inconsistent. The school has put together assessment procedures in most subjects although there are still weaknesses in the use of the information provided by assessment. Many of the positive features of the previous inspection are still in place, for example, the pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour, but because standards are still below average in the core subjects¹, improvement overall since the previous inspection, is judged to be satisfactory. However, the staff and governors' commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed is good.

¹ The core subjects are English, mathematics and science.

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 ²
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	D	E	C
Mathematics	D	D	E	D
Science	B	D	E	E

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

The results of the National Curriculum tests, in 2002, taken by pupils at the end of Year 6 indicated that standards were well below average in English, mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools, standards were average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. Between 1998 and 2002, the school's trend of improvement was below the national trend. The results of the national tests in 2002, taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, showed standards were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, reading and writing were below average and mathematics well below average. Although pupils' achievement is now satisfactory, not all of the pupils in Years 2 and 6, in 2002, made the progress of which they were capable in relation to their prior attainment. Recent national test results have shown some differences in the performance of boys and girls.

The pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards that are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils in Year 6 are achieving standards that are below average in English, mathematics and science. Although standards are still not high enough, this is an improvement on 2002. The school has set targets for 2003 for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics which reflect this improvement.

Pupils achieve expected standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 in design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and physical education. Standards in art and design and religious education are similar to those expected at the end of Year 2, but below expected levels at the end of Year 6. The majority of children in the reception classes are likely to achieve the expected standards in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language is satisfactory overall.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy coming to school. They show a strong level of interest in whatever they are doing and this contributes well to their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour in classrooms, in the playground, when moving about the school, and at lunchtime, is consistently good. Pupils are polite and friendly to visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are very strong, both between pupils themselves, and with adults. When given the opportunity pupils readily display initiative and responsibility. The majority of pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others and are sensitive to other's feelings, values and beliefs.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are satisfactory. Punctuality at the start of the day is good.

² 'Similar schools' are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall and some good and very good teaching was also observed. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed and this is an improvement on the previous inspection. In a number of classes through the school teaching is consistently good or better, but this is not the pattern in all lessons. The pupils learn more effectively and make good progress in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding when the teaching is good, or very good. Literacy and numeracy lessons are generally well organised, but not all of these lessons provide work that is appropriately matched to the needs of all pupils. This slows the learning of some pupils, particularly the higher attainers, who are not always challenged sufficiently. Better use could be made by some teachers of on-going assessment to ensure a better work match and to monitor pupils' individual progress. The control and management of pupils is consistently good. The majority of pupils enjoy their learning. They talk positively about what they are doing and make a good effort with their work. Classroom support staff often provide good support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. The quality of teaching in the reception classes is satisfactory but there are weaknesses in the use of assessment to monitor children's progress and plan future work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The school's provision for personal, social and health education is very good. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good. There are weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum that influences the quality of some learning experiences. The withdrawal of some pupils for other activities also restricts their access to the statutory curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' individual education plans are detailed and identify specific targets. Teachers make good use of the skills of classroom assistants to help pupils work towards a lesson's learning objectives at an appropriate level.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The school is able to draw on the services of a teacher from the local authority, who visits the school each week and provides some direct help for some of the pupils who use English as an additional language. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The provision has a positive impact on the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils. Pupils' moral and social development is a particular strength. There are weaknesses in the planned provision for pupils' spiritual development across the curriculum
How well the school cares for its pupils	Lainesmead is a very caring school that looks after its pupils very well. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory.

The parents view the school as a good one. Both the information the school provides and the support of parents for the work of the school are very good. The school reaches out to its parents providing very good information about school activities and linking with them to mutual advantage.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher's leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher has contributed much to school improvement and provides clear educational direction. She is well supported by the deputy head who is a very good role model as a classroom teacher. Many of the subjects are well managed by co-ordinators.
How well the governors	The governors undertake their responsibilities well and have a good understanding of

fulfil their responsibilities	the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are aware of the need to challenge what is going on in the school and fulfil their statutory duties.
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The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school and governors ensure that they achieve best value by good evaluation of the school's educational provision. Governors increasingly recognise the need to develop strategies to monitor and challenge the work of the school, to further the promotion of high standards.
The strategic use of resources	The school's use of the financial resources available to it is good. There is effective contingency planning and clear priorities aimed at raising standards. Good use is made of specific funds.

Staffing, accommodation and levels of resources are satisfactory.

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 is good. • Teaching is good. • They feel comfortable approaching the school with suggestions or concerns. • The school expects their children to work hard. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps their children develop into mature and responsible individuals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework arrangements. • More information about progress. • Closer working with parents. • Revised swimming arrangements.

The parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire and the 24 parents who attended the pre-inspection parents' meeting are supportive of the school. They think it is a good one. Inspection evidence confirms much of what parents think is good, although progress made by their children could be better and there is some inconsistency in teachers' expectations. There is no evidence that homework is inappropriate and no parent should feel a lack of information, or distanced from the school, if they take advantage of the opportunities that the school presents to them. The arrangements for swimming are satisfactory, although pupils do not go as often as they used to the school still meets statutory requirements.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. By the end of their time in reception the majority of children are likely to reach the expected levels in all areas. Progress is satisfactory for most children. However, information collected when they entered school shows that a small percentage of children in reception have not done as well as they should have done. A significant number of pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 did not achieve as well as expected during their year in reception. This would have had a significant impact on the attainment of these pupils, and goes some way to explaining why the pupils currently in Year 2 are not on target to achieve average standards in reading, writing and mathematics, despite receiving at least satisfactory teaching through Key Stage 1³.
2. The results of the National Curriculum tests, in 2002, taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, showed that standards, in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average. When compared with similar schools, standards were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. Evidence provided by the previous inspection would indicate that not all of these pupils made satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment at the end of reception. The percentage of pupils who achieved the higher grade was well below average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. When taking the years 2000 to 2002 together, the pupils' performance fell below the national average in all three areas of learning.
3. The results of National Curriculum tests, in 2002, taken by pupils at the end of Year 6, showed standards to be well below average in English, mathematics and science. National data indicates that these pupils made well below average progress in English and mathematics in relation to their attainment when they were in Year 2. Their progress in science was very low. When compared with similar schools, standards were average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 5 was well below average in all three subjects. When taking the years 2000 to 2002 together, the performance of pupils fell below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Since 1998, the school's trend of improvement has been below the national trend.
4. As a result of being categorised as an underachieving school at the previous inspection, the school received a monitoring visit from Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools in May 2002, who judged that underachievement still remained in some subjects, but acknowledged that standards were rising. Currently in Year 2, standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Although still not high enough, this is an improvement on last year and at the time of the previous inspection. Since leaving the reception classes, these pupils have made satisfactory progress. The school's target for the percentage of pupils that are expected to reach the higher grade shows an improvement in reading, although the levels in writing and mathematics, remain similar to last year.
5. In Year 6, standards are currently below average in English, mathematics and science. Again, although still too low, this is an improvement on last year. Evidence provided by the school, indicates that up to the end of Year 5, a significant proportion of the pupils currently in Year 6 were likely to underachieve in English and mathematics. Through a combination of good teaching and strategies, such as 'booster' classes, the percentage of pupils now likely to underachieve is very small. The percentage of pupils expected to achieve the higher grade in English and mathematics is also expected to be higher.
6. The school is moving in the right direction with regard to pupils' progress over time and their attainment. Standards are improving, but there is still some 'catching-up' to be achieved by some year-groups who were influenced most by the school's period of underachievement. The 'catching-up' is possible when teaching is good or better. When the quality of the teaching is satisfactory, although pupils make sound progress, this is not sufficient to bring their levels of attainment up to those expected. The headteacher and governors are very aware of this and there is no complacency on their part. The school did not achieve its targets for 2002, which were missed by

³ Key Stage 1 caters for pupils aged 5 to 7 and refers to pupils who are in Years 1 and 2.

13 per cent in English and 10 per cent in mathematics. There are some differences in the performance of boys and girls beyond the trends found nationally. For example, looking at pupils' performance by taking the three years 2000 to 2002 together, the girls performed better in reading, writing and mathematics than the trend found nationally. The school has not done enough to address this issue.

7. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 in design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and physical education are similar to those found in the majority of schools. Standards in art and design and religious education as expected at the end of Year 2, but below the levels expected at the end of Year 6. This is a result of these subjects not being covered in sufficient depth.
8. Despite the below average standards in English, mathematics and science, 96 per cent of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that their children were making good progress in the school. The same percentage also agreed that expectations in the school were high. At the pre-inspection meeting, the majority of parents agreed that the standards achieved by their children were what they would expect, although a small minority had concerns that their children did not reach their potential. None of the parents believed the school was underachieving.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. They are effectively supported by teachers and teaching assistants who provide suitable approaches, methods and activities to assist their learning. Pupils benefit from working within the classroom as well as being withdrawn by the special educational needs co-ordinator for more focused support. When receiving high quality individual and small group support, these pupils are observed to make good and sometimes very good progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy activities.
10. Pupils who speak English as an additional language attain results that are similar to those of other pupils and make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour and how they related to each other were judged to be good. Their attitudes, behaviour and personal development made a significant contribution to their learning. These strengths have been maintained. Relationships are now very good. Pupils respond to the opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility well. Attendance continues to be satisfactory.
12. In the Foundation Stage⁴ the children develop good relationships with the adults who work with them and with each other. Behaviour is consistently good and most children show positive attitudes to learning, settle in well and enjoy coming to school. All show interest and concentrate well in the activities they are offered. Personal independence is well promoted for example as the children self-register each morning and tidy up well at the end of sessions.
13. Pupils' good attitudes to school help them learn. There is a constructive atmosphere in most classrooms with pupils being keen to learn. They enjoy coming to school and show an above average level of interest in whatever they are doing. Even when teaching, though satisfactory, is occasionally less than stimulating, the large majority of the pupils do not lose concentration, and they continue to involve themselves in the lesson, listening carefully to the teacher and trying to do their best. In lessons the pupils enjoy taking part in question and answer sessions, during which they are happy to take turns without inappropriate shouting out. The pupils gain in confidence as they progress through their school life. They relate easily with adults, although never in a disrespectful way. Their readiness to open doors for each other and adults, and to say 'please' and 'thank you', without prompting, is noticeable.
14. There is an ethos of good behaviour in and around the school that encourages learning to take place. Throughout the school the pupils are polite, friendly and well behaved. Parents are very happy with how their children behave in school. All pupils, even the youngest, respond well to the

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

high standards of behaviour expected. Break times are pleasant social occasions when the pupils behave well, playing together without any sign of bullying or other anti-social behaviour. There is some boisterous behaviour, but no more than that to be expected when pupils are given the opportunity to let off steam away from the constraints of the classroom. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms, in the playground, when moving about the school, and when eating their lunch, is consistently good. Very little unsatisfactory behaviour, and then only of a minor nature in the very occasional lesson, was observed during the inspection. Nothing was seen to suggest that when misbehaviour occurs it is oppressive, or that there is vindictive bullying or sexism within the school. When inappropriate behaviour occurs, the school adopts a rigorous but sensitive approach that recognises the impact such behaviour by a very small number of pupils can have on the majority. It has not been necessary to exclude any pupils, for either a fixed term or permanently, in recent times, as pupils understand and accept the school's expectations of them.

15. Harmonious relationships exist throughout the school community. Pupils of all ages respond well to the school's provision for their personal development. Though, of necessity, somewhat limited for the youngest children, but appropriate for their age, the school provides opportunities for pupils to assume responsibility that steadily increase throughout their school life. When given the chance to be responsible or display initiative, for example when looking after attendance registers, when asked to help teachers in the classroom or when getting out or putting away equipment in the hall, the pupils happily volunteer, undertaking the activities diligently and with enthusiasm. Those involved in the School Council take their responsibilities very seriously, making a positive contribution to the school's strategies for involving its pupils in the work of the school. Relationships are very good, both among pupils and between pupils and adults. Boys and girls of all ages and backgrounds get on well with each other, showing respect for the feelings of others. They show respect for the values and beliefs of others and this is apparent in the way they relate to each other, both in lessons and elsewhere.
16. Most pupils with special educational needs show positive attitudes to their learning. When paired with higher-attaining pupils, they concentrate well on their tasks and willingly share their ideas. Pupils withdrawn for group work respond with confidence to well-focused questions and encouraging feedback. These pupils display pride in their achievement when they describe what they have learned at the end of each session. Pupils' own comments on their individual education plans show a positive approach to reaching their targets.
17. Attendance levels have shown little improvement since the previous inspection, remaining satisfactory overall, broadly in line with the national average for similar schools. Punctuality in the morning is generally good. When instances of lateness occur, they are of a minor nature and are not disruptive to lessons. Unauthorised absence is somewhat higher than that experienced in most primary schools nationally. Attendance levels are reduced by a considerable number of parents who organise annual holidays during term time, especially during the autumn term. Unauthorised absence, which is the result of a small number of parents having a relaxed attitude to the importance of school attendance and to the need to respond to the school's procedures, is higher than the average. Absence from school reduces the potential for learning for those pupils involved.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. The majority of parents who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teaching in the school was good, however, some parents attending the pre-inspection meeting suggested that there were inconsistencies amongst teachers, particularly regarding supporting pupils and challenging higher attaining pupils. Inspection evidence would support the parents' views about inconsistency between classes. During the inspection, 51 per cent of lessons were satisfactory, 33 per cent good and 16 per cent, very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed and this is an improvement on the previous inspection although the percentages of good and very good teaching are very similar. The proportions of good and very good teaching were similar in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2⁵. The majority of teaching in the Foundation Stage was satisfactory. In a number of classes, the quality of teaching and learning very rarely exceeded the satisfactory level and, although, in these lessons, the strengths exceeded the weaknesses, pupils did not learn at the

⁵ Key Stage 2 caters for pupils aged 7 to 11 and refers to pupils who are in Years 3 to 6.

same rapid rate as they did in lessons where teaching and learning was consistently good or better. Teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall with pupils learning soundly. The percentage of good or better teaching will need to improve if the school is to make a greater impact on the learning for those pupils who were affected whilst the school was underachieving,

19. Teaching is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Adults manage the children effectively and develop good relationships with them and the children are supported satisfactorily by the adults who work with them. Planning is sound, but day-to-day assessment is not always as good as it should be. Adults miss opportunities during class discussions and during adult-focused activities to collect information on the quality of the children's responses or behaviour. It is then difficult for them to clearly see how well children are responding to the activities offered to them. This sometimes results in activities not being well matched to the children needs. Apart from placing children into ability groups for mathematical development and communication, language and literacy there is little evidence in teachers' planning of assessment information being used to move children onto the next stage of learning. In addition there is little evidence of any evaluation of teaching apart from in one class where in communication, literacy and language and in mathematical development the teacher uses a 'traffic light' system to show who has achieved and who hasn't. Previous work and lesson observations show that adults do not consistently promote basic letter and number formation effectively. As they get more proficient at writing, children are not consistently shown how to develop words and spaces as they begin to write sentences. Adults are not always good role models regarding handwriting. When adult expectation is low, the learning within lessons is affected. Progress is satisfactory overall, because children generally concentrate well, work hard and respond positively to the tasks they are given, but weaknesses in teaching regularly hinder the progress made by individuals.
20. The management of pupils is good in all classes. Relationships are strong between the teachers and the pupils and these contribute well to pupils' learning. Pupils are always prepared to make an effort for their teachers and are interested in their work. The pupils talk enthusiastically about their current learning, or work they have undertaken in the past. The majority of lessons are well planned in principle, but too little notice is taken of the information provided by day-to-day assessment. Consequently, a minority of pupils are not always provided with an appropriate level of work for their individual needs. This tends to affect the higher-attaining pupils more than other groups. However, on occasions, pupils with special educational needs are affected, particularly when they are not provided with support by a classroom assistant, and a teacher has to manage a class and its needs, on their own. This can also happen to pupils who use English as an additional language, when they are given insufficient support. A few teachers do not have high enough expectations of their pupils. This goes some way to explaining the differences between the teachers' assessments in 2002 and pupils' results in the national tests. For example, 62 per cent of pupils achieved the appropriate level in Year 6, whereas the teachers' assessments only identified 50 per cent. When expectations are too low, pupils are provided with work that is too easy or they do not cover the amount of work in a lesson of which they are capable. Insufficient use is made of time targets or providing extension activities for higher-attaining pupils. In a minority of lessons, no effort is made to reflect the range of ability found in classes, by providing pupils with different levels of work. The school's management recognises the importance of providing challenge for the higher-attaining pupils and class teachers have been expected to identify pupils that would fall into the higher-attaining category, but a few staff, in one or two classes, pay lip-service to this process and provide little extra support.
21. This is not the case where teaching is consistently good or better. The school does have some talented and well-trained teachers who are good role models for others who are not so proficient. In the good classes, the pupils' productivity, pace of working, independence and knowledge of their own learning is better and, consequently, they make consistently good progress. This applies to all groups of pupils, whether they have special educational needs or are higher attainers. The needs of all pupils are considered effectively and pupils learn well. Examples of effective teaching were seen in every year group. In a Year 1 religious education lesson that focused on special celebrations, pupils showed high levels of interest as they sensibly discussed with each other, and the class as a whole, why they could not wait to do something, or see someone, as part of a special event or seeing special people. Pupils understood that there was a commonality between celebrations. In a very good literacy lesson in Year 5 on report writing, a well organised and stimulating session ensured that pupils of all abilities learn very effectively as a result of the class teacher's very good

strategies and sensitive support that promoted very good learning. Likewise, in a Year 6 numeracy lesson, that involved visualising three-dimensional shapes from two-dimensional drawings, pupils made very good gains in their knowledge and understanding as a result of challenging practical activities, very focused questioning, and the class teacher's stimulating approach. By eradicating the common weaknesses that are found in otherwise satisfactory lessons, the school would contribute to improving standards particularly in English, mathematics and science.

22. The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are used satisfactorily. However, some teachers make better use of these initiatives than others. Learning objectives are consistently shared with pupils but there is sometimes an over reliance on matching work to the recommendations of the strategies, rather than to the needs and experiences of the pupils. Literacy skills are better promoted across other areas of the curriculum than numeracy skills. Good examples of the development of speaking and listening skills were seen in lessons such as religious education, design and technology, and geography. Information and communication technology is not used enough by teachers to support other areas of learning. In the best lessons, time is used very effectively. These lessons have pace, no time is wasted, and the pupils make considerable gains in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding. This was seen to good effect in a Year 5 physical education lesson developing pupils' throwing and catching skills, in a Year 2 design and technology lesson, where pupils were investigating ways of joining materials, and in a Year 1 literacy lesson, where pupils were describing characters from well known stories. In other lessons, where the pace was more pedestrian, learning was not so good and the use of time, less effective. Support staff are often used well. They are particularly effective at supporting pupils with special educational needs and enable these pupils to make the same progress as their classmates. However, on occasions, pupils who are at the early stages of learning English are not supported well enough to learn effectively. There are times when the explicit needs of these pupils are forgotten, particularly during class discussions.
23. A teacher from the local authority's diversity and ethnic minority achievement service visits the school each week and provides some direct support for some of the pupils who use English as an additional language. She provides learning materials and informal training for staff at the school, as appropriate. The school is aware of the need to provide good role models for language development and often pairs pupils for whom English is an additional language with higher-attaining pupils for group tasks.
24. Teaching satisfactorily meets the learning requirements of pupils with special educational needs. Good relationships with pupils in withdrawal groups, and good teaching methods that are well matched to their learning needs, help to improve pupils' concentration and confidence. Pupils do not always achieve enough during early morning reading activities when they do not receive feedback on their learning.
25. The use of homework by teachers is satisfactory but inconsistent. Examples of pupils' homework seen during the inspection provided some good examples of thoughtful work that was marked well and supported pupils' learning in school. Other examples showed inconsistent presentation by the pupils and work that had not been marked. Eighty-eight per cent of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that their child got the right amount of work to do at home. Some teachers do not mark effectively. In the best examples, teachers provide constructive comments that help pupils move to the next stage of learning and challenge their thinking. In the weakest examples, comments are cursory and work is often just ticked or crossed.

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

26. The school's curriculum is broad and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and to provide religious education. This was not the case at the time of the previous inspection, when the curricular provision for both religious education and information and communication technology, were unsatisfactory. The school has worked hard to eradicate these weaknesses. The provision for religious education now fully meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus and there is a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. Curricular provision for information and communication technology has improved significantly in the last two years and all elements of the statutory curriculum are now taught. The school teaches all the subjects required by the National

Curriculum and meets the related legal requirements. The recent development of a comprehensive policy for personal, social and health education reflects the importance that the school places on this curricular area. There are appropriate policies for citizenship, sex education and drugs awareness and the school has a strong commitment to equal opportunities and racial equality. These areas permeate all aspects of school life and help to ensure that it operates as a harmonious community.

27. At the time of the previous inspection there were considerable weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum, caused, in particular, by a lack of depth in the provision for history, geography, music and information and communication technology. There was also insufficient teaching time within Key Stage 2. There have been a number of improvements to the curriculum in the last two years and the school now provides a framework of policies and schemes of work for all curricular areas. Planning and provision in all subjects are at least satisfactory and the development of a computer suite has improved the provision of resources for this subject and created opportunities for greater flexibility in curricular planning. Curricular provision for both key stages is now satisfactory and the school has refined and developed its long-, medium- and short-term planning to take account of curricular improvement. There has been an increase in teaching time within Key Stage 2 to bring it in line with most other schools.
28. The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It is planned according to the national guidelines, and activities promote all areas of learning. However, sometimes there is too much emphasis on the area of communication, literacy and language and, when this happens, children do not experience an adequate variety of activities within the day. The outside area is used regularly to promote all areas of learning.
29. Despite improvements, the curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2, though broad, is not yet sufficiently balanced. An audit has been carried out within the school to ensure that each subject is allocated an appropriate time allocation. However, each class now undertakes a daily reading session in addition to the work that is done as part of other literacy lessons. Although some of these sessions, such as those that afford pupils opportunities to carry out research activities, are well planned and effective, many others lack real focus and the time could be better used to increase the curricular time available for other subjects, particularly art and design, history, and geography. Although the school is committed to a policy of equal opportunities, it is unsatisfactory in providing a curriculum that ensures that all pupils are given equal access to the statutory curriculum and all other activities provided. For example, pupils are frequently withdrawn from lessons, such as religious education, information and communication technology, and music, to participate in additional literacy support activities and this restricts their curriculum entitlement.
30. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall because the special educational needs co-ordinators have a clear overview of the needs of these pupils. Pupils' individual education plans are detailed and identify specific targets. Some of the targets are small enough to be achieved quickly so that teachers and pupils can build on early success. Teachers make good use of the skills of teaching assistants to help pupils work towards a lesson's learning objectives at an appropriate level.
31. The school has recognised the importance of pupils' personal, social and health education by appointing two co-ordinators for this area of learning and developing a comprehensive scheme of work that can be taught either as a discrete subject or as part of the normal curriculum. The school does much to raise pupils' self-esteem and to help them develop into capable, responsible people. For example, each class from Year 2 to Year 6 has their own Class Council whose elected representatives form part of the School Council which meets fortnightly to discuss problems and to suggest ways of improving school life. The School Council has recently completed a major project with staff and the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust to develop plans to improve the school grounds and these have been submitted to the governors for approval. The school has been successful in achieving a Health Promotion Award as part of their commitment to improve health awareness and the fitness level of all pupils. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are currently involved with the local health authority in a health promotion scheme that involves a trained instructor visiting the school on a weekly basis to run a fitness session as part of curriculum for physical education. The work undertaken in personal, social and health education contributes significantly to the development of the good relationships and respect for others that is deeply embedded in the life and work of the school. The provision for

personal, social and health education has improved since the previous inspection and is now very good.

32. The sound implementation and priority given to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has begun to make a positive impact on pupils' learning. Skills are reinforced on a regular basis and are taught in a well-planned and structured way. Most teachers feel confident with the structures of the frameworks, which help them to develop a consistent approach to teaching the curriculum. However, although the new computer suite is used very effectively, there is a need to make greater use of computers within the classroom.
33. The teacher from the ethnic minority achievement service also supports the school in its work in valuing the contribution made by cultures other than the one that most pupils experience. The support teacher and the subject managers at Lainesmead keep careful records of the progress made by pupils for whom English is an additional language. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
34. Parents are pleased with the opportunities provided for pupils to take part in a range of activities outside formal lessons that have improved since the time of the previous inspection. At that time they were judged to be satisfactory. They are now good, with a wide range of activities offering enjoyment for the pupils, as well as contributing positively to their learning and personal development. There is something for everyone, including sporting activities, chess, art and science clubs, choir and musical tuition, and gardening. These activities, as well as a much-enjoyed residential visit for pupils in Year 6 that is organised each year, enrich the curriculum provided by the school.
35. There is a constructive relationship with partner institutions, with the school benefiting from its association with other educational establishments by sharing experiences and best practice. Links between coordinators ensure smooth curriculum development. The school's links with the local and wider community, including with local church ministers, are satisfactory. Links with a local performing arts college, and theatre and dance companies, are effective.
36. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has worked hard to put systems in place to improve behaviour, encourage co-operation between pupils and create a positive learning atmosphere. Consequently, the provision for social development is now very good. The good provision for moral development has successfully been maintained since the previous inspection and there has been some improvement in the planning for cultural development, which was unsatisfactory. Although brief times for quiet reflection are now included in whole-school and class assemblies, insufficient opportunities are created for pupils' spiritual development.
37. Pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. Daily assemblies now meet the requirements as collective acts of worship and regular visits by the local vicar contribute well to these. Although statutory requirements are met, and assemblies are used well to reinforce good behaviour, self-worth and community spirit, the moments of quiet reflection and acknowledgement of a supreme being are, at times, very brief and, occasionally, almost insignificant. An exception to this was a class assembly in Year 2 in which pupils offered their own thank you prayers. In an assembly for Year 1 a spiritual atmosphere was sensitively created as the teacher shared her 'treasure', but there was only a very brief moment of prayer. Music is used at the start and end of whole-school assemblies, creating a peaceful atmosphere, but when songs are used these again stress moral messages and rarely refer to a supreme being.
38. Occasionally in lessons moving moments are created and pupils' learning is exciting and spiritual. For example, in science, young pupils were fascinated by the changing state of an egg from raw, to mixed, to hard-boiled. In a Year 5 religious education lesson pupils were enthralled as they watched and listened to chants sung in the packed, candle-lit church at the Taize community in France. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, lower-attaining pupils became really excited when they suddenly realised they had the strategies to work out 8×16 . However, these moments are rare and too many lessons lack real sparkle or fun.

39. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. There are high expectations of good behaviour throughout the school and this is supported through reward systems. Good attitudes to work are also promoted and pupils receive recognition through certificates and house points. Parents agree that pupils are taught good attitudes and appreciate the recognition pupils receive for these. In some lessons, such as history and geography, pupils are provided with opportunities to learn about social inequalities and the contributions made by famous people, such as Grace Darling. Pupils are also encouraged to share and discuss their own views on moral issues, through class and school council meetings, as well as lessons, as was seen in a literacy lesson for pupils in Year 6 when they discussed the issue of animals in captivity. A wide range of games and sports provide good opportunities for pupils to learn to play fairly.
40. Very good opportunities are provided for the development of pupils' social skills. In lessons pupils frequently work in pairs or small groups, with high expectations of sharing and co-operation. These opportunities range from quick 'buzz' chats with the person sitting next to them, to longer, more sustained activities as they get older. For example, in religious education lessons pupils from Year 1, sitting in a circle, briefly told the person next to them about a birthday celebration, whilst older pupils worked well together in a science lesson to record work on plant growth. Pupils are also given good opportunities in religious education, geography and history lessons to develop a deeper understanding of other communities and societies and their rules for living together harmoniously. Since the development of the school and class councils, pupils have learnt basic rules of democracy and feel empowered to make decisions about the life of their school. Older pupils enjoy the range of opportunities to take responsibility, for example preparing the hall for assemblies and operating the technical equipment, such as CD-player and overhead projector, and they take seriously discussions about how to spend money raised for charity. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities, including school sports teams, encourages pupils of different ages to work together, and the annual residential trip to the Isle of Wight further enhances the social development of pupils in Year 6.
41. The provision to help pupils develop an understanding of their own and other cultures is satisfactory. Although the school recognises the importance of helping the pupils to become more aware of living in a multicultural society, this is not currently a priority and displays around the school reflect this. Through history, pupils develop some understanding of cultures which have shaped life in Britain today, for example, through studying the Ancient Greeks, the Romans and the Tudors, and making visits to museums and other places of cultural heritage. In religious education lessons, pupils develop an awareness that people have different beliefs, faiths and life styles. A multicultural week, held last term, provided brief, but good opportunities for the pupils to broaden their knowledge through meeting and working with artists and performers from a range of cultures and countries, for example Mexico and the African continent. Activities included dancing, pottery, and story telling. From time to time, music and art lessons further broaden pupils' cultural knowledge and understanding, but this is limited, as are the opportunities to learn from and about each other's diverse backgrounds and religious beliefs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. When inspected in January 2001, the provision for pupils' welfare, and personal support and informal guidance for pupils was judged to be good. Effective systems promoted good behaviour and attitudes. Child protection procedures, and those for recording and monitoring attendance, were good. The position is even stronger now with all pupils, whatever their needs, being very well looked after. The weakness in monitoring pupils' personal development that was identified has been addressed and arrangements are now satisfactory.
43. The school's provision for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils is very good. The pupils are valued whatever their ability or personal circumstances. Lainesmead is a very caring school. It aims to provide a caring, happy and positive environment and it is successful in this. This is recognised and appreciated by parents. There are good arrangements for ensuring a smooth introduction to school life, with effective links with playgroups and parents. The quality of education provided by the school is enhanced by the support it provides for its pupils.
44. There is a supportive atmosphere within the school with teachers and support staff responding sensitively and positively to pupils' individual needs. Led by the caring headteacher all members of

the school community work together to provide a setting in which all pupils, whatever their personal circumstances, feel well cared for and secure. The school's health and safety policy is school specific with clear guidance on individual and corporate responsibilities. The school is aware of its responsibility to provide for pupils with physical disabilities and endeavours to meet it positively, although the design of the school restricts access. The pupils are happy at school and confidently turn to adults when they want help or advice knowing that their needs will meet with a positive, and supportive, response.

45. There is good support during lunch and breaktimes, which has a positive effect on behaviour and safety. First-aid and fire safety arrangements are good and the school provides a safe and supportive environment in classrooms and public areas. The school's procedures for dealing with minor accidents are secure, with good arrangements for contacting parents when necessary.
46. Child protection arrangements, very good overall, have some excellent features. Statutory requirements are met. The designated person has extensive relevant experience. She ensures that all members of staff understand their duty to be aware of the need to be attentive and that they are conscientious in their approach to the proper support of the pupils in their charge.
47. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Records of attendance are properly maintained and comply with statutory requirements. Procedures for recording unauthorised absence are rigorous and there are good procedures to deal effectively with any unexpected absence. The school opens its doors to pupils and parents to start work together, prior to the official opening time, to encourage attendance and promote punctuality. Parents appreciate this. Despite attendance levels being broadly in line with the national average, there is no complacency. When necessary, there is close liaison with the school's educational welfare officer to support the school's efforts to promote attendance especially amongst the very small number of parents whose children have unsatisfactory attendance records. Registration procedures are efficient and there is rigorous recording of lateness. There are good procedures for contacting parents in the case of unexpected absence
48. The monitoring and promotion of good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. The school's policies, including those for anti-racism and anti-bullying, are focused well on the need to promote good behaviour. There is an emphasis on the positive, with clear rewards and sanctions. The school's procedures are consistently implemented to encourage good behaviour. At their heart is a recognition of the importance of being sensitive to the needs of the pupils as individuals. School rules are clear with constant reinforcement through school assemblies and in the classroom. Encouraging and praising good behaviour is emphasised. The procedures, that are well understood and accepted by the great majority of the pupils, are effective and allow the pupils to learn in a setting in which there is an absence of oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism or racism.
49. Although there has been some improvement in the school's arrangements for promoting and monitoring pupils' personal development, they remain satisfactory as they were when inspected in January 2001. Informal arrangements continue to be better than formal ones, with records of achievement still not in place. However, parents feel that personal development is promoted well. A range of strategies, such as the school council, which was introduced by the new headteacher, circle time⁶, when pupils share their views with each other, and class and school monitors, promote pupils' personal development effectively. Support for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. The local authority's ethnic minority achievement service can call upon speakers of some other languages as necessary.
50. There is a good system for identifying pupils with special educational needs. Teachers and the co-ordinators for special educational needs work closely together so that pupils are recognised as early as possible and appropriate help can be arranged. Good liaison with outside support groups ensures pupils receive additional teaching and resources where necessary. Regular reviews are made of pupils' progress towards the targets on their individual learning plans. All procedures

⁶ Circle time is a session provided for pupils to discuss certain matters as a class, following strict rules about listening to others and taking turns to speak.

comply with the nationally recognised Code of Practice in the assessment of pupils with special educational needs.

51. During the previous inspection, assessment was judged to be unsatisfactory. Assessment procedures are now good in English, mathematics and religious education and this is a marked improvement since the previous inspection. In addition, procedures in science and the remaining subjects have been developed satisfactorily since Her Majesty's Inspectors visited the school nine months ago. Teachers now assess regularly after each topic and a 'traffic light' system of assessing how well pupils have grasped the concepts being taught is working effectively. Although this has not been in place long enough to affect the standards pupils reach, teachers can now see how pupils are doing as they move through the year-group. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good, ensuring that all pupils have individual education plans tailored to their personal needs.
52. Performance information is beginning to be analysed and used to predict and to track pupils' progress as they move through the school and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers use this information satisfactorily to place pupils into ability and groups within classes and lessons. The setting of targets in English and mathematics is satisfactory, but class and group targets have recently been established throughout the school. However, although the pupils are aware of these targets, some pupils are confused between the two different types of targets. When teaching is good or very good, targets are sometimes used well to promote learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. At the time of the previous inspection the overall effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents was judged to be satisfactory. It was noted that there had been a recent significant improvement in the involvement of parents in the life of the school. The new headteacher had introduced wide consultation with parents. There was good information for parents. Since then the initiatives that were being put in place have been successfully implemented and the school now has very good links with its parents, both in the way it provides information and the way in which parents support the work of the school.
54. Parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire and the 24 parents that attended the pre-inspection meeting have positive views about the school, which they think is a good one. Parents' views are more positive now than when the school was inspected previously. Parents appreciate what the school provides for their children. Their views reflect the positive partnership that has been developed since the previous inspection. They feel that there have been a number of improvements since then. Particular strengths are thought to be that their children like school, make good progress, behaviour is good, teaching is good with high expectations, there is good access to staff, and the school is well led and managed. Children are helped to become mature and responsible members of society. Weaker elements of the school's provision are thought to be the school's homework policy, some lack of information about progress, and some parents feel distanced from the school. Some parents do not like the reduced opportunities for swimming instruction. Inspection evidence confirms much of what parents think is good, although progress made by their children might be better and there is some inconsistency in teachers' expectations.
55. The school recognises the importance of good relationships with parents and works hard to promote its partnership with them. Home-school links are supported by a home-school agreement that provides for commitment by all to the improvement of standards. All parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning and this has a beneficial impact on pupils' progress. Parents are made to feel welcome and there is much encouragement for parents to play a full part in the education of their children. A number of parents and other helpers respond positively participating in the work of the school in a number of ways that support its work. The Friends' Association successfully organises social and fund-raising events that support the school very well. Parent-governors provide very good role models. They help to ensure that parents are able to contribute directly to the school's educational provision. Parental support for school presentations and attendance at parents' evenings to discuss attainment and progress are very good.
56. The quality of information provided by the school is now very good, an improvement from the good quality reported previously. Parents are kept very well informed about school activities and how

their children are getting on. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have concerns and teachers make themselves available before and after school to meet with them. Parents' evenings take place twice a year to discuss their child's attainment and progress. Pupils' annual reports support these. These are satisfactory overall with those for children in reception being of good quality. There is some well-informed comment on pupils' personal development. Statutory requirements are met. The weakness in reporting how pupils' attainment compares with that expected, which was identified during the previous inspection, has yet to be consistently addressed, especially for subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

57. Regular newsletters, and meetings between the headteacher and parents, contribute positively to good exchange of information between home and school. The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are well-organised, very comprehensive documents that give parents all the information to which they are entitled. There is particularly good reporting of the school's policy for supporting pupils with special educational needs. Statutory reporting requirements are met.
58. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited into school to discuss their child's individual education plan with all staff involved. This encourages parents to help by working with their child at home. Parents of pupils with a statement of special educational needs are invited to contribute to review meetings with all support agencies concerned with their child's education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The headteacher provides good leadership and management. Some elements of her leadership are very good. At the pre-inspection meeting with parents, the strong leadership provided by the headteacher and other senior staff was something parents liked about the school. The headteacher is popular with pupils and parents and her availability, particularly to parents, is an aspect of her leadership that they respect and identify as an improvement on previous years. Ninety-four per cent of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school is well led and managed. The headteacher's educational vision is very clear and the recently updated school improvement plan identifies quite specifically where the school intends to be by 2007. There is a drive to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching and learning. Morale in the school is high, and the majority of staff work well together as a team. There is a shared commitment to improvement; the capacity for the school to succeed is good and the headteacher must take much of the credit for this. The headteacher is well supported by the deputy head who is an outstanding role model in the classroom. They are beginning to forge a successful management partnership, although the deputy is allocated less responsibility for key subjects and/or aspects of the school, than one would normally expect to find. The drive to improve the school lost some of its momentum during the previous academic year when the headteacher had to take on a class teaching responsibility and the deputy had only just joined the school. However, now established as a management team, they are well placed to make some significant inroads into continuing to improve standards and the quality of education.
60. Many of the subject co-ordinators provide good leadership of their subjects. This is particularly noticeable for example, in English, mathematics and science. However, some aspects of the school, for example assessment and the Foundation Stage, are not so well managed and are delaying improvement. Overall, the management of subjects has improved since the previous inspection. The school has a senior management team that is a little larger than one would normally expect, but it is effective. It meets regularly to focus on school issues. As the overall leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff is judged to be good, this is an improvement on the previous inspection.
61. The school's procedures for monitoring, evaluating and developing teaching are satisfactory overall. The procedures have been successful in eradicating the unsatisfactory teaching observed during the previous inspection and during the later evaluation visit by Her Majesty's Inspectors. The school has a good teaching and learning policy. If fully implemented and followed by all staff it is likely to raise the quality of education and standards. However, there are inconsistencies in teaching that still need to be overcome if the school wants to become more successful. The school's strategy for performance management is similar to that found in the majority of schools and is satisfactory overall. However, it should be recognised that when the current headteacher joined the school a

term before the previous inspection, nothing was in place and the school did not have a performance management policy. On this basis, improvement in this area has been good.

62. The joint co-ordinators for special educational needs are efficient and knowledgeable and provide positive, specific guidance for staff in dealing with pupils' needs. This very effective partnership offers useful strategies for in-class support and for the writing of appropriate learning targets. The co-ordinators monitor the training programme followed by teaching assistants, and discuss with them their performance management targets. Helpful weekly discussions focus on current relevant issues. This helps teaching assistants to be thoroughly informed about pupils' needs and with class teachers, to ensure that pupils are fully included in all lesson activities.
63. There is good liaison between the school and the local authority service with regard to pupils who use English as an additional language. The level and quality of support are effective and ensure that these pupils make satisfactory progress. The weaknesses mentioned in the previous report have been addressed and there has been an improvement in the arrangements since then. However, there are only a small number of bilingual texts available and the school recognises the need to augment these.
64. When inspected in January 2001, although the majority of governors were new to their work, the governing body fulfilled its responsibilities well. They have continued to do so, fulfilling their statutory duties and making a good contribution to how the school is organised and run. They are proud of the school, but not complacent, showing an active interest in all aspects of its work. Led by a very committed Chair, governors are actively involved in the work of the school, both as members of various committees, and as individuals properly undertaking their responsibilities. There is a clear scheme of delegation that defines roles and responsibilities. Most governors have individual responsibilities, such as literacy, numeracy, assessment, special educational needs and chairing sub-committees, which are undertaken conscientiously and well. Governors liaise very well with the school, both formally and informally, to offer support and to monitor developments in provision and standards. Several also provide direct support, including assisting with after-school activities, acting as classroom helpers, hearing pupils read, and providing good quality support for the teaching of singing. Governors are kept well informed by the headteacher, formally through detailed headteacher's reports, and informally, through meetings and discussion, so that they have an increasingly clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses that is enabling them to properly meet their obligations to hold the school to account for the standards it achieves.
65. The school has good procedures for ensuring that the financial resources available to it are used to support pupils' learning efficiently. The school's arrangements have improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be satisfactory. The well-informed Chair of Governors, who also chairs the finance committee, works closely with the headteacher and other members of the governing body to ensure that within the school there is a secure grasp of the school's financial situation, so that the school can manage its budget efficiently. Budget setting and monitoring procedures are well organised with a priority on raising standards.
66. The headteacher and governors are committed to providing a high standard of education and their financial planning is solidly based on ensuring that the school's educational provision is sustainable and that, as far as is possible, its educational targets are met. Planned financial reserves, are lower than in the past and, at an expected 2.7 per cent of planned expenditure, are less than good practice suggests. However, there is prudent contingency planning so that the school can respond to changing circumstances with minimal disruption to its planned strategies, enabling it to continue to focus on raising pupils' attainment and progress by giving increased attention to maintaining staffing levels, improving learning resource provision, and raising the quality of the physical environment.
67. The use of the funds that the school receives to support pupils with special academic and other needs is good. The school contributes from its own funds to supplement these specific grants to ensure that there is effective raising of attainment of those who receive extra support to address special learning, language or behaviour needs. The investment made in providing welfare support from the school's own resources is a positive feature of its financial planning.

68. The school's administration arrangements, and the day-to-day control of its finances, are good. Clerical staff are undertaking their duties efficiently. The school office runs smoothly. Satisfactory use of new technology is made here, and elsewhere throughout the school. The school has had a recent audit visit, but results are yet to be published. The most recent published report from the local education authority was in October 1997, well before the present management was in place. It found little of consequence. Some minor procedural matters needed attention, all of which have been properly addressed.
69. In judging the school's performance good use is made by members of the governing body, ably supported by the headteacher, of the four principles of compare, challenge, consult, and compete, to plan and implement the work of the school. Governors are aware of trends in performance and are making effective comparisons with how school standards compare with those expected and achieved elsewhere. A wide variety of statistical information is used to monitor the quality of learning, and identify priorities for development that are fed into the school's improvement plan and, subsequently, into budget priorities. All elements of the school's spending are evaluated to ensure that the most economic and effective quality of education and support is provided for the pupils in its charge. Good procedures are in place for ensuring that best financial value is obtained when purchasing products or services and there are some good consultation procedures with governors making use of a variety of information from parents, staff and the pupils.
70. The match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory and the school makes efficient use of subject expertise in developing the role of the curriculum co-ordinators. All staff new to the school are given satisfactory induction information and a number of staff have trained to act as mentors for students and newly qualified teachers. The school places a high priority on the provision of support staff and currently employs a number of suitably qualified learning assistants who give support to pupils with special educational needs and to those few pupils who have English as an additional language.
71. The accommodation is satisfactory overall with some good features, particularly the school grounds. It fully meets the demands of the curriculum. During the last two years, there have been improvements to the accommodation, including the development of an attractive entrance area and the provision of a well-equipped computer suite, a design and technology resources room, and an outdoor area for children in the reception classes. New toilets have been provided for boys in Key Stage 1, and further, planned improvements include the provision of new toilets for all pupils, disabled access, new windows throughout the school, and the extensive development of the school grounds. The school grounds are spacious with sufficient playground space, divided into lower and upper school areas, for the size of the school, and access to a large playing field, pond area and a small wooded section. The decision to install security cameras has contributed significantly to a reduction in vandalism. The interior of the building is well maintained by the school caretaker and the cleaning staff. However, some areas of the building, including many classrooms in Key Stage 2 are in need of redecoration, and the floor of the Key Stage 2 hall needs to be re-surfaced.
72. Overall, resources for learning are satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, there has been a considerable improvement in the provision of resources for information and communication technology and these are now good. The development of the new computer suite has led to an improvement in the computer skills of all pupils and helped to significantly raise their standard of attainment in both key stages. In the previous report, resources for design and technology were described as 'barely adequate'. However, the school has now developed a design and technology resource room, where resources are of a satisfactory standard, plentiful, and easily accessible. The spacious external areas of the school are used effectively for both physical education and science.
73. Taking into account the improvement in standards, the good leadership and management, the pupils' enthusiasm for learning and good behaviour and the strong moral and social development, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

74. To improve standards and the quality of education further, the headteacher, staff and governors should now:

- ❑ Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:
 - planning work more rigorously for different ability groups and providing extension activities for higher attaining pupils;
 - ensuring that all teachers have realistic expectations for pupils of all abilities;
 - using the information provided by day-to-day assessment and marking more consistently.
(Paragraphs 6, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 76, 78, 79, 80, 88, 89, 91, 95, 97, 101, 103, 104, 122 and 127)

- ❑ In mathematics specifically:
 - promote the development of pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum more effectively. *(Paragraphs 100, 105, 111, 112 and 121)*

- ❑ Improve the balance of the curriculum for pupils of all ages by:
 - ensuring that the time provided for extra work in literacy is used effectively, and appropriately, so that pupils are receiving worthwhile and beneficial learning experiences. *(Paragraphs 28, 29, 76 and 86)*

 - ensuring that all pupils have equal access to all areas of the curriculum, by introducing a rolling-programme of withdrawal, completing some activities such as 'booster groups' at different times, and keeping a record of pupils who are withdrawn for additional activities. *(Paragraphs 29, 139 and 152)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	10	21	32	0	0	0
Percentage	0	16	33	51	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	316
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	68

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	37

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	22

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	33
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.7
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	20	18	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	14	13
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	32	31	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (77)	82 (77)	79 (91)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	14
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	31	30	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (72)	79 (81)	82 (81)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	22	20	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	14
	Girls	15	13	16
	Total	26	25	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (77)	60 (64)	71 (85)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	11	15
	Girls	14	13	17
	Total	21	24	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (63)	57 (67)	76 (89)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	208		
White – Irish	0		
White – any other White background	4		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0		
Mixed – White and Black African	0		
Mixed – White and Asian	0		
Mixed – any other mixed background	0		
Asian or Asian British - Indian	6		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	3		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	5		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	4		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0		
Black or Black British – African	2		
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1		
Chinese	0		
Any other ethnic group	4		
No ethnic group recorded	79		

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	155

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	701,967
Total expenditure	715,865
Expenditure per pupil	2,137
Balance brought forward from previous year	43,202
Balance carried forward to next year	29,304

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	316
Number of questionnaires returned	85
Percentage of questionnaires returned	21

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	32	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	68	28	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	45	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	52	36	7	4	1
The teaching is good.	71	28	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	42	12	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	20	4	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	33	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	46	41	9	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	66	28	5	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	27	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	38	7	2	6

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

75. During the week of the inspection there were 39 children in the two reception classes. The school has developed good procedures for introducing the children into school and these have resulted in most children settling in extremely well. A small number of children have been identified as having special educational needs and are satisfactorily supported. The majority of these children have speech and language difficulties. Information collected as the children enter the reception classes shows that most children have expected levels of attainment. Profiles showing the progress children make during their year in reception are not fully developed but are likely to provide useful information when they transfer to Year 1.
76. Provision for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Assessment evidence provided by the school indicates that a significant percentage of children were underachieving at the time of the previous inspection. This has been eradicated. The curriculum is soundly planned on the basis of the nationally recognised early learning goals⁷. However, the daily timetables show an imbalance of time spent on the different areas. On some days, some children do not get an adequate variety of activities, because too much time is spent promoting communication, language and literacy. The headteacher is aware of the need to look at the teaching time allocated to all areas of learning. Long- and medium-term planning is clear but, although lesson planning identifies activities which promote all areas of learning, it is not consistent between the two classes. Teachers do not systematically evaluate their teaching effectively and there are no clear procedures that show how information collected on individual children is fed into the planning. There are satisfactory opportunities for children to begin to develop confidence when speaking during class discussions, and mathematical skills are promoted soundly, for instance when children add up the number of boys and girls who are present. Learning resources are satisfactory to promote all areas of learning inside and outside the classroom. In both classes, the children have regular opportunities for structured outdoor play in the secure area outside the classrooms, and there are weekly opportunities in the hall for children to develop physically. In addition, the children have a number of effective short sessions in the hall each week to work on a series of exercises designed to develop their co-ordination and improve their readiness for reading and writing. Although there are areas for development, teaching is satisfactory overall.

Personal, social and emotional development

77. Teaching is sound. Behaviour is consistently good and, because of this, most children show positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. This results in most children developing good relationships with the adults who work with them and with each other. Personal independence is developed well each day, as the children come into school and register themselves. Adults and parents interact well during these times to support where necessary. There are many opportunities to work in pairs and small groups and most children are able to freely select activities and work independently when required to. Progress is satisfactory and by the end of their time in reception most children are likely to reach levels expected. In both classes, adults give children regular opportunities to tidy away at the end of sessions and they do this well. Most children quickly and confidently learn the classroom routines, which they come across each day and eagerly explain what they are doing to visitors.

Communication, language and literacy

78. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. Adults have high expectations regarding speaking and listening and this results in most children speaking with confidence and listening well during class discussions. Adults question children satisfactorily but sometimes questions are only directed at higher-attaining children. The children's attitudes to learning are enthusiastic and this has a positive affect on learning within lessons. Although children regularly work in ability groups in this area, adults do not systematically collect assessment information on

⁷ The Early Learning Goals set out what children should achieve by the time they reach the end of the reception year in primary school.

individuals to feed into future planning. As a result, some work is not always well matched to the different abilities within the classes. Progress is satisfactory. Parents and carers are encouraged to come into school each morning. These sessions are lovely, social events and the children proudly show the adults the words they are learning to spell and write. Children are well supported during the sessions, but their previous work shows that they are not given enough guidance to improve. Teachers do not consistently mark this work and inform the children, for example, where they need to place their pencil to write letters correctly.

79. All children have a good try at writing their own name. Most children are likely to reach the expected levels by the time they start Year 1. Information and communication technology is beginning to be used to support this area, for example, the children are beginning to develop a sound idea of how sentences are formed as they complete simple literacy programs. All children handle books carefully and most children are aware of the difference between the pictures and the text. Higher-attaining children talk confidently about the pictures and begin to match the words with their voices. They identify familiar words that they have learnt. Average-attaining children show a sound knowledge of basic book vocabulary, such as the 'front cover', and begin to read words such as 'the' and 'a' in the simple texts they happily share with adults. Lower-attaining children name the main characters in their books, but do not use any knowledge of sounds to help them read the simple texts they are given. For example, one lower-attaining child read 'blanket' for 'rug' and 'pussy cat bowl' for 'bowl'. However, although he spoke confidently about the pictures, he had little regard for the actual text underneath the pictures. Teachers keep records of the books children have 'read' and make brief comments on reading behaviour. However, these comments are often vague and do not consistently enable them to then work specifically on individual children's difficulties.

Mathematical development

80. The children have many opportunities to develop mathematical skills in the activities they are offered, for example, as they count the number of children in the class. Planning links creative development with mathematical development as children make flowers and count the petals. Most children attempt to count and stick up to ten petals but higher-attaining children count up to 16 petals on their flowers. Past work shows that the children have many opportunities to write numbers, but teachers' marking does not consistently inform them what they need to do, to write them correctly. All children begin to learn the names and some properties of basic shapes as they cut out squares, rectangles, circles and triangles to make pictures. Many begin to name two-dimensional flat shapes correctly, but most have little idea of three-dimensional shapes. Teaching is satisfactory overall. However, because teachers do not have effective systems to evaluate teaching, or systematically feed information collected on individuals into planning, activities are sometimes too difficult for some children. An example of this was seen in one class, when the teacher introduced a number of three-dimensional shapes to the children. Many were still confused with two-dimensional shapes and learning was affected during the lesson. Progress is satisfactory overall and most children are likely to reach the expected levels by the end of the reception classes. However, a few will not make the expected progress during their time in reception because of weaknesses in teaching. Previous work shows little evidence of children beginning to record information which they have been taught such as 'one more than' or beginning to learn how to write down this information by using symbols for 'add' and 'equals'. There is little recorded evidence of information and communication technology supporting mathematical development. All children begin to develop an idea of time as they identify important times during the day, such as when they have their lunch.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

81. Teaching is satisfactory and the children make sound progress. There is a satisfactory range of activities to support this area. For example, the children learn about their body as they identify body parts. All children have many opportunities to investigate objects and materials by using all of their senses. They cook, and later eat, gingerbread men and pancakes. Discussions with children show that they enjoy these activities immensely. The children link the gingerbread men that they made with the story they listen to, and one average-attaining child, when asked why they made pancakes said, 'Pancakes are something to do with Jesus'. The children talk with satisfactory understanding of how everyday things can change. Average-attaining children confidently use the word 'melt' in relation to ice cream and chocolate. They begin to name some of the ingredients that they have

used when cooking, such as 'flour' and 'sugar' and 'currants'. Most children are aware of the need to eat healthily and, also, that if you plant seeds in the garden and water them they will grow. They begin to develop a satisfactory understanding of where they live and name the type of house they live in. A few name the road in which they live and the number of their house. They all know that they live in or near to Swindon. By the time they leave the reception classes most children are likely to reach the expected standards. Progress is satisfactory. The children begin to develop a satisfactory understanding of how information and communication technology can support them, as they use programs to develop an idea of basic sentence construction and how to draw pictures using the computers. Lower-attaining children achieve these tasks with support. There are satisfactory opportunities for all children to select from a range of materials to develop the skills needed to cut, stick and join materials together. For example, they make 'Old Mother Hubbard's' cupboard by joining and folding cardboard and using split pins and a stapler. All children use construction toys enthusiastically.

Physical development

82. There are regular opportunities for the children in both reception classes to develop skills using the outdoor equipment in the secure outdoor play area. No complete outdoor lessons were observed during the inspection, but one lesson was seen using the school hall. During this observation children had the opportunity to develop a satisfactory understanding of getting out and putting away basic apparatus, such as benches and mats. Their social development was well promoted as they worked well together. After an active warm-up session all children were aware that their hearts were beating faster, but the opportunity was missed to develop their understanding further, by, for example getting them to think about why this was happening. Number recognition was promoted effectively as the children linked a number, which the teacher held up, with the number of their body parts that touched the floor as they moved. All adults develop personal and social skills consistently as they encourage the children to undress and dress themselves. This results in most doing this independently. Most children move confidently and safely, and are happy to perform in front of their classmates. Teaching is sound. There are many opportunities to work with construction toys and to use soft materials, such as dough to develop rolling and cutting skills. All children have many opportunities to develop their control when using scissors, paintbrushes and pencils. They handle equipment safely and make satisfactory progress in this area. Most children are likely to reach the expected levels in this area by the time they start Year 1.

Creative development

83. Sound teaching and support enables most of the children to make satisfactory progress. In both classes, children have satisfactory opportunities to regularly sing songs and use musical instruments to make music. They sing nursery rhymes and identify 'loud and soft' sounds and decide that 'Mary, Mary quite Contrary' is a 'quiet' nursery rhyme. All children develop a satisfactory idea of using paint as they paint pictures of themselves and use a range of other materials to develop collages. They look at the work of Mondrian and then use his style to create their own colourful pictures. Creative development is linked with mathematical development as they look at shapes within their pictures. Most children are likely to reach the expected levels by the end of their reception year, as they develop careful artwork using a sound variety of materials and techniques, such as collage, printing and painting. For example, careful pictures were developed as the children used chalks on black paper to make firework patterns. Information and communication technology is used effectively to promote creative development as the children use a program to draw gingerbread men.

ENGLISH

84. Standards in reading and writing at the end of Years 2 and 6 are below the national average. This is an improvement on the previous inspection in Year 2, and a similar picture at Year 6. Current standards show an improvement on last year's national test results. Standards in speaking and listening are average through the school. Test results for the past three years have shown some differences in the performance of boys and girls. These were not apparent during the inspection.
85. Younger pupils talk in small and large groups, and listen and respond to stories and instructions. In all year groups pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed through discussion activities and

some pupils are able to speak confidently to adults and in class. In some good Year 1 lessons, teachers used role-play to extend pupils' skills in speaking and listening. The teachers pretended to be 'Goldilocks' and encouraged pupils to ask them questions. Within a short time pupils were framing thoughtful questions and many of them used full, grammatically sound sentences. By the end of Year 6, most pupils demonstrate sound standards in speaking and listening for example, when talking about their reading books and their work in other subjects. During the inspection teachers used questions well to improve the speaking and listening skills of older pupils.

86. Many pupils enjoy books and take pleasure in reading. In Key Stage 1, pupils use a variety of strategies to support their reading including the use of phonics. However, even pupils who read quite confidently are less good at talking about the book they are reading in more than a very simple way. Few pupils in this group know the names of authors or books and some are unsure about the difference between fiction and non-fiction. Only the higher-attaining pupils knew how to use the alphabet to locate books. In Key Stage 2 nearly all of the pupils in the reading sample use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate texts. They also know how the contents and index sections of books can be used to find information. Many use the Internet to help with research. In Year 6, most pupils name authors and talk confidently about their books, but a minority are less knowledgeable. However, even the confident readers are less good at talking about characters or events in a story in more than a literal way. They do not find it easy to predict the likely outcome of a story, or speak about the characters in depth. As in the previous inspection, the 'Reading Activities' at the beginning of the day are of variable quality. Some are focused and help pupils to improve their reading skills in a systematic way, while others are rather desultory. The reading records for younger pupils foster links between home and school by getting parents and carers to add comments which help their children to develop their reading skills. However, not all parents take this opportunity to be involved in their child's learning. As pupils move into Year 6, the emphasis changes and the records are used for pupils to develop their response to what they have read. There are libraries in each section of the school. They are situated in corridors. The stock of books is well organised and many of the books are of good quality.
87. Most pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to develop ideas in a sequence of sentences, sometimes demarcated by capital letters and full stops. Although many pupils are able to write well by the end of Year 2, a significant number continue to make errors in basic spelling and punctuation and this weakness continues into the next key stage. Most pupils write with clearly shaped and correctly orientated letters and the school's focus on developing cursive handwriting has meant that the majority of pupils in Year 2 write in joined handwriting. The headteacher has initiated a regular handwriting competition to foster development in this area and standards have improved since the previous inspection.
88. In Key Stage 2, written work is sometimes presented well, with pupils using joined up writing. However, the presentation of pupils' work is not always satisfactory and this detracts from the standard of their work in other subjects. The school has made the development of the use of literacy across the curriculum a priority and standards are rising as a result. There are good displays around the school, which remind pupils about ways to use their literacy skills to aid their progress in other subjects. There are opportunities to write with a specific audience in mind and pupils have written reports of a school football matches. These were written in an appropriate style and had obviously engaged the pupils' interest. Pupils in Year 4 wrote lively pieces about 'Horrid Henry' and used adjectives well to add interest with phrases like 'the gloomy, mysterious basement that was as big as an elephant'. In an imaginative poem about the moon a pupil wrote 'The moon is a pale dolphin diving in the deep blue sea of night'. The higher-attaining pupils use a more formal style, where appropriate. The range of written work is satisfactory. However, much of the work produced by the higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 is competent, but no more, and teachers need to think of ways to present more challenge for these pupils. By the end of a well-planned lesson in Year 6, pupils were able to make thoughtful vocabulary choices and present a balanced argument about the pros and cons of mobile phones in schools. Higher-attaining pupils use imaginative and precise vocabulary, but not all pupils are able to organise sentences into paragraphs. There is evidence in the classroom displays and in discussions with pupils that they are encouraged to concentrate on grammar, spelling and punctuation. However, even in Years 5 and 6, pupils spell common words incorrectly for example, 'crispsy', 'smuther' and 'wrighting'. Pupils use computers to develop their work, by drafting and redrafting, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Most of this work takes place in the computer suite, but the computers in classrooms

could be used more consistently for this type of work. Raising standards in writing is a priority in the school improvement plan and there has been a lot of time and effort devoted to this.

89. Teaching is satisfactory and some good lessons were seen in the inspection period. There are variations in the skills of teachers and the best teachers set a good pace and ensure the work set will stimulate all pupils and challenge the most able. In less successful lessons, some of the tasks that teachers set are unchallenging and time is spent on tasks that do little to promote progress. All teachers make good use of grammatical terminology, which reinforces pupils' knowledge of technical terms. Teachers often read in a lively and dramatic way and provide a good model for pupils to follow when they read.
90. Most pupils enjoy their work in English. They are interested and maintain concentration well. There are good relationships in all classes and personal development is fostered well. The subject makes a good contribution to the social, moral and cultural development of pupils, for example through class discussions. Teachers are good role models for pupils to follow in valuing and respecting the ideas and opinions of each other. No answer or comment made by a pupil is ever dismissed as worthless by any teacher and this effectively builds up an atmosphere or trust in which self-esteem and self-confidence are enriched.
91. There are two subject managers who share responsibility for development of the subject. They monitor teaching, as well as the planning of the scheme of work. The assessment of pupils' work is now well established, but it does not always sufficiently impact on the planning of teaching. Teachers' marking is always positive in tone and the best examples give clear guidance as to how pupils can make further progress. However, this is not always the case, and the subject leaders need to ensure that the practice of the best teachers is a model for all teaching the subject. Target setting, both for groups and individuals is now becoming established. This is a useful tool for raising standards, but some of the individual target sheets are rather too general and have too many areas on them to be entirely effective. This was also the case in the previous inspection. Resources for the subject are satisfactory. There are ample good quality resources for teaching and class libraries have a suitable range of books.
92. Pupils with special educational needs are given support that enables them to make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. Classroom and learning support assistants make an effective contribution to the progress of these pupils. They clarify questions, explain new vocabulary and encourage pupils. There are good individual education plans for these pupils and these are implemented carefully and reviewed regularly. The arrangements for pupils with English as an additional language are also satisfactory, and their progress is monitored to ensure that they continue to make progress.

MATHEMATICS

93. Standards of attainment are below the national average at the end of both key stages. Standards were well below average in national tests in Year 2, when the school was previously inspected two years ago, and below average in Year 6. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Current standards are an improvement on last year's national test results. Pupils throughout the school are making satisfactory progress and in some year groups are now working at levels expected for their age. This steady improvement is mainly due to good teaching and the additional support some pupils are receiving through 'booster' sessions. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when supported by the experienced classroom assistants, but learning is not so good when there is no additional support.
94. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils are working at the expected level and mentally add and subtract numbers to 20. They understand about place value with numbers to 100 and about half already have an appropriate understanding of simple multiplication and division, with good mental recall of 10, 5 and 2 multiplication factors. Some higher-attaining pupils are beginning to try different approaches when solving problems and most pupils have the confidence to discuss their work in correct mathematical language, giving reasons for their answers. Both in lessons and in pupils' books, there is a strong emphasis on using and applying numbers and good opportunities for problem solving. This emphasis and high expectations by the teachers in oral number work is reflected throughout the key stage and, in Year 1, many pupils are now working at levels above

expectations in this area of mathematics. Most pupils in Year 2 know how to collect data and produce simple bar graphs, but very few pupils have secure knowledge and understanding of working with numbers beyond 100. There was little evidence of higher level work in measuring, two- and three-dimensional shapes, or work on right angles.

95. In some lessons, individual activities are not consistently matched to pupils of higher and lower abilities and, although the majority of pupils make good progress, some pupils find the work too easy and a few struggle to keep up without support. This lack of very careful day-to-day assessment by the teachers, and subsequent adjustment to planning, means that insufficient numbers of pupils are working at the higher level, improvement is not as rapid as it could be, and standards are still below those expected overall. Despite this, all pupils have good attitudes and try hard.
96. Standards in Year 6 have risen, but pupils are still not attaining national averages. In particular the numbers working at the higher level are not as high as the national average, although an improvement on last year, and there are gaps in the pupils' knowledge and understanding from previous years of underachievement. Most pupils in Year 6 have a sound understanding of numbers to 1000, and a few beyond this. They are able to use the four rules of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division in a variety of ways, both mentally and using written methods, and have learnt to calculate the perimeters of regular and irregular shapes. Basic work with fractions, percentages and decimals is evident, but some areas of this work are not at the level expected for their age. The setting of pupils in Year 6 has enabled work to be matched more accurately to pupils' capabilities, particularly for the lower-attaining group and, for them, there has been some rapid progress due to very good teaching. Detailed planning, focused questioning and high expectations ensured that most grasped how to make two-dimensional nets (plans) of three-dimensional shapes at a level expected for their age, even though one or two pupils are still well below expectations in other areas of mathematics. Their pride in their achievement was a joy to witness. Although pupils in the higher group were observed working at an appropriate level for their age, that is accurately measuring angles to within one degree, there was no evidence of the more capable pupils working at levels beyond this. Throughout the rest of Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and in some classes it is good. In Year 5 the withdrawal of five pupils to work with the special needs co-ordinator during numeracy lessons is proving particularly effective.
97. The improvement of mathematics has been a high priority over the last two years and the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is now firmly established. This has given teachers a clear structure for planning lessons and is beginning to reflect in the systematic acquisition of knowledge, skills and strategies that the pupils use. A few teachers, however, are not yet sufficiently precise in their daily planning to accurately match activities to pupils' abilities and this slows the rate of progress particularly for the higher and lower attainers. Where on-going assessments are used to readjust planning, progress is rapid and pupils learn very well. This was demonstrated in the very good Year 6 lesson with the set of lower-attaining pupils and in a Year 5 lesson where the work on 'magic number squares' challenged pupils of all abilities. Procedures for assessment over time, for example half-termly and end of year testing, have improved and the results are used to accurately group pupils and identify the need for additional support for lower attainers. They have also enabled teachers to identify class and group targets for each half term, but individual short-term targets are not so clearly defined. Individual pupil tracking sheets show progress year by year and potential high attainers have been identified. This data is not yet sufficiently tied into weekly planning, but, occasionally, teachers do provide extension activities to effectively challenge those with more ability. For example, work by pupils in Year 4 showed that the majority were labelling acute and obtuse angles and one pupil had gone on to learn how to use a protractor.
98. Despite the mismatch of some individual activities, the overall quality of teaching is good and many lessons have elements of very good teaching. There were no unsatisfactory lessons during the inspection. The start of lessons, with the whole class participating, nearly always challenges pupils to apply knowledge and use strategies they have been previously taught. For example, in a Year 3 lesson pupils were introduced to division and had to use their understanding of multiplication tables to work out answers for the calculation '18 divided by ? = 3' by reversing and rewriting the number sentence as '3x? =18'. The group of pupils in Year 5 with special educational needs were stimulated and encouraged to explain calculations through the teacher's careful phrasing of

questions and clarity of exactly what she wanted them to learn. Other teachers also share with pupils what they will be learning during the lessons and generally check with them at the end what has been achieved. A good example of this was in a Year 4 lesson, when the objective was to learn to use known multiplication tables to work out more difficult ones, in this case 2x and 4x tables to work out 6x. At the end of the lesson a quick but very effective 'thumbs up' or 'thumbs down' indicated to the teacher which pupils felt secure with the concept.

99. Most teachers manage the pupils very well and, having established very good relationships, pupils respond well and usually work hard. Even when the tasks are insufficiently challenging or too difficult they try hard and only occasionally do they lose concentration or waste time. Teachers use a wide range of methods and these effectively make most lessons fun, generating enthusiasm for mathematics. Spiritual moments in lessons are rare, such as when lower-attaining pupils in Year 6 suddenly realised they had the strategies to work out 8×16 , using doubling or $[8 \times 10] + [8 \times 6]$, but frequent opportunities are made for the pupils to work in pairs and small groups. These opportunities contribute well to their social development and pupils show mature levels of co-operation. There was very little use of information and communication technology to support learning in lessons and this is an area for development. However, pupils in Year 2 were observed in the computer suite and the whole lesson had a mathematical focus. Pupils made good gains in their mathematical as well as their information technology learning.
100. The overall management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is ably supported by the experienced deputy head and, since the last inspection, there has been significant improvement in the assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress. The quality of teaching is more consistent but monitoring is not yet sufficiently focused to accelerate the rate of improvement in standards. The use of numeracy in other areas of the curriculum is still underdeveloped.

SCIENCE

101. Standards of work seen during the inspection are below average for pupils in Years 2 and 6. This is a similar picture to the national test results in Year 6 when the school was previously inspected. Standards were well below average in the 2002 national tests and teacher assessments. The school's analysis of these results highlighted the need for pupils to develop their investigative skills, graph work and recording of data. These elements have since been satisfactorily incorporated into lessons. A study of pupils' errors did not explain why boys' results were lower. No evidence was seen of boys' lower achievement in science during the inspection. More detailed lesson planning now identifies more precisely the purpose of learning activities. Teachers have begun to mark pupils' work by indicating whether or not they have met these learning objectives. This evidence provides a clearer view of pupils' achievement. As a result, the work seen during the inspection shows that standards are gradually improving. Most pupils now achieve satisfactorily in lessons. However, teachers do not effectively build on their assessment of pupils' understanding when planning future learning. This means that progress towards the expected standards is not rapid enough. Higher-attaining pupils achieve below their capabilities, because much of their work is insufficiently demanding. Pupils with special educational needs, however, make satisfactory progress in their learning because of the effective support that they receive.
102. Lessons are firmly based on practical investigation, which encourages pupils to observe, handle materials and talk about their findings. Scientific skills are now being developed within a clear planning structure for each investigation. Pupils learn to conduct a fair test, predict the outcome and record their findings. In Year 1, pupils use their senses to try to compare and describe different materials. They use words such as 'furry' or 'shiny' and know that materials can be 'a teddy made from fabric' or 'a spoon made from metal'. At present, several of these pupils are withdrawn for literacy support and so receive less science teaching than the other pupils in the class. In Year 2, pupils understand that plants need food, light and water to grow. They act as science 'detectives', as they set up a test to discover what happens to their seeds when they are deprived of one of these conditions. Pupils show a very basic understanding of what they have learned, for example, about an electrical circuit, but their explanations lack detail.
103. Pupils in Year 5 select different sized spheres to show their understanding about relative sizes and distances between planets. They demonstrate a variety of ideas about the orbits within the solar system. They use photocopied book extracts and the Internet to find more precise data. By Year 6

pupils examine how materials can be changed and begin to identify which of these changes can be reversed. Although they record their findings as shown, however, pupils do not use units of measurement accurately. Higher-attaining pupils do not always have enough to do and, therefore, make insufficient progress. There is not enough challenge for them to follow their own lines of enquiry or to plan their own experiments.

104. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with examples of good and very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Higher expectations of pupils' presentation of their work now produce neater writing. Pupils have good opportunities to use their literacy skills by writing descriptions, lists, and describing activities within a clear planning structure. This helps them to learn correct scientific methods. Careful planning and good organisation ensure that all pupils know what they have to do. Well-focused questions require pupils to explain how much they already know and what they need to find out. This helps to develop their speaking and listening skills. In a Year 5 lesson, this was consolidated by frequent reference to science vocabulary, helping pupils to recognise and define words such as 'orbit', 'relative', and 'solar system'. In Year 6, the teacher's well-focused questions helped pupils to make careful observations about changes to a raw and a cooked egg. This led them to consider and correctly describe reversible and irreversible changes to various substances and explain how they are caused. Improved planning includes a suitable range of activities allowing pupils to learn from first-hand experience. Teachers' pairing of higher-attaining pupils with the lower-attaining ones, in some classes, develops a sense of responsibility and confidence in different pupils. For example, in a Year 6 lesson it was the less confident pupil who described sugar in water as a 'mixture'. Where pupils' literacy skills are not suitably matched to their science observations, pupils have difficulty in recording their findings. For example, in Year 1 pupils were not able to read 'rough', 'transparent' or 'stretchy', which prevented them progressing independently after a good initial discussion. Where pupils with special educational needs have additional help and modified activities they progress well. However, higher-attaining pupils are not always given opportunities to extend their learning at an appropriate level.
105. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. They learn about the work of famous scientists, such as Sir Isaac Newton. Pupils' enthusiasm for science is encouraged by science clubs, young scientist awards and overnight visits to the Science Museum in London. Pupils have regular opportunities to share their ideas in groups, which help them to learn to respect each other's views. The promotion of numeracy skills and the use of computers to support the subject are less well developed.
106. Leadership of the subject is good. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator is well aware of the areas needing improvement and parts of the comprehensive action plan have been implemented. These are already having a positive effect on pupils' learning and standards are improving. More detailed planning is necessary to provide more demanding activities to extend the learning of higher attaining pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

107. Pupils reach the expected levels in Year 2 but are below the expected levels by the end of Year 6. These standards reflect those reported during the previous inspection. Progress is satisfactory throughout Years 1 and 2. However by the end of Key Stage 2, progress is unsatisfactory because the pupils have not been systematically taught the appropriate skills knowledge and understanding in the subject in particular regarding the development of drawing and sketching skills. In Year 6, pupils' knowledge of famous artists is weak.
108. No teaching was seen because art and design was not being taught. The subject is taught in alternate blocks alongside design and technology. The judgement that teaching is satisfactory was made by looking at pupils' work and by discussions with pupils in Years 2 and 6. All pupils have sketchbooks, but these are not consistently used well and do not clearly show that drawing and sketching skills are progressively taught. This continues to be an issue since the previous inspection. Attempts of sketching objects by pupils in Years 1 and 2 are broadly in line with expected levels, but, in Years 3 to 6, attempts at sketching objects are below the expected levels. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to monitor the use of these sketchbooks.

109. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have developed a satisfactory understanding of painting, printing and collage skills, but have had limited experiences with regard to three-dimensional art. Although pupils in Year 1 have made papier-mâché faces, pupils in Year 2 have little idea of the term 'three-dimensional art'. This was identified as a weakness in the previous inspection and continues to be an issue. In addition, pupils in Year 2 have had few opportunities to use clay to develop artwork. However, they all spoke enthusiastically about the recent work they have completed after looking at the work of Kandinsky. Pupils are given opportunities to look at famous pieces of art and talk about what they see. One pupil in Year 2, whilst looking at the work of Kandinsky, said 'It looks like fungus'. Pupils' knowledge of other famous artists is satisfactory as they spoke briefly about the work of Claude Monet and Vincent Van Gogh. Progress within Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory.
110. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 and looking at a small sample of previous work in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, clearly indicates that pupils have not been taught art skills progressively as they have moved through the school. This has contributed to standards being below the expected level by the end of Key Stage 2 and is the reason why the pupils in Year 6 have made unsatisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 6 cannot speak confidently about any famous artists or pictures that they have looked at. Although they spoke about using paints, wax crayons and watercolours, they could not remember working on any three-dimensional art. All spoke enthusiastically about recent drawing and sketching of items such as 'their shoe'. However, pupils' attempts at drawing 'people in motion', which was their topic last half term, are of a low level and show little idea of shading. Sketchbooks clearly show that most attempts at observational drawings are of a standard that is below the expected level for their ages.
111. Art is regularly linked with other subjects, such as English, history, geography and information and communication technology. Pupils in Year 2 used a computer program competently to develop artwork in the style of Kandinsky. In Year 3, when pupils used a variety of materials to create masks, the activity cleverly reinforced the skill of following instructions, which was previously taught in literacy. Art and music were linked in Year 5 as pupils listened to Peer Gynt Suite and then transferred their thoughts to paper, as they developed sensitive pictures using crayons and charcoal. As pupils learn about the work of other artists and allow music to influence their thoughts when creating artwork, the subject promotes the pupils' cultural development satisfactorily. During a recent Multi-Cultural week, Afro-Caribbean artists visited the school and pupils had the opportunity to develop Afro-Caribbean artwork.
112. The enthusiastic, newly appointed co-ordinator is aware of what is needed to raise standards, in particular at the end of Key Stage 2. Teachers currently use the national guidance to plan lessons. However the co-ordinator has identified the need to monitor what is actually being taught, in particular with regard to the use of sketchbooks and opportunities for three-dimensional art. The recently developed assessment procedures have not been in place long enough to show a clear record of the progress pupils make but in the future these will guide teachers well. Resources are satisfactory. Resource packs of pictures and posters have been satisfactorily developed and the co-ordinator has made them easily accessible for teachers. She has worked with teachers to develop their subject knowledge, for example with regard to the unit that is followed by pupils in Year 3 on sculptures. Each week a parent runs an art club for pupils in Key Stage 2. There is some evidence of literacy skills promoting the subject, but this is not so regarding the use of numeracy skills. Information and communication technology is beginning to be used satisfactorily in some year groups to support the subject. For example, pupils in Year 2 produced pictures similar to those of the artist Kandinsky using the computer.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. Standards of attainment are similar to those expected nationally at the end of both key stages and, throughout the school, most pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. Standards are the same as the previous inspection. There have been a number of developments since the previous inspection, including a significant improvement in resources, the introduction of assessment procedures, and the implementation of planning and evaluation booklets across the school to ensure a formal and structured way of recording.
114. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are introduced effectively to the processes of planning, designing and making. They are made aware of the need to establish criteria at the beginning of each project, and

these criteria are used as the basis for design and assessment. For example, pupils in Year 2 were given the opportunity to investigate ways of joining thick card into a cylinder as part of their project to design and make a lighthouse. Before investigating a variety of joining methods, they discussed and established the necessary criteria that the joint should be strong, the process should be as simple as possible, and that there should be no gaps in their joint. They were then able to work in groups to evaluate the effectiveness of their technique against set criteria and to make decisions related to their experience. For example, two pupils decided that they would not use sticky tape, because it was difficult to paint over, whilst another group of pupils felt that the use of drawing pins was totally ineffective. The curriculum for design and technology is often linked to other curricular areas, such as literacy. Pupils in Year 1, for instance, had made houses for 'The Three Little Pigs' as part of their literacy work and then used a hairdryer to test their houses for 'wolf-proofness'. Pupils in Year 2 had used construction kits to make cars and then tested their effectiveness as part of their work in science, as well as developing computer generated graphs to demonstrate their results. All pupils become increasingly aware of the need to carry out evaluations on their finished products and this is a strong feature of their work in design and technology. The evaluation booklets ensure a formal and structured way of recording and make a significant contribution to the development of literacy skills across the school.

115. Pupils in Year 3 to 6 continue to make satisfactory progress in the designing process and in the investigation of a wide range of purposes for designing. They acquire appropriate knowledge in the use of tools and materials and this is evident in the products that they make. Pupils in Year 4 had made musical instruments and tested them for the range of notes that they could produce, whilst pupils in Year 5 had transferred their poems to pop-up cards and then shared them with pupils from Key Stage 1. The importance of establishing appropriate criteria remains an important aspect of design and technology. For example, as part of their work in food technology, pupils in Year 4 were testing a range of biscuits for taste, texture, smell and value for money, whilst in a Year 6 lesson, pupils tested materials for strength, durability and their ability to remain waterproof. This lesson had strong links across the curriculum to both science and numeracy, as pupils were using stopwatches and weights to establish fair tests. As in Key Stage 1, pupils are encouraged to complete written evaluations of their finished products and to make suggestions for future improvement. This is a very strong feature of the curriculum in design and technology and it encourages pupils to think carefully about their work.
116. Although teaching is satisfactory overall, some good and very good teaching was observed during the inspection. The best lessons were well planned, resources were good, and pupils were provided with a range of challenging and stimulating activities. Pupils clearly enjoy these lessons and respond appropriately. In one lesson in Year 4, for example, pupils worked with pace and enthusiasm when establishing written criteria for testing biscuits, because they were motivated. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 talked enthusiastically about this subject and particularly enjoy the practical activities that they undertake. They work well as individuals, in pairs and within groups and the subject makes a considerable contribution to the good attitudes and behaviour observed within the school.
117. The co-ordinator is a subject specialist and has already done much to raise the profile of the subject within the school. She has implemented a curriculum for design and technology that is based on nationally recognised guidelines, but is adapting it to meet the particular needs of the school. The development of a curriculum map has ensured that all areas of the curriculum are being taught. It seeks to ensure that what pupils learn is carefully matched to their previous experiences and gives good opportunities for pupils to increase and to practise their skills over time. She has improved both the quantity and quality of resources, which were barely adequate at the time of the previous inspection and ensured that they are stored centrally and are easy to access. She has developed procedures for assessment and these are being implemented throughout the school. She has a clear overview of her subject and has developed an action plan for future development, which includes monitoring of teaching. Her good subject expertise and enthusiasm are likely to ensure the future development of design and technology within the school.

GEOGRAPHY

118. Standards of work seen in geography for pupils in Years 2 and 6 are similar to those found in most schools. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, but discussions with pupils and looking at their work show that standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils' standards in Years 3 to 6 show an improvement since that time, when attainment was judged to be below average. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning because there is now a clear scheme of work in place. This enables pupils to build on skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Re-arrangement of the history and geography timetable means that pupils are taught these subjects in alternate half terms. This means that, as there are now no long periods without geography lessons, pupils' learning does not lose momentum. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because of suitably modified activities and good support from teachers.
119. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory awareness of their local area and are able to compare features with other places. In Year 1 they walk around the local area, observing houses, shops and the park, identifying aspects that they like and dislike on a picture graph. They record and label where features are on simple plans of their home or the school and examine the route of their walk on a large street map. Pupils begin to use suitable geographical vocabulary, describing an island correctly but not understanding the term 'mainland'. They identify correctly some of the physical and human features of the island they have studied and name features that are natural or man-made. Pupils name India and Africa as distant countries and know that deserts and Antarctica have different climates.
120. In Year 6, pupils use the geographical terms 'source', 'meander' and 'estuary' correctly to describe elements of the river system. They name mountain ranges such as the Rockies, Himalayas, the Andes and the Atlas mountains, but cannot always identify which continent they are in. Pupils use books and holiday brochures as part of their holiday weather reports, showing appropriate awareness of the weather's effect on recreational possibilities and clothing needs. Pupils understand how people can improve or damage their environment. Average and higher-attaining pupils enthusiastically describe their debate about the siting of a theme park. This activity helps pupils to present an argument and to listen to opposing points of view. Although pupils use an atlas to locate places, little evidence of their creating their own maps was observed. A residential visit for pupils in Year 6 to the Isle of Wight further enhances pupils' geographical skills.
121. Suitable opportunities are planned for pupils to develop their descriptive writing and this is usually neatly presented. A well-planned activity in studying maps, for instance, engaged pupils in identifying place names with Roman, Viking or Anglo Saxon word endings. Pupils enjoyed this and completed the task very well, which also contributed to the improvement of their literacy skills. Appropriate opportunities for the development of numeracy are seen in pupils' use of tally charts and interpretation and recording of temperature and rainfall data. However, pupils do not always understand how to read the format provided.
122. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Planning clearly shows what pupils are to learn and the organisation and resources necessary. Lower-attaining pupils are suitably supported but higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged. For example, in a Year 4 lesson about rainfall these pupils were not sufficiently occupied in their group tasks, and questions were directed at pupils of average ability. Group activities are successful in helping pupils to share their ideas but do not always enable them to complete sufficient work. Thus, pupils do not always achieve enough in these lessons. Teachers use the introductory session well, allowing regular opportunities for pupils to share ideas with a neighbour to encourage confidence in speaking. Positive acknowledgement of pupils' answers helps to develop self-esteem and promote further clear explanations. A varied range of decision-making activities and knowledge about other lifestyles satisfactorily promotes pupils' social, moral and cultural development.
123. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The action plan for geography highlights skills in need of development and adequate progress is under way. Pupils gain appropriate experience in using information and communication technology for their investigations, such as directing the floor robot in Year 2. However, this is not fully integrated into their learning. Numeracy skills are not well promoted. Positive marking statements show teachers and pupils what has been achieved. This

assessment is not yet used efficiently to plan how learning is to be improved. Resources are satisfactory, but globes and a wider variety of maps are needed to improve mapping skills.

HISTORY

124. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils' attainment is similar to the standards expected for their age. This shows an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below expectations. Teaching now follows a clear programme of history skills and topics and pupils do not experience long gaps between history projects. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress. Effective support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to achieve satisfactorily. No lessons were observed in Years 4 to 6, but discussion with pupils and examples of their work show that standards are as expected.
125. By Year 2 most pupils understand that some events happened long ago and that changes occur over time. For example, they compare their own toys with those that their parents and grandparents played with. Pupils in Year 1 identify some of the similarities and differences between their toys. In Year 2, pupils know that punishment was more severe in schools in Victorian times, but are not sure whether the monarch then was a king or a queen. Pupils' use of history vocabulary is underdeveloped; for example, they refer to 'long ago', but not 'past and present'. Pupils learn from suitable sources of information, such as stories and pictures, objects, and by asking questions.
126. In Year 6 pupils compare pupils' lifestyles in different periods of history and describe how poorer people must have suffered. They have a satisfactory knowledge of the sequence of periods studied but cannot place them accurately in appropriate centuries. Pupils have an approximate idea of the dates of the Anglo Saxon and Tudor periods. They know that Sir Francis Drake was a famous Tudor explorer and discuss the harsh living conditions of sailors at that time. In Year 5 pupils' written descriptions show a satisfactory understanding about life in Ancient Greece compared with today. Their 'Greek Day' provided interesting activities for pupils present their knowledge about Greek theatre. They dressed in masks and clothing as worn by actors during this era and to take part in a drama session. Pupils use appropriate sources of evidence for developing research skills, including documents, encyclopaedias and the Internet. In Year 1, pupils pose for 'freeze-frame' presentations of scenes from a story. The tableaux were photographed with a digital camera to create pupils' own version of the event.
127. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The topics studied help pupils' moral and cultural development. For example, in Year 2 pupils learn about the achievement of famous people in history, such as the bravery of Grace Darling. Teachers offer a suitable range of approaches and activities to interest and motivate pupils. These include role-play, sequencing and categorising pictures and events and expressing their own views on people's behaviour. Thorough lesson planning ensures that teachers are clear about what pupils are to learn. However, sometimes this is over-directed and pupils do not have enough opportunity to suggest their ideas. When topics involve handling and examining objects, pupils are interested and make good observations. Pupils enjoy taking part in the activities, but do not always achieve enough in a lesson. Where all pupils undertake the same level of task, higher-attaining pupils are working below their capabilities. The history content is appropriate, but pupils' skills of enquiry are not developed at a high enough level.
128. The subject is satisfactorily managed. Key investigation skills have been identified and fitted into a two-year study cycle. Regular opportunities for discussion and writing opinions and descriptions contribute suitably to pupils' literacy development. Pupils' work is marked according to whether they have achieved the learning expected. However, this information has yet to be successfully built on to plan ensuing lessons.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

129. At the time of the previous inspection, the standard of attainment by pupils at the end of both key stages was below expectations and a number of other weaknesses were identified. The school has made good progress in eradicating all of these weaknesses and pupils are now matching national expectations by the end of Year 2 and also by the end of Year 6. This good progress has been achieved by developing and following a clearly defined programme for improvement. A new

computer suite has been established that is large enough for class lessons and each classroom has a computer that is connected to the main network. Pupils now have good access to computers for learning and a broad and balanced scheme of work based on whole-school curriculum guidelines enables pupils to develop their computer skills in a systematic manner. The training of most teachers is currently being carried out and this has increased their subject expertise and confidence. Curriculum co-ordination has improved with the appointment of a knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject co-ordinator.

130. By the end of Year 2, pupils use the mouse control and keyboard accurately and acquire a range of basic technological skills. They can enter, save and retrieve their work and discuss the various functions of certain keys. As well as developing keyboard skills, work in information and communication technology lessons is frequently linked to other subjects, such as literacy, numeracy and science. In one Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils were able to create graphs by entering data that they had collected during a science walk, whilst in another lesson, pupils in Year 2 were using a computer program to help them to develop their skills of multiplication and division. All pupils in Year 1 had used programs to develop keyboard skills and mouse control. They had all used the computer to write their own names and the more able pupils had inserted very basic text onto their scenes from the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. Almost all pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special education needs, show great confidence when asked to 'log-on' to programs and some have quite advanced keyboard skills. The school makes good use of digital cameras and computer-generated pictures of pupils are evident in a number of classrooms. The wide range of experiences that pupils now have in Key Stage 1 enables them to achieve the standards that are expected nationally and this represents a considerable improvement from the time of the previous inspection when they did not have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills. Most pupils now have a satisfactory understanding of information and communication technology and higher-attaining pupils use it confidently and with purpose, such as when a pupil in a Year 2 lesson confidently explained how to make the title of his graph more informative by using the highlight function and then moving text appropriately.
131. Between Years 3 and 6, pupils build on previous knowledge, continue to make at least satisfactory progress, and there are no significant differences in the standards achieved by pupils of different gender or ethnic backgrounds. This is to their credit, as most of them were in school at the time of the previous inspection, when standards and resources were poor, and they have had to work particularly hard to achieve the standards of attainment that are expected nationally. These pupils have now been provided with good opportunities to catch up on aspects of the subject that were not previously addressed and by the end of Year 6, their knowledge, skills and understanding are in line with national expectations. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils were being challenged to retrieve information from a database and to ensure that the information retrieved was reliable and appropriate. As part of their work in science, they had used sensors to develop graphs to reflect the temperature in their classroom over a period of 24 hours. At the time of the previous inspection, there were very limited opportunities for information and communication technology to be used to support learning in other curricular areas, but this is no longer a weakness as pupils potentially have good access to computers for learning, although more use could be made in some classes. In some lessons, work on computers is linked to other areas of the curriculum and it is often related to everyday situations, such as when a class in Year 5 checked the validity of an estate agent's information sheet. Pupils in Year 5 had used their word-processing skills to write a final verse to the poem 'The Highwayman', whilst pupils in Year 4 had produced a 'Flexi-Tree' of questions relating to different methods of transport, as well as designing wrapping paper using repeating patterns. Pupils in Key Stage 2 use the Internet effectively as a tool for research, such as seen in the work produced in history topic for pupils in Year 5, based on the Greeks, and they are beginning to exchange information by e-mail, both internally between classes and with some outside audiences.
132. The quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory throughout the school and this reflects good improvement both from the previous inspection and from the visit by Her Majesty's Inspectors in May 2002. As a result of training, most teachers are becoming increasingly confident in the use of information and communication technology and the marked improvement in resources is having a positive impact on the delivery of the curriculum. Teachers plan effectively and set challenging targets for their pupils. All classes have regular weekly lessons in the computer suite when teachers focus on developing pupils' computer skills. Pupils enjoy these lessons and work

successfully as individuals and in mixed-ability groups and this successfully promotes their social and moral development. Good planning allows pupils to work at their own pace and good levels of co-operation result. In most lessons, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language receive good support and this helps them to progress well. Almost all pupils are highly motivated by the developments in this subject and parents comment positively on the improvements that have taken place. Pupils in Year 6 discuss their work enthusiastically and appreciate the additional opportunities that teachers provide, such as the chance to research and publish a school newspaper, and to enter their own information onto the school website.

133. The school has invested heavily in resources in order to ensure that there are greater opportunities for pupils to work regularly on computers and this has improved their attainment considerably. Teachers make very good use of the inter-active white boards and in all of the lessons observed within the computer suite, the standard of teaching and learning were never less than good and often very good. However, although new computers have been networked and placed in all classrooms, these are under-used and this represents a missed opportunity to use information and communication technology to support learning. In some lessons, such as when pupils in Year 5 researched the Taize community as part of their studies in religious education, classroom computers are used effectively. However, in many lessons, the classroom computer is not utilised and learning opportunities are missed.
134. Although the subject co-ordinator has only been in post for a year, she has been responsible for successfully raising the profile of information and communication technology within the school and this has led to a significant improvement in standards of attainment for all pupils. She has good subject expertise and her good leadership has enabled teachers and support staff to develop in confidence and to make good use of the regular opportunities that they have to teach in the new computer suite. She has developed a scheme of work that includes full coverage of the statutory curriculum and a systematic progression of skills throughout the school. Management of the subject is good overall and includes the monitoring of both teaching and planning and the use of assessment procedures. The school has used its funding well to furnish the computer suite and resources have improved considerably in the last two years. The appointment of a technician has helped to ensure the smooth running of the suite. The school is well aware of its obligations to pupils about safety and security when using the Internet and health and safety procedures are satisfactory.

MUSIC

135. During the inspection there were few music lessons taught. Taking into account the evidence from these lessons and discussions with pupils and relevant staff, pupils in both key stages reach the expected standards for their age groups. These standards are better than those in the previous inspection when the standards in Key Stage 1 were below the national expectations.
136. The few lessons seen during the inspection were good, and the subject is taught satisfactorily overall. In a well-planned and lively music lesson in Year 3 a group of pupils clapped rhythms while another group kept a steady pulse. They followed standard notation and played simple melodies on their recorders. The teacher developed this by dividing the class and each group of pupils maintained their own part while another was being played. In Year 1, pupils talked about 'pitch' and could distinguish high and low notes and demonstrate these on a xylophone. The teachers gave appropriate advice on how to play instruments effectively. There was also good use of technical terms such as 'interval' and 'scale', which helped the pupils to develop their literacy skills.
137. Many pupils learn instruments and visiting music teachers take these lessons. One of these also takes music lessons in Year 3 and a vocal specialist is also working with older pupils to develop their singing. Musicians, such as percussion players and other instrumentalists, visit the school and perform for pupils. A percussion group held a workshop that helped older pupils to enhance their skills of combining different parts and creating an overall effect. Pupils perform in leavers' assemblies and other school events and this helps to foster a sense of self worth. The subject also supports social development with pupils participating in group work.
138. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject. Many of the pupils can express their likes and dislikes of various types of music and some recognise different instruments and use appropriate

vocabulary to describe the sounds they make. They also listen to examples of music from other cultures and appraise them. However, few pupils in Year 6 could name a classical composer and this is similar to what was found in the last inspection. As pupils enter assemblies, there is a piece of music playing and the composer or genre is mentioned and this is a way of reinforcing pupils' general knowledge of music. In a singing assembly the teacher taking the session encouraged them to look at Impressionist pictures while some Debussy was playing. The pupils became aware of the link between the musical and pictorial techniques. This enhanced their cultural development effectively.

139. The responsibility for co-ordinating the subject is shared between two teachers, both of who have musical qualifications. They are aware of the difficulties experienced by non-specialist teachers of the subject and are introducing a new scheme of work that will support them more effectively. The course follows the national guidance and covers the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is a system for assessing the progress that individual pupils make in music and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The resources for the subject are satisfactory and teachers have a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments that they can draw on for their lessons. These are kept in an accessible location. However, some instruments have come to the end of their life and now need replacing. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are supported appropriately and have full access to this part of the curriculum. However, there are times when these pupils are withdrawn from music lessons for support in literacy and this is unsatisfactory. The use of information and communication technology is also unsatisfactory in this subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

140. Standards in physical education in Years 2 and 6 are similar to those expected nationally. A minority of pupils exceed these levels in some elements of physical education, as they did at the time of the previous inspection. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress and boys and girls achieve equally. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with medical difficulties make the same progress as their classmates as a result of the good support they receive from classroom assistants. Occasionally, pupils at the early stages of learning English do not achieve as well as their classmates because they are given insufficient support.
141. The school is currently participating in 'activ8' which is a health promotion scheme operated by the local authority's Lifestyle Development Team and sponsored by a national building society. Many of the sessions are run by a trained local instructor who looks to develop pupils' awareness of physical activity, promote an active lifestyle and improve pupils' cardio-respiratory fitness. At the end of the course, the pupils' fitness levels are measured and compared with the levels when they started. Sessions associated with 'activ8' were observed in Years 3, 4 and 6. Lessons were taken by class teachers and the local fitness development officer. All of the sessions provided rigorous activity for the pupils and the confidence to talk about the effects of exercise on their bodies and its value to health and fitness. This programme of work makes a significant contribution to the school's provision for personal, social and health education.
142. In a lesson in Year 2, pupils created dance sequences that represented words. They 'drifted', 'sank' and 'twizzled' as they moved around the school hall showing a sound awareness of each other and space. The pupils identified the need to warm-up before exercise and moved slowly when 'drifting' and quickly as they 'whizzed'. The pupils showed good physical effort and were able to evaluate sensibly the performances of others and how they could be improved. Literacy skills were well promoted as the pupils remembered words, such as 'spinning' and 'twirling', from the previous week's lesson. Discussions with the pupils in Year 2 indicated that they had a satisfactory understanding of how the body changes during exercise, identifying a faster heartbeat and heavier breathing. They also described using the 'apparatus' for gymnastics and how they developed their turning and jumping.
143. In Year 6 pupils spoke very positively about their 'activ8' work. They commented on how they were evaluating flexibility and stamina and thought the process was getting them fitter. They also believed that being fitter and healthier would help them with their schoolwork. The pupils described undertaking games activities, such as hockey, rounders and developing athletic skills, such as

running and throwing. However, they were less confident in discussing gymnastics and indicated a limited experience in this area of physical education.

144. Teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall although many of the 'activ8' based lessons observed during the inspection were good. The nature of the planning for these lessons encouraged time to be used well as pupils undertook an active warm-up session followed by a series of fitness tasks. This allowed pupils to display good physical effort and the teachers used the time to interact well with pupils to encourage or support them through their tasks. Occasionally, in other lessons observed, teachers did not always get the balance between instruction and ensuring that pupils got plenty of physical activity correct. However, most teachers showed a secure understanding of the subject and an enthusiasm that also stimulated the pupils. This was seen to good effect, as pupils in Year 5 developed their passing, throwing and dodging skills as part of an indoor rugby session. Instructions from the teacher such as 'Move with the ball' and 'Ensure you know who you are passing to', encouraged the pupils to think about what they were doing and a 60-second time limit put on a passing session ensured that pupils focused very carefully on what they were doing. As the lesson progressed there was a clear improvement in the pupils' tactics and their passing and intercepting skills developed well.
145. The subject is used effectively to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills as pupils are given opportunities to evaluate each other's work and discuss improvements to activities and routines. Social development is encouraged through group work and competitive sports, such as weekly football matches with other local schools. The school does not have any formal procedures for pupils who do not undertake physical education for medical reasons. This is a lost opportunity, as these pupils could be involved in evaluating lessons and performances, which is an important element of the physical education curriculum.
146. The subject is managed well by the subject co-ordinator who has a good understanding of physical education. Scrutiny of the school scheme of work and teachers' planning, indicates that the school provides an appropriate breadth of study for all age groups. Swimming is offered to pupils in Years 4 and 6 during the summer term. Although the time given to this area of study is less than the school used to provide, and a disappointment to some parents, statutory requirements are fulfilled. Discussions with pupils and teachers indicates that the majority of pupils fulfil national expectations for swimming activities and water safety, but the school could not provide any records of pupils' achievements in this area and this is unsatisfactory. Satisfactory assessment procedures for other areas of the physical education curriculum are being developed by the subject co-ordinator. The accommodation for physical education is good. Outside, there are large playing fields for games and athletics and reasonably sized playground areas for activities such as basketball and netball. The school has two halls suitable for indoor games, dance and gymnastics. However, much of the gymnastics equipment is old and unattractive, although it is regularly tested to ensure that it fulfils health and safety requirements. Some of the hall space, particularly in Key Stage 2, is taken up by storage of other equipment and this is inappropriate. Resources are generally satisfactory and enable the curriculum to be delivered satisfactorily.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

147. Since the previous inspection significant improvements have been made in the provision for and the teaching of religious education and, consequently, standards have improved. In all year groups except Year 6, pupils are now attaining standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. In Year 6, pupils are making satisfactory progress but, because of several years of under-achievement, they have significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding, particularly of major world faiths. The allocation of an appropriate amount of time for teaching religious education is a major factor in the improvement of standards. The quality of teaching has also improved. Overall it is good and there was no unsatisfactory teaching observed. The implementation of the locally Agreed Syllabus provides teachers with a clear structure and helps them systematically develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding from year to year. Consequently, teachers are more confident and enthusiastic about the subject.
148. In Key Stage 1 pupils develop an appropriate awareness that different things are special to different people and that differences are to be respected. By the time they leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a very sensitive awareness that beliefs and faith are not always linked to a

specific religion. However the pupils currently in Year 6 have had insufficient opportunities to share and explore the rich diversity of faiths that there are amongst their fellow pupils.

149. In Key Stage 1 pupils learn that Jesus was a special teacher and hear some of the familiar parables He told, such as 'The Lost Sheep' and 'Blind Bartemaeus'. They are made aware that these stories have special meanings such as caring, trusting and jealousy and the pupils are helped to relate these meanings to every day life. The themes are expanded well and pupils are given opportunities to talk about who they can trust, what it is like to be jealous, (linked to the story of Joseph), and how they can care for other people and for the world around them. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are aware that many of the stories they hear in religious education lessons are from the Bible, which is a special book for Christians. They know that stories in the Old Testament were written before Jesus was born and those in the New Testament after his birth. The notion of 'speciality' is frequently reinforced, as pupils are encouraged to talk about special friends and special occasions. In a good Year 1 lesson the focus was special occasions and, through talking with others, the pupils discovered that each celebrated their birthdays in different ways, but that they were all special. The teacher briefly, but effectively, led the pupils to realise that, despite the differences, celebrations have many things in common such as cards, presents, special food and decorations, thus sowing the seeds for the later study of celebrations by people of other faiths and cultures. Pupils in Year 2 confidently talked about 'caring hands' and 'unkind hands', about how some people pray to God but others do not.
150. As the pupils move through Key Stage 2 the sound basis of knowledge and understanding from earlier years is systematically built on by good long-term planning and increasing teacher confidence. For instance, regular visits to the local church are continued, but the pupils look in more detail at the functions of, say, the font and altar. They have the opportunity to talk with the vicar and ask him about his job and his faith. Pupils continue to hear stories from the Bible and to discuss the meanings, but it is evident from recorded work that these are in greater depth as the pupils get older. In Year 3, pupils look at joining clubs and the need for rules and teachers clearly establish good relationships and have generally have high expectations because pupils write movingly about their feelings on joining Brownies and Cubs. In Year 4, pupils consider whether or not life is fair, and give opinions on aspects of suffering. They also begin to compare the basic beliefs of Christianity with Judaism.
151. As the links between Christianity and Judaism are developed, and Old Testament stories revisited, pupils are expected to apply greater knowledge and understanding, reinforcing and extending previous learning. For instance pupils in Year 5, revisiting the story of Joseph, considered the feelings of all the main characters, that is Joseph, Jacob and their father, as well as thinking about the brothers' jealousy of Joseph. In Year 5, pupils are also challenged to think about the similarities and differences in the Christian and Jewish concepts of God and in a very good lesson, pupils from this year group learnt about the Christian Community at Taize, in France. This extended their understanding of the basic tenet of unconditional, which Jesus taught, and gave them an insight into a church community. It also linked very well with the history of the Second World War and the teacher skilfully included aspects of geography, by the use of an atlas, to help the pupils locate Taize. Information technology, to enable research the Taize web site, was also used very effectively. Pupils of different abilities were appropriately challenged to find out more about the life in the community, those of higher ability using difficult text and the lower attainers studying pictures.
152. It is evident from the work done by pupils in Year 6 that they have had some good quality of teaching during the last 18 months, but discussions revealed that they did not have the good basis which pupils lower down the school are now receiving. They have very limited knowledge and understanding of other faiths and have had few opportunities to discuss the similarities and differences of major religions. Most have acquired snippets of information, such as knowing that the Qu'ran is a holy book, but did not know for which religion. Currently, most pupils are really enjoying learning about how a boy from a German concentration camp finds faith and learns to trust God and the teachers are using this story well to create opportunities for the pupils to think about and discuss who is important to them and why. A few pupils, that is those who are in the mathematics booster group, are currently missing these vital lessons.
153. Part of the good teaching is the attention paid to the reinforcement of literacy skills. In Key Stage 1, in addition to the many opportunities for speaking and listening, pupils record their work in a variety

of ways. These include making lists, by brain storming, and sequencing stories using pictures and text. Teachers mark the work carefully and help the pupils to spell correctly and use appropriate punctuation. The good literacy links and high standard of marking is continued by most of the teachers in Key Stage 2 with valuable comments indicating to the pupils how well they are progressing. For example a comment in a book from a pupil in Year 4 said, 'Unsure of the meaning' (referring to work on the Lord's Prayer) and in a book of a pupil in Year 5 there was a reminder of the literacy target to organise the work into paragraphs. A further excellent example of the reinforcement of literacy skills was seen in a Year 5 lesson when the more able pupils were reminded to use the skills of 'skimming and scanning', which they had been working on that morning.

154. Pupils respond well, even on the few occasions when the teaching is not exciting. They enjoy the subject, contributing thoughtfully to discussions, taking pride in their work and behaving well. The co-ordinator has worked hard to bring about the improvements to the curriculum and this was acknowledged by Her Majesty's Inspectors on their visit last year. The monitoring of teaching has now begun, and end of topic assessments started this term, so it is too early to assess the impact on raising standards. Religious education now makes an important contribution to all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development.