

INSPECTION REPORT

UPTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Pontefract

LEA area: Wakefield

Unique reference number: 130862

Headteacher: Mr P Franklin

Reporting inspector: Miss K Manning
20267

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd May 2003

Inspection number: 248804

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Waggon Lane
Upton
Pontefract
West Yorkshire

Postcode: WF9 1JS

Telephone number: 01977 723845/6

Fax number: 01977 723845

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs S Bolton

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20267	K Manning	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	What the school should do to improve.
			Special educational needs	How high standards are.
				How well pupils are taught.
				How well the school is led and managed.
12511	L Buller	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
				How good curricular and other opportunities are.
				How well the school cares for its pupils.
				How well the school works in partnership with parents / carers.
31012	A Welch	Team inspector	English	
			History	
22881	GHalliday	Team inspector	Science	
			Geography	
			Physical education	
			English as an additional language	
29188	GUlyatt	Team inspector	Foundation Stage	
			Design and technology	
			Music	
31175	A Allison	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Art and design	
			Religious education	

The inspection contractor was:

Quality in Focus
 Thresher House
 Lea Hall Park
 Demage Lane
 Lea by Backford
 Chester CH1 6LP

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Upton Primary is a very large school serving the local community. There are 412 boys and girls in classes from reception to Year 6 and a further 78 attend the lower Foundation Stage part-time. In the lower Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 3 classes there are more boys than girls and in Year 5 classes there are more girls. Though pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds the area in general is more disadvantaged than most. This is reflected in the above average proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. Most of the pupils are from British families though a very small number come from homes where English is not the mother tongue. However, they do not need any extra help because they speak good English. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is about the same as in most other schools. Ninety-six have learning, physical or emotional difficulties and four of these have statements of their special need entitling them to extra help from the school. When children start in the lower Foundation Stage, their attainment varies but most do not have the skills and knowledge in communication, language and literacy and mathematics that are expected for their age. The school has recently gone through a period of great turmoil with several changes of staff and some classes in Years 2 and 6 being taught by temporary teachers for most of last year. It is now entering a period of greater stability but the frequent changes to staffing have had an adverse affect on the school's performance in national tests.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective and provides its pupils with a good education. Although standards in English, mathematics and science fell last year and are currently below average the school is in a good position to be able to raise standards. This is largely because most of the teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good and the teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and sometimes good. In addition, the head teacher is a very good leader, who has led the school through a difficult period of instability with staff and is determined to move the school forward and raise standards. Despite the high cost, pupils of all abilities and backgrounds get a fair deal in this school and it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Some very good and excellent teaching of art and design helps pupils achieve standards that are beyond what is expected by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour contribute to the good progress they make in most lessons.
- Good provision for pupils' personal growth makes a strong contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language are given all the help they need to make good progress.
- Strong leadership and effective management by the head teacher and senior staff provide the school with a good basis for development and improvement.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are not high enough.
- Although they learn at a steady rate, children in the Foundation Stage do not achieve as well as they could.
- Teachers are not consistent in the way that they mark work and they do not always make the sorts of comments that help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work.
- Despite tremendous efforts by the school, pupils' attendance continues to be well below average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved at a good rate since it was last inspected in 1998. All of the areas for development have been tackled systematically and with some success. Boys are doing better with their reading and writing. Teachers plan plenty of opportunities for pupils to speak and listen and there is now a consistent approach to the way that handwriting is taught. Teachers ensure that higher attaining pupils are given more challenging tasks in many lessons and have begun to consider how best they can provide for those pupils who are gifted and talented. Other improvements include the provision for pupils' cultural development and the rigorous monitoring of teaching and the curriculum, which is helping teachers to identify areas for continued improvement.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

From a low starting point, children make steady progress throughout their time in the Foundation Stage. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage they have the personal and social and physical skills expected for their age. In communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development their attainment is below what is expected for their age. Despite making good progress by the end of Year 2, standards in reading and writing are well below average; reflecting last year's national tests. In mathematics and science standards are below average, which is an improvement on last year's tests. Pupils achieve beyond what is expected for their age in art and design. In all other subjects they reach the level expected for their age. It is a similar picture in Year 6. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6 but standards plummeted in last year's national tests. Inspection findings are that in mathematics and science they have improved this year but remain below those expected by the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve beyond what is expected for their age in art and design and physical development. In all other subjects they reach the level expected for their age. Pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress as a result of the help they get from teachers and classroom assistants. While those who are gifted academically make the same good progress as other pupils, those who have talents in sports and arts do not always achieve their full potential.

NB several factors affected pupils' learning and caused standards to fall last year. A number of classes in Year 2 and Year 6 were taught by a succession of temporary teachers. A considerable number of pupils had special educational needs that prevented them from reaching the level expected for their age. A significant number of lower attaining pupils joined the school and did not have time to catch up. In Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' attendance was poor.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Children in the Foundation Stage are generally keen to explore new learning. Pupils have positive attitudes and are eager to learn. They are enthusiastic about lessons and other activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. From Foundation Stage onwards, most pupils behave well in lessons. Behaviour at playtimes is not always as good, but is improving.
Personal development and relationships	Good. In the Foundation Stage, children do not have enough opportunities to take on responsibilities such as tidying away. Older pupils take pride in their contributions to the running of the school. Throughout the school pupils form good relationships with other children and adults.
Attendance	Well below average. Despite the school's tremendous efforts a significant number of pupils frequently miss school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In the Foundation Stage, teaching is satisfactory overall though some activities are taught well. Staff plan interesting activities for children but are sometimes hindered in what they can offer because of the lack of resources. In Years 1 to 6, the methods that teacher's use are effective and help pupils achieve well in all subjects. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well and this helps pupils make good progress with reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers manage pupils well and this helps them to settle to their work. Lessons move at a brisk pace and particularly good use is made of the time and talents of classroom assistants. There are some aspects of the teaching that could be improved; although teachers mark pupils' work and praise them for effort, they do not always make the sort of comments that help pupils know what they need to do to improve. In general, teachers ensure that pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds have equal access to the curriculum and the same opportunities to make progress. Pupils whose mother tongue is not English and those who have special educational needs linked to learning, physical or emotional difficulties benefit considerably from the work they do with classroom assistants. Teachers have just begun to look at how best they can help pupils who are gifted and talented achieve their full potential and this is something they have identified as a priority in the coming year. Last year, temporary teachers taught a significant number of classes and this had a detrimental effect on pupils' learning. The effects are still being felt this year, although current temporary teachers are doing a good job.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Children in the Foundation Stage have a curriculum that is appropriate for their age. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 meets statutory requirements. It is enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities and a number of visitors to the school but pupils rarely get the first-hand experiences provided by regular educational visits or residential trips.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The work, guidance and resources provided for pupils who have special educational needs help them to make good progress towards their personal targets. Pupils' learning also benefits from the well-managed teaching they receive in small groups from skilled classroom assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Staff ensure that pupils whose mother tongue is not English understand technical terms and are able to take part in all lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are promoted well in assemblies, lessons and the day-to-day life of the school. Pupils' cultural development is promoted very well and helps prepare them for life in a multicultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils and take good care of them when they are in school. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Though the procedures for promoting attendance are very good they are not as yet proving successful.

A close partnership with parents provides an effective basis for pupils' learning and personal development. Most parents are pleased with what the school provides for their children.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Very good. The head teacher leads and manages the school very well and is supported by a competent deputy and senior teachers. Staff work as a team and this has helped bring about significant change and improvement since the previous inspection.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are knowledgeable about the school and fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities. They are committed to the school's success and work hard on its behalf.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Teachers have analysed thoroughly the results of tests and assessments and have taken positive action to tackle the issues arising from this evaluation. Everyone has a good idea of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses almost all of its resources efficiently. Particularly good use is made of classroom assistants to help lower attaining pupils and those who have special educational needs.

The school has a good level of teachers and classroom assistants. The accommodation is satisfactory and good quality displays make it an attractive place for pupils to learn. There are sufficient resources to teach the curriculum in Years 1 to 6 but the limited range and quality in the Foundation Stage have an adverse effect on teaching and standards. Governors and staff consider the pros and cons of all spending decisions and actively apply the principles of best value to all of the school's work.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are pleased that their children like school. They believe that their children are making good progress in school. Parents think that most of the teaching is good. Most parents feel that staff are approachable. They feel that their children are expected to work hard and achieve their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some parents would like a more interesting range of activities outside lessons. A number of parents feel that they do not get enough information about how their children are doing.

Inspection findings confirm parents' very positive views of the school. Children say that they enjoy school and talk enthusiastically about their favourite lessons and activities. Most of the teaching is good or very good and children are expected to work hard and do their best. At the start and end of each school day teachers and other staff are always available to talk with parents. The school provides a reasonable range of after-school activities, though several are cancelled. Parents are right that some aspects of the information they get from the school could be improved. They get good information about the curriculum and events but written reports lack detail about what their children know and can do in each subject.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

By the end of the Foundation Stage

1. Although their attainment varies considerably most children do not have the skills and knowledge expected for their age when they start in the Foundation Stage. This is most noticeable in their knowledge of books, writing and mathematics. The daily opportunities provided for working together and playing outside ensure that by the time they leave the Foundation Stage children's personal and social skills and physical development match those expected for their age. In other areas of learning, teaching is satisfactory and consequently children make steady progress. However, this is not enough to help them achieve as well as they could and by the end of the Foundation Stage standards remain below what is expected in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development.

By the end of Year 2

2. The school's results in last year's National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 fell significantly. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average and far fewer pupils than in most other schools reached the expected level. The proportion achieving a higher level in reading and mathematics was very low and no pupils achieved a higher level in writing. Teachers' assessments in science showed that standards were well below average and that far fewer pupils than in most other schools achieved a higher level. Standards had plummeted because of three crucial factors. Pupils had been taught by a succession of temporary teachers for most of the year and this slowed their learning. There was a higher than usual proportion of pupils in the year group who had special educational needs and this prevented them from reaching the level expected for their age. On top of all this, attendance in these classes was poor.

3. In each of the last five years girls have outperformed boys in reading and writing. Teachers are aware of this trend and the steps they have taken to encourage boys to read and write are beginning to close the gap in attainment.

4. Inspection findings are that most pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn at a good rate and achieve well. Standards in the current Year 2 classes are rising, although they remain well below those expected in reading and writing and below those expected in mathematics and science. Once again standards are affected by high numbers of pupils who have special educational needs and poor attendance. Some very good teaching ensures that standards are beyond what is expected in art and design. Standards in geography, history and information and communication technology are typical for pupils' age, though they have fallen since the time of the previous inspection. In history and geography this is because less time has been devoted to these subjects as teachers concentrated on literacy and numeracy. In information and communication technology, the previously limited number of computers has had an adverse affect on pupils' attainment. In religious education, standards match those prescribed by the locally Agreed Syllabus and in all other subjects, standards have been maintained and are typical for pupils' age.

By the end of Year 6

5. Last year, the school's performance in national tests in English, mathematics and science also fell drastically. Standards were below average in English and well below average in mathematics and

science. Far fewer pupils than in most schools reached the expected level in any of the three subjects. A success for the school was that more than a quarter of pupils in Year 6 achieved a higher level in English tests. This was about the same proportion as in most other schools and happened because teachers ensured that the work planned for these pupils was challenging. In mathematics and science the picture was not so rosy; fewer pupils than in most other schools achieved a higher level in mathematics and far fewer did so in science. Pupils in these classes were also taught by a succession of temporary teachers and, as with Year 2, there were a high proportion of pupils who had special educational needs and attendance was poor. However, the school's results in national tests for pupils in Year 6 were further affected by the fact that a number of lower attaining pupils joined the school in Year 5 and did not have the time to gain enough ground to reach the levels expected in national tests.

6. The school's performance in national tests in English and science had been rising steadily until last year. In mathematics, test results have fluctuated from one year to the next, depending on the abilities of different groups of pupils. The school had set challenging targets for raising standards in English and mathematics but the problems encountered over the year meant that they failed to achieve either by a long way. Despite this, the dip has not prevented standards from rising at the same rate as the national trend. Over the last five years, girls have done better than boys in English tests. Teachers have introduced several new initiatives, such as the head teacher working with a group of boys from Years 5 and 6, in order to remedy the situation and these are beginning to pay dividends. It continues to be a priority for the school.

7. Inspection findings are that standards in English, mathematics and science are improving, though they remain below those expected by the end of Year 6. There is a high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs in the year group and a significant number of pupils who join the school part-way through their education and therefore do not benefit from the predominantly good teaching in Years 3 to 6. However, the schools records and careful tracking of pupils' progress show clearly that many pupils who stay in the school from Foundation Stage through to Year 6 learn at a good rate. Those who start the school after Year 1 make equally good progress from their individual starting points.

8. Predominantly good teaching ensures that standards are above what is expected in art and design, and physical education. In religious education, standards meet those prescribed by the locally Agreed Syllabus and in all other subjects, standards have been maintained and are typical for pupils' age. In history and geography standards have fallen for the same reason they have in Year 2.

9. Throughout the school, good teaching and the support provided by classroom assistants ensures that pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress. Pupils who are gifted and talented academically make the same good progress as others. Those who excel in sports or arts do not always achieve their full potential because the school is at an early stage of deciding how best to promote their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes to school are good. This is not as positive as at the time of the previous inspection when they were very good. Although pupils' enthusiasm for school is very apparent as they talk about their favourite lessons and activities, there is a significant number of pupils who do not attend school often enough. In lessons, the majority of pupils are enthusiastic, motivated and eager to learn. They pay attention to their teachers, ask and answer questions willingly and are keen to offer their own ideas and opinions. In the main, children in the Foundation Stage enjoy the activities provided for them although a small number in the lower Foundation Stage take a little while to settle each day.

11. Overall pupils' behaviour is good and this is one of the reasons why they achieve well. Most of the time teachers manage pupils well and operate the school discipline procedures consistently. Nevertheless there are a small number of pupils who have special educational needs and difficulty in controlling their behaviour; this is especially the case in Year 4 where the time taken to maintain discipline occasionally slows pupils' learning. Most pupils apply themselves well to tasks in the classroom and move around the school in an orderly manner. Pupils and staff have been concerned that standards of behaviour have fallen at less structured times; for example, in the playground. Improving this situation has been a priority for the school council, who feel that the actions they have taken are beginning to have a positive effect. As a result no incidents of bullying or harassment were seen during the week of inspection. No pupils have been excluded from the school for poor behaviour in the last two academic years.

12. Pupils' personal development is good. The caring nature of the school promotes pupils' personal development very effectively. Pupils relate well to their teachers, to other adults and also to one another. They are polite, well mannered and welcoming to visitors. In personal, social and health education lessons they are learning a wide range of social skills that are helping them to develop into well-rounded individuals, who consider the feelings and beliefs of themselves and others. For example, pupils in Year 5 demonstrated their maturity when putting themselves in the position of refugees forced to flee their homes. One pupil wrote, *I felt on edge all of the time, I miss my friends and family but I feel safe now that I do not have to worry about the secret police.*

13. Throughout the school, pupils take responsibility for getting out the materials they need in lessons and tidying them away when they have finished. Outside of lessons older pupils willingly take on the wide range of extra responsibilities that are offered to them, for example, maintaining the school library and as representatives on the school council.

14. Attendance is poor. It is well below the national average and has fallen considerably since the time of the last inspection. The attendance of pupils in the infants is a particular concern. For example, in a Year 1 class attendance has fallen below 90 per cent in 20 of the 31 one weeks of this academic year and in one week was as low as 77 per cent. This is having a significant impact on the standards attained. In past years there has been very little unauthorised absence, however, this has increased during this academic year due to the lack of collaboration from some parents. Attendance registers show that illness accounts for the bulk of the authorised absences, however, there are also a significant number of absences when parents take their children on holiday during term time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 has been maintained since the time of the previous inspection. Most of it continues to be good, though it varies from unsatisfactory to excellent. The weaknesses in pitching work at the right level for higher attaining pupils that were identified in the previous report have been remedied as teachers have worked hard to improve the quality of planning. Only one lesson was taught unsatisfactorily and this was because the teacher had difficulty managing a number of unruly pupils in a physical education lesson and their bad behaviour prevented other pupils from learning. There is good teaching in every year group and good features in the teaching of all subjects. In the Foundation Stage teaching is satisfactory and some activities are taught well.

16. Teachers have maintained the features of teaching that were identified as good in the previous inspection. They continue to manage pupils well, mostly through the good relationships they have with pupils, which ensure that they want to please their teachers. Lessons generally move along at a brisk pace so there is little time for pupils to become bored and this has a significant effect on the physical and intellectual effort that pupils put into their work. For example, in an excellent music lesson, the teacher kept pupils in Year 5 on their toes by changing the rhythms they were trying to play.

17. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs continues to be good. In lessons, they are given work that meets their needs and are encouraged to take a more effective part in discussions by answering questions aimed specifically at them. Teachers use similar methods to ensure that pupils who speak English as an additional language fully understand technical terms in lessons such as science or design and technology. Consequently, these pupils make the same good progress as other pupils. Teachers have only recently begun to identify pupils who are gifted and talented. Those who are gifted academically are given more challenging work in the same way as higher attaining pupils. Those who excel at sports are given the chance to play in teams and leagues and benefit from specialist coaching but teachers have not yet begun to look at how else they can help this group of pupils achieve their full potential. The head teacher and co-ordinator recognise this as a priority for development if the school is to ensure equal opportunities for all.

18. Many pupils who have special educational needs are taught by well-trained and efficient classroom assistants who work with small groups, using strategies aimed at giving them the push they need to catch up or the skills they need to play a full part in lessons. Pupils benefit tremendously from the close attention given to individuals and groups and the classroom assistants make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching. These methods help them make good progress towards their individual targets. For example, practice and guidance helped a pupil whose writing was extremely wobbly in the autumn term to write by the spring term, sentences where letters were formed correctly and were consistent in size.

19. In general, teachers use the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively. Their knowledge of how to teach reading, writing and mathematics has improved as a result of training and because they now use the strategies effectively to plan work. From the Foundation Stage onwards, teachers emphasise the sounds of letters and this helps pupils with both reading and spelling. As a result, children are keen to learn and their interest in books, writing and numbers is increasing. However, there are still one or two aspects of the teaching of English and mathematics that could be improved. Teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to write in subjects other than English. This is most noticeable in subjects such as history, where the emphasis is on discussion followed by the completion of worksheets. In mathematics, not enough time is devoted to learning multiplication tables and number bonds and not being able to recall these quickly often holds older pupils back when they are trying to work problems out in their head. Teachers are also making increased use of information and communication technology in their teaching; as a teaching aid and to help pupils learn in subjects such as history and geography.

20. In the Foundation Stage, where teaching is carried out by two qualified teachers and three nursery nurses, the teaching is satisfactory overall, though some of it is done well. Nursery nurses and teachers put a lot of effort into planning activities that are interesting to children, such as making a home for a snail in the lower Foundation Stage or retelling the story of The Hungry Caterpillar in upper Foundation Stage. As a result, children enjoy their time in school and are keen to explore new learning. This helps them make steady progress and gain knowledge, skills and understanding in all area of learning. However, throughout the Foundation Stage, the range of activities on offer is restricted because of the lack of good quality equipment. For example, much of the role-play furniture in the lower Foundation Stage is old and worn and does not inspire children. In addition, the methods used by staff are not always effective. This is most noticeable in the way that they use the outdoor area well to promote children's physical development but fail to use it to promote other areas of learning.

21. One important gap in the teaching is that although teachers always mark pupils work there are inconsistencies in the way that they do it that results in pupils not knowing what they need to do to improve. Pupils' books show that teachers often give praise for work and effort but they rarely make

comments that tell pupils what is wrong and challenge their thinking. In some subjects, the marking is related to spelling and punctuation rather than the subject itself. In addition, teachers do not always follow the school's guidelines and policy for marking. Subject co-ordinators have identified this as an area of teaching that needs improving.

22. All teachers set homework that is relevant to what pupils are learning in school, although some do this more regularly than others. From the lower Foundation Stage onwards, pupils are encouraged to take books home to read with parents or carers. In addition, pupils are given spellings and multiplication tables to learn at home. Most parents are happy with the amount and type of homework that their children get and reading records show that those pupils who read frequently at home do better than those who do not.

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

23. The curricular and other opportunities provided for pupils are satisfactory overall. As at the time of the previous inspection, the appropriate statutory curriculum is in place. Children in the Foundation Stage are provided with a satisfactory range of activities and experiences that cover all the recommended areas of learning. Religious education is taught in line with the locally Agreed Syllabus. The national strategies to teach literacy and numeracy are used effectively, with teachers adapting the detailed planning to meet the needs of different groups of pupils.

24. The curriculum is inclusive and ensures that all pupils have an equal opportunity to make progress. Pupils who have special educational needs have the same opportunities to attend clubs and take a full part in lessons. The wide range of initiatives used by the school extends the opportunities they have to learn. For example, working in small groups for *early* and *additional literacy support* helps them make good progress with reading and writing and *springboard mathematics* helps them learn and consolidate fundamental skills in mathematics. It is a similar picture for pupils who speak English as an additional language. They also bring a richness to the curriculum by sharing their own culture with other pupils. Pupils who are gifted and talented have access to some additional coaching in after-school clubs but the curriculum is not yet focused on attending to their particular needs. For example, though visitors to the school work on art and design projects with a whole class or year group there is nothing aimed specifically at the most talented artists.

25. A few parents hold the view that insufficient activities are offered by the school outside of lessons. Inspection evidence shows that although extra-curricular activities are satisfactory overall they are limited in the range of subjects that they cover and are at times cancelled. Though the curriculum is enriched by events such as the Tudor day for pupils in Year 6, there are few educational visits or a residential trip to promote pupils' learning in other subjects or contribute to their personal and social development. This is an area that the head teacher recognizes could be improved if the curriculum is to offer pupils first-hand opportunities to learn from a wider range of experiences than they have at present.

26. The school has satisfactory links with the community. Local businesses such as a well known baker visit the school to help pupils make progress in subjects such as design and technology. Links with local clergy make a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development. The head teacher meets regularly with local community groups with a view to the school's becoming a central resource for the village. This places the school in a good position to further develop this aspect of its provision. Satisfactory links with the local high school provide a bridge for Year 6 pupils from one phase of their education to another.

Personal development

27. One of the things the school does very well is promote pupils personal and social development. A good programme of lessons helps the oldest pupils learn about sex and relationships and throughout the school pupils are taught about healthy lifestyles and issues, such as the abuse of medicines and drugs. Most classes have some time each week when pupils can talk about their difficulties or concerns under the watchful and sympathetic eye of teachers. For example, pupils in Year 5 discussed the issue of bullying and suggested a range of strategies to be used if such incidents were to occur in school. The issue of bad behaviour was further taken up at the school council, which enables pupils to have a say in how their school is run and gives them a great sense of self-esteem. Members say that they are proud to be elected to do this job and feel that it is very important. In addition to all this, the deputy head teacher has recently taken on the role of pastoral co-ordinator and is readily available to talk with pupils at break and lunchtimes. This is beginning to have a good effect on the behaviour of some pupils, who see him as a positive role model and, through counselling and quiet conversation are beginning to see how their actions have an impact on others.

28. The overall provision for spiritual, moral and social and cultural development has been well maintained since the previous inspection and continues to be good.

29. The school continues to promote pupils' spiritual development well. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to consider issues and reflect on their thoughts and feelings; the power of music is used well to elicit feelings during moments of inner thought. Spirituality is promoted well throughout the curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to see the wonders of nature first-hand. For example, they waited for chickens to hatch from eggs and for chrysalises to turn into butterflies. In religious education lessons pupils are inspired by the parable of *The Good Samaritan* and state quite clearly that '*Eternal life is about helping people*'. In art and design lessons, pupils are inspired by the work of famous artists and in history they gain insight into the lives of past generations through experiencing their dress and food at first hand.

30. Teachers continue to make good provision for pupils' moral development. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong in the day-to-day work of the school. As a result, they accept the need for school rules and think that they are fair. In assemblies and lessons pupils learn about wider social issues, such as the local problems associated with litter and more global issues such as endangered species. Bullying and other problems that might affect pupils are discussed frankly in specific lessons aimed at promoting pupils' personal, social and health education and consequently pupils are more confident in dealing with any problems in the playground. All pupils are taught to have a sense of fair play, particularly when playing games in physical education lessons.

31. Teachers continue to ensure that pupils' social development is promoted well. In many lessons, pupils are expected to work together and they collaborate well on projects, such as the African art sculptures being made by pupils in Year 5 and 6. On a larger scale, pupils are taught to sing together as a school choir and perform as individual classes. Throughout the school pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility for helping themselves and others. Older pupils act as monitors and even the youngest pupils take registers back to the office. Pupils' social development and in particular their knowledge of how a democracy works is promoted well through the school council. Pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 meet regularly to discuss issues affecting them and their school. This gives them a tremendous amount of pride and they take their duties very seriously. Other pupils know that they can approach council members to have their ideas or concerns listed on the agenda of the following meeting.

32. The school makes better provision for pupils' cultural development than it did at the time of the previous inspection. It is now very good. As a result of extending their links with a school in Africa teachers are able to offer pupils a rich range of experiences of art, music and culture. Pupils are

fascinated by the differences in the two schools and stop visitors to point out the sparseness of the African classroom and the fabrics and masks on display. Pupils are also taught about other cultures and religions in art and design, music, history and religious education and from the small number of pupils who are from ethnic backgrounds that are not English. As a result, although there are few pupils in the school from other cultures pupils are aware of the multicultural nature of society and there is racial harmony in the school. Pupils are also taught to value their own cultural heritage and there are plans to extend their knowledge further in the future with projects about the area's steam trains and railways.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school provides good levels of care for its pupils. All members of staff are committed to the welfare of the children in their charge. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' safety are securely in place and fully understood by all staff. The arrangements for first aid and dealing with minor injuries are good. All of the required health and safety inspections and checks are systematically carried out and formally recorded.

34. There are very good arrangements for monitoring and supporting the personal development of pupils. From the Foundation Stage onwards, teachers and classroom assistants know their pupils extremely well and have a very good understanding of their individual personal needs. Together with the deputy head teacher, who carries out his pastoral role extremely well, they use this information effectively to provide pupils with the help and guidance they need to develop confidence and self-esteem.

35. The school has good arrangements for promoting and monitoring discipline and good behaviour and these start in the Foundation Stage. In the main, staff are conscientious in the implementation of these procedures. This has a positive impact on the good standards of behaviour seen in most lessons. Pupils value the rewards they receive, especially when they are able to share with their parents the photographs taken as they receive their rewards in assemblies. Incidents of poor behaviour are recorded and monitored by the deputy head teacher who has developed very good relationships with pupils and their parents, as a result, the final sanction of exclusion has not been needed in the last two school years.

36. Procedures for recording and monitoring absence are very good. Attendance registers are fully completed and a system of coding enables staff to monitor closely the reasons for absence. Very detailed records are kept regarding the levels of attendance for individual pupils, each class and the school as a whole. This information is used very well to alert the school to individual problems and to reward those who have good attendance. As a result of this monitoring staff are aware that the attendance in infant classes and in particular Year 1, is a cause for concern. Parents have been made aware of this situation and their co-operation to ensure that their children attend regularly has been sought. Yet, despite these very good procedures and the efforts of staff, attendance levels remain poor and have continued to fall this school year.

37. The procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. Much has been done to improve them with the result that they are now good for English and mathematics and satisfactory for other subjects. Information gathered from detailed examination of national tests in English, mathematics and science is used productively to identify gaps in teaching and learning and to target areas for the school to improve. In addition, this information is used to prepare class profiles and to set targets for classes and groups of pupils of differing attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Issues to do with gender, special educational needs and English as an additional language are taken into account at this stage. As yet, no individual targets are set for pupils unless they have an education plan for their special needs. Science has yet to be drawn into the

system although regular assessments of what pupils know and can do are made at the end of each topic. Procedures for keeping track of pupils' progress as they get older are still under development. In the Foundation Stage, the procedures for assessing children's attainment and progress are satisfactory and teachers use a good balance of questions, observations and tests to determine what children know. Formal systems are in place for assessing and recording pupils' achievements and progress in information and communication technology, art and design and design and technology. The school plans to use the good elements within these procedures to assess the remaining foundation subjects and religious education. By regularly monitoring assessment procedures class by class, the assessment co-ordinator has a clear idea of how far class and group targets have been met.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Most parents have positive views of the school. The majority of those who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed a high level of satisfaction with the school's work; for example, their children's progress and the quality of teaching. Inspectors agree with these positive views. However, a number of parents disagreed with the view that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team found extra-curricular activities to be satisfactory overall, though they are mostly sports and arts and are sometimes cancelled for extended periods of time.

39. Some parents feel that they are not kept well informed about how their children are getting on. Communication between the school and home is satisfactory. The school sends out informative newsletters. The detailed curriculum maps, which are provided at the start of each term, enable parents to understand what it is their children will be learning. The school publishes an attractive, comprehensive and informative prospectus. However, the annual reports of pupils' progress are limited in value. They consist mainly of ticked boxes and do not clearly tell parents what it is their children can do in each subject or the progress they have made over the year. The parents of pupils who have special educational needs are kept well informed about their children's progress and are always invited to take part in review meetings, where they are given ideas about how best to help their children at home and can help to set targets for their future work.

40. Many parents make a good contribution to their children's learning in school and at home. For example, they help with homework and listen to their children read. Several parents regularly help in the classrooms. The *MADCATS* (Mums and Dads, Children and Teachers) organise a number of events during each school year, which contributes to pupils' social development as well as raising additional funds for the school. The parents of children who are expected to join the Foundation Stage are welcomed into school and a number take part in a weekly programme of sessions aimed at giving them the skills they need to help their children develop skills in all areas of learning but especially in literacy and numeracy. For example, in one well-attended session, parents and children looked at pictures of birds and talked about their names. They climbed and travelled over physical education apparatus and one or two had a go at playing skittles or hopscotch. The important factor was that for parents and children it was an enjoyable introduction to the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The leadership and management of the school have been strengthened since the previous inspection and are now very good overall. The head teacher has built a strong and supportive team of teachers, governors and classroom assistants, who use all of their skills to ensure that no one loses sight of the school's aims.

42. The head teacher has a very clear vision of how the school needs to develop and the determination to make it succeed. To this end he has inspired staff and governors to make changes to

the way that they monitor and evaluate the work of the school and to many of the school's procedures. Though these have not been in place long enough to have had an effect on standards they are all beginning to pay dividends. For example, focussed monitoring of teaching by a co-ordinator resulted in changes and improvements to teachers' planning for geography.

43. Strong leadership is based on the head teacher's determination to raise standards and his willingness to lead by example. He does this by teaching writing to groups of lower attaining boys in Year 6. The deputy head teacher is a good role model who leads staff and pupils by his quiet, calm manner and the sympathetic way he handles pupils' problems and parents' concerns. Co-ordinators also play their part in leading by example. They provide training for other teachers and offer advice whenever it is requested.

44. Very good management results from the head teacher's ability to coherently plan improvements by addressing issues raised from evaluating what the school does well. The school's improvement plan sets out in detail the school's priorities for improvement, identifies areas where further training or resources are necessary and gives clear criteria for success. In addition, the head teacher delegates responsibilities so that teachers gain expertise in different subjects and year groups and makes good use of performance management to support teachers' professional development. In the last two years the head teacher has managed a difficult situation where several teachers have been absent and temporary teachers have taught classes in Years 2 and 6 for lengthy periods of time. In all of this he has managed to keep the morale of staff and pupils high.

45. Co-ordinators manage their subjects and areas of responsibility well. As a response to criticisms in the previous report they now monitor the curriculum more rigorously and analyse the results of National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science in order to identify gaps in teaching and learning. In addition, co-ordinators check teachers' planning each term and keep a close eye on standards by looking at the work on walls and in pupils' books. The co-ordinators with responsibility for managing the school's provision for pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language do a good job. The recently appointed co-ordinator for overseeing provision for pupils who are gifted and talented has made a good start but has not been in post long enough to have moved the school beyond the point of identifying pupils. She is very much aware that the next step is to look at what the school can do to ensure that these pupils do as well as they possibly can. All of this puts the school in a very good position to be able to return standards to the level they were before the disruption to staffing.

46. Governors make a positive contribution to the very good leadership and management of the school. They are involved in decisions about curriculum and policy and see that the aims and values of the school are met in its everyday working. Governors fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities towards the school. They have set targets for the work of the head teacher and for raising standards in English and mathematics in National Curriculum tests. Following the previous inspection governors drew up an appropriate plan of action to show how they would tackle each of the issues highlighted in the report. As a result, over the next four years the school made good progress in dealing with each of these.

47. Financial planning and control continue to be good. Governors and head teacher work together to set and agree the budget and they ensure that all additional funding is used for its intended purpose. Throughout the year governors continue to work with the head teacher and make regular checks on spending. At the same time, the school administrative staff exercise good control of day-to-day spending within the limits agreed by governors.

48. After an unsettling period when a number of teachers were absent, the staffing situation is now beginning to recover. There is a good level of teachers and classroom assistants to teach the

National Curriculum. The school makes particularly good use of classroom assistants to work with pupils who need extra help in literacy and numeracy. The contribution they make to the quality of teaching makes them a good investment.

49. The head teacher and deputy have successfully introduced procedures for the continued professional development of teachers. This has helped staff to identify where they need further training and this is beginning to have a positive effect on the quality of teaching. For example, having identified the need to have greater consistency in the way that writing was taught, teachers agreed on the style of handwriting they would use in all classes. There are also good procedures in place for helping teachers who are new to the school to settle in and get to know the routines and policies followed by other teachers.

50. There are sufficient resources to teach most subjects and the school is well resourced for teaching religious education, art and design and music. Having good quality resources, such as a kiln, and the efficient use of artists and visitors to the school are helping pupils achieve standards in art and design that are beyond those expected for their ages. In contrast, the limited range and poor quality of some resources in the Foundation Stage are preventing children from making faster progress in a number of areas of learning. For example, children in an upper Foundation Stage class could not copy or continue patterns because the interlocking cubes they were given kept falling apart.

51. The school is set in attractive grounds comprising hard surface playgrounds and large grassed areas. The drainage of the grassed areas has improved since the last inspection and they are now fully used to the benefit of pupils. There is a separate safe and secure play area for children in the Foundation Stage. The classrooms are of an adequate size and place no restrictions on the teaching of the full curriculum. During the week of inspection the school was found to be clean and tidy, although the floor in the hall is not always swept adequately after dinner and some food particles are still on the floor when pupils come to use it for physical education.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. Governors, head teacher and staff should

(1) Raise standards in English by

- providing more opportunities for pupils to write in subjects other than English,
- ensuring that pupils' targets for raising standards in reading build on what they already know.

(paragraphs 63 and 69 of the commentary)

(2) Raise standards in mathematics by

- ensuring that pupils are taught strategies to help them gain a rapid recall of important number facts.

(paragraph 75 of the commentary)

(3) Raise standards in science by

- providing more opportunities for pupils to record their work systematically,
- including more investigative and experimental work in lessons in Year 6.

(paragraphs 82 and 83 of the commentary)

(4) Get children in the Foundation Stage off to a faster start by

- using a wider and better quality range of resources as a stimulus for children's learning,
- ensuring that the outdoor area is used to promote learning across the curriculum,
- making better use of the time of classroom assistants,
- giving children greater responsibility for their learning.

(paragraph 54 of the commentary)

In addition there are the following minor areas for development

(5) Improve pupils' attendance at school by

- building on the school's good relationship with parents to encourage them to ensure that their children attend school

(paragraph 36 of the commentary)

(6) Improving the quality of marking by

- insisting that teachers follow the guidelines in the school's agreed policy
- ensuring that teachers' marking helps pupils to understand what they need to do to improve their work.

(paragraph 21 of the commentary)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	80
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	12	31	33	1	0	0
Percentage	4	15	39	41	1	0	0

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

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	39	412
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	110

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	96

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	35
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	24	22	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	18	19
	Girls	17	18	17
	Total	30	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	65 (85)	78 (89)	78 (94)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	20	22
	Girls	18	17	17
	Total	34	37	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (89)	80 (89)	85 (91)
	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	32	28	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	21
	Girls	18	20	22
	Total	36	38	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (82)	63 (70)	72 (91)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	17	24
	Girls	19	20	21
	Total	33	37	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (70)	62 (70)	75 (82)
	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	370	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.8
Average class size	27.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	271.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	92.5

Financial information

Financial year	2001
----------------	------

	£
Total income	985,046
Total expenditure	989,062
Expenditure per pupil	2294
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,202
Balance carried forward to next year	20,186

Number of pupils per FTE adult	26
--------------------------------	----

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	451
Number of questionnaires returned	174 (38.6%)

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	40	5	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	56	38	3	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	48	6	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	53	5	1	6
The teaching is good.	57	37	3	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	39	14	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	30	5	2	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	33	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	49	11	3	4
The school is well led and managed.	34	49	10	3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	41	6	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	40	13	2	8

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

53. Children start the lower Foundation Stage in the term after their third birthday. They transfer to the upper Foundation Stage in the term in which they are five. This means that some children spend only one term in upper Foundation Stage before going into Year 1. At the time of the inspection seventeen children were aged under five.

54. Most of the teaching in this stage is satisfactory, though some activities are taught well. In part this is because teachers have had little experience of the year groups that they are working with and in the lower Foundation Stage children are taught by trained nursery nurses who do not have the same roles or responsibilities as teachers. Staff have had few opportunities to attend courses, though they have visited other schools in order to look at good practice elsewhere. This has not yet had an effect on the classrooms and some areas lack vibrancy and are uninteresting to children. In addition to this, the school's resources are limited and what is there is often old or worn. This limits what teachers and nursery nurses can provide in terms of interesting children and stimulating good quality play. Despite all this, most children make steady progress during their time in the Foundation Stage. However, they do not get the start that they need to achieve as well as they could. Though staff use the outdoor area well for promoting children's physical development it is not used effectively enough in other areas of learning. This is an inefficient use of a good resource and one that staff have identified as an aspect of the teaching that could be improved.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. Children enter the Foundation Stage with limited social skills. They make good progress because teaching in this area of learning is generally good. Adults know that young children learn best through practical experiences. They make sure there is a good range of activities on offer. However, resources are limited and not organised well enough for children to take on responsibility for their own learning. Children concentrate well in both large and small groups. They take care of the equipment by hanging up aprons after use; they learn to care for living things by feeding the fish. Relationships are good throughout the Foundation Stage. Adults are good role models and teach children how to play together. They encourage parents to linger and this helps children to settle well. Children in the upper Foundation Stage have established friendships, share equipment and toys and play amicably together. Behaviour is good overall; adults have high expectations and make sure that children are sure about boundaries and expectations; they follow rules and routines well, lining up sensibly when walking in the building. The majority of children manage their own hygiene and are learning how to dress and undress before and after physical activity. Staff praise children often and listen to what they have to say. This helps children develop self-esteem. During group activities and self-directed play, children become very involved in what they are doing; for example, when playing with wooden blocks, two children in the lower Foundation Stage worked well together. They constructed their building and stayed at the activity for a considerable period of time. Children learn about their own cultures and beliefs through regular activities during the year. At Christmas time they take part in the school Nativity play. They have had opportunities to find out about Chinese New Year. However, activities to help them gain enjoyment from beliefs other than their own are limited and this affects their understanding of differences between people.

Communication, language and literacy

56. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory and children make steady progress towards the early goals expected for their age. However, because they start from a lower than average point this

steady progress is not enough to help them catch up, and standards remain below what is expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. Staff overall give attention to communication skills and this has an impact on children's learning. They work with children in small groups encouraging them to listen and talk. For example, they teach children a good range of songs and rhymes so they learn a good variety of new words. Staff place good emphasis on topic words so children know the names of many insects. Well-planned role-play scenarios such as the *Insect Hide* help children improve the way they speak to each other. Staff place good emphasis on early reading and some children are beginning to identify letters and sounds, although there are not enough visual aids to help them learn. Children show interest in books, have regular access to them, and know how to handle them correctly. The youngest children learn to recognise words and phrases and older children read simple stories. Writing is at an early stage and children do not achieve well enough here. Staff teach children early handwriting skills but there is too little emphasis given to writing through play. In the upper Foundation Stage children easily identify their own name and some attempt to write it.

Mathematical development

57. In mathematics teaching is satisfactory and children make steady progress during their time in the Foundation Stage. However they do not achieve as well as they could because too little attention is given to numbers through planned play activities and by the end of the Foundation Stage standards remain below those expected for children's age. Enjoyable sessions involving number rhymes, in lower Foundation Stage are a regular feature, but staff miss opportunities to help children identify number symbols as they count. In upper Foundation Stage staff do not always include a planned number element into mathematics lessons. This slows down progress and opportunities are missed to develop mental strategies to solve practical problems. Staff emphasise mathematical words as they work and play with children, for example, in the lower Foundation Stage staff helped children to count four objects to stick in the *Snail House*. Children learn the names of shapes through planned teaching. They learn to make repeating patterns because staff plan several different activities to deepen their understanding.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

58. Teaching is satisfactory and children make steady progress in this area of learning. However, as with other areas of learning, children's lower than average starting point means that this is not enough to help them catch up and standards remain below what is expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. Teachers plan interesting experiments to help children learn about living things. There is a wormery, an ant home and a giant snail for children to observe. There are chrysalises ready to turn into butterflies. In water play children use pumps and learn how to make water rise. They play with dry and wet sand and see the difference. Children play with blocks, make models and have the chance to play games on computers. Staff know children and their families well and talk about special events in their lives as they occur. Children in the upper Foundation Stage classes go on walks around the school grounds suggesting ways to improve the area. They also mark places where they find mini-beasts and record these on a plan in the classroom. Children celebrate local cultural events as they occur, and they have good opportunities to find out about African culture. However, less emphasis is given to the variety of cultures that exist in English society today. Although staff provide a good range of activities, they do not allocate enough direct teaching time to work and play alongside the children to extend their understanding and develop their ideas

Physical development

59. Standards have improved in physical development since the previous inspection. Teaching is good overall and the majority of children achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Throughout the week children have regular opportunities to play at vigorous activities outdoors.

They play with a good variety of wheeled equipment, with balls, beanbags and hoops. They learn to control their bodies and have good chances to run vigorously. In sessions in the school hall younger children learn to move in different ways by pretending to be animals, for example. Older children develop co-ordination when teachers show them the right way to stand when aiming their beanbags for the hoop. Children show a good awareness of their space and the space of others. They listen well to commands and are well able to stop when directed to do so. Children learn about a healthy lifestyle when they drink milk each day and have healthy snacks. They know their bodies change when they are active. A range of tools and equipment is available and children are developing their fine finger skills by threading beads, using glue spreaders and paintbrushes. They play with construction equipment and manage to push and pull to join pieces together. They handle dough each day and learn to knead and stretch it. Children learn to carefully pour liquids from one jug into another as they play in the water tray.

Creative development

60. Children's progress in creative development is steady and teaching is satisfactory. However, limited resources and stimulus mean that by the end of the Foundation Stage standards remain below what is expected for the children's age. Adults provide a range of art related activities, but the areas are not exciting enough to inspire children. Children's work is displayed, but it lacks variety. Children paint pictures of themselves and learn to mix colours; however, the work is generally immature and lacks detail. Children have a snack each day and experience the smell and taste of fruit. Older children use clay to make models of ladybirds, for example. Children enjoy singing rhymes and songs and they play with musical instruments whenever they wish. Children develop their imagination as they act out scenes in role-play, but the lack of resources prohibits their responding to a wider range of stimulus.

ENGLISH

61. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well but despite this, standards in reading, speaking and listening are well below those expected by the end of Year 2. In writing, standards are below average. In the current Year 6 classes, standards in English are below average. One of the main reasons for this is that both year groups include an above average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs. In addition, classes in Year 6 include a significant number of lower attaining pupils who joined the school last year and have not had the time to benefit from the good teaching.

62. By the end of Year 6, good teaching ensures that pupils gain the confidence to take part in discussions in the class and speak to small and larger groups in assemblies. As a response to criticisms in the previous report teachers have put a lot of effort into ensuring that pupils have plenty of opportunities to take part in discussions and give their points of view in English and other lessons. For example, in Years 1 and 2 pupils are asked to talk about the characters and plot of the books they read in small groups. However, because of their low starting point in lower Foundation Stage, a significant number of pupils in Year 2, use a limited vocabulary when explaining their ideas and a number need prompting to speak in full sentences. Older pupils, in Years 5 and 6 were asked to consider what made a good poem and were able to give considered opinions about their preference for rhyming couplets. Though they concentrate on what others say, it is generally only average and higher attaining pupils who develop their ideas beyond a simple response and one or two lower attaining pupils get the tense wrong when speaking.

63. The teaching of reading is good throughout the school. Teachers use the National Literacy Strategy effectively to plan regular opportunities for pupils to read alone, in small groups and to adults. One of the strengths of the teaching is that from the Foundation Stage onwards pupils are taught the basic skills of reading. Consequently, by the end of Year 2, most use the sounds of letters or look at

the pictures to help them read unfamiliar words. By the end of Year 6, the many opportunities that teachers provide for pupils to read books is beginning to pay off. For example, average and higher attaining pupils show their understanding of the themes and characters of books as they talk, albeit shyly, about their favourite stories and authors. An area that could be improved is that the targets teachers set for pupils to improve their reading skills are not always based firmly enough on what pupils already know.

64. Throughout the school, teachers make particularly good use of initiatives such as early and further literacy schemes to help pupils who have special educational needs or who just need an extra push with their reading. In Years 1 and 2 pupils benefit considerably from the good help they get from trained classroom assistants. They make good progress with reading and understanding, and learn to enjoy books. In Years 3 to 6, teachers make similarly good use of classroom assistants to work with groups of pupils who need an extra push with their reading. This strategy is working well and a number of pupils have reached the level expected by the end of Year 6 as a result of the good quality help that is provided by all staff. Pupils who speak English as an additional language do well in Years 1 and 2 and progress at the same rate as other pupils.

65. Teachers' concerns over the lower achievement of boys than that of girls, in national tests, have led to an additional emphasis on topics that appeal to boys. New books to whet their appetite for reading are proving successful and boys say that they find them imaginative and exciting. Another initiative to raise the attainment of a small number of boys in Years 5 and 6, who had not realised their full potential, is the introduction of a weekly lesson with the head teacher. His excellent teaching has not only improved the pupils' enthusiasm for the subject but has provided the extra impetus for at least half of the Year 6 pupils in the group to raise their level of achievement to the expected level for their age.

66. Teachers are good at developing pupils' appreciation of stories and poetry. They do this by asking pointed questions that make pupils think about the characters, the plot and the author's intentions. Pupils also respond positively to their teachers' enthusiasm for reading. For example, in a class in Year 2, the teacher's excellent expression as he read *Joseph and his Amazing Coat* communicated itself to the pupils so that they too got into character and read with the correct intonation. Throughout the school, pupils are expected to read at home and parents who share the reading, further develop their children's fondness for books.

67. One aspect of the teaching that could be improved is the way that teachers use the school library. While it is used regularly for pupils to choose fiction books it is not often used for independent or class research. This limits pupils' abilities to find things out for themselves.

68. The teaching of writing has also improved since the previous inspection, which highlighted weaknesses in handwriting in particular. Since then teachers have agreed a style of handwriting that is taught from the Foundation Stage onwards. Pupils are taught to join their letters so that by the end of Year 2, most pupils have a clear, cursive style of writing. Teachers' handwriting continues to be a good model for pupils in Years 3 to 6 so that by the end of Year 6 most write in a fluent and legible style.

69. Pupils write for a range of audiences and purposes to express their ideas and thoughts. There are more opportunities for writing in Years 1 and 4 than in other year groups. In lessons, there is often too little time for pupils to complete the writing task and, in general, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length. Opportunities are missed for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects, particularly when work is confined to work sheets and writing is often limited to a few sentences. There are, however, good examples of pupils using their literary skills well across the curriculum. For instance, pupils in Year 6 used poetry and both report and narrative writing to

describe the heroic actions of Grace Darling. The teachers' focus on extending pupils' choice of vocabulary is beginning to pay dividends. In a very good lesson in the higher-attaining set of Years 5 and 6, pupils used James Reeves' poem *The Sea is a Hungry Dog* to write their own poems. One pair wrote *The sea is a prowling cat, elegant and grey, spitting and hissing all day*. Special needs pupils in Year 4, with the competent guidance of their teacher, added *No more drinking milk, no more tearing curtains silk* to the poem *Cat's Funeral*. Although pupils are expected to learn spelling rules and to practise their spelling regularly, some teachers do not ensure that spelling skills are used consistently in pupils' independent writing. Teachers indicate spelling mistakes but the onus to correct them is with the pupil and, although pupils make an effort to do this at the beginning of the year, it tails off as the year progresses.

70. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a very clear understanding of the educational direction to be taken in the subject and there is a strong commitment on behalf of staff and governors to raise standards in English. Thorough monitoring of teaching and learning, planning and pupils' work has enabled the co-ordinator to identify the strengths and weaknesses of provision and to take the necessary action to make improvements. There are plans in the pipeline to change the library to a computerised system with the aim of improving pupils' access to books.

MATHEMATICS

71. Standards have fallen since the previous inspection and are now below those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a result of the problems that arose when a number of classes were taught by temporary teachers and the higher than average proportion of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 who have special educational needs. In Year 6 several of the pupils with special educational needs were admitted to the school during Year 5. Nevertheless, all pupils make good progress and achieve well. Despite the increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs, the percentage of pupils working at the nationally expected levels or above is similar to last year. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils achieve well because the teaching is good and this ensures that pupils of all abilities learn well.

72. Teachers have a very secure knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and implement the strategy well, so helping pupils to make good progress across all areas of learning. By the end of Year 2 most pupils understand place value and sequence numbers to a hundred. Higher and average attaining pupils mentally recall addition and subtraction facts to 20. They use this knowledge well when solving problems such as *There were 14 dogs. Six ran away. How many were left?* However, higher attaining pupils do not work with big numbers to enable them to understand place value to 1000. Some lower attaining pupils write numbers incorrectly and this is not always corrected by teachers.

73. Pupils in Year 6 have made good progress in all areas of mathematics, particularly in their understanding of number. They use the partitioning method to work out problems involving multiplication and division. Higher attaining pupils understand place value from, for example, 0.003 to 3000. These pupils and average attaining pupils plot coordinates in four quadrants, whereas lower attaining pupils are only beginning to work with first quadrant coordinates. However, in all classes the inability of many pupils to recall number facts, including table facts, rapidly limits the pace at which they work and so inhibits progress. The school recognises this as an area that is holding back standards.

74. A good feature of the teaching is the way that pupils of all abilities are given work that meets their needs. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are taught in groups of similar ability and this is working well. Planning is thorough and takes good account of the different levels of attainment. For example, pupils

in Year 5 learning how to multiply and divide by 10 and 100 were set tasks that built well on previous learning and for a pupil identified as being gifted and talented the tasks were extended to multiplication and division by 1000. In other year groups teachers plan activities carefully so that work is pitched at the right level. For example, while average attaining pupils in Year 4 devised and set out the working for three addition or subtraction sums using numbers lower than 100 for a partner to check, higher attaining pupils were expected to use numbers above 100, lower attaining pupils numbers below 50 and four pupils who have special educational needs added one-digit numbers to two-digit numbers with very good help from a learning support assistant. In all lessons learning support assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, particularly those pupils who have special educational needs.

75. Another good feature of the teaching across the school is the way all teachers share the learning objectives with pupils so that they know what they will be able to do by the end of the lesson. For example, in a very good lesson with a higher attaining group of pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 the whole class read aloud the learning objectives about choosing appropriate number operations to solve problems and being able to explain their reasoning and their methods. The teacher then reinforced this by a careful explanation and so pupils knew exactly what was expected of them. This set the scene well and motivated the pupils to work with a high level of concentration with their partners. As a result, when asked to explain how an estimate and answer for a problem that required pupils to divide £570 by 15 was arrived at, a pupil said *I rounded up £570 to £600 and estimated the answer would be just below £40 because 60 divided by 15 is four, so 600 divided by 15 would be 40* and then continued to explain clearly how the answer of £38 had been calculated. In some lessons, this is not done as well and pupils are not always taught a wide enough range of strategies to help them gain a rapid recall of important number facts.

76. In most lessons teachers have high expectations of both work and behaviour and manage pupils well. For example, in a lesson with lower attaining pupils in Year 6 the teacher was firm about paying attention and watching closely. As a result pupils behaved well and made good progress in the lesson in their knowledge and understanding of coordinates.

77. The school has piloted an information and communication technology independent learning system in Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5. This not only provides exercises at the right level for pupils, but also has a built-in assessment programme that informs teachers well about the standards and progress of the pupils. The success of this pilot study means that the school is adopting the system for all year groups. This extension of the use of information and communication technology to support learning is expected to be effective in helping to raise standards of attainment.

78. A weakness in the teaching is the inconsistent application of the school's marking policy that clearly sets out how marking should be a tool for taking pupils' learning forward. All work is marked up to date and often includes praise and encouraging comments. However, marking in books very rarely includes comments that take learning forward by asking questions or by setting short-term targets for individual pupils. This is an area for development that will help to raise standards.

79. The subject is led and managed well. The monitoring of teaching and learning through an analysis of planning, looking at pupils' work and the observation of lessons has highlighted areas for change and improvement. As a result of thorough monitoring staff decided to change the method of teaching number operations to one where pupils used a system of partitioning numbers according to their value. This is working well and the impact is beginning to show in pupils' increased confidence in working out mathematical problems. With clear guidance from the co-ordinator the school has been able to use the expertise of teachers from other schools and the local education authority to provide training. This effective leadership and management puts the school in a good position to raise levels of attainment.

SCIENCE

80. Standards have fallen since the previous inspection and are now below those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is because of staff changes and an increase in the number of pupils who have special educational needs.

81. Teaching is mostly satisfactory, though in lessons it varied from satisfactory to very good. As a result pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make steady progress. A strength of the teaching in most classes is that teachers take time to ensure pupils understand the different stages of scientific investigations. For instance, in a good lesson in Year 1 the teacher got pupils to predict which material would best insulate sound from their ears and showed them how important it is to recognise when a test is fair or unfair. This approach continues in Year 2 and gives pupils a firm foundation to build on. As a result, by the end of Year 2, many pupils describe scientific observations reasonably well. However, not enough reach higher standards. This is because teachers do not consistently target higher achievers.

82. Not all teachers have the confidence and scientific expertise to teach investigations effectively. Evidence of this was seen in lessons and pupils' books in Year 6, where group investigations are few and far between. As a result, by the end of Year 6 pupils do not know how to plan a fair test for themselves. This was evident in a lesson when pupils found it difficult to put their knowledge of a fair test into action and to work as a team when they tested the strength and absorbency of a selection of papers. While pupils' attitudes to their work were satisfactory, this contrasts with the good and very good attitudes pupils show in other classes in response to investigations.

83. A common weakness in teaching in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 is that teachers do not teach pupils to record their work scientifically. Too often pupils' recording is a hotchpotch of what they did and observed. In Year 6, pupils' recording is identical, directed by teachers, often word for word. As a result, by the end of Year 6 pupils do not know how to record the results of their work scientifically and independently.

84. Most teachers have a sound knowledge of how to teach science. The quality of teaching was at its best in a lesson in Year 2, where the teacher's flair inspired pupils to tackle an investigation with confidence and in dedicated teamwork. Pupils were intrigued to see for themselves how the distance a vehicle travelled changed when they changed the height of a ramp. The teacher exploited their enthusiasm well by asking pertinent questions such as, *If we make the slope higher still, would the vehicle travel further?* This drew pupils' attention to the patterns shown in their graphed results and their clear understanding underlined the success of the lesson. Teachers enliven discussions with good questioning that keeps pupils on their toes. In contrast, teachers do not often make such good use of questions when marking pupils' work. There are few examples of questions such as, *Why do you think this?* and *What will happen if?* to help pupils do better. Another common weakness is the lack of emphasis teachers give to developing pupils' use of scientific language. As a result, pupils do not as a matter of course use technical terms. Even in good lessons this is usually a weakness. For instance, in a lesson in Year 3 pupils did not use terms such as *plaque* and *enamel* without being prompted. Teachers do not use books or computers on a regular basis to help them learn and this slows down the development of their skills in obtaining and presenting information independently.

85. In a very small number of lessons, teachers do not take into account the needs of different groups of pupils. In these lessons, lower attaining pupils find the work too hard and higher attaining pupils do not get a suitable challenge. This slows the progress of both groups and prevents them from achieving as well as they could.

86. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Teachers' planning has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. This is the result of the introduction and development of national guidelines to teach the subject. There are procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and teachers keep an eye on pupils' attainment and progress by testing them regularly and recording the results. Teachers in Year 6 analyse the results of national tests and identify strengths and weaknesses. This gives teachers the opportunity, for instance, to improve the way they teach pupils about electric circuits because analysis has identified this as a weakness. The subject leader has a clear view of priorities for action. The number of science resources and amount of equipment available to classes is to be boosted to match the requirements of the new scheme of work. New assessment procedures are to be evaluated. The use of information and communication technology in lessons is to be improved. The subject leader's awareness of what needs to be done is a pointer towards improved standards.

ART AND DESIGN

87. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and remain above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Some very good and excellent teaching, combined with the good resources that are available to the school, ensure that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well. Pupils benefit from a broad programme of work in art that introduces them to a wide range of experiences in different dimensions, techniques, tools and materials. Pupils also benefit from working with artists in residence. Work by pupils in Year 6 shows that a particular strength of the subject is observational drawing using pencils. A growing strength is the work with clay using the new kiln. This is clearly in evidence in examples of work by pupils in Year 2.

88. Throughout the school, teaching is consistently good or better. One of the reasons that teaching is good is that teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum programmes of study for the subject. This enables teachers to plan well and to challenge all pupils with activities that enable them to build on what they already know and can do. This is very clearly shown in the very good progress pupils make in choosing and using a range of pencils for their sketches. In a very good lesson, pupils in Year 4 responded very well to the constant praise and helpful comments of the teacher as she moved around the groups so helping them to reach high standards. The teacher questioned pupils closely about their choice of media. For example, when a pupil said that charcoal smudged easily the teacher challenged pupils to explain when this might be advantageous or disadvantageous. The teacher also provided an opportunity for pupils to observe and critically comment on the work of others with the emphasis on why the pictures were effective. Pupils responded to this sensitively and their comments demonstrated a good understanding of the use of different media to produce desired effects. Teachers have high expectations of both behaviour and work. Pupils in Year 1 are shown how to observe closely a plant that they are to sketch. As a result all pupils, including those who have special educational needs, sketched the general features and then incorporated detail such as the veins on the leaves very carefully.

89. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to consolidate skills learned in art lessons to promote learning in other subjects. For example, in history pupils in Year 6 drew portraits of people in the style of Tudor artists. Pupils use skills learned in information and communication technology lessons to generate art, for example symmetrical designs. This also reinforces learning in mathematics. The work of pupils is displayed attractively in shared areas and classrooms. There are also good quality prints by artists such as Lowry, Monet and Van Gogh together with photographs of the local area on display around the school. These heighten the interest of pupils in the subject. However, although there are opportunities to look at these paintings informally, one area of teaching that could be improved include; extending the opportunities for pupils to study and work in the style of artists in any depth.

90. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. For example, in an act of collective worship all pupils, from Year 1 to Year 6, listened in amazement to an account of the painting by Michelangelo of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Also the artwork in Year 5, stemming from the links with a school in South Africa, helps pupils to understand other cultures better. In all lessons seen behaviour was never less than good. In discussion with pupils it is clear that this is a subject pupils enjoy very much and their very positive attitudes contribute significantly to their achievement.

91. Leadership and management of the subject are good. A strong feature is the monitoring of teaching and learning, including lesson observations. This helps to ensure that the quality of the teaching is good and so helps all pupils to achieve very well. Assessment is satisfactory and this is the area of teaching that the co-ordinator has identified for further development. Improving assessment

and increasing opportunities to study and work in the style of artists, including potters, will put the school in a good position to raise standards further.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

92. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and continue to match those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Teaching is sound overall and pupils build on what they have learnt in previous years and achieve well. Design and technology makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Leadership in the subject is satisfactory and schemes of work and policies are in place. The subject co-ordinator is currently building a good portfolio of work to guide and support staff.

93. Pupils' design skills develop at a steady rate. For example, in Years 1 and 2 they draw simple pictures to help them to visualise what they want to make. They label their drawings showing the materials and components they intend to use and write simple instructions. By the time they are in Year 3, pupils consider the making of sandwiches and the packaging of food. Teachers spend time explaining how to use cutting tools safely. Pupils are taught to produce carefully labelled diagrams of cereal packaging; for example, showing how they intend to design each side of the box. In Year 4, pupils produce detailed designs of how to make a chassis for a vehicle. The work produced shows a good range of ideas. Pupils in Year 6 are taught to consider the properties of materials and to analyse and check whether they are suitable for their purpose. For example, when making slippers they learn to choose rubber for the sole because it protects the feet and satin for the upper because it provides comfort. Pupils' skills of measuring, cutting and joining are typical for their age. Before a new project begins, pupils are carefully taught the specific skills needed to enable them to work accurately. In Year 5 pupils learn to measure with great accuracy when making biscuit containers. Teachers and classroom assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. This enables them to make good progress.

94. Teachers prepare lessons carefully, organise them well and manage them safely. This ensures that pupils work methodically, purposefully and with enjoyment. Demonstrations are particularly useful because they help pupils' understanding. A good feature of a lesson in Year 2 was that the variety and individuality in the pupils' coat designs reflected the resources the teacher used to inspire them. Pupils were given the opportunity to produce their designs on the computer and compare differences. Throughout lessons staff encourage pupils to experiment and try different methods and consequently pupils are keen to talk about their work and are proud of their efforts. Teachers encourage pupils to evaluate what they are doing every step of the way and think about how they might improve or change their ideas. For example, when planning and making sandwiches pupils were encouraged to consider mixing sweet and savoury foods if they so wished. This challenges their thinking and inventive skills. Resources are well organised and readily accessible, so no time is wasted between demonstrations and practical work. In discussions, pupils in Year 6 said that they enjoy evaluating their work objectively and analysing qualities and faults in their designs.

95. The curriculum is sufficiently balanced and schemes of work show good links between design and technology and other subjects. The school invites visitors, such as staff from Warburton's Bakery to teach children about basic hygiene when handling food and to let them sample many varieties of bread. This inspires pupils when they are learning how to make sandwiches and encourages them to make informed choices about the type of bread they wish to use. There are some missed opportunities for pupils to keep their sketches and designs over time to see their own progress and this is an area of teaching that the co-ordinator has identified as one that could be improved.

GEOGRAPHY

96. Standards have fallen since the previous inspection though they remain in line with those expected for pupils' ages. There are two main reasons for this: the emphasis placed on literacy and numeracy at the expense of other subjects; and the greater number of pupils who have special educational needs. Teaching is good on the whole. Teachers make good use of the time available for geography lessons. As a result pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make fast progress. A good new scheme of work provides a firm basis for teachers to plan interesting lessons.

97. A strong feature of teaching is the emphasis teachers place on fieldwork in the locality to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. They use fieldwork well to give pupils first-hand experiences in the school grounds and a nearby village. Teachers help pupils in Year 1 to make a traffic survey outside school and invite visitors to talk to them about safety. Teachers in Year 4 develop this real life approach. Pupils take a questionnaire into the streets and shops of Upton to ask opinions about traffic. From the results they draw conclusions and suggest ways of improving traffic flow and safety. By the end of Year 6 pupils know enough about the locality to compare and contrast Upton with a nearby village, which they visit. They know basic differences between the settlements, such as one being linear and the other being nuclear.

98. Teachers introduce pupils to contrasting locations in the United Kingdom and abroad. In Year 2 they use a well-known story of a girl on a Scottish island to bring human interest to pupils' study. Pupils show a satisfactory understanding of similarities and differences with their own environment and express sensible opinions about whether they would like to live on an island: for instance, *It would be too quiet*. Teachers give pupils a sound understanding of the effects of climate on lifestyles in different parts of the world. They help pupils appreciate not only the differences between cultures and countries, but also the things they have in common. For example, pupils in Year 3 study the climate and landscape of Greece and in Year 5 they study the features of the Caribbean island of St. Lucia.

99. Teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities to develop their skills in making maps and plans at a variety of scales and to study maps and atlases. For example, pupils in Year 2 draw a route of their journey from home to school and show features such as shops and houses. Exercises in orienteering around the school in Year 3 gives them a practical purpose to put their skills in map work to good use. By the time they are in Year 4 pupils use large scale Ordnance Survey maps in their local studies.

100. Teachers make good links with other subjects, such as literacy, numeracy and history. This is done especially well in Year 3 where pupils draw maps of ancient Greece, graphs to compare weather in Greece and the United Kingdom and write reports for a holiday brochure.

101. There are a few weaknesses in teaching. For instance, there is little evidence of the use of computers to help pupils learn in geography lessons. The way teachers mark pupils' work does not show them how to improve. In Year 6, the teacher heavily directs much of pupils' recorded work and this slows down the development of pupils' skills.

102. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader gains an awareness of what needs improving by monitoring teaching and learning. This gives the school the capacity to lay the foundation to raise attainment.

HISTORY

103. Standards in history are typical for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Standards have fallen since the last inspection, mainly because less time is given to history following the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Pupils enter school with limited background knowledge and understanding and achieve well to reach the standards expected by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also make good progress.

104. Teaching is good overall, mainly because teachers know their subject well. A strength of the provision is the way that they use a practical approach which brings history to life. Teachers in Year 6 planned 'A Tudor Day', with great care, to ensure that pupils of all abilities had very interesting things to do. Teachers, helpers and pupils entered into the spirit of the occasion by dressing in Tudor style clothes, eating a lunch of typical foods from Tudor times and addressing each other as *Master....* or *Mistress....*. As pupils, for example, wrote with quill pens, used a spindle to spin wool, played *five stones*, attempted fine embroidery and made posies to ward off evil smells, they made thoughtful and informed judgements about the best and worst features of Tudor England. The climax to the day was story telling, set in a darkened room with only candles for light. Pupils were completely silent and enthralled as one of the teachers, using some of the language of the day, described her 'life' as a servant to Elizabeth 1. This is very effective teaching because it helps pupils to know and understand what life was like in the past. As a result pupils' knowledge and understanding of this period are above expectations.

105. By the end of Year 2, pupils begin to develop a sound knowledge of the passing of time as they make a simple time line of the events in their lives. They learn about the way of life in the more distant past by looking at the lives of notable people. By reading extracts of Samuel Pepys' diary they discover why the fire spread so quickly; Florence Nightingale's work in Scutari helps them to see how conditions in hospitals have improved since Victorian times. Pupils in Year 1 gain an understanding of chronology as they sort toys into new, older and oldest.

106. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to consider why things happened as they did. When pupils in Year 5 looked at *World War Two* they showed that they were able to link cause and effect. They described how Hitler's invasion of Poland caused the allies to declare war on Germany, which in turn led to some children in Britain being evacuated to the country. In most lessons, teachers guide pupils to write about history using their own words. One Year 6 pupil empathised with the shipwrecked sailors before their rescue by Grace Darling by writing '*the thought of me never seeing my family again brought a tear which ran down my face*'. Paradoxically, there are other occasions when pupils are expected to copy the same factual information. This discourages their creativity and does not provide opportunities for teachers to check what pupils have understood about the lesson. Lower-attaining pupils sometimes find it difficult to complete this kind of work. Marking of pupils' written work is inconsistent. Few teachers make comments to help pupils to develop their history skills because marking is more focused on the literacy aspects of the work. However, teachers make very good use of pupils' skills in handwriting and art. Pupils sketch confidently and they take care to present their work neatly. Some teachers are using information and communication technology well, for example, to show pupils how to collect information from the Internet.

107. The subject is led and managed soundly. The present co-ordinator is holding history on a temporary basis alongside her other co-ordinator commitments. Although she monitors the quality of teachers' planning, she has not monitored teaching and learning to see how well it is working in the classroom. Resources for history remain satisfactory. Visits to places of historic interest enhance the curriculum and good use is made both of local residents and places of interest in the local community to provide first hand learning experiences.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

108. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well and standards match those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6. For pupils in Year 2, this is a similar picture to the time of the previous inspection. Standards have fallen by the end of Year 6 because, until the installation of the computer suite, there were not enough computers to give pupils sufficient opportunities to learn new skills. As a result, a

significant number of pupils in Year 6 are unsure how to use electronic mail, spreadsheets or sensory equipment to communicate information.

109. Rigorous and regular monitoring by the co-ordinator ensures that teachers are aware of the gaps in pupils' knowledge and that they are working hard to remedy them. Teachers use a good quality programme of work and ensure that each class gets at least one lesson a week in the computer suite and that, wherever possible, pupils continue to practise their skills on computers in classrooms.

110. The teaching is satisfactory overall and some lessons are taught well. Since the previous inspection teachers have taken advantage of training and they are now competent in teaching information and communication technology and confident in using computers to promote pupils' learning in other subjects. This is evident in the way that pupils in Year 1 used computers to create picture graphs of their preferred pets and those in Year 5 interrogated databases to compile facts about birds.

111. In most lessons teachers give pupils clear, step-by-step instructions about how to use the hardware and the school's programs. For example, in a good lesson linked with design and technology, pupils in Year 2 produced attractive, symmetrical designs for a coat for Joseph after the teacher showed them how to use the program's features. As a result of these careful explanations pupils in Year 2 are familiar with the layout of the keyboard, control the cursor with a mouse, log on and off and open programs. They also know that information and communication technology is not just computers, but includes many domestic items. By the end of Year 6, pupils use a word processing program competently to draft and publish their work and communicate their views in good quality presentations about endangered species, litter and football. They are confident in using information and communication technology and are beginning to consider why they would choose to use computers to share information rather than other methods. Occasionally, teachers do not give pupils all the information they need to use the computers. This happened in a class in Year 3, when a number of pupils interrupted the computer's progress in loading a program because they did not know how to determine that the task was completed. This led to some frustration before they settled to their work on sending messages electronically.

112. Throughout the school, teachers ensure that pupils have equal access to the curriculum and the same opportunities to make progress. In most lessons, classroom assistants provide valuable help to pupils who have special educational needs and the most able pupils are given the chance to work on more difficult tasks or help by demonstrating their skills. For example, in a class in Year 4, lower attaining pupils were helped to understand how to program a floor robot to move in a fixed pattern while average attaining pupils were set the task of writing a sequence of commands for drawing regular two-dimensional shapes straight onto the computer. The most able pupils were challenged by working out how to use the repeat command to draw rectangles, where sides are of different length. The careful planning of work ensures that pupils of all abilities enjoy their work and are motivated to do well. It also means that pupils are successful and are proud when their completed work is shown to the rest of the class.

113. The subject is led and managed well. By systematically monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and keeping a close eye on standards, the co-ordinator has a clear idea of what works well and where there is a need for further improvement. This has helped in the development of procedures for assessing and recording what pupils know and can do and in beginning a portfolio of work aimed at giving teachers clear examples of the levels of work attained by pupils. All of this puts the school in a good position to be able to continue to raise standards and keep up with the constant advances in information and communication technology.

MUSIC

114. Standards match those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This means that, in Year 2, they are lower than they were at the time of the previous inspection. In part this is because temporary staff have not always been confident in teaching music and occasionally it has not been given the time needed for pupils to do well. Standards have been maintained by the end of Year 6. A number of pupils have extra tuition and they benefit considerably from this expertise and make good progress in learning to play a musical instrument and read musical notation.

115. Satisfactory teaching ensures that pupils of most abilities make steady progress in learning to appreciate, compose and perform music. By the end of Year 2, pupils learn to clap and tap a steady pulse, to increase and decrease the tempo. They do this to create the mood of weather, such as rain and wind. Younger pupils in Year 1 learn about pitch through the story of the *Three Billy Goats Gruff*. Teachers use instruments well to demonstrate the sound of the goats on the bridge. Pupils recognised the pitch when they said *That one is lowest, that one a bit higher and that one the highest*.

116. Throughout the school, teachers ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to perform together and for an audience of other classes. For example, they stand up and sit down together, but in complete silence and learn to begin and end songs together. Pupils sing tunefully and with expression and find the experience enjoyable. In Year 4 pupils learn about the characteristics of music through games, chants and rhymes. They learn to use musical words such as *crochet* and *quaver*. Older pupils in Year 5 perform as a class using African drums and boomwhackers. They play their own part and see how the different parts their classmates play fit together to achieve an overall effect. Pupils say they enjoy music lessons and like having opportunities to work in groups when composing. However, there are some areas of teaching that could be improved. Though the curriculum includes opportunities to perform, compose and appreciate music the emphasis is generally on singing and playing instruments. While pupils have some opportunities to appraise and compose music, teachers do not always make the most of these. For example, pupils have few opportunities to compose music using computers or new technology. The range of music that pupils listen to is still fairly limited and few pupils in Year 6 talked knowledgeably about different types of music, such as classical, jazz, popular or could talk about the lives or work of well know composers from the past or the present.

117. In a number of classes, pupils benefit considerably from some excellent teaching by the head teacher. In these lessons good knowledge, talent and enthusiasm combine to ensure that pupils have a marvellous time and make good progress. For example pupils in Year 5 were very clear about what they were going to learn and the teacher used resources very well to inspire them

118. A strength of the teaching is how pupils are taught the meaning of musical terms through first-hand experience. For example in Year 4 pupils are given turns to copy the tempo of the teacher and the class decide how accurate it is. This encourages them to listen carefully and explain their ideas. Pupils are also taught to sing the words clearly and are encouraged to use the voice with expression. In some classes the absence of instruments and recorded musical extracts means that lessons lack enrichment.

119. The school is beginning to raise the profile of music. This is evident in assemblies where pupils listen to music from different cultures and eras. Pupils are now beginning to recognise the names and works of famous composers, including Mozart and Beethoven. Several pupils benefit from good quality lunchtime tuition from a volunteer musician. These pupils make up the Salsa band, which is popular with pupils and audiences.

120. Leadership in the subject is satisfactory and schemes of work and policies are in place. The school has a well-resourced music room and ensures that pupils have access to a range of instruments from different cultures. In most classes a good feature of the lessons is the skilled way that all pupils, including those who have special educational needs, play a full part in all the activities.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

121. By the end of Year 6, standards have been maintained since the previous inspection at levels above those expected for pupils' ages. Standards in swimming are good. Almost all pupils attain at least the 25 metres award by the end of Year 5. Pupils in Year 6 play team games such as rounders with confidence and skill. By the end of Year 2 standards have fallen since the previous inspection and are now in line with those expected for pupils' ages. This is because teaching is not as strong as it was. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, including those who have special educational needs, make sound progress. From Year 3 to Year 6 they make good progress overall.

122. Teachers provide pupils with a broad range of activities from a programme of work that provides a good framework for planning lessons. The school provides pupils with a good range of after-school activities, such as football, cricket, rounders and dance. Clubs are well attended, coaching is good and pupils strive to achieve high quality performance. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' attainment and the school's success in local competitions. Talented pupils do well in school and in local organisations such as football teams out of school.

123. Good and very good teaching drives up the rate of learning in some classes and contributes to the high standards reached in classes in Year 3 and Year 6. Elsewhere, teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject. A good feature is the attention teacher's pay to picking out pupils to demonstrate good performance for others to learn from. In most lessons they give pupils time to reflect and offer views of their own and others' performance. Pupils take this seriously and, because teachers use their comments as teaching points, they improve their performance. A common factor of the best teaching seen, in Year 3 and Year 6, was the teachers' good knowledge of the subject, which gave an edge to their confidence and organisation. Their high expectations of pupils' performance and behaviour resulted in fast-flowing lessons and a very enthusiastic response from pupils. For instance, pupils in Year 3 were very impressive as they moved quickly and freely in a gymnastics lesson in complete safety over, under and through apparatus.

124. Teachers generally have firm control over pupils' behaviour. This ensures that they behave and perform safely when moving at speed or when using equipment and apparatus. Most pupils have good attitudes in lessons, work hard and try to improve and give their best performance. One lesson, however, was unsatisfactory because the teacher did not handle some misbehaviour well enough. This had an adverse knock-on effect on the learning and attitudes of the whole class. Occasionally, other weaknesses slip into lessons. For example, in one lesson the teacher did not give pupils an opportunity to improve their performance after watching the good practice of others. In another the teacher did not give pupils the opportunity to discuss their performance. A warm-up session in one lesson was not handled effectively. In contrast, pupils in Year 3 took the warm-up and cool-down sessions very seriously because the teacher ensures that they regard it as a vital element of the lesson.

125. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader monitors the quality of teaching and learning and uses information gained to move the subject on.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

126. Standards in religious education by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have been maintained since the last inspection and meet those prescribed by the locally Agreed Syllabus. All pupils make good

progress and achieve well. Collective worship makes a good contribution to attainment in the subject as shown in two acts of collective worship, one for pupils in Year 1 to Year 6 and the other for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6.

127. The teaching of religious education is good overall, ranging from satisfactory to very good. A strong feature of the teaching is the planning that reflects a secure knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. This ensures that all requirements are met and pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the major faiths. For example, pupils learn about the Islamic religion in Year 2 and then revisit the topic in Year 6 where they explore the festivals, values and beliefs in greater depth. As a result they know about the Five Pillars of Islam, the *Shadada* (declaration of faith), the Qur'an and the role of the Imam. Pupils also learn about Christianity, Judaism and Sikhism and when studying baptismal customs of different faiths they also learn about the Buddhist faith, making good use of video recordings and objects of religious importance to each faith.

128. In many lessons teachers help pupils to explore their feelings and emotions and to think about choices, refugees and friendship. When studying these topics, as well as when studying the major religions, teachers capitalise on opportunities to foster pupils' literacy skills, particularly writing. This is another strong feature of the teaching. A pupil in year 6 wrote the lines, *She'll never hurt my feelings, even if I get on her nerves* in a poem about friendship. Similarly, in a lesson about refugees the methods used by the teachers helped pupils empathise with the plight of Tara a girl forced to flee her home because of political persecution. The carefully structured activities enabled pupils to really think about and discuss their views about what it must be like to be a refugee and their written work showed clear evidence of this in comments such as, *It would be better because I wouldn't have to keep worrying about the secret police and moving homes all of the time is awful*. In another good lesson pupils discussed the parable of the Good Samaritan and then devised their own modern parables on the theme of prejudice. They performed these for the others and the high level of interest of the audience, leading to comments such as, *No matter what, if you help them, they'll help you* showed how well the activity had fostered the personal growth and understanding of the pupils.

129. Through teaching strategies and activities such as those described, teachers promote very positive attitudes to, and interest in, the subject. This enables all pupils to make good progress in religious education as well fostering their spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth well. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.

130. The subject is led and managed well. A notable feature of the co-ordinator's role is the monitoring of teaching and learning, including observing lessons. This means that the co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the subject. As a result help given to teachers enables pupils to achieve well. Resources for the curriculum are good, particularly objects of religious interest in relation to the major religions, and are used well to support learning in the classrooms. Two areas that are satisfactory have been identified as areas for improvement. These are the use of information and communication technology to enhance learning and the assessment procedures. Improving these aspects will put the school in a good position to raise standards.