

INSPECTION REPORT

WAVENDON GATE COMBINED SCHOOL

Milton Keynes

LEA area: Milton Keynes

Unique reference number: 131397

Headteacher: Mrs Linda Killman

Reporting inspector: Mr Mike Phillips
7704

Dates of inspection: 19 - 22 May 2003

Inspection number: 248840

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First and Middle
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to12
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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School address:	Gregories Drive Wavendon Gate Milton Keynes
Postcode:	MK7 7HL
Telephone number:	01908 586394
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Dominic Newbould
Date of previous inspection:	None. This is a new school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7704	Mike Phillips	Registered inspector	Geography Special educational needs English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1165	Peter Dannheiser	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30705	Graham Stephens	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Physical education	
12394	Carole May	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Music Religious education	
32181	Maria Coles	Team inspector	Science History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

23658	Stephen Parker	Team inspector	English Information and communicatio n technology Design and technology	
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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?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	24
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Wavendon Gate Combined School is a popular school that opened in September 1999. At the time of inspection the school received a national award in recognition of high standards in the arts. There are 435 pupils aged between four and 12, which is larger than most primary schools. Children enter the Reception Year with standards in line with those expected for their age. Most pupils live near to the school, with others joining in Year 4 from primary schools further away. The 18.6 per cent of pupils leaving and joining the school over the last year is well above the national average. Over the last 11 terms the school has grown and this has contributed to the 35 per cent of teachers leaving and joining the school over the last two years, with more joining than leaving. Teachers left for good, professional or social reasons and were replaced. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. Almost one in five pupils has special educational needs, mainly moderate learning difficulties, and this proportion is near to the national average. The thirty per cent of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the nine per cent of pupils who learn in English as an additional language are above the national average. No pupils are in the early stages of learning English.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This very good school has the potential and commitment for continued success. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. Most teaching is good and it is often very good and sometimes excellent. Most pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and there is very effective provision for pupils who learn in English as an additional language. Standards in English, mathematics and science and most other subjects by Years 2, 6 and 7 are above national averages and standards in art throughout the school are very high. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher and the excellent support of her deputy.
- The outstanding support provided by the governing body.
- Teachers' high expectations and their management of pupils' learning and behaviour.
- Pupils' achievement, especially in Years 1 and 2, and for pupils with special educational needs.
- The enormous range of very popular activities available outside lessons.

What could be improved

- The use of teaching space throughout the school to further improve the Reception Year curriculum and children's achievement.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This is the school's first inspection.

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	D	D	A	C
Mathematics	D	D	B	C
Science	E	D	A	A

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

The **2002 national test results for Year 2** show standards in reading well below the national average and in the bottom five per cent nationally for similar schools. Mathematics results were below the national average and those of similar schools across the country. In writing, standards were above the national average and matched those of similar schools.

Results of the 2002 national tests for Year 6 for English were well above the national average and in line with those for similar schools. Standards in mathematics matched those of similar schools and were above the national average. The science results were the best, being well above the national average and **well** above those of similar schools.

Current standards by Year 2 in reading and writing have improved dramatically since the 2002 national tests and are now above the national average. The proportion of high attaining pupils now in Year 6 is not as high as that for the 2002 Year 6 cohort. This explains why standards are not as high in the current Year 6 classes. Nevertheless, standards in English, mathematics and science are above national averages. By Years 2, 6 and 7 standards in religious education, physical education and in information and communication technology (ICT) match those expected nationally. In geography, design and technology, history and music, standards are above national expectations. Standards in art are well above those expected nationally and in Year 7 science standards are very high.

Pupils' achievement in relation to their attainment when they enter the school is satisfactory by Year 1, very good by Year 2 and by Years 6 and 7 it is good. Whilst the achievement of children in the Reception class is satisfactory, it could be better. Analysis of pupils' work and the school's records of pupils' progress shows that most pupils make good progress. When pupils join the school in the early stages of learning in English their progress is also very good so that they quickly reach standards similar to those of other pupils of their age. The achievement of pupils by Year 2 in literacy skills is very good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are as enthusiastic about their learning in lessons as they are about participating in activities outside lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. They are very polite to staff and each other and welcoming to visitors. They show great respect for the school buildings and for the many displays of work and artefacts around the school.

Personal development and relationships	Very good. They are good at using their initiative. They are very good at respecting the feelings of others. Racial harmony is excellent, as are the relationships pupils enjoy with each other and staff.
Attendance	Very good and well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6	Year 7
Quality of teaching	Good	Very good	Good	Good

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

Most teaching is good, with a high percentage very good and excellent. Out of 78 lessons observed, all were satisfactory or better, with 77 per cent good or very good and five per cent excellent. This high quality teaching contributes to this being a very effective school. Throughout the school, the stunning displays of pupils' work in classrooms and corridors, and the use of them by teachers and their assistants to help pupils learn, contributes hugely to the school's highly successful learning atmosphere. The teaching of English and mathematics is good throughout the school and numeracy and literacy skills are consistently reinforced well in most other subjects. Whilst teaching assistants work very well in partnership with teachers to support pupils with special educational needs, they are not as effectively deployed in some lessons to help pupils learn. Teachers are very good at discussing with pupils what they will learn and how to improve. Well-chosen, evaluated learning targets for pupils contribute to teachers' very good knowledge of pupils' learning when they plan, so that challenging work meets individual learning needs. High expectations and imaginative and effective use of resources contribute to the teachers' outstanding management of pupils' learning and behaviour. There is some inspirational teaching of higher attaining and talented pupils in Years 6 and 7. Although many of the features of successful teaching are seen in the Reception Year, some improvements in the increased use of teaching space elsewhere in the school is needed to improve further curriculum planning and children's achievements.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good, with further improvements needed for the Reception Year. It is broad, balanced and well organised and extended through an impressive range of activities outside lessons. Pupils with different learning needs and from diverse backgrounds are fully included in all the school offers.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. There is well-organised provision with highly effective evaluations of pupils' progress and very successful parental partnerships.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Very effective identification of language and learning needs ensure these pupils' make very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural	Very good. There is excellent provision for moral development. Provision for spiritual, social and cultural development is very good.

development	
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How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Procedures for promoting good behaviour, and to eliminate bullying should it occur, are excellent. In most subjects the school evaluates pupils' progress and attainment very well and monitors their personal development very thoroughly. The school promotes racial harmony very successfully.
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Parents enjoy a highly effective partnership with the school, making valuable contributions to children's learning at home and at school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding, as is the leadership and management of the deputy. The headteacher's commitment to high standards is shared by all who work at the school. The leadership and management of senior teachers are very good and subject leaders are improving their roles effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	This highly effective governing body demonstrates exemplary practice in the ways it fulfils its responsibilities and uses its excellent knowledge of the school to help shape its future.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This school is very successful because it is very good at evaluating school improvements in order to take decisive action.
The strategic use of resources	The excellent strategic use of resources is underpinned by exemplary use of the principles of best value to ensure that high standards are maintained and others improve where necessary.

Well-qualified teachers and their assistants very successfully manage the curriculum to meet the different learning needs of pupils. Teachers and other adults make good use of restricted space in the Reception class and teachers and their assistants use the rest of the school's spacious accommodation very well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like this school where they are expected to work hard and behave well. • They say that teaching is good at this well led and managed school. • The school helps their children to mature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents are concerned about the amount of homework their children receive. • Some parents would like the school to work more closely with them and provide more information about what their children will learn.

Inspectors agree with parents' very positive views of the school. Inspectors found that pupils receive weekly homework that increases appropriately as they grow older and prepares them well for their next lessons. Inspectors do agree with those parents who say that more information about what their children will learn would help them work even more effectively in partnership with the school to help their children learn.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Assessments made when children enter the Reception class show that most of them start with levels of attainment in line with those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress by the time they enter Year 1 and they all reach standards expected nationally.
2. The **2002 national test results for Year 2** pupils in reading were well below the national average and in the bottom five per cent for similar schools. Mathematics results were well below the national average and those for similar schools. Standards were highest in writing. They were above the national average and in line with similar schools.
3. The **national test results for Year 6** pupils in English showed standards well above the national average and they matched those of similar schools. Mathematics results were above the national average and in line with similar schools. Science results were the highest because they were not only well above the national average but they were also well above those for similar schools.
4. There is only information about national test results since 2000 upon which to base judgements about **trends over time**. Between 2000 and 2002, Year 2 national test results for reading fell and then rose. Whilst there is a good upward trend standards were well below those expected nationally. The three-year trend for writing shows standards also fell, but not as much as for reading, and then they rose very steeply to be above the national average. In mathematics, despite good, steep improvements over time, the 2002 national test results were well below national averages. For Year 6, continuous steep improvement was seen in English, mathematics and science standards that rose from being below national averages in 2000 to being above in mathematics and well above in English and science in 2002. This is a very good upward trend.
5. **Current standards in English, mathematics and science** by the end of Year 2 have improved and are now above those expected nationally. The analysis of school records, pupils' work and lesson observations, show that standards are still rising in reading and mathematics. Writing standards remain above the national average with good improvements in spelling. By Year 6, spelling has improved well. Standards in English and mathematics are a little below those of the 2002 Year 6 cohort because those pupils had a higher proportion of high attaining pupils than the present Year 6 class. Nevertheless, the current Year 6 pupils reach standards in all three subjects that are above national averages and the school may exceed its challenging 2003 numeracy and literacy targets. By Year 7, standards in mathematics and English are above national expectations and in science they are very high.
6. Teachers reinforce **numeracy and literacy** skills well in other subjects, with some very good practice in Years 1 and 2. There are very high standards in the organisation and presentation of work in pupils' books, and in stunning displays of their work in classrooms and corridors, that provide a wealth of information about how well numeracy and literacy is used in other subjects. The good improvement in

spelling throughout the school is due to very well targeted action. In geography, history and in science, pupils improve their literacy skills by drafting work to improve it so that their writing is lively and informative. In Years 1 and 2, pupils reinforce numeracy skills when placing past events in the correct order on a time line. In geography from Year 3, pupils make good progress when using co-ordinates to improve their knowledge about the use of maps and their numeracy skills. In science throughout the school, pupils improve measuring, calculating and estimating skills well when doing investigations and when designing fair tests. All this highly effective practice contributes to high and improving numeracy and literacy standards.

7. **Standards** by Years 2, 6 and 7 in physical education are satisfactory, with plans securely in place for improvements now that the new large grassed area has recently come into use. Standards in ICT by the end of Years 2, 6 and 7 are also satisfactory. Standards are higher in ICT in Year 3 because these pupils have 'grown up' with the increasing range of resources in this new school. The school has plans in place to make best use of the new, locally agreed religious education syllabus when it becomes available in order to further improve satisfactory standards in this subject throughout the school. Standards in art are very high throughout the school. In all other subjects by Years 2, 6 and 7, standards are above those expected nationally. Some Year 7 pupils reach very high standards in science.
8. **Achievement** is measured by how much pupils improve as they grow older, moving from one Year group to the next. From the time children enter the Reception class to the time they join Year 1, their achievement is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2, numeracy and literacy skills in particular improve dramatically so that pupils' achievement is good across the full range of subjects by the end of Year 2. Pupils continue to achieve well by the end of Years 6 and 7. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and those who learn in English as an additional language make very good progress and so achieve as well as other pupils of their age. The learning needs of high attaining and talented pupils in Year 6 and Year 7 are met very well so that they too achieve well.
9. The school manages the large proportion of **pupils leaving and joining the school** throughout the year very well. Almost one in five pupils leave and join the school other than at the usual times and in Year 4 there is an additional intake of about 20 pupils from neighbouring primary schools. All these pupils' learning needs are expertly assessed, often using records from previous schools, to ensure they settle into this school swiftly to make the same good or better progress as other pupils of their age.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Before the school opened, the headteacher planned as a 'cornerstone' of this very effective school, high levels of behaviour, very positive attitudes to learning, high expectations and principles that valued the diverse talents, cultures and beliefs of pupils and their families. With the help of governors, her deputy and other colleagues this vision has already been achieved and the school has the confidence and capacity to be even more successful because the foundations of pupils' very good attitudes to learning are firmly established. There have been no exclusions since the school opened. Parents agree that their children behave well at school.
11. Pupils are proud of this school. Behaviour in lessons is very good and sometimes excellent and pupils always behave very well around the school, reflecting the school's prominently displayed Golden Rules. They strive and greatly value rewards

for behaviour, effort and concern for others. At lunchtime, a weekly prize to sit at a special table with their friends rewards best behaviour. The very effective use of these rules contributes to the pupils' very good sense of responsibility. This was seen when Year 6 pupils composed music without the need for close supervision in groups in the performing arts space and a corridor. They greatly respect teachers and other adults, school resources and the many artefacts and displays. They participate eagerly in all the school offers. They make lunchtime a pleasurable experience and during break times they play well together. Older pupils care for younger ones and all of them help those new to the school make friends. They get to school on time and work hard all day.

12. Pupils are very friendly, courteous to each other and welcoming to visitors. They happily talk about what they are doing. They listen well to others, enjoy answering questions and participate enthusiastically in discussions. They have confidence that adults will treat them fairly and with respect and that teachers will do their best to interest and help them.
13. Incidents of bullying are unheard of by pupils and there have been no incidents of sexism or racism. Year 6 and 7 pupils replied incredulously to questions about unkindness. "There is absolutely no bullying in this school. If anyone is unhappy we help them." They agreed whole-heartedly with the Year 7 pupil who said, "There has never been any religious or racial discrimination – mainly because we have been taught about it." There are good systems in place that record incidents, involve parents and evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken. The school deals sensitively and promptly with the few incidents of pupils being unhappy at school. Parents say that incidents brought to the school's attention are dealt with very well.
14. Personal development and relationships are very good because of all the high quality practice described and because staff are very good role models for pupils. Pupils share resources and take turns to use equipment very well. Year 1 pupils' faces were wreathed in joy and concentration as they changed their books in the library and discussed those they had read with each other and an inspector. Very well planned and managed time is set aside each week for each class to sit in a circle and discuss how to help others lead happy lives. In literacy lessons, Year 6 and 7 pupils discuss and write about ways to combat racism. All this very good and sometimes excellent practice provides very effectively for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Outstanding examples of this provision were seen in school assemblies.
15. Very good provision for spiritual development is evident in the vibrant displays of pupils' work and concern shown by teachers and assistants for the feelings of others that is mirrored by pupils. The school is alive with music and full of art produced by pupils and visiting artists. In literacy, art and music lessons pupils wonder about the creativity of famous authors, composers and artists and this improves their learning. In science lessons, they consider the beauty and mysteries of nature, as seen when Year 6 pupils learnt more about how nature creates delicate laurel leaves. In school and class assemblies, moral and social issues are considered with great sensitivity to the different beliefs and values of pupils and their families. Teachers know how to create special moments to celebrate the joy of learning and discovery, for example, when a talented teaching assistant arrived to be questioned by Year 6 pupils in role as John Lennon.

16. Provision for social development is very good. Pupils raise money for charity. From Year 1, they help teachers prepare for and tidy up after lessons and they are expected to perform other tasks well, such as taking registers to and from the office. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to befriend those new to the school to help them settle in happily, and older pupils are expected to care for younger ones. Very effective lesson planning ensures pupils understand very well what being a good citizen means, for example, in geography so that pupils know how to look after the environment. Numerous very well planned day and residential outings teach pupils a sense of responsibility, how to use their initiative and to work as a team member. The school has well advanced plans to improve provision further through an elected school council.
17. Provision for cultural development is also very good and prepares them very well for life in a multicultural world. Very good use is made of local art galleries and visitors. Pupils learn about music and dance from many countries that include Iraqi dance and African drum music. Cultural diversity is celebrated in religious education and in the exceptionally fine multicultural displays of pupils' work that included Year 4's work on weddings in different cultures. Pupils' love of books is encouraged through the good use of the school library. Visiting artists work with pupils to improve the environment. There are school clubs to teach Spanish, Irish dance, music and art. Pupils join with other local schools to present a concert at the Albert Hall and the whole school takes part in annual performances. There is very effective provision to ensure pupils' very good understanding of beliefs and customs different to their own in many lessons, including those for religious education, geography and English. In music lessons, some excellent provision enables pupils to make music from other countries, and in physical education very good provision was seen when Year 6 pupils improved upon an African dance. Some excellent provision teaches pupils about art from around the world.
18. Attendance is well above the national average. Very few absences are not satisfactorily explained, and punctuality is good.
19. Pupils' very good attitudes contribute enormously to the school's very good learning and caring atmosphere.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. Most teaching is good, with a high percentage very good and excellent. Out of 78 lessons observed, all were satisfactory or better, with 77 per cent good or very good and five per cent excellent. This high quality teaching is one of the main reasons why this is a very effective school that has the capacity to improve further. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is almost always good or better, with numeracy and literacy skills reinforced consistently well in other subjects and extremely well in displays of pupils' work. Teaching in the Reception class is good, despite the lack of classroom space. Too few design and technology and geography lessons were seen to make judgements about the teaching of these subjects. The teaching of talented and very able pupils in Years 6 and 7 is very good and sometimes inspirational.
21. There are a number of significant strengths common to all teaching: the management of pupils' learning and behaviour, lesson planning, high expectations and innovative teaching methods. There are also some areas that could be even better, namely some teachers' use of assessment, the reviews of pupils' learning at the end of lessons and the marking of pupils' work.

22. Teachers manage learning and behaviour with such deceptive ease that it is outstanding and contributes very well to pupils' moral and social development, as seen in the courtesy they show each other and visitors. Teachers are highly skilled at ensuring pupils appreciate the importance of the school's Golden Rules. Pupils work hard to earn Golden Time each Friday, and consider it very serious to have this time denied through unacceptable work or behaviour. As a Year 4 pupil said, 'To lose Golden Time is serious, BIG TIME!' Should ever a pupil consider misbehaving, it is 'nipped it in the bud' with a quiet word or even a raised eyebrow. All this excellent practice means that teachers and assistants have time unhindered to help pupils learn.
23. Lessons start promptly with teachers sharing the lesson's objectives with the class, with some very good practice seen in literacy lessons where pupils review previous learning in order to understand clearly what they need to learn next. Teachers use time well through their effective use of resources so that learning materials are easily available, as seen when Year 3 pupils were deployed through the school to learn in small groups on computers.
24. Teachers work very well together, effectively using their good subject knowledge to plan lessons and create displays of work that sometimes inspire pupils and drive their learning forward. Work meets the individual learning needs of pupils so that they are all involved in lessons that challenge, interest and often enthuse them. The role-play of teachers in Years 1 and 2 brings learning alive in science and mathematics, and in Years 3 and 4, highly effective planning of ICT lessons ensures pupils with widely different attainment levels make good progress, with good reinforcement of numeracy skills when using proportions to plan a classroom on the screen. Teachers plan to reinforce numeracy and literacy skills very skilfully, as seen in a Year 1 history lesson about Victorians when pupils learnt that butter was made into cuboids using butter pats. In Year 7, the very well planned discussions with a poet about her work challenged and extended pupils' understanding and inspired them to write. The use of the space outside Years 2 and 3 classrooms is typical of the school's use of outstanding displays of pupils' work that links together pupils' learning in other subjects. This space became an airport departure lounge to which all displays were linked on the theme of travel, with excellent reinforcement of numeracy and literacy skills through work completed in geography, science, history, ICT and other subjects. Year 7 pupils told an inspector that learning at this school is so interesting because lessons use work in other subjects to bring learning alive, for example, when they studied volcanoes with references to science and history.
25. Teachers make effective use of information gathered from national tests, and other tests pupils do, to plan lessons for the year, the term and for each half term. Teachers keep good records of pupils' progress. They interpret accurately the attainment levels set out in the National Curriculum, and individual progress is rigorously checked against the expectations for each year group. This practice ensures prompt and effective action is taken should there be differences in performance between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and between boys and girls generally. Pupils who are not making the expected progress, or who are very able or talented, are clearly identified, and in some cases given more intensive instruction. This has been particularly effective, for instance, in raising standards in reading. Subject leaders keep portfolios of examples of pupils' work to illustrate the expected standards year-on-year, so as to guide teachers' judgements and show new staff what is expected. The very good practice that measures progress against the learning targets of pupils with special educational needs and of those who learn

in English as an additional language leads to the effective deployment of teaching assistants and these pupils' very good progress. In the best lessons, teachers gather information from their probing questions and from the tasks pupils do during lessons to respond to emerging needs. Exemplary practice of this was seen in a Year 1 science lesson, where the teacher gave herself time to analyse the responses of pupils so that her eventual interventions led to pupils' delight with their progress. In the Reception class, teachers work very well in partnership with other adults to assess children's learning continuously. Where the marking of completed work is achieved very well, pupils receive clear advice on how to improve and this information informs lesson planning. This best practice of assessing learning during lessons and of marking work has yet to spread throughout the school.

26. Pupils respond cheerfully to teachers' very high expectations. This was evident in so many lessons seen, for example in the Year 4 music lesson where pupils improvised a tune based upon a drone. Inspirational teaching drives pupils cheerfully along in their learning, as seen in Years 6 and 7 literacy lessons. Although classroom space restricts what children can do in the Reception class, expectations about what these children are capable of achieving are high.
27. In the most successful lessons, teachers end lessons by reviewing with the class how well they have met their learning objectives in order to decide what they need to learn next. This highly effective practice was evident in several lessons, including a Year 1 literacy lesson, but has yet to spread throughout the school. Nevertheless, pupils understand their learning targets well and many know what to do to improve.
28. The high quality teaching contributes to the school's extremely good learning atmosphere that entuses pupils to work hard all the time and produce plenty of work.

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

29. The school meets its statutory responsibility well to provide for children in the Reception Year of the Foundation Stage, the full range of National Curriculum subjects, for religious education and to hold a daily act of worship. Planning ensures very good provision for pupils' personal development and is often innovatively implemented to stimulate learning.
30. Good, detailed, long and medium-term plans set out work that builds upon pupils' previous learning and become more demanding as they get older. Units of work for each subject have appropriate amounts of time allocated to them. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies.
31. This is a very inclusive school. It makes very good provision to ensure that teaching and work is carefully matched to pupils' attainment levels. It ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and others who learn in English as an additional language, as well as gifted and talented pupils, have equal access to the full range of curriculum opportunities through well organised provision. All pupils are fully involved in all aspects of school life. Recent training enables teachers to plan more effectively to suit individual pupil's learning styles. There are very good personal relationships between staff and pupils and good procedures to support inclusion, including a 'buddy' system. The excellent induction procedures are highly effective in ensuring that new pupils and staff to the school feel part of the "school family".

32. Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is very good. It fully fulfils its statutory requirements for sex and drug education. The profile of the subject is very high. It is taught in science, and at times each week for pupils to discuss issues in a circle, in religious education and citizenship lessons. Provision is deeply embedded in many lessons because there is a strong commitment to encourage healthy living. Work is in hand to achieve a national school healthy living award. Good use is made of a commercial programme to plan lessons about drug education. Whilst provision is good, the school has plans for further improvement through a scheme of work for citizenship and its own drugs awareness programme of work. The sex education scheme, agreed by the governors is fully implemented though, unusually, it does not cover elements of personal growth until Year 7.
33. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of personal responsibility and initiative well. In the playground, Year 6 and 7 pupils act as 'buddies' to look after younger pupils and those who signal they are upset by sitting in designated places in the playground. There are plenty of imaginatively landscaped areas for pupils to sit and forge friendships that span ages and gender.
34. Provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent. Since 1999 there have been 47 clubs run after school and at lunch times by staff and parents. During the week of the inspection, the school was buzzing with activity as over 130 pupils participated in the 12 clubs operating after school on Wednesday. Activities included football, Irish dance, drawing, a choir, English country dance, story writing, an explorers club, a brass band, cricket, and hockey. Over 200 pupils a week are involved in extra-curricular activities that also include learning Spanish or French and computer clubs. Visitors to school include artists in residence. This exceptional wealth of activities greatly enhances pupils' learning. In addition, there are numerous educational visits and residential outings for pupils in Years 3 to 7. Time in Bournemouth for pupils in Years 4 and 5 improved their geography and science work. Year 6 and 7 pupils' visit to the Kingswood Activity Centre improved their ICT skills. There are other educational outings that include Linford Environmental Centre and local and national theatres and art galleries. The choir performed at the Royal Albert Hall and the Brass Band won the silver award at the Milton Keynes Brass Festival. Visitors to school include theatre groups, science workshops and pantomime for pupils.
35. Good links with the community include the Ecumenical Church, a vicar who takes some assemblies and a strong partnership with parents, governors and friends of the school that benefit pupils' learning. Some parents run clubs, help in classrooms and make props and costumes for school productions. 'Friends of Wavendon Gate' raise about £4000 a year to improve learning resources through fundraising that include social events. Governors adopt a class and make very good use of their annual 'drop-in-day' to get to know the school. They also provide valuable community links.
36. There are very good links with partner institutions. Pupils from Walton High School gain work experience at this school. It supports trainee nursery nurses from Milton Keynes College, and trainee teachers from De Montford University. There are strong links with local primary and special schools. The school is a member of the Walton Partnership of Schools that provides meetings and training.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Staff provide very good support and welfare for all pupils. Health and safety procedures are very good. There are risk assessments each year. Professional inspections of fire prevention and portable electrical equipment are made annually. The Milton Keynes Environment Directorate inspects the premises with governors, and the governing body's environment committee undertake health and safety audits. The school is safe, clean and very well maintained by hard working site staff.
38. The school's procedures for child protection are in place and the high level of understanding and experience of the headteacher who has responsibility for this area, and her deputy, ensures its effectiveness. Teaching and non-teaching staff understand child protection procedures well.
39. Excellent management of behaviour provides pupils with a secure knowledge of their boundaries and an understanding and appreciation of the rewards and sanctions they might encounter.
40. Staff are trained in first aid and take appropriate care of those who need it. There are careful records made of all incidents.
41. Registrations are efficient and the time is used effectively. For example, in Year 1 pupils answered their names in Italian, did calculations on the number of pupils there that day, were reminded how to write the date and how to write the name of the day. The school monitors and promotes pupils' attendance and punctuality very well and has achieved very good results. The attendance information is fed into a database that enables rapid and effective analyses to be undertaken. Office staff attempt to contact the family on the morning of a pupil's unexplained absence; especially those Year 4 to 7 pupils who usually come to school unaccompanied. The school works very closely with its educational welfare officer.
42. Teachers set good examples to pupils through their own relationships and attitudes. Their expectations of good behaviour are clear and consistent. Giving a wide range of responsibilities to many pupils fosters personal development. They are happy, feel cared for and able to share problems with staff. Pupils in their last year at school say that they have enjoyed their time at the school, have respect and fondness for the staff, and enjoy the responsibilities they are given. For example, they read with Year 1 and 2 pupils once a week and they help to set up assemblies.
43. Teachers carefully monitor and track pupils' personal, as well as their academic development. Good assessment procedures provide good quality information about pupils' progress and attainment. The school keeps careful records of accidents and informs parents. Successes, including marked improvement in behaviour, are recognised and contribute to the points that may be gained by the teams pupils belong to. Innovative ways to record how well teams do add to the excitement of pupils doing their best, and they include a Year 6 and 7 race track that travels along the ceiling, with each team represented by a racing car. Pupils enthusiastically plot their team's progress. Year 1 and 2 pupils are equally excited as their teams accumulate 'air miles' as they journey around a globe and success is celebrated at the end of each week.
44. Procedures for assessing learning in English, mathematics and science are very good. The results of national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6, and formal tests in other years, are very thoroughly analysed to identify pupils' strengths and

weaknesses in the subjects concerned. Senior management explain the implications of the results clearly and emphatically to all staff. As a result, the staff as a whole is very well focused on what needs to be done to raise standards, and this very effective interpretation of assessment information has played a key role in the rapid improvement in standards.

45. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing attainment and recording progress in other subjects. Teachers assess in broad outline whether the work of individuals in each unit of study meets the expected standard or is above or below it. This is helpful because it links assessment directly to curriculum planning. In some cases, teachers make notes of the key strengths and weaknesses of individuals, and this has very useful potential for guiding the next steps in their learning. Nevertheless, the school intends to develop a more consistent format for assessing and recording pupils' progress in each subject, so that instruction and tasks can be more efficiently matched to individual needs.
46. Assessment information is used well to guide the next steps in pupils' learning in English, mathematics and science. Teachers consistently show high expectations for pupils to do their best. This is made explicit with considerable determination in the targets set for classes, groups and individuals. In mathematics, pupils are taught in "sets" of broadly similar attainment rather than in their usual classes, allowing instruction to be more sharply focused. In other subjects, the level of instruction and the difficulty of tasks are broadly adjusted for pupils of lower or higher attainment. Work matches the learning needs of pupils with special needs, or for whom English is an additional language, very well. Pupils with special educational needs are regularly tested and the information is used to set the targets in their individual education plans and to identify the support needed from within school and from outside agencies. As a result they consistently make very good progress. At times, though, pupils with the potential for high attainment have too little freedom to plan and carry out their own independent study, as seen in some mathematics lessons. Teachers generally mark pupils' work thoroughly, though the impact is lost when individuals are not given clear enough advice on how to improve or the time needed for further work on specific weaknesses identified.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Parents enjoy a very good partnership with the school and are confident that their children will learn very well here. Their support of the school to help their children learn is seen in high levels of attendance and punctuality, the reading they frequently do with their children, their support of the exceptionally large number of activities outside lessons and by making sure homework is completed on time.
48. Inspectors agree with the very positive views of parents. Parents say that their children are happy in school and that they are expected to work hard. They say that this is a welcoming school that values parents highly. They are full of praise for the way the school is managed and they believe that their children are well taught and make good progress. Parents at their meeting agreed with the mother who spoke of the outstanding assembly she attended and others were impressed with the open mornings when they saw the school at work. The school consults parents well, for example by governors sending them questionnaires, through numerous high quality newsletters and brochures and an active website. Parents greatly appreciated the workshops for them about the teaching of literacy and numeracy. There is a well used communications booklet to exchange information between home and school.

49. About one in five of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that their children do not receive the right amount of homework. Parents at their well-attended meeting before the inspection explained this. Some parents said their children do not need homework, some said they get too little and others say they get too much. Inspectors found that homework arrangements are good, that it becomes more demanding as pupils get older, is appropriate for their age and prepares them well for their next lessons. A few parents would like to see more work their children have completed when they consult teachers about how well their children are getting on. Whilst parents appreciate information about what their children will learn, inspectors agree with those parents who said at their meeting that more detailed information about future learning, with guidance on how to help their children learn, would enable them to work even more closely with the school.
50. Parents of pupils with special needs work closely with the school and are involved in the structuring of learning plans. Annual reports show how well their children are getting on and provide good information for them about progress and standards reached in English, mathematics and science in comparison with national expectations. They contain advice on how to improve. At consultation times, parents are provided with similar information for other subjects.
51. Parents' contribution to the work of the school and to their children's education is very good. The support of parents and friends in classrooms and in activities outside lessons is greatly appreciated by teachers. Their tireless efforts contribute to the highly successful learning atmosphere of this caring school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. One of the main reasons why this is a very good school is the outstanding leadership of the headteacher who has steered this school through many changes since it opened almost four years ago, supported by an excellent deputy and a highly effective governing body. The headteacher's firm commitment to high standards is shared by governors and all who work and teach at this school. The headteacher sets herself high standards and others willingly do the same for themselves.
53. Leadership and management have some excellent strengths. The delegation of responsibilities for senior managers is highly effective because these people clearly understand their responsibilities and are confident that, through performance reviews, they will receive the training, advice and support they need. The headteacher and her deputy manage this team extremely well so that they all work confidently as a team, sharing and anticipating challenges and solving problems, rather than just 'getting things done'. Subject leaders receive equally effective support, knowing what needs to be done to maintain high standards and raise those that are not high enough. The effectiveness of their roles and the support they receive is evident in the dramatic improvements in numeracy and literacy standards by Year 2. An impressive feature of the school is that mathematics standards improved although the temporary post holder is the fifth subject leader. This is because all subject leaders have highly effective, regularly evaluated strategies as part of their subject improvement action plans that ensure the transfer of subject leadership to be achieved 'seamlessly' so that improvements continue unhindered. The best practice of evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning has yet to be used by all subject leaders in order to maintain high standards and lead on necessary improvements.

54. An important key to this school's success since it opened 11 terms ago is the very good strategies to evaluate school effectiveness in order to take decisive actions for improvement. The headteacher, supported by senior colleagues, reviews the school's strengths and areas to improve and shares findings with governors. There are meticulous, accurate and frequent evaluations of pupils' progress. Achievable and challenging targets for pupils, teachers and for school performance are set, and strategies to reach them are agreed with teachers and governors. Everybody understands how to contribute to the success of the school. For example, pupils, teachers and their assistants knew what to do to improve English and mathematical standards by the end of Year 2, and they strived to maintain high standards collectively and to improve spelling so well by Year 6 that the school is on course to exceed the challenging numeracy and literacy targets agreed by governors with the local education authority.
55. Another reason for this being a very good school is found in the school improvement plan that is a highly effective tool in its quest for continuous improvement. Staff are fully consulted about the plan's contents by the headteacher, senior colleagues and governors. Parents are consulted about their views of the school and improvements they would like to see through their annual meeting with governors and through questionnaires. School improvement targets are measured to set new ones and to agree strategies. Each target is financially supported and people are identified to lead on improvements, with dates for completion and success criteria. This working document is referred to by the headteacher, senior colleagues, teachers and governors when planning, so that improvements are evaluated, and amended when necessary, to meet emerging needs.
56. The very good induction of teachers new to the school ensures they settle in swiftly and contribute to the school's effectiveness. This is seen in the maintenance of high academic and behaviour standards despite so many teachers joining and leaving the school over the last two years. Newly qualified teachers receive very good support working closely with experienced mentors. They gradually and successfully assume increasing responsibilities, for example, to improve the range and quality of provision for physical education.
57. The numerous opportunities for professional development contribute to the good match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum and the different learning needs of pupils. For example, the school meets the learning needs of high attaining, gifted and talented pupils very well due, in part, to its participation in a national project.
58. Another very significant reason why this is a very good school is the work of the highly effective governing body. Governors are very ably led by an experienced chairperson who has worked in partnership with the headteacher from the early beginnings of this school. Since those early days, the headteacher, her deputy and chair of governors ensured the governing body shared their vision and commitment, to create a school that pupils and their parents are proud of; that is an attractive, stimulating place to work and learn and where high academic achievement and behavioural standards are successfully promoted. Over the 11 terms of the life of this school, governors have grown in number and improved in expertise to help realise this vision. Their knowledge of the strengths of the school and areas to improve is excellent, enabling them to use in exemplary fashion their skills and talents to shape the future of the school. They are organised into committees that reflect priorities in the school improvement plan. They have well-defined responsibilities to support staff and the curriculum, with governors responsible for

literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. They involve themselves actively in the life of the school and are unafraid to make difficult decisions. They expertly scrutinise school finances and ensure school improvements are properly financed. They ask searching questions of the school and are highly effective at holding the headteacher to account for the quality of education provided. For example, they critically examine national test results, seeking information about the performance of different groups of pupils, in order to agree with the headteacher strategies should improvements be needed. The ways governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities are often outstanding. They ensure parents have good information about how their children are getting on. They continuously improve communications with parents that include an Internet school web site and they seek and respond to the views and concerns of parents through questionnaires and the annual meeting they are required to hold for them. They acknowledge that, whilst parents receive some very good information about the school, more needs to be done to provide more detailed information about what their children will learn. Health and safety is meticulously managed with actions taken to ensure the safety of all who work and learn at the school and during educational outings. The partnership enjoyed by governors, the headteacher and staff is based upon a commitment to continuous improvement that is evident in the exemplary way all decisions adhere to the principles of best value.

59. The day-to-day financial management of the school is outstanding. The school administrator and bursar have annually reviewed job descriptions and their performance management leads to training to improve their skills further. They understand the school's improvement priorities and what they need to do to ensure the success of the school. The office is very well managed. The school has excellent, secure financial monitoring procedures that make very good use of computers to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the school. All recommendations for improvement in the auditor's report are completed. Teachers and other staff understand and use very well the financial procedures, all of which are overseen by the headteacher and governors. The school budget is continuously updated to show the current state of school finances.
60. A very good range of learning resources is used very effectively to help pupils learn. The number of computers is above the national average, as is the number of books per pupil. Very good use of the locality and school grounds brings learning alive in geography, history, science and art. The excellent range of activities outside lessons include numerous day and residential outings, enhances the curriculum and improves learning impressively, with very good provision for pupils' moral, spiritual, social and cultural development. Another resource the school uses very well to help pupils learn is parents, with a significant number of them helping regularly in class, on educational outings, with clubs and by coaching games after school.
61. The school makes good use of its accommodation, with excellent use of space for stunning displays of pupils' work that help them learn. These displays contribute to the school's highly impressive learning atmosphere as well as to pupils' spiritual development. Very good use is made of the hall for assemblies, visiting artists and musicians. The expressive arts room is used very well and contributes to high standards. Computers in shared areas throughout the school are used well, and enhance provision for pupils' social development because they are expected to work co-operatively and productively. Shared areas also provide good bases for pupils to learn in small groups or to receive individual tuition. The school makes very good use of its extensive grassed area that it took control of shortly before the inspection.

The school has secure plans in place to improve the accommodation for Reception children. At the present time, improvement to this unsatisfactory accommodation is outside the control of the school until the ages of admission to schools in the local education authority change next year. When the school no longer has a Year 7 it can expand the Reception accommodation. Teachers make good use of unsatisfactory classroom space for Reception children the school has yet to make best use of space elsewhere as an interim measure.

62. The school provides very good value for money because of:

- the outstanding leadership of the headteacher;
- the excellent support of the headteacher by the deputy who is also an impressive leader;
- the very effective leadership and management of senior teachers;
- the very good leadership of most subjects;
- the very effective evaluations for school improvements;
- the exemplary attitudes of pupils and their good, and sometimes very good, progress;
- the highly effective governing body;
- the confidence of parents in the school;
- the school's capacity and commitment for further success.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. The headteacher, governing body and staff should use their highly effective partnership:

to improve further the curriculum and children's achievement in the Reception Year by:

- making better use of teaching space in other parts of the school; (Paragraphs 61, 66, 78)
- and to ensure the consistent good use of time to help children learn. (Paragraphs 69, 72, 74, 81)

Minor areas for improvement

64. The headteacher, governors and staff also need to ensure that the following minor areas are improved:

- to provide parents with more detailed information about what their children will learn;
- to ensure best practice when marking work is spread throughout the school so that all pupils receive clear advice on how to improve;
- to make sure that, consistently at the end of lessons throughout the school, teachers use the lessons' learning objectives to review pupils' learning so that they know what to do next to improve;
- to build upon existing very good practice to improve the independent learning of pupils consistently throughout the school, especially when pupils solve problems and undertake investigations in mathematics.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	79
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	23	38	14	0	0	0
Percentage	5	29	48	18	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	435
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	97

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	38

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	51
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	28

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	22	29	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	21	20
	Girls	25	28	27
	Total	39	49	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (71)	96 (82)	92 (80)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	20
	Girls	26	26	25
	Total	46	46	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (82)	90 (82)	88 (92)
	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	34	27	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	30	27	32
	Girls	25	21	26
	Total	55	48	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (65)	79 (62)	95 (88)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	29	32
	Girls	22	22	26
	Total	45	51	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (62)	84 (71)	95 (88)
	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	349	0	0
White – Irish	5	0	0
White – any other White background	15	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	13	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	9	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	12	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	9	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	4	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	5	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 – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18.48
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	206

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	10

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	789,550
Total expenditure	785,118
Expenditure per pupil	2,008
Balance brought forward from previous year	32,900
Balance carried forward to next year	37,332

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	435
Number of questionnaires returned	217

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	28	0	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	62	35	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	33	2	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	40	15	5	2
The teaching is good.	59	38	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	33	10	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	24	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	26	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	46	41	12	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	65	32	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	37	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	31	9	2	2

Other issues raised by parents

In response to some parents' concerns, inspectors investigated homework requirements and the amount of information they receive about what their children will learn. Inspectors found that pupils receive homework that increases in demand as they grow older, is appropriate for their age and prepares them well for their next lessons and, for Year 7 pupils, for secondary schools. Whilst parents receive satisfactory information about what their children will learn, inspectors agree with those parents who say that more detailed information would help them work even more effectively in partnership with the school.

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

65. There are 40 children in the two Reception classes. From September 2002, children who had had their fourth birthday by August 31st were admitted at the start of the school year. Previously, children had been admitted each term. Most children experience pre-school education and join the Reception Year with average attainment. There are a few children with special educational needs and others who do not speak English as their first language. These children make the same satisfactory progress as other pupils. By Year 1 all pupils reach the standards expected nationally.
66. Teaching is good and teachers use the unsatisfactory classroom space well to provide for children's different learning needs. There is only one room for the two Reception classes and this severely restricts the curriculum and so contributes to some children not achieving as well as they could by Year 1. Whilst teachers make creative use of the indoor space, they do not make as good use of space available elsewhere in the school. Lesson planning is securely based on nationally recommended areas of learning and children learn safely and satisfactorily. Teachers manage behaviour with great skill. Relationships between children and adults are very good.
67. There are very good and continuously updated records of pupils' progress and learning that begin as soon as the children join the Reception class. They inform planning very well because they identify children's individual learning needs effectively. The school receives few records of children's previous learning from pre-school groups or nurseries.
68. Relationships between staff and parents are good. Parents are pleased with the education their children receive and the few who work in the classroom regularly provide good additional support that is highly appreciated by teachers. Lack of space that prevents parents from bringing the children into the classroom each morning is an obstacle to forging even closer partnerships with parents.
69. Leadership and management are good, although there are areas to improve. Improvement to the classroom space is a high priority in the school's improvement plan, with strategies securely in place. The leader of the Reception Year knows what to do to improve learning and provision further. All teachers and adults are committed to high standards. Despite the restrictions of space, teaching assistants do not always make the best use of time to make sure children concentrate long enough on what they need to learn. Teachers have completed training to use the new national assessment scheme and their assistants are trained to support children's learning through English and mathematical activities. The Reception leader keeps up-to-date with best practice by attending locally organised meetings. Good resources are used well to help children learn, especially those for outdoor play.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. By the time children enter Year 1, good teaching and learning results in standards being well above those expected for their age in most aspects of this area of learning. Children's progress is very good and their behaviour is excellent. All adults place a great emphasis on the importance of this area of learning. Children are swiftly taught to understand and use learning routines very effectively so that they learn and play very well together. They take off and put on their own coats and put their name cards in the special place that indicates their presence at registration times. They are taught to select their own learning activities well, to take turns, share and to return resources to their correct place. Sometimes the children are unable to stay on one task long enough to develop sustained concentration, partly due to lack of space. This is particularly noticeable in communication, language and literacy and in mathematics. Building restrictions also prevent the children from carrying out some responsibilities, such as taking the register back to the office, selecting their own resources and setting out equipment indoors.

Communication, language and literacy

71. Teaching is good. By the time children enter Year 1, they reach satisfactory standards in speaking and listening. Frequent times are planned for children to talk with adults, but too often children are not required to explain what they have learnt. This means that opportunities are missed to assess learning in order to provide advice on what they need to do next to improve.
72. Most children are likely to reach standards expected in reading and writing. They write their names on their work, progress satisfactorily in recognising letter sounds and they enjoy books and stories. Children look at and share books together daily, knowing the difference between story and 'true' books through the use of a wide variety of different types of literature. However, when assessing children's reading, teachers do not always make the best use of time to talk about the books they are looking at in order to measure their speaking and listening skills and to give advice to improve reading. Teaching is good in recognising letters and sounds and building up words. Many greatly enjoy practising reading on their own and with the teacher.
73. Children use their knowledge of letter sounds well to write simple words correctly and to make good attempts at more difficult words. Their punctuation is satisfactory. Average and low attaining children make satisfactory progress when writing over the top or underneath the teacher's writing. Whilst children's learning is well supported in small groups, restrictions of space mean that it is difficult for the teachers to implement the Reception class literacy strategy effectively in preparation for numeracy and literacy lessons when they enter Year 1. They do not have enough time to write freely and to concentrate on a piece of writing long enough for them to make the progress they are capable of.

Mathematical development

74. Satisfactory teaching and learning results in children reaching standards expected in number work by the time they enter Year 1. Children's understanding and use of space, shape and measures are satisfactory. They use mathematical language appropriately to describe size and to count in a variety of practical ways using toys and other mathematical apparatus. They say 'one more' and 'one less' when adding and subtracting. Lesson introductions ensure children know what to learn. These

are followed by good learning sessions, as seen when a computer and projector were used to teach adding and subtracting to ten. However, despite good curriculum planning, and effective teaching of individuals or small groups, children's mathematical development suffers the similar fate as that of their literacy development because of the lack of space, contributing to them not sustaining concentration on tasks to reinforce learning in the earlier parts of lessons. Sometimes resources are not well matched to the learning needs of children and so, whilst progress is satisfactory, for some it could be better. At times, lack of classroom space hinder teacher's intentions to make effective use of their time to review learning with groups of children, to check their understanding and to offer advice on what they need to do next to improve.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Most teaching is good. Children's progress is satisfactory and they reach standards expected by the time they enter Year 1.
76. Children participate in a very wide range of learning activities, with well-planned times for them to talk about their work with adults during their play in the classroom and especially outside. They find out about living things that improve their observation skills and learning about the world around them. They use a good range of different materials when building and constructing, such as old cardboard boxes, small construction toys and large building blocks. Children are taught to use computer programs well so that by Year 1 they use a mouse confidently to click on icons and to drag and drop symbols on the screen.
77. They make satisfactory progress when experimenting with sand and water and finding out how to grow and care for plants. Outside, they use a 'farmer's market' well to learn the names of fruit and vegetables. However, planning misses opportunities for children to reinforce their learning, for example, by visiting a farm, or from displays of farm items and books and pictures about farms. Planning for them to learn about their own and other cultures, customs and beliefs is very good.

Physical development

78. By the time they enter Year 1 most children exceed standards expected for their age. This is because of very good planning for outside play that is expertly reinforced by very good teaching in the school hall. This very good provision in using school teaching space to help children learn has yet to be more widely implemented. Children have frequent opportunities to develop their awareness of space in their daily play activities. They move around outdoors sensibly showing an awareness of one another. There are numerous opportunities provided for vigorous movement that are supported well by adults so that children make good progress in skills such as steering vehicles, climbing, balancing, throwing and catching. They use different resources and tools to improve their fine manipulative skills when writing, cutting and sticking.

Creative development

79. Teaching is good and most children meet the expected standards for their age by the time they enter Year 1. They make good progress when painting and drawing because of the quality of support they receive. They paint self-portraits and create pictures that interest them using different materials and textures to make collages.

They experiment with play dough to make three-dimensional models and they use different shaped objects for printing. The children's knowledge of art was extended well by a visiting artist who taught them how to use printing inks and rollers on fabric. Teachers reinforced this learning well by creating an 'Art Gallery' displaying the children's paintings and drawings of fruit and flowers.

80. Very good planning improves children's creativity well, for example, when they experiment with musical instruments to maintain a steady beat to accompany their favourite songs. They make good progress knowing the names of different instruments and their sounds and which ones are for shaking and which for beating or tapping.
81. Daily role-play activities reinforce learning satisfactorily, for example, by acting out stories they have heard. This provision improves their use of spoken language and social skills well most of the time because they learn to understand other people's points of view and lifestyles. However, sometimes adults do not use time well, doing too much for the children and when this happens they do not learn well. This was as seen when the children used masks provided by adults to act out the story of 'The Enormous Turnip'. This resulted in the children paying more attention to balancing the masks on their heads than they did to acting out their role and thinking about the language they used.

ENGLISH

82. Standards reached by pupils currently in Years 2, 6 and 7 are above the national average in speaking, listening and writing. Standards are above average in reading at the end of Year 2, and well above average by the end of Year 6 and Year 7. National tests in 2002 revealed weaknesses in reading in Year 2 and in spelling in Year 6, while results in the Year 6 tests were much lower in writing than in reading. The school took decisive action to improve standards in these aspects and the inspection found this to have been successful. Pupils with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language make very good progress because of the care taken to improve their learning and to provide additional help as needed. Such support is very well managed through the school. It is a notable indication of the school's success that only one pupil failed to reach the expected level in reading in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002.
83. The routines of the literacy hour are well established by Year 2 so that pupils know what is expected of them and they listen carefully to instruction. Teachers develop very good relationships and take care to involve all pupils in discussions. They spread their questions widely so as to keep all pupils on their toes. As a result, all take an active part, showing great enthusiasm when learning involves a game or competition. In answer to questions, pupils speak clearly, using a wide range of vocabulary and sentence structures, and the conventions of Standard English are well established by Year 2. Pupils listen politely to others and work very well together on shared tasks in all subjects. Most attempt to read aloud with dramatic expression. Pupils in Years 3 to 7 are confident in talking to adults and explain their ideas carefully. They use more formal language appropriately in class discussions, with correct use of technical terms. This helps their learning in other subjects, where ideas are explored and developed through talk. They work well together in teams, for instance successfully negotiating their roles in practical lessons in science and design and technology. Those with higher attainment give detailed answers to challenging questions. Two girls in Year 6 very successfully played the role of

characters in a novel, explaining their motives and feelings in answer to probing questions from their peers. Such skills are very well developed in Year 7, where pupils with higher attainment explain clearly their ideas about difficult material, such as complex poetry. Videos of school productions show pupils reaching very high standards in speaking in role under performance pressure. Generally though, in the lessons observed, more use could have been made of the final review of pupils' learning ("plenary") in all subjects to coach speaking skills, set pupils the challenge of taking the lead in speaking at length and ensuring they know what to do in the next lesson to improve further.

84. The school has been very successful in improving standards of reading in Years 1 and 2. An officially recommended teaching programme has been adopted to ensure that the skill of sounding out new words to find their meaning is taught systematically. A commercial reading scheme is used to guide pupils' progress, while books for wider reading have been graded for difficulty so that pupils' interest is boosted as their skills develop. As a result, pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of what they read and talk confidently about books they have enjoyed. Pupils having difficulty are given very well focused additional support, following officially recommended programmes of study, and their progress is carefully monitored so that they build on success. Throughout the school, interest in reading of all kinds is developed very well, with pupils showing a significant interest in non-fiction, some of which involves use of computers. The expectations for homework reading are well established, alongside silent reading sessions, adult-guided reading groups and structured reading tasks in all subjects. As a result, pupils have a wide experience of reading for different purposes by the end of Year 6. Most have favourite authors, and explain and compare their preferences. Their understanding of how to use the library and find specific information develops well because of regular class instruction. This experience is used effectively for study purposes in such subjects as science, history, geography and religious education. Many parents give very good support by hearing their children read, talking with them about books, taking them to local libraries and building book collections at home.
85. Through the school, pupils learn to write for many different purposes and audiences, including poetry, stories and factual reports. The high level of creative writing is a significant feature of provision that is very successful in stimulating pupils' interest. Their good standard of spoken English is reflected in the wide range of sentence structures and vocabulary they use in writing. By the end of Year 2, pupils write clear personal accounts and lively stories. Pupils with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language are given additional support and encouragement so that they too write for real purposes, without over-use of narrowly focused exercises. Most pupils spell frequent words correctly and punctuate accurately. A joined style of handwriting is developed early through regular practice, and some work is word-processed. By Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of how to hold the reader's attention in their stories. Their use of dramatic speech and creation of atmospheric settings in stories is particularly impressive. They describe technical processes accurately in other subjects, using the correct terminology. They are confident in using dictionaries and thesaurus, and generally check their work before handing it in, though they are not always given enough time to do so. The quality of their work benefits when they develop it in stages, from planning to drafting and editing for display, with opportunities to practice the same kind of writing soon after.

86. The quality of teaching is good overall. Half the lessons seen in Years 1 and 2 were good and half were very good. Of the lessons seen in Years 3 to 7, half were very good and one was excellent. One third were good and the remainder were satisfactory. The framework of the National Literacy Strategy guides teachers' planning and gives lessons a clear sense of purpose. Teachers explain that purpose clearly at the outset so that pupils understand what is expected of them, and they generally cooperate very well in their learning. In the best lessons, teachers read aloud with dramatic expression, so helping pupils to understand and raising their interest in how language communicates ideas. Language features are generally taught thoroughly, with examples of usage repeated in imaginative ways so as to hold pupils' interest. All pupils are fully included in discussions because the difficulty of questions is adjusted to match different levels of attainment, and those who do not volunteer to answer are asked directly. The standard of questioning is generally very good, showing high expectations for well thought-out answers. This was a particularly impressive feature of the excellent lesson for high attaining pupils in Year 7, where both the material and the questions asked were very challenging. In classes with mixed levels of attainment though, slower pupils would on occasion benefit from more time to work out their answers, for instance, by talking with a partner or using a mini-whiteboard to jot down their ideas as notes before answering.
87. Pupils settle to work quickly and confidently on independent tasks. Teaching assistants give very good support to specific individuals and groups at such times, particularly to pupils with special needs, low attainment or English as an additional language, enabling them to make good and often very good progress. Other pupils for the most part work hard on their own, though occasionally the level of informal talk is too high, which slows their progress. Generally, pupils need more time to improve and correct their written work before handing it in. In some lessons, lower attaining pupils are encouraged in the plenary review to explain how they have got on, so boosting their esteem. In general, though, not enough use is made of the plenary to evaluate the progress of different groups, to develop speaking skills and to reinforce the lesson's targets.
88. In the best marking, teachers give encouragement and identify how future work could be improved. They write the most significant weakness as the current target on each pupil's target card, and pupils are required to add spellings they have got wrong to their individual dictionaries. These are very good practices, though pupils are not routinely given enough time to do other corrections or follow-up work in response to marking in lessons that follow.
89. The subject is very well led and managed. The literacy strategy is securely in place and is used well to focus on literacy standards in English lessons and other subjects. The careful analysis of test results and samples of pupils' work has been a key factor in driving the rapid improvement in standards. It has identified weaknesses in pupils' achievement from which have been developed well informed strategies for improvement that have been agreed with all staff. As a result, teaching staff show an impressive determination to raise standards and they have been very successful in communicating their high expectations to pupils in all classes. As a result, pupils as a whole are keen to do well and show a strong pride in their achievements. Resources are good, with well planned developments in the library and classroom book collections to raise pupils' interest. The standard of displays is excellent. Teachers work hard and very skilfully to display pupils' best work and publish class anthologies to stimulate interest and reward success. The subject has a high profile in the school and makes an excellent contribution to pupils' personal development.

MATHEMATICS

90. By Years 2, 6 and 7 standards are above national averages and pupils' achievements are good. A few Year 7 pupils reach standards that are very high for their age.
91. Pupils' achievements are good because:
- good teaching uses recommended national strategies well;
 - teachers are very good at managing pupils' behaviour and learning;
 - the analysis of national tests and other tests pupils do, and information obtained by recording pupils' progress, are used very well to identify where learning has to improve and highly effective action is taken;
 - very good use is made of training and support from the local authority;
 - pupils are enthusiastic learners;
 - pupils learning needs are very well met by placing them in groups based on prior attainment;
 - provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those who learn in English as an additional language is very good.
92. In Years 1 and 2, pupils recall number facts well to solve problems mentally because teachers use probing questions well to assess their understanding. Year 2 pupils mentally recall and solve problems related to the five times table well. They enjoy this and other types of mathematical learning because teachers plan lessons that interest and actively involve them. This was seen when Year 1 pupils used football league tables to improve their understanding of ordinal numbers and when the Year 2 teacher assumed the role of 'Inspector Symmetrical Sam' that enthused pupils so that their progress to match symmetrical patterns was good. Year 2 pupils add and subtract numbers to 100, identify common two and three-dimensional shapes, recognise and fold paper to show simple fractions and estimate a metre and a centimetre; all with good skill and confidence. When lesson planning ensures the computer is used well, pupils make very good progress, as seen in the lesson about symmetry in Year 2 when two pupils using the machine exclaimed, 'Look, look, the circle has got millions!'
93. Pupils' enthusiasm for mathematics continues as they grow older. Year 7 pupils relish the challenges of mathematics lessons, prompting a teacher to write in a pupil's book, '... this was a good use of logic to solve a problem.' Pupils in Year 4 progress well in their understanding of capacity because teachers skilfully make learning relevant for them, as seen when popular soft drink containers were used to improve their knowledge of capacity using millimetres and litres. Year 5 pupils make good progress understanding fractions and turning them into percentages and decimals. By Year 6, most pupils satisfactorily use their knowledge of number to calculate and solve problems using numbers up to 1000 and sometimes beyond. They compare metric and imperial measurements and construct angles well. They are good at representing and analysing information using bar and line graphs and their work with co-ordinates in all four quadrants is reinforced well in science and geography. They complete calculations involving money well. Their good skills of calculating the areas and perimeters of regular and irregular shapes are reinforced well in art and in design and technology lessons.
94. Most teaching is good and sometimes it is very good. It is never less than satisfactory. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to conduct lessons at a challenging pace to which pupils respond cheerfully. In the most successful lessons,

probing questions are carefully selected to challenge pupils with different learning needs. In these lessons, teaching assistants provide very effective support for those with special educational needs and to support the learning of other pupils. In the less successful lessons, that are nevertheless satisfactory, teaching assistants are less well deployed, particularly during whole-class teaching. The best teaching provides time for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding, especially pupils capable of high attainment, by providing time for them to complete work on weaknesses identified and through challenging investigations that provide time for them to improve further as independent learners. This best practice has yet to spread through the school. When teaching is very good, teachers' highly skilled management of learning and behaviour provide very well for pupils' moral, social and spiritual development because they learn to co-operate well, sharing resources and showing consideration for the feelings of others. Pupils take a pride in their well-presented and frequently marked work. Where marking is highly effective, it provides clear advice on what to do to improve, but this best practice is not common through the school. Good practice that is consistently used to help pupils learn is the sharing of the lesson's learning objectives so that pupils know what they have to learn. However, too often the ending of lessons is not managed as well because teachers do not spend enough time reviewing how well pupils met the lesson's objectives in order to decide what they need to learn next. Homework is set regularly throughout the school, is completed on time and prepares pupils well for their next lessons.

95. Despite the subject having had five leaders, standards are improving and it is very well led and managed by the deputy headteacher, ably supported by an assistant. They have perceptive insights into how to make further improvements through the use of an action plan. Effective use is made of good resources to help pupils learn, although computers are not always used well to consolidate and reinforce learning.

SCIENCE

96. Standards are above national averages by Years 2 and 6 and well above those expected by Year 7. Throughout the school, progress is good and pupils with different levels of attainment and from diverse backgrounds are fully included in lessons.
97. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand well what living things need to grow and change. They know the differences between healthy and unhealthy food and are good at categorising natural and manmade materials and knowing how some materials can be changed. They are also good at designing and conducting scientific enquiry because they ask pertinent questions and carry out investigations well. This was evident when Year 1 pupils investigated whether plants grow better with or without sunlight. Year 2 pupils are good at using a variety of methods to record and analyse findings that utilise work sheets and written accounts that reinforce literacy and numeracy skills well. They use scientific language well to explain their learning, for example, to define a fair test.
98. By Year 6, pupils understand the differences between solids and liquids well and they are equally as good at comparing the properties of materials and understanding the processes of evaporation and condensation. They have good understanding of the structure of flowers, of pollination and fertilisation and of electricity, magnetism, and the solar system. They use scientific terms accurately to explain their learning when writing and speaking and when calculating and using graphs to interpret the results of investigations, all of which reinforces numeracy and literacy skills well. All

these good skills and knowledge were seen when Year 6 pupils formed perceptive hypotheses to investigate why laurel leaves differed in shape and size. Pupils with different levels of attainment recorded findings well, using notes, graphs and charts. They understood how to reach conclusions that were well grounded in evidence.

99. Year 7 pupils have very good knowledge and understanding of the environment, digestion and reproduction. Their knowledge of chemistry is very good through their work on acids and alkalis. Their understanding of the solar system, rock formation and how different surfaces succumb to erosion is also very good and reinforces learning in geography very successfully.
100. Most teaching is good and it is sometimes very good and occasionally excellent. Good planning ensures challenging work matches the different learning needs of pupils and that each lesson builds upon previous, successful learning. Where teaching is most successful, probing questions and the highly effective use of resources and of the school grounds enthuses pupils and drives their learning forward. In these lessons, provision for pupils' social development is very good because they work so well together. When working independently, they are good at selecting what they need to do next to improve their learning, but this best practice has yet to spread throughout the school. Very well planned investigations lead to elements of surprise, for example, when Year 6 pupils found out about laurel leaves, and this contributes greatly to their spiritual development. Innovative teaching methods inspire pupils, as seen when the Year 2 teacher played the role of the 'Ghastly Gardener' who did everything wrong and the pupils had to teach her to plant a seed and help it grow. In this excellent lesson the teacher gave herself time to observe how well pupils were learning and this on-going assessment enabled her to amend the lesson to meet their emerging needs so that by the end of the lesson the pupils were delighted with their progress. Teachers make excellent use of pupils' work to make colourfully vibrant displays that include poems, factual writing, questions and scientific artefacts. They immerse pupils in scientific knowledge and demonstrate powerfully the importance of science in the world around them. The high quality teaching and displays contribute hugely to the school's stimulating atmosphere and pupils' very positive attitudes to science.
101. The recently appointed subject leader has a good understanding of standards throughout the school and what to do to maintain them and even improve upon them through the use of a subject action plan.

ART AND DESIGN

102. By Years 2, 6 and 7, standards are well above those expected nationally and pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn in English as an additional language make very good progress.
103. A highly impressive feature of this school is the stunning displays of pupils' work that are used extremely well to help them learn. They represent pupils' work in progress, as well as work recently completed, all imaginatively designed and displayed to stimulate pupils' learning. An example of this was seen when pupils unfolded a model of a volcano made by Year 7 pupils to find out what makes it erupt. Art pervades the whole curriculum and spills over into every part of the school, creating a vibrant, stimulating atmosphere in which to teach and learn. Displays not only value pupils' work but, because pupils with different levels of attainment and from

diverse cultural backgrounds contribute to them, they celebrate learning and the inclusiveness of the school. Art, in its many forms, including modelling, drawing, painting, collage, printing and sketching in lessons throughout the school, has a powerful influence on pupils' social, moral and spiritual development and contributes greatly to this being a very good school.

104. Pupils use the displays to learn and they apply critical appreciation of what they see to vote for the best. During the inspection a cup was awarded to Year 4 for their display on weddings that reflected custom and practice in different cultures. Pupils of all ages talked enthusiastically to inspectors about their contributions to displays and how they arise from work they do in class. They explained how, by drawing Henna patterns on their hands in art, this helped learning in religious education when constructing the wedding display.
105. Year 2 learn successfully working with a variety of materials resulting in good knowledge about their properties and how to use them. They exercise good control and techniques when using watercolours to paint self-portraits. They produced pencil drawings that supported writing on 'My Special Place' that reinforced literacy skills very well. By Year 6, pupils' very good skills and techniques are very well refined and they talk confidently and knowledgeably about African masks they make, explaining how research guides their choice of colour. They paint good portraits in the style of Liechtenstein and complete with equal skill collages in the style of Matisse. They talk very knowledgeably about the use of line and texture in their own and others' paintings or sketches. Pupils throughout the school use sketchbooks very well to try out various ideas and techniques, such as sketching ideas for a William Morris collage.
106. Most teaching is good and it is often very good. The infectious enthusiasm of the teachers leads to pupils being eager to learn. In Year 2, the teacher's probing questions pushed pupils' learning along well when they critically considered a painting and discussed the shapes and textures of the buildings portrayed. Pupils work diligently, on their own and in groups. This was evident in Year 5 when pupils arranged items brought from home for a still-life drawing. Good use of ICT was seen in the use of digital photographs that enable pupils to complete their drawings at home. Year 6 pupils looked forward to using their well-researched and careful work on African masks as symbolic costume in an African dance they were learning in their physical education lessons. They worked enthusiastically, justifiably proud of their efforts.
107. The knowledgeable and enthusiastic leader provides highly effective support and advice for colleagues. Visiting sculptors and artists use the ideas and talents of pupils to improve the school that results in designs on exterior school walls and wooden sculptures and paintings on canvases on permanent display. The award of Artsmark status during the inspection, and the publication of a book based on displays in the school, is testimony to the subject leader's philosophy that is shared by colleagues, that art and design should support and inspire learning across the curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. Standards are above national expectations by the end of Year 2, Year 6 and Year 7. Pupils make good progress with very good progress in drawing accurate designs and evaluating the quality of their finished products. Pupils with special educational

needs are given extra help so that they make the same good progress as other pupils and the very good provision for those who learn in English as an additional language ensures they reach standards similar to other pupils of their age.

109. By Year 2, pupils use simple tools successfully to shape, cut and join textiles, paper and card, for instance to make pictures with moving parts. Their plans are well drawn and clearly labelled to show what they intend to do. Year 6 pupils' plans are very well drawn, generally to scale, clearly showing construction details. They write full proposals explaining their intended procedures and listing the tools and materials necessary and this reinforces learning in literacy well. Their evaluations of their finished products reveal good reinforcement of numeracy skills when measuring and calculating. They are detailed and thoughtful, showing very good understanding of technical problems and a frank appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of their designs. This attention to detail continues in Year 7.
110. Finished work shows strong individuality in approach, for instance, in the wide range of model shelters and the materials to make them chosen by Year 6. Their models are brightly painted and well finished.
111. Teaching was very good in the one lesson seen. The targets of the lesson were precisely stated and clearly linked to a well structured sequence combining art with design and technology. Year 4 pupils were very keen to continue with their project of making model chairs. Very well organised activities allowed pupils to cooperate effectively in teams, discussing possible solutions to design problems and helping each other in practical tasks. The end of lesson review is an example of the very good practice that is not yet established throughout the school. It gave pupils valuable practice in evaluating examples and suggesting how weaknesses could be improved in the next lesson.
112. The subject is very well led and managed. The scheme of work is based on official guidance, suitably modified to reflect the school's resources and teaching strengths. Examples of pupils' finished work are attractively displayed to celebrate their achievements and stimulate interest in the subject, which makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.

GEOGRAPHY

113. Discussions with pupils and teachers and the analysis of teachers' planning, of pupils' work and of outstanding displays of pupils' work, show that standards are above national expectations by the end of Years 2, 6 and 7. Pupils make good progress and some high attaining and talented Year 7 pupils reach very high standards. The very effective extra help for pupils with special educational needs and for those who learn in English as an additional language ensures they reach standards similar to other pupils of their age.
114. A key feature contributing to high standards is the innovative planning of teachers, and their expert use of stunning displays of pupils' work, that ensure geographical knowledge, skills and understanding continue to develop when it is the turn of history to be taught for a while. The work of Year 4 pupils is typical of that of all other Year groups. When learning about the causes and effects of storms, pupils were required to make good use of specialist language and to express ideas clearly that were accurately spelt in well punctuated sentences. From Year 2, pupils make good progress in the use of graphs to portray and analyse evidence in order to reach

conclusions, for example, about the effects of rainfall. By Year 7, pupils are good at presenting findings based on calculations both graphically and in writing. All this very good practice improves pupils' numeracy and literacy skills and contributes to high standards through the school.

115. By the end of Year 2, pupils with different levels of attainment have good understanding of, and offer opinions about, in ways people over time altered the landscape of their new town and the surrounding countryside. They are good at comparing their town with others elsewhere in the United Kingdom and with places on other continents. Their own maps of the locality reveal good understanding of symbols, compass points and their good progress in understanding scale. Low attaining pupils explain satisfactorily the various types and purpose of buildings in their locality. Average and high attaining pupils are good at explaining the effects on the environment of different buildings, of parks and transport systems and how they and others can look after the environment. They all have good knowledge of the features of an island, the seaside, of different weather patterns and climates and the effects these have on the lives of people. They use their good knowledge of specialist language very well to explain their learning, such as, *evaporation, weather cycle, directional* and *shoreline*.
116. Year 6 pupils draw very well upon learning in other subjects to extend learning in geography, for example, when they explained how and why their town and others changed and grew over time. They understand the inter-dependence of towns and regions well, with high attaining pupils having very good understanding of international dimensions, such as the influence of mainland Europe on farming, fishing and leisure. Pupils with different levels of attainment use their good understanding of physical features, such as deserts, rivers, and mountains, and of erosion and deposition, to draw upon learning in science and express opinions on how they and others could manage, improve and sustain the environment. They know how to conduct fieldwork well, with good improvements in learning during residential visits and other educational outings.
117. Year 7 pupils understand how human and physical processes interact to produce distinctive characteristics of different localities and how these forces lead to change.
118. Leadership and management of the two newly appointed co-ordinators are good. There is a good strategic improvement plan in place that matches school improvement priorities. Some improvements in skills to analyse teaching and learning are needed to ensure standards remain high. Good resources are used well to help pupils learn.

HISTORY

119. Standards are above national expectations by Years 2, 6 and 7. Pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs and others who learn in English as an additional language.
120. By the end of Year 2, pupils have good knowledge of past events, such as the Fire of London, and the lives of ordinary people through their work on toys and homes. They have good knowledge about how some famous people, including Florence Nightingale and Louise Braille, improved the lives of others.

121. Year 6 pupils have good understanding and knowledge of the effects on British history of invaders and settlers, of Ancient Greece and Egypt, life in Tudor times and in this country in the first 30 years of the last century. By Years 2, 6, and 7, pupils achieve well using computers and CD-ROMs when conducting historical research to reach conclusions. This was evident in Year 4 during work that distinguished fact from opinion. Year 5 pupils use pictorial evidence well to reach conclusions about life in this country after the First World War. A few Year 7 pupils reach very high standards when learning about and researching British medieval history.
122. Most teaching is good and it is occasionally very good, with effective coverage of nationally recommended historical topics. Teachers ensure pupils know what to learn at the start of lessons, manage behaviour very skilfully and deploy teaching assistants well. Existing best practice that reviews learning at the end of lessons to assess how well pupils met learning targets has yet to spread to all history lessons. Teachers pool their good subject knowledge when planning lessons together to enliven pupils' learning so that classrooms are full of the sound of busy pupils. Excellent management of behaviour and learning when pupils work on their tasks means teachers concentrate unhindered on supporting learning and pupils produce plenty of work. Very good use of highly imaginative displays enthuses pupils and pushes their learning forward. This was evident in Year 2 pupils' displays about events during the Great Fire of London that required them to compare and contrast life in London in the 17th century with life there today. There is very good reinforcement of learning in other subjects that makes work relevant to pupils' diverse learning needs. For example, through the school there are good links to improve geographical knowledge when learning about past events around the world. Year 3 pupils improve their scientific knowledge when studying Ancient Greece and learning about Zeus and Greek Mythology to answer the question, 'How lightening happens?' Numeracy and literacy skills are reinforced well, as seen when a Year 1 teacher described the word 'candle snuffer' as beginning with the digraph 'sn' to reinforce learning in the literacy. In Year 1, pupils were taught that Victorians used butter pats to turn butter into cuboids that reinforced learning about mathematical shapes well. Learning is brought to life inspirationally at times with a great effect on pupils' spiritual development. A highly knowledgeable teaching assistant mesmerised pupils in the role of John Lennon when he answered questions about his life in order to improve their use of questions during historical enquiry that also deepened their understanding of life in the 1960s.
123. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A subject improvement plan links well to school improvement priorities and provides a good foundation upon which to further improve skills in evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning to ensure standards remain high.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

124. Standards meet national expectations by the end of Year 2, Year 6 and Year 7. Pupils throughout the school currently make good progress, including those with special educational needs and others who learn in English as an additional language. Standards are rising after a period of rapid improvements in planning and resources.
125. Pupils are confident and enthusiastic computer-based learners. From Year 1, they make good progress in using computer programs and word-processing so that by the end of Year 2, pupils type simple texts on screen, change the size and style of

the print, save and print their work and use the mouse accurately to choose options from a menu and to draw pictures in different colours, using an art program. They record information about children in their class in simple graphs. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 search CD ROMs and the Internet for information, and include pictures of various kinds when recording their results. They use computer graphics well to explore possible classroom designs, understanding proportions and shapes well, thus reinforcing numeracy skills. By the end of Year 6, they have good understanding of how word-processing can make the printed word attractive to an audience by adapting the style to match the mood of their creative writing, with good effects on literacy skills. Pupils in Year 7 create complex multi-media presentation about themselves and their interests. Throughout the school, pupils have good opportunities to operate technical equipment, such as audio and video recorders, CD players and digital cameras, and to find information using teletext. They use calculators and electronic dictionaries well.

126. Most teaching is good and it was very good in two of the lessons seen. Planning sets clear learning targets and activities are very well prepared and resourced. Teachers clearly and confidently explain and demonstrate new applications, making very good use of sophisticated projection equipment such as the interactive white boards. They use questioning and pupil demonstrations effectively to check the understanding of the class. Clearly explained tasks are supported well by guide sheets and checklists. For practical tasks, pupils work at clusters of computers spread through the school. It is a key factor in securing their progress that assisting adults are well briefed and organised so that they target their help efficiently to meet the individual learning needs of pupils. Such work is successful because pupils cooperate very well, with high attaining pupils helping lower attaining partners and all pupils consistently staying on task. The subject makes a very good contribution to their social development.
127. The subject is very well led and managed. The rapid increase in resources has required considerable and successful staff training. The scheme of work sets out clearly what pupils should be learning from year to year in all aspects of the subject. ICT is not used as well as it could be to support learning in other subjects, particularly in mathematics and science. There is a lack of a standardised procedure for assessing pupils' attainment and progress to ensure that instruction and tasks are consistently and accurately matched to pupils' differing attainment levels as they grow older. In particular, assessment does not always identify those pupils who have mastered an application so that they apply their skills to more challenging, independent work, whilst lower attaining pupils receive further guidance and practice.

MUSIC

128. By the end of Years 2, 6 and 7, standards are above those expected nationally. Pupils' progress and achievements are good, including those with special educational needs and others who learn in English as an additional language. Provision is good for high attaining pupils through recorder clubs and additional lessons. Tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers enhances provision for these pupils and for others and contributes greatly to pupils' enthusiasm and high standards. The school has achieved nationally recognised Artsmark status in recognition of its high achievements in the arts.

129. Most teaching is good and it is occasionally excellent. Throughout the school pupils make good progress in work that interests and sometimes excites them. Pupils learn from a rich diversity of music from around the world, often singing and making music in groups, with very good effects on their cultural, spiritual and social development. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons and they are very good at making sure pupils understand their learning objectives at the start of lessons. They are not as good when reviewing learning with the class at the end of lessons. The excellent management of learning and behaviour, and teachers' high expectations, all result in pupils with different learning needs being engrossed in learning. High quality teaching leads to Year 2 pupils singing enthusiastically in tune in lessons and assemblies with good understanding of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. They identify high and low notes and follow symbols well to play a musical sequence. Good use is made of the talents and the enthusiasm of pupils to help others learn, as seen in when a Year 4 boy played his miniature bagpipes to demonstrate the long note played in a dirge. By Year 6, pupils use musical notebooks well to record ideas that they use to compose and perform harmonies and melodies with good rhythmic phrasing. Good progress continues into Year 7, where pupils further improve their skills of critical appreciation. Throughout the school, pupils who play musical instruments reach very good standards in reading and playing music. They perform confidently in assemblies and concerts.
130. Extremely good use is made of music that touches pupils' feelings and contributes enormously to the school's highly successful learning atmosphere. This was evident when a talented pupil played his trumpet as Years 4 to 7 left their assembly and reception children and pupils in Years 1 and 2 arrived for their music lesson. This spiritual and cultural experience stayed with pupils long after the event. Visits from African drummers, Gospel singers, and performances from a violin ensemble, brass and woodwind musicians, as well as musical performances by pupils for parents, further improve pupils' learning and provided very effectively for their spiritual and cultural development.
131. Two very knowledgeable teachers contribute to highly effective leadership and management. They are very good at advising, supporting and enthusing colleagues. They lead on extending learning in class through to activities each week after school that include pupils' participation in choirs, educational visits and to concerts and singing with other schools at local and national events.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

132. Standards are in line with national expectations in gymnastics, games and swimming but well above in dance. Pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs and others who learn in English as an additional language. The school field only came into use three weeks before the inspection and, therefore, the opportunities for pupils to take part in a full range of games activities has been severely restricted. However, an exceptional range of sports activities took place after school during the inspection that involved over 70 highly motivated pupils.
133. Most teaching is good. Pupils progress and achieve well. High quality teaching ensures that they behave extremely well and are eager to learn. In a Year 2 dance lesson, pupils responded well to music and the teacher's high expectations as they improved their ability to evaluate and improve their performances. In Year 3, the teacher's good use of pupils' ideas maintained their great interest as they travelled in different directions, on and off the apparatus. Standards of dance in Year 6 are very

high, as seen when pupils rehearsed an African dance. Year 7 pupils demonstrated high fitness levels and a good understanding of the principles of orienteering whilst they searched for letter clues and recorded their findings on a detailed plan of the school that reinforced learning in geography well.

134. A total of fifteen clubs are run at different times of the year, supported by teachers, parents, coaches from Wimbledon Football Club and professional dance teachers. The school plans to increase competitive games with other schools now that the field is in use. Regular after school dance performances are planned that range from country and folk dancing to African and Native American dance. The award of an Artsmark in recognition of some of these types of high quality activities was made to the school during the inspection.
135. The headteacher keeps a 'watching brief' over physical education until next term when the induction of newly and well-qualified enthusiastic leaders will be completed. They have good plans for continuous improvement.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

136. Standards in religious education match those expected by the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2, 6 and Year 7. Pupils progress well when using computers to do research. Those with special educational needs and others who learn in English as an additional language make good progress.
137. Most teaching is good and learning is appropriately supported through homework. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons that interest pupils. However, day-to-day assessment, and those completed more formally, do not yet inform lesson planning well enough so that teaching consistently focuses upon improvements to pupils' learning, and so further raises standards. Planning also makes too little use of local places of worship to help pupils learn, although during the inspection there was a well-planned visit for Year 2 to a local church that resulted in good work. Numeracy and literacy skills are reinforced well. Year 2 pupils have good understanding of the Christian celebrations of Christmas and Easter. They have satisfactory knowledge about special people in the community and about the life of St Francis, linked appropriately to their understanding about caring for pets. Very effective teaching in Year 2 resulted in pupils' very good progress when talking about the Mosque, why Muslims face Mecca to pray, the role of the prayer mat and why there is always a deliberate 'mistake' in the weaving, before designing their own mat. This lesson reinforced learning in design technology well, as it did numeracy and literacy skills when pupils described the different shapes they made and wrote about their learning, paying close attention to punctuation and spelling. Year 6 pupils adequately understand the importance of rules in everyday life and they have satisfactory understanding of major world religions and special books used in worship. Year 7 pupils demonstrated very good understanding of different faiths. Very probing questions drove forward their understanding of the 'table of brotherhood' when discussing Martin Luther King's dream of equality and the beliefs of Malcolm X. This lesson supported learning in citizenship well.
138. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The school's improvement plan prioritises improvements to coincide with the publication of the new, agreed syllabus that is about to be published. The subject leader has good knowledge about improvements needed. Some improvements in skills to analyse the effectiveness of teaching and learning are needed to further improve standards.