

INSPECTION REPORT

HILLCREST PRIMARY SCHOOL

LEA area: Bristol

Unique reference number: 131522

Headteacher: Mrs Norma Watson

Reporting inspector: Mr Peter Kerr
23583

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th March 2003

Inspection number: 248846

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Road Totterdown Bristol
Postcode:	BS4 3BW
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Helena Peake
Date of previous inspection:	15 th January 2001

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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23583	Mr P Kerr	Registered inspector	Music	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught What the school should do to improve further
14756	Mr J Lovell	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
21904	Mrs D Gale	Team inspector	Geography History Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	
22841	Miss P Jackson	Team inspector	Science Religious education	English as an additional language
22397	Mr S Fowler	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Physical education	The quality of the curriculum and other opportunities offered to pupils
17263	Mr A Bond	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology	How well the school is led and managed
10611	Mr M James	Team inspector	English Art and design	Educational inclusion Special educational needs

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REPORT CONTENTS

Page

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

6-9

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

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

10-12

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

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12-14

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

14-16

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

16-18

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

18-19

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

19-22

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

22

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

23-26

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

27-44

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a larger than average primary school, with 366 pupils on roll, aged four to 11, situated in an area of mixed private and rented housing near Bristol city centre. Sixteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is near the national average. About ten per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, mostly related to learning difficulties, seven of whom have a statement of special educational needs; these are also average proportions. The intake of pupils contains a wide variety of ethnic minority groups, and 15 per cent of pupils speak a language other than English as their home language. Six of these are at the early stages of learning English. There is a fairly high turnover of pupils of about 17 per cent, but the numbers on roll remains very constant. Overall, the children's attainment on entry to the school is average. During the last two years there have been a significant number of staff changes, with six teachers leaving and 12 new appointments, including the deputy head. Many of the new teachers are recently qualified. The school participates in a number of national and local initiatives in order to improve facilities and provision. These include: Sport England, Learning Through Landscapes, and an Initial Teacher Training partnership with the University of West England.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Standards have improved overall and are above average in English and in dance. In most other subjects, pupils attain the levels expected for their age. The quality of teaching is good overall, although some inconsistencies remain. Pupils achieve well overall, however, in some lessons, the most able pupils are not fully stretched. The school's very good provision for the pupils' personal development contributes to their very good attitudes and behaviour. An excellent team spirit pervades the school, making it a very pleasant place to learn and work. The headteacher, senior staff and governors provide very good leadership and management, and the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils reach above-average standards in English and dance by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils have very good attitudes, behave very well and show very good personal development.
- The quality of teaching is good overall.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of very effective support.
- The school has an excellent community spirit.
- Leadership and management are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in geography, history and music at the end of Year 6.
- Consistency of provision for the most able pupils to learn at a faster rate in lessons.
- The overall rate of attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 2001, when it was judged to have serious weaknesses; this is no longer the case. The five main weaknesses have all been successfully remedied. Standards in writing, which were too low, are now average and rising; the quality of teaching is now good; assessment data is used very effectively in English and mathematics; senior staff support the headteacher very effectively, and pupils now make good progress in information and communication technology. Pupils also use their computer skills widely and effectively to support their learning in most subjects. These improvements have been brought about by the determined and concerted efforts of the headteacher and governors to maintain morale whilst, at the same time, gradually eradicating weak teaching and establishing more effective management. More remains to be done to make teaching consistent within all year groups and between the key stages¹, and to ensure that the most able pupils achieve as well as they can, but, overall, improvements in standards, teaching and leadership and management have been very good.

¹ Key Stages

Key Stage 2, sometimes referred to as the juniors, caters for pupils aged between 7 and 11 and refers to pupils who are in Years 3 to 6.

Key Stage 1, sometimes referred to as the infants, caters for pupils aged between 5 and 7 and refers to pupils who are in Years 1 and 2.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools ²
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	D	C	C
Mathematics	E	D	C	C
Science	E	E	C	C

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

Standards, as measured by the test results, are now average when compared with all schools nationally and, also, when compared with similar schools. This represents satisfactory achievement for all pupils across the school. The inspection found that pupils currently Year 6 achieve very well in English to reach above-average standards in speaking, listening and reading, and average standards in writing. Standards in mathematics and science are average. These standards represent good achievement for these pupils, as this is the one remaining year group adversely affected by the school's re-organisation in 1999. The school's realistic targets for 2003 reflect these findings. The school predicts that results will be above average from 2004 onwards. The inspection confirms that pupils are now achieving well overall in Years 3, 4, and 5, so that, following a slowly improving trend, the test results should improve more rapidly after 2003. Although the school's test results are better for girls than for boys over time, the inspection found no evidence of any difference in achievement by gender.

Children enter the reception classes with attainment which is average overall. They make good progress and begin Year 1 with standards that are above expectations for their age in all areas of learning, except in the physical education aspect of physical development, where their attainment is in line with expectations. The results of the national tests, taken by pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2002, were well above average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing. The inspection found that standards in English and mathematics are above average at the end of Year 2. Standards in science are average, although teachers' assessed pupils' attainment in 2002 to be well below average.

Pupils achieve very well in literacy, especially in Years 3 to 6, where their self-expression is highly valued. Their poems, and other reflective writing on display, lift the spirit. Pupils achieve well in the basic skills of numeracy at the end of Year 6 and satisfactorily at the end of Year 2. Standards in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, physical education and religious education are typical for the pupils' ages at the end of Years 2 and 6, apart from in dance, where standards exceed expectations in Year 6, and in geography, history and music, where standards are below average at the end of Year 6.

Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards their individual learning targets, because of the very good support they receive from teachers and learning support assistants. Pupils who speak a language other than English at home achieve as well as other pupils in their year-groups, because their specific needs are identified, and appropriate support is given to them to learn English and have full access to lessons. The most able pupils do not achieve as well as other pupils in each year group in most subjects, because they do not have sufficient extra challenge. Although pupils achieve well, progress is uneven within some year groups because teaching is more effective in one class than the other. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2, and achieve well, overall, in Years 3 to 6, because of more effective teaching in these classes.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school and to learning. They respond very well to challenging work and are very appreciative of the support of their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall, the behaviour of pupils is very good. They have a very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong.

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

Personal development and relationships

Pupils show good responsibility and initiative. They work together very well, and have very good relationships with adults and each other.

Attendance	Although some pupils have very good or excellent attendance, overall it is well below the national average. Last year unauthorised absence was below the average for primary schools nationally but holidays in excess of ten days were authorised.
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Overall, the very positive attitudes and behaviour of pupils supports their attainment, achievement and personal development.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching is good overall. It is consistently good in the reception classes. Teachers, nursery nurses, and other helpers, co-operate very effectively to provide a busy, but calm atmosphere in which the children make good gains in all areas of their development.

The strongest teaching is in Years 3 to 6, where 40 per cent of the lessons seen were very good or better, and three lessons were excellent, two of these in religious education. Teaching was judged good or very good in six subjects in this key stage. The feature that marks out the excellent teaching in religious education is the teachers' ability to inspire the pupils to explore and express their own ideas and feelings and exchange them with one another. Many very good lessons contain elements of similar creative challenge, particularly in English. Teaching is good in English and mathematics overall. Numeracy is taught well and literacy is taught very well. Teachers use a good range of methods in the best lessons that get the pupils working together and developing their ideas, with plenty of evaluation and suggestions for improvement. This enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress. All the teachers establish very good relationships with the pupils and manage them very well. Teachers and learning support assistants work very well together as a team, particularly to support pupils with special educational needs, for whom teaching is very effective. Lessons also effectively meet the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language.

Teaching is weakest in Years 1 and 2, although it is seldom unsatisfactory. The main weakness in the least effective lessons is the lack of attention paid to pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills, both in introductions to lessons and in the tasks set. In these lessons, teachers also talk to the whole class for too long, leading to inattention and slow progress. The strengths and weaknesses in teaching are not evenly distributed among classes, so that the quality of teaching is higher in one class in some year groups than in the other, sometimes significantly so, especially in Years 1 and 2.

Teaching is not as effective in music as it is in most other subjects, because teachers lack the confidence to adapt the school's chosen lesson planning guidelines to suit the needs of the pupils they are teaching. In history, the good teaching of the subject overall does not lead to good achievement by the end of Year 6 because of gaps in the coverage of the subject leading to gaps in the pupils' knowledge. In information and communication technology, good training and support for teachers has resulted in good teaching and learning across the school. The pupils are good learners overall. They put in a lot of creative and mental effort and sustain concentration well, even when tasks are difficult or lessons uninteresting.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good throughout the school, except for provision for geography and history in Year 6. Plenty of activities are provided outside lessons to enrich and enhance the pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with special educational needs receive very effective support from teachers and learning support assistants, enabling them to make very good progress towards their targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional	There is good provision and support for pupils at the early stages of learning to speak English. Good systems are in place to monitor the progress of all pupils who use

language	English as an additional language.
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Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school gives high priority to pupils' personal development. The many very good opportunities provided mean that pupils grow in self-esteem, develop a sense of responsibility and gain valuable insight into the lives and beliefs of others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The overall procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and promoting good behaviour are good and the school operates an effective policy on race equality. Procedures for assessment are very good in English, mathematics and are satisfactory overall. Assessment is not used effectively to challenge the most able pupils.

The school works well in partnership with parents to the benefit of all the pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall. The headteacher provides strong, dedicated leadership and very effective management. The senior staff and subject leaders make a valuable contribution to the management of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors fulfil their statutory duties very well and make a significant contribution to shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school compares its performance meticulously with other schools and endeavours to continually improve.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The budget is very closely linked to educational priorities. The school consults widely and spends wisely to obtain best value and ensure that the school meets the needs of the school community.

The school is well staffed. The accommodation is satisfactory. The building and limited grounds are put to very good use. Resources are at least adequate in all subjects, except for some shortages in art and design, design and technology and geography.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That their children like school, behave well and make good progress. • The good quality of teaching. • The good attitudes, values and beliefs being promoted by the school. • They are comfortable in approaching the school with any concerns or problems. • The high expectations of the school. • The quality of the leadership and management of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information that they receive about pupils' progress. • The closeness with which the school works with parents. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with the points that please parents most and judged that, whilst the information provided to parents and the accessibility of teachers is good overall, the quality of the reporting of pupils' progress could be improved. The range of activities outside lessons was found to be good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards on entry to the school are average. This judgement reflects the findings of the previous report. Many of the children have had pre-school experience, ranging from playgroups to private nurseries. By the time they leave the reception classes, the children attain standards that are above the expectations for their age group in their personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, their mathematical and creative development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In their physical development they reach the expected standards. Similar standards were found at the time of the previous inspection, although children's physical development was judged to be above expectations. The current judgement in this area reflects the average skills demonstrated by the children in their physical education lesson, although their physical skills in using small tools are good. Children's achievements are good overall across the areas of learning, and reflect the good teaching and teamwork in the reception classes.
2. The school's results in the national tests in 2002, taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, were well above average in reading and mathematics, due to the relatively high proportion of the pupils achieving the higher than average Level 3. Results were average in writing, because fewer pupils attained the higher level. The inspection found that the standards attained by the pupils currently in Year 2 are above average in English and mathematics. This reflects the school's successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies that have given structure to lessons. The uneven quality of teaching between classes affects pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. However, achievement is satisfactory overall. The school's assessment of the pupils' attainment in science at the end of Year 2 was well below average in 2002 overall. The inspection found, however, that standards are average in science, but held back by the inconsistency between classes; pupils in one class have much better knowledge, understanding and skills than in the other class.
3. Low standards and poor results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science were a concern at the last inspection. Since then the school's results have improved from well below average to average, when compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools. The improvements are most marked in English, where most effort has been put in, and where standards are now above average, representing very good achievement for these pupils. Standards are above average in reading, speaking and listening, and average in writing. The content of the pupils' writing is often above average, as illustrated by the inspirational poetry on the theme of death on display in the school hall. The school has had to work very hard, however, to bring the pupils' spelling, grammar and handwriting skills up to an average standard.
4. Good progress has also been made in mathematics. The standards attained by the pupils currently in Year 6 are typical for their age, but are above expectations in Years 3, 4 and 5. This represents good achievement. The pupils show good skills in finding their own solutions to challenging problems, and have good basic numeracy skills for their age in each year group.
5. The trend towards above average attainment in Years 3, 4 and 5 is mirrored in all subjects, except music, and marks the end of the underachievement that followed the school's re-organisation in 1999. The establishment of more effective teaching in Years 3 to 6 has led to better levels of achievement among the pupils and rising standards. The school's targets reflect this. They show an improvement in English in 2003, but are more modest in mathematics. Thereafter, above average standards are forecast in both subjects.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to the targets set for them; this is an improvement since the previous inspection. They are provided with extremely good levels of support from their teachers and the learning support assistants. Pupils' targets are regularly evaluated and reviewed, and new targets are set to aid progress, when required. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress. Their needs are accurately assessed with the help of the part-time specialist teacher, and programmes of support provided.

Those at the early stages of learning English have appropriately intensive support and, also, therefore, make good progress. The most able pupils do not achieve quite as well as other groups of pupils, because, in too many lessons, work of a similar level of difficulty is set for the whole class. The most able pupils do more work of a higher quality than the other pupils, but do not often reach the higher levels of attainment of which they are capable.

7. The inspection found no evidence to suggest any difference in achievement between boys and girls. Although test results are significantly different in some years, there is no overall pattern, with girls doing better in some years and boys in others. Pupils from different ethnic groups also achieve equally well; the school closely monitors their performance. The pupils have made very good progress in their information and communication technology skills since the last inspection. They now use these in a number of subjects, but not yet to the fullest possible extent, for example in music. Standards in dance are above expectations in Year 6. Standards in geography and history are not as high as they should be at the end of Year 6, because gaps in provision within Year 6 have led to gaps in the pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. However, standards in these subjects are at least in line with expectations in Years 3, 4 and 5. Standards in music are below expectations in music in Year 6, because pupils have not had opportunities to develop their skills over time.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour show a very good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils now have very positive attitudes to school and to learning; this is confirmed by parents. Pupils have a very good interest and involvement in activities. Overall, standards of behaviour are very good and relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, are very good. These very good attitudes are a strength of the school and make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.
9. Children in the reception classes have very positive attitudes. They have good levels of confidence and self-esteem in response to the praise and encouragement they receive. They undertake helpful tasks around the classroom efficiently. Overall, pupils' responses to teaching are very good throughout the school; they were good or better in almost all of the lessons observed during the inspection, and never less than satisfactory. In those lessons where the pace of the teaching is good or better and teachers' expectations are high, pupils are very well motivated, interested and responsive. For example, in a Year 4 geography lesson about the use of land in Bangalore, pupils sustained concentration very well and drew upon their own experiences to gain an understanding of lifestyles and land use, collaborating very effectively to develop and explore ideas. In such lessons, which are well structured to use time effectively and to stimulate all pupils to develop ideas independently and in small groups, pupils are enthusiastic and remain focused on their work, enabling them to make good or better gains in their knowledge and understanding. Pupils work well individually, in pairs and in groups, sharing resources, co-operating and working together well. When the pace and challenge of lessons is less demanding, pupils remain keen to learn, but concentration sometimes lapses and a minority of pupils may need encouragement to continue to apply themselves to their work.
10. The quality of relationships between pupils is very good and this benefits collaborative working. Pupils mix together very well at the dining tables, irrespective of gender or ethnic background. They enjoy games, in which everyone is included, and the younger pupils, particularly, value the active involvement of the midday assistants. Pupils are very welcoming to visitors and keen to engage them in conversation, readily sharing their enthusiasm for school, and are confident in showing and discussing their work.
11. Pupils have a good understanding of the needs of others, which is developed through assemblies and visiting speakers, religious education and personal, social and health education lessons. They support local, national and international charities such as Red Nose Day, the Autism Society, and Water Aid. In the latter case, this has been led by pupils in Years 5 and 6 and is linked to work in geography.
12. Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is good, or better, and usually very good. Parents support this view. Pupils are self-disciplined, although a very small minority behave inappropriately on occasions. Pupils have a very good understanding of the school rules, which are displayed around the school, and they are very aware of the high standards of behaviour that are expected from them. They usually respond very well to these expectations and value the praise of

staff and rewards such as 'golden time.' There is no evidence to suggest that there is systematic bullying or oppressive behaviour within the school. Generally, pupils and parents do not express concerns about bullying and pupils are very confident that if they have any worries about this or relationship breakdowns, they may talk to teachers or other adults working in the school. The school seeks to identify and address any concerns, mediating in the case of difficulties, which may arise in relationships, and involving parents when appropriate. During the last school year there have been 18 fixed-period exclusions and one permanent exclusion, involving six pupils in total. This compares with six fixed-period exclusions in the year prior to the last inspection. However, behaviour overall has shown a significant improvement and exclusions have been used appropriately. The very high standards of behaviour throughout the school have a very positive impact on pupils' progress and standards.

13. Pupils move around the school in a very orderly fashion, with a minimum of supervision. During lessons, they are quiet and attentive. They are very courteous and trustworthy and show great respect for the school's and other pupils' property. There is no evidence of vandalism, graffiti or litter in or around the school. Pupils have great respect for each other's feelings, values and beliefs. For example, in Year 5, a pupil referred to the importance of learning about Islam, by explaining that we all expect others to respect our culture and beliefs and we, therefore, have a duty to respect them and their beliefs, which can only be achieved by learning about them. During breaks, pupils play very well together and clearly enjoy each other's company. They are very supportive and considerate of each other, in work and play, taking delight in celebrating each other's success and ensuring that nobody is excluded.
14. An excellent example of the pupils contributing to the life of the school community, and showing responsibility, is the school council, which canvasses the views of all pupils very effectively over a wide range of issues, ranging from the appointment of senior staff to facilities at lunchtime, to how to create quietness in classrooms. Throughout the school, pupils undertake tasks within the classroom, such as clearing up after activities and assisting in handing out books and resources. They also enjoy tasks that help the smooth running of the school generally, such as moving the 'sandwich crates' into the hall at lunchtime. In Year 6, pupils act as 'buddies' for children in the reception class and assist them in play and activities during break and lunchtime. Pupils respond well to opportunities to show initiative and responsibility in their own learning, but there are few such opportunities within some lessons. This particularly limits the progress of the most able pupils in developing skills of independent exploration and research.
15. Although many pupils have very good or excellent attendance, the attendance rate was well below average in 2001/2, and was slightly below that found at the time of the last inspection. However, the attendance rate has remained fairly constant, overall, during the last three years. Until a recent review, extended holidays were recorded as authorised absences, which made the figure for unauthorised absences appear low. Governors have decided to discontinue this practice, in line with national guidelines, which will increase the figures for unauthorised absences. The school recognises that attendance and punctuality is an area needing improvement and parents admit to taking children on holiday during term time. The significant majority of pupils are punctual at the start of the school day and those who arrive late usually arrive within the first few minutes of the school day, during registration.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good overall, which is a very good improvement since the last inspection. It is consistently good in the reception classes. In Years 1 and 2, it is satisfactory, with a few good lessons and a small amount of very good teaching. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is good overall, with much good and very good teaching, and some examples of excellent practice.
17. In the reception classes teaching is good overall, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. It is never less than satisfactory and two very good lessons were observed. The consistently good standard of teaching has a very positive impact on the rate that children learn and their good achievements, whatever their ability. All the children are fully included in all activities. Children with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, are supported well by the good teamwork of teachers and nursery nurses and other staff. Consequently, they achieve well and make good progress. Teachers continually assess the children's progress and

keep careful records of what they observe. They use this information well to carefully plan tasks of varying difficulty to match the ability of the children. The teachers' planning ensures balanced development in the six areas of learning, with effective links between them all. They make certain that lessons contain a good variety of tasks, some of which encourage independence. The teaching of basic skills is good. Teachers have good expectations of what children should learn, although, at times, the over-structuring of a lesson means that some spontaneous opportunities are missed to extend children's learning further. Time and resources are used efficiently and children learn in a busy but calm atmosphere. The learning support assistants make a valuable and knowledgeable contribution to children's learning.

18. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. The teachers all work hard and establish good relationships with the pupils, but not all are effective in ensuring that the pupils make good progress in lessons. In the best lessons in these classes, the teachers give clear but brief introductions, and then set the pupils tasks to do that extend their learning, with more challenge for the most able pupils, and support, with easier activities, for the lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. They then interact with the pupils, as they work, helping them to see where they can improve. Few such lessons were seen in this key stage. In the less effective lessons, the teachers spend too much time talking to the whole class, leaving insufficient time for pupils to learn at their own rate through activities and without due regard for the pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and skills. The most able pupils, in particular, under-achieve in these lessons, because they often know a lot of what is being taught already and have ideas of their own that they are not given opportunities to explore.
19. These drawbacks prevented some of the lessons seen in Years 3 to 6 from being fully effective, but the proportion of such pedestrian teaching is much lower in this key stage, so teaching is good overall. It was good or better in over 80 per cent of the lessons observed and very good or better in 40 per cent, with three excellent lessons. Two of the excellent lessons were in religious education, where the teachers really challenged the pupils to explore sensitive and difficult ideas in innovative ways, including role-play. They gave total respect to the pupils' individual beliefs, views, and feelings, and sensitively encouraged them to consider those of each other. This led to spirit-lifting interactions between the pupils and between pupils and teachers and real gains in understanding and appreciation of the world and the possibilities of ideas and beliefs. One lesson in particular led to a wonderful insight into the similarity between Muslim and Christian views, vital for the pupils' understanding of the world in which they live. Another excellent lesson which was in design and technology encouraged the pupils to use their imagination. This is a feature of many very good lessons, especially in English, as evidenced by the wonderful examples of creative writing on display around the school.
20. The main area for improvement in the less effective lessons in Years 3 to 6 is in enabling the pupils to explore their own ideas and learn at their own rate. Teachers do not consistently use a wide enough range of methods to achieve this. For example, in some science lessons, all the pupils undertake exactly the same experiment in the same way, instead of discussing how they might test their own ideas. In some music lessons, all the pupils are kept working at the same pace, under the teacher's direction, instead of being set free to explore and develop their ideas within a given framework. This approach stifles the pupils' creativity and prevents those who are capable of it from developing real learning skills within the particular subject. The most able pupils are the most affected by these shortcomings. The organising of pupils into mixed-ability pairs, for all lessons in the computer suite, restricts the opportunity for pupils to work at their own pace and limits the progress that the most able pupils can make. The pupils' learning in history and geography is also held back by the long gap between lessons.
21. Teachers are confident in using the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. Teaching is good overall in English and mathematics, and very good in English in Years 3 to 6. This is reflected in the progress the pupils have made in these subjects over recent years. Greater consistency in the quality of teaching between classes in some year groups, particularly in the level of challenge provided for the most able pupils, is the main area for improvement, especially in Years 1 and 2, where teaching is satisfactory overall in both subjects. Teaching is good overall in science, information and communication technology, history, and religious education, and satisfactory in art and design, design and technology, geography, music and physical education.

22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The pupils learn very effectively at their own pace, because of the very good quality individual learning programmes that are provided and the support they are given by teachers and learning support assistants within lessons. The learning support assistants are very effective, because they work so closely with the teachers and feel part of a professional team. They give excellent support to the individuals in their care and very good support to groups of pupils within lessons. Pupils for whom English is an additional language learn well, because of the good quality support they receive. The visiting teacher provides very good, direct teaching for those pupils who are in the early stages of learning to speak English, and very good advice and support for teachers to enable them to fully include all these pupils in lessons and ensure that they make the same progress as other pupils, relative to their ability.
23. The pupils are good learners. They seize any opportunity to learn new facts, explore new ideas and put forward their own suggestions. In the best lessons, they work hard all the time and co-operate well with each other in discussions, drama and practical tasks. Pupils take great pride in their work. Even when lessons are uninteresting and lacking in challenge, they sustain concentration and do their best to learn. They are particularly keen to express themselves creatively, putting a great deal of effort, for example, into the writing of poetry.

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

24. At the time of the last inspection, there were some significant weaknesses in both the breadth and the balance of the curriculum. Provision was unsatisfactory for geography and music in Years 1 and 2 and in information and communication technology, music and design and technology in Years 3 to 6. There was also a need to develop the use of information and communication technology in other subjects. These weaknesses have been eradicated. The school now provides a carefully considered framework of policies and schemes of work for all subjects, and pupils use information and communication technology widely as a tool for learning.
25. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good in the reception classes. The children are offered a good curriculum, which is broad and balanced, and carefully matched to the six areas of learning appropriate to the age group. It carefully makes sure that children develop their skills alongside knowledge and understanding, with an effective blend of teacher-directed activities and opportunities for children to explore and make independent choices.
26. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is good. It is broad and balanced, and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The provision for religious education meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and there is a daily act of collective worship for all pupils, other than those withdrawn by their parents. The school has developed a comprehensive policy for personal, social and health education, and has good policies for sex education, drugs education and citizenship. A strong commitment to equal opportunities and racial equality contributes significantly to the good behaviour and attitudes of pupils and helps to ensure that the school operates as a harmonious and caring community.
27. Although many subject co-ordinators are relatively new to their posts, all are enthusiastic and providing at least good leadership, although most of them have not yet had time to monitor the delivery of the curriculum. A survey has been carried out within the school to ensure that each subject has an appropriate time allocation. This has given a better balance to the curriculum. However, the time gap between the teaching of history and geography in both Years 5 and 6 is, currently, too long to enable pupils to build on their previous knowledge.
28. The very good implementation of and high priority given to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have begun to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Skills are reinforced on a regular basis and are taught in a well-planned and structured way, which is a good improvement since the last inspection. Teachers feel confident with the structures of the frameworks, which help them to develop a consistent approach to teaching the curriculum, and the subject co-ordinators give very good leadership. Teachers are particularly effective in getting the pupils to use and improve their literacy skills in other subjects.
29. Overall, the school is effective in ensuring that all pupils are given equal access to the statutory curriculum and all other activities provided. Good policies on equal opportunities and racial equality permeate all aspects of school life. However, on occasions, groups of pupils are removed from

lessons, including information and communication technology and physical education, to participate in additional literacy and numeracy support. In addition, teachers do not always cater for the needs of higher-attaining pupils within their lessons. For example, the decision to organise pupils into mixed-ability pairs for all lessons in the computer suite, restricts the opportunity for individual pupils to work at their own pace and limits the progress that higher-attaining pupils could make.

30. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good; this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Clear procedures are in place, which follow the new Code of Practice closely. The pupils' individual education plans are of good quality and are reviewed each term. Care is taken to ensure that the work provided for pupils is closely suited to their needs. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs are provided with the most suitable support, in line with the requirements indicated, and their statements are reviewed annually. All pupils with special educational needs are involved in the full range of school activities.
31. A good range of activities is provided outside of lessons, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Younger pupils have after-school activities arranged during the lighter evenings; for example, last summer, 35 of them took part in playground games workshops. In addition, the curriculum is enhanced and enriched by visits, for example to the theatre and by visitors to school, such as the 'Storybox Theatre' and members of the local community. Parents make a good contribution to events, such as the 'arts week', which provided opportunities for pupils to make a significant contribution to improving the school environment through, for example, the creation of a mural in the playground.
32. The school places great importance on personal, social and health education and this makes a significant contribution to the very positive attitudes and relationships amongst all pupils. This represents an improvement from the previous inspection. In all classes, personal, social and health education lessons are timetabled on a weekly basis. These concentrate on developing healthy lifestyles, confidence and responsibility, preparation for citizenship and respect for all. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, pupils developed role-play to demonstrate how they should react in risky situations, and, although there was a sense of fun within the lesson, the teacher did not allow it to detract from the seriousness of the issues. All classes from Year 1 to Year 6 have elected representatives on the school council, which meets on a regular basis to discuss issues of importance to the school as a whole. This encourages the development of a sense of citizenship and allows pupils to have a say in their own education. During the week of the inspection, for example, class representatives expressed genuine concern that the building of a proposed new nursery would lead to a further reduction in the already limited outside play area. The co-ordinator for personal, social and health education is enthusiastic and gives good leadership to the subject.
33. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection, when provision was satisfactory. The school is a caring community, where pupils can grow in self-esteem, develop a sense of responsibility and gain insights into the lives and beliefs of others. The four areas that make up this aspect are carefully interwoven, so that there are strong links between them. Pupils' progress in these areas is central to the vision of the school, which is clearly displayed around the building. It is based on values, which encompass equal opportunities, together with individual rights and informed choices. Self-discipline and care for others are seen as essential parts of the pupils' development, and this area is led and fostered well by the headteacher.
34. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. It is inherent in lessons and in daily life and routines. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on what they learn, to empathise with others and consider their own feelings. They capture these elements in their writing, which frequently illustrates their deeper thinking. The benefits of this very good provision was clearly illustrated when pupils in Year 6 affirmed how important it is to know about other beliefs and cultures, and how this can lead to mutual respect and tolerance. Subjects such as science and religious education play a major part in contributing to the pupils' spiritual development by developing their sense of wonder, for example, when pupils in a class in Year 6 explored the question 'What happens to us after we die?' Work such as this helps pupils to consider their own feelings and beliefs and to understand something of the beliefs of major religious faiths. Spiritual effects are captured by displays around the school, which contribute to the feeling of calmness and enhance pupils' awareness of beauty in many aspects of the world around them. However, although assemblies are thought through carefully, and are a special time, they only make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual

awareness because they lack really effective reflection; a weakness recognised during the previous inspection.

35. There are strong links between pupils' spiritual awareness and the provision for their moral development, which is very good. The school's strong moral code helps pupils to grow in self-confidence, and moral and behavioural expectations are consistently and unobtrusively reinforced. This again is underpinned by the school's ethos and teaching. Moral issues are sensitively explored through personal, social and health education, and religious education lessons and assemblies. All staff consistently provide good role models in promoting harmonious relationships and a caring atmosphere. Pupils are taught to consider the effect of their actions on others, whether pupils or adults. They know what is expected of them and respond accordingly. Pupils learn to distinguish between right and wrong, and this, too, develops a respect for needs, feelings and beliefs of others. In some classes, the use of 'worry boxes' helps pupils to quietly confide their worries, or celebrate pleasant events in their daily lives. Pupils also become aware of the wider moral issues around the world, through the aspects of the curriculum. They engage in discussion and debate on current topics, and consider carefully, for example, issues concerning the Iraqi war and environmental issues, showing a growing awareness and understanding of the views of others.
36. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Teachers have high expectations and try to ensure that pupils understand the value of sharing and of working and playing together co-operatively. The results of this were seen, for example, in the playground, where a group of pupils of different gender, age and ethnicity played together harmoniously, organising their games with no dissension between them. Some lessons provide very good opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and groups and to undertake independent learning, although not enough in some classes, especially in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are encouraged to consider and support each other when applying themselves to their tasks in the classroom, and this sometimes results in spontaneous applause. From an early age, pupils are helped to develop their sense of responsibility and initiative. In this they are encouraged by the ideals and development of the very effective School Council. It is a matter of pride to be part of this and many aspire to being elected. They know their views are respected and they have successfully instigated many changes. Older pupils become aware of the need for the care of others, through helping the children in the reception classes regularly. Pupils are made aware of wider social and moral issues, through their good support of a range of local and worldwide charities, and, in some cases, they have initiated and organised fund-raising events themselves. A wide range of visits and involvement in local events consistently provide another very good element to pupils' social development.
37. Provision for pupils' cultural development has improved from good to very good. The diverse and rich culture of the school is carefully drawn upon and open attitudes to religion and cultures are fostered consistently. From the time they enter the reception classes, children learn about the celebrations and festivals of others. The signs, pictures and displays around the school effectively support pupils' awareness of cultural diversity, and contribute to the feeling of mutual respect among the pupils. This aspect is also successfully fostered across the curriculum and particularly in religious education lessons, where, for example, pupils research themes in art from different religions. Pupils' knowledge of their own culture and western culture is also well developed. It is strongly developed in literacy, history and geography. Art and music also play their part, although music makes only a satisfactory contribution. Other cultural opportunities are provided through visits and visitors and effective innovations such as an art week. Among the many visitors who heighten pupils' cultural awareness are Japanese drummers and Zimbabwean dancers. Pupils benefit from the opportunity to take part in a range of Chinese workshops at the Bristol Museum, and they also participate in local festivals.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The provision for pupils' welfare is good overall and shows an improvement on that found at the time of the last inspection. Teachers know pupils well and procedures for monitoring and supporting their personal development are good and enhanced by opportunities for pupils in Years 3 and 6 to work together at camps. The effective strategies employed to improve pupils' behaviour and support their personal development ensure standards in these areas are very good overall, and support the school's very positive ethos of a community in which every member is valued and has a role to play. This has a very positive effect on pupils' learning.

39. The school has a clearly understood behaviour policy. The pupils have a very good understanding of the rules and of teachers' very high expectations. Learning support assistants and midday assistants are fully involved in the consistent implementation of the rewards and sanctions system, which is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Pupils value the praise and recognition given by staff and speak very positively of the support which they receive. They are confident that they can take concerns, including those about relationship breakdowns, to any member of staff and that they will be listened to, the issues addressed sympathetically, and resolved effectively, involving parents fully when necessary. The school's procedures for addressing bullying and oppressive behaviour are effective and, where particular concerns are identified, parents are fully involved in resolving problems. Race equality is assured through a carefully thought out and consistently implemented policy.
40. Currently, the school has satisfactory procedures to promote good attendance and punctuality. Parents are encouraged to take holidays outside term time. The school contacts parents on the first day of absence in those cases where no explanation has been provided. Good attendance is celebrated by recognition of the achievement of those pupils having excellent levels of attendance. Registers are marked accurately and the school authorises absences, in accordance with its policy. In those cases, where concerns are identified, the school seeks to resolve them in partnership with parents and outside agencies. Good support is available from the education welfare officer, who is readily accessible. The weaknesses in the current system are the lack of analysis of attendance patterns to link pupils' attendance with their rate of progress, and the historic authorising of absences for holidays in excess of ten days. The school has recognised these weaknesses and is currently in the process of moving to a computerised system, with a view to significantly improving administration and analysis.
41. Child protection procedures are good and comply with requirements. The school uses the local area protection committee's guidelines. The headteacher is responsible for child protection and has undertaken appropriate training. She is well supported by her deputy, who has also undertaken training. Staff are familiar with the procedures to be followed in the case of any concerns and these procedures are reinforced during induction for new staff and through staff meetings. The school has a policy for the use of restraint to protect pupils from harming themselves or others, although no training has been undertaken. An appropriate system for recording the use of restraint is in place, although it has not been necessary to restrain any child.
42. Overall, the management and promotion of health and safety is satisfactory. Teachers have a good awareness of health and safety and promote it well, on a day-to-day basis, within lessons. The school has an appropriate policy and the headteacher is responsible for its implementation. Fire extinguishers, portable electrical appliances and equipment, such as that used for physical education, are tested regularly. Emergency evacuations are practised and any issues identified addressed. Defective equipment is immediately taken out of use, until repaired or replaced. Although the school, supported by governors, carries out regular inspections, the practice of completing and recording risk assessments is underdeveloped. On some occasions, the need to retrieve stored physical education equipment from cupboards leads to teachers not supervising the pupils closely enough as they handle the equipment. Sound procedures are in place to ensure that the use of the Internet by pupils is closely regulated to prevent them gaining access to unsuitable sites.
43. The arrangements for providing first-aid are good. Three staff hold full current first-aid certificates. First-aid supplies are appropriate and are accessible throughout the school for the use of the school and users of the premises. Travel first-aid kits are taken on school visits. Accident records are satisfactory, but there is insufficient detail and formal monitoring of the records to ensure that potential risks are identified and assessed. Parents are appropriately advised of accidents and contacted in the event of any concerns about a pupil's health. Outside agencies and education specialists provide good support and advice for pupils.
44. At the time of the previous inspection, the school assessment procedures were unsatisfactory. Since that time, there have been some notable improvements, particularly in English and mathematics, where assessment is now very good, and in science, where it is good. 'Tracking sheets' have been introduced to record the progress of all pupils in these subjects. These are intended to raise standards by ensuring that teachers plan lessons to effectively challenge all pupils. However, the system is not yet used effectively to plan for all groups of pupils, as, in some

lessons, there are still too few opportunities for the most able pupils to learn at a faster rate than other pupils. The school is aware of the need to extend consistent and manageable assessment procedures to all subjects. In some subjects, such as music and physical education, individual co-ordinators have developed and implemented assessment procedures but in other subjects, for example, information and communication technology, there is no formal assessment.

45. In the reception classes, the procedures for assessing and tracking children's progress are good. Regular assessments are made, over time, to ensure that children are making the expected progress. The results of assessment are carefully annotated and used so that the next step in the children's learning can be planned carefully. Clear records are kept, and the systems contribute to the good progress of all groups of children. Pupils with special educational needs are regularly assessed and a wide variety of information is recorded to help identify pupils' current attainment. The information gained is used most effectively to provide suitable new work for the pupils. Teachers also keep good separate records for those pupils who speak English as an additional language, which are used well to ensure that these pupils are fully included in all lessons and make good progress overall.
46. The use of assessment information to guide the planning of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. Most teachers know their pupils well, and have a clear picture of how individual pupils are performing. They record informal assessment information on a regular basis. Teachers often make good use of the final part of lessons to allow pupils to evaluate their own progress, and there are some good examples of teachers amending their planning as a result of evaluations made. Although the assessment co-ordinator has only been in post for two months, she has already carried out a considerable amount of useful data analysis relating to the performance of pupils, by gender and by ethnicity. This careful analysis of data has also enabled the co-ordinator to predict the likely performance in national tests of the pupils taking the tests at the end of Years 2 and 6. Effective assessment procedures are also in place for pupils with special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The school's partnership with parents remains a positive feature and makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. An effective partnership between the school and parents is promoted through very good communications and good information regarding pupils' progress, and through the very good involvement of parents in the life and work of the school. The partnership between parents and home is reinforced through the home-school agreement, which has been returned by most parents.
48. Parents express positive views of the school, although a minority express concerns about the range of extra-curricular activities and the arrangements for homework and a minority of parents express some concerns about the information which they receive on their child's progress, the closeness with which the school works with parents, and the range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors support the positive views of parents but do not support their concerns. Inspectors found that the school is effective in developing a close partnership with parents to support pupils' learning and the headteacher and staff are very approachable. Information provided for parents is judged to be good, overall, and the school accepts that reports could be reviewed to improve the information although, when combined with consultation opportunities, the information provided to parents about progress is good. Extra-curricular activities and opportunities to enhance and enrich the curriculum are judged to be good.
49. The information provided for parents is good overall, with some significant strengths. Very good induction procedures help the children to settle happily and confidently when they first join the school. Initial contacts and familiarisation with parents help teachers to make an early assessment of children's needs and are used well to inform planning for teaching and learning. Staff are very accessible to parents to discuss any concerns, and parents are invited to meet with class teachers each term. The consultation meetings are very well supported by parents and the school follows up those parents who do not meet with teachers, in order to offer alternative opportunities to discuss their child's progress. Annual reports provide appropriate information about what pupils know and can do, but are not consistent in informing parents about progress, or in setting clear targets for improvement, which could help parents support their children's learning at home. However, these are discussed at consultation evenings and the senior management team has already identified and discussed these areas for improvement, with the intention of revising the

format of its reports. The newsletters sent to parents provide very good information about the life and work of the school and what topics are to be covered. This helps parents in providing opportunities to support learning at home or when making family visits although, on occasions, the language uses too much educational jargon.

50. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed of their children's progress. They are provided with their own copies of their children's individual educational plans and invited to regular review meetings, at which they have the opportunity to comment and make suggestions.
51. Parents provide very good support for the work of the school and their assistance benefits pupils' learning and the opportunities available to them. Up to 40 parents regularly help in school and many parents readily volunteer to accompany pupils on visits. The 'Friends of Hillcrest School' organise fundraising events, such as an autumn craft fair, and provide valuable practical support, which has been particularly effective in improving the school grounds and environment. The funds raised are used to provide resources and pay for activities, such as visits by theatre workshops. When the school organised an 'arts week' with a theme of movement, many parents came into school and helped with various activities which benefited the opportunities and support available to pupils. The support of parents is valued and appreciated by pupils and staff.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The headteacher provides the school with strong, dedicated leadership and very effective management. She has successfully guided the school through a difficult phase in its development; amalgamating two schools, and building up a team of skilful and hard-working teachers; which has been strong enough to take the school from serious weaknesses to overall effectiveness, within the space of two years. There is a quiet determination to build on these successes and to improve standards, even further, through very good strategic management. The many strengths outlined in the last inspection of the headteacher's leadership and management remain clearly evident at the present time; the difference being that the school has had time to build on the earlier foundations and is now reaping the rewards of improved teaching and learning and higher standards throughout the school.
53. The headteacher is supported well by the deputy headteacher and senior staff. Although comparatively new to the school, the deputy headteacher brings a fresh, lively approach to the role and has taken responsibility for the major areas of curriculum and assessment. The senior management team is closely involved in shaping the direction of the school, through the analysis of school's performance, the setting of new targets for improvement, and the day-to-day management systems. Their contribution to school improvement has been very important. At the time of the last inspection there was no effective senior management team and the headteacher was overburdened with responsibilities; so much so that she was unable to delegate key areas to senior staff and this hampered the school's progress in the past.
54. The subject co-ordinators fulfil their roles well. The leadership and management of each subject are generally good. Co-ordinators are trained well; they act as advisers to the staff, and make presentations to the governors. There are good procedures for consultation in the school, which builds on the very strong school team spirit. Policies and curriculum programmes are built up, with the agreement of all staff and governors, before being implemented, resulting in a largely consistent approach throughout the school. Most co-ordinators assess the performance of pupils through scrutinising pupils' work on a regular basis, and gain an insight into teachers' planning by periodic reviews. It is only in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science that the monitoring of teaching and learning is fully established, but procedures are developing which will encompass other subjects. Co-ordinators produce action plans, which predict how their subject is to be developed over a one-year period. This is a useful tool for school improvement, but it does not focus sufficiently or explicitly on raising standards and is more concerned about mechanisms than outcomes. Gradually, co-ordinators are becoming more responsible for their own budgets by making submissions for finance based on good reviews of their subjects. This is a positive step in giving co-ordinators more scope for the overall management of their subjects and shaping its future direction.
55. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities very well and is very effective in helping to determine the school's priorities and monitoring progress towards meeting them. The governors

have developed an effective committee structure through which to organise their work and monitor performance of the school. They have a very good understanding of the school's priorities for development and of its finances and the impact of change upon its budget. Governors are very effective 'critical friends' and assist in planning and identifying areas which could be improved.

56. The school has very clear aims and values that are reflected in its work. Pupils are placed at the centre of the learning process with a good, broadly balanced curriculum in place. There is an atmosphere within the school that fosters pupils' personal and social skills and encourages respect for all members of the school community. Pupils are enabled to work collaboratively and this benefits their academic and social development. There is evidence of individual research and independent working, but the school could do more to challenge the most able pupils to reach even higher levels of performance.
57. There are very good systems in place for the monitoring, support and improvement of teaching and learning. The headteacher has a well-defined programme, which ensures that teachers are visited regularly, and the quality of their work in the classroom evaluated. Strengths in their teaching are identified and areas for improvement noted for reference in later monitoring visits. Performance management procedures also dovetail into these systems and include all ancillary staff. This ensures that all staff are clear about what they need to do in order to effect improvement in their specific role. The much-improved quality of teaching and learning and pupils' attitudes to school bears testament to the effectiveness of these systems.
58. The Foundation Stage³ manager provides good leadership in this area of the school. She has the necessary vision and commitment to ensure that the planning, teaching and organisation of the reception classes is of a high standard. A good feature of leadership is the way that it ensures that the established curriculum and systems are constantly evaluated and changed, if necessary, to meet the needs of the school and current initiatives.
59. In the recent past the school improvement plan has focused tightly on the key issues for improvement identified at the last inspection. They have been addressed very well in a comparatively short period of time. Standards in writing, information and communication technology, and design and technology, have risen to, at least, national average levels. Subject leadership, the quality of teaching and learning, and assessment procedures have been transformed from weaknesses to strengths of the school. New areas of development are being correctly identified through the school's own analysis and consultation systems. Attendance and punctuality procedures are areas of focus, as there is a need to raise parents' and pupils' awareness of this important area. Links with parents and the community are also being strengthened. Although the school improvement plan is well structured, it lacks some important elements, such as success criteria and review dates, which would indicate the levels of progress being made and give further opportunities for modification to the plan whenever necessary. The school has developed very good systems for the induction of new teachers, especially newly qualified staff. There has been a high turnover of teachers during the last three years, and the school has learned quickly how to refine support systems to meet the needs of these new teachers. The mentor, a very good professional role model, has monitored the work of new teachers, given valuable advice, and has ensured that they have received good training, both from external agencies and from within the school. The school has a group of good, young teachers who are perceptive and enthusiastic in their work. These teachers are pushing up standards within a very good school management framework. This epitomises the strong school commitment and very good capacity to succeed.
60. The school is making satisfactory use of new technology to support its work in the general administration of the school. For example, basic pupil data records and limited assessment information is maintained on the computer system. In classrooms, the 'Friends of Hillcrest School' have enabled a class in Year 6 to benefit from the use of a laptop, write pad, and projector, which help to support the sharing of work and ideas. Good use of new technology is evident in the use of digital photographs to record activities and work, for instance, in design and technology. The school recognises that further use of new technology will enhance its ability to analyse and use data to benefit pupils' learning. For example, the administrative staff are currently in the process of transferring attendance data to a computerised system and investigating the development of a

³ The Foundation Stage caters for children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

website, which will give parents access to information and resources to support their children's learning.

61. The headteacher and governors have managed the school's finances very well since the previous inspection. The recruitment and deployment of teachers that has been effected over the past two years underpin the recent improvements in leadership and management, teaching and standards, which were the main priorities in the school's action and improvement plans. An example of judicious spending has been the appointment of a full-time member of staff to cover for teachers absent from their classrooms for management or training purposes. This gives the pupils continuity, as well as reducing the amount needing to be budgeted for supply teachers. All grants are allocated to the purposes for which they were intended, such as supporting pupils with special educational needs. The governors consult widely on how best to spend the school's budget; they seek the views of pupils through the school council, and of parents and staff, through questionnaires. Competitive tenders are invited for all major projects and a close check kept on the performance of providers. The improvements to the school building and playgrounds that were in progress during the inspection have resulted from just such a process. The governors continually seek ways of measuring the effectiveness of spending, for example by comparing the school with other schools over as wide a spectrum of performance as possible. The headteacher, deputy and senior managers work closely with the governors to review their performance and set challenging targets for continuing improvements. As a result, the school achieves good value for the money spent. This is a very good improvement from the last inspection when value for money was unsatisfactory.
62. Overall, the match of staff to the needs of the curriculum is good. Teachers are well deployed, using their strengths, and recognising their weaknesses, in order to try and create a balance within each year group. Although there has been a significant turnover of staff since the last inspection, this has provided a good opportunity for the appointment of several enthusiastic and talented teachers who are already helping to raise standards. The arrangements for performance management are impressive. Not only do teachers have annual targets but there is also a good network of support and monitoring for all other staff who are expected to work towards specific performance targets. Classroom assistants, whilst only being satisfactory in number, give very good support, particularly to pupils with special educational needs. The nursery nurses and other support staff in the reception classes are well deployed to support children's learning. They play a significant part in the smooth running of the lessons and in contributing to children's progress. Pupils who use English as an additional language are supported well when they are in the early stages of learning to speak English, through the support of experienced staff from the local authority.
63. The accommodation is satisfactory overall for the delivery of the curriculum and is greatly enhanced by attractive architectural features and good displays. The accommodation for the reception classes is well organised and enhanced by colourful and stimulating displays. The outside area has been improved by vivid and lively paintings on the walls, and teachers use the confines of the area imaginatively and to the best advantage for the children. The classrooms are of various sizes, but provide at least an acceptable space for the number of pupils. Although there are two halls, providing plenty of opportunities for physical education and music lessons, both are cramped for the full range of physical activities. The larger hall is limited in its use by the staging that is permanently in place at one end of it. There are spacious, light airy corridors which, enhanced by effective displays, create a very pleasant purposeful ethos. The new information and communication technology suite is large enough for a whole-class group and is secluded, enabling pupils to work undisturbed. Each key stage has its own library area, but, though well laid out, these are small and do not provide sufficient quiet areas for reading or individual research. The school has a number of very useful small rooms and 'platform' areas, which are mostly used well by support staff working with groups of pupils. The playgrounds are small and there is no grassed playing field, however, the school has put a great deal of time and effort into planning exciting environments, containing both physical and quiet areas, some of which have already been completed.
64. Except for some shortages in art and design, design and technology and geography, resources are adequate and are appropriately used to support pupils' learning. The exceptions to this are good resources for the support of pupils with special educational needs and unsatisfactory ones in

geography. The range of books within the libraries is limited and there are insufficient numbers of bilingual storybooks. The resources for music are good, but under-used.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. In order to ensure that all pupils reach the highest standards of which they are capable, across the curriculum, the headteacher and governors should now:

- Raise standards and pupils' achievements in geography, history and music by:
 - allocating sufficient time for the regular teaching of geography and history during Year 6;
 - giving teachers more support in the teaching of music;
 - incorporating more singing, performing and listening to music into assemblies. *(Paragraphs 7, 27, 119, 121, 124, 135 and 138)*

- Improve the planning of lessons so that they cater for the most able pupils, more effectively, by:
 - making better use of assessment information to determine the attainment levels of each group of pupils in each subject and plan tasks accordingly;
 - including within lessons opportunities for the most able pupils to explore their own ideas and undertake more independent, extended research and investigation tasks. *(Paragraphs 2, 6, 18, 20, 21, 29, 36, 44, 56, 88, 94, 102, 105 and 137)*

- Improve the overall rate of attendance.* *(Paragraph 15)*

* This is already recognised as a priority in the school improvement plan.

In addition to the key issues above, the governors should consider including the following in their action plan:

- Reduce the amount of lesson time missed by pupils when they are receiving support with literacy. *(Paragraphs 29, 132 and 138)*

- Improve the overall effectiveness of subject action plans, and school improvement planning, through a sharper focus on raising standards and more explicit success criteria. *(Paragraphs 54 and 59)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	80
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	18	36	20	2		
Percentage	4	23	45	25	3		

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	366
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	58

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	36

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	54

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	28
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	35

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	26	30	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	22	25
	Girls	28	28	29
	Total	51	50	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91(83)	89 (89)	96 (94)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	20	20
	Girls	28	24	27
	Total	51	44	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (89)	79 (78)	84 (96)
	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	14	20	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	9	13
	Girls	18	16	18
	Total	25	25	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (61)	74 (68)	91 (74)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	17	15	17
	Total	25	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (74)	71 (82)	76 (71)
	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	227	10	
White – Irish	2		
White – any other White background	20		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	11	7	1
Mixed – White and Black African	3		
Mixed – White and Asian	2		
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	1	
Asian or Asian British - Indian	3		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	29		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	4		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2		
Black or Black British – African	2		
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0		
Chinese	1		
Any other ethnic group	0		
No ethnic group recorded	8		

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	246

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	757,376
Total expenditure	775,516
Expenditure per pupil	2,191
Balance brought forward from previous year	31,798
Balance carried forward to next year	13,658

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	12

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	367
Number of questionnaires returned	165
Percentage of questionnaires returned	54

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	41	3		
My child is making good progress in school.	45	49	3		3
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	65	5	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	59	7	1	3
The teaching is good.	39	53	1		5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	46	26	7	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	40	7	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	49	5		1
The school works closely with parents.	26	46	19	1	6
The school is well led and managed.	33	58	5	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	57	1		3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	35	13	1	13

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

The parents are very supportive of the school overall.

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

66. The provision for children in the reception classes is good, as it was at the time of the previous inspection, and the good quality of teaching and learning has been maintained. Children enter the reception classes with different pre-school experiences, and different abilities, but most children enter with average attainment. By the time they enter Year 1, most children achieve standards that are above what is typical for their age in all areas of learning, except their physical development, where their attainment is as expected. This demonstrates good achievement overall. The good standards of teaching, the rich and varied curriculum, and the commitment of the staff make a strong contribution towards enabling all groups of children to achieve well across the areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. The provision for this area of children's development is intrinsic in the daily routines and life of the school. By the time the children enter Year 1, the majority achieve standards, which are higher than expected for the age group. Children with special educational needs gain from the caring and consistent support they receive. Similarly, those who speak English as a second language receive good support and demonstrate their growing confidence in the school environment, with the consequent positive effect on their learning and achievements. The children demonstrate a good degree of independence and their ability to persevere and concentrate on their tasks is consistently good. They share equipment well, with little dissension between them. When using the sand tray, or the role-play area, they show that they are able to co-operate and work together constructively. The staff inculcate an appreciation and respect for each other, and of different cultures in this area of children's development. The praise and encouragement that adults give helps to promote the children's confidence and self-esteem, and they undertake helpful tasks around the classroom when tidying up with initiative and efficiency. The time each day for the 'special person' to take the chair, and talk about something of personal interest, makes a consistently good contribution to the children's personal development. It contributes to the individual child's confidence and encourages others to listen and question politely, and with respect, while teachers also use the opportunity to make useful assessment of individual prowess. The children are aware of the need for healthy eating and cleanliness, which is reinforced through the daily routine of 'snack time'.
68. The quality of teaching in this area is consistently good. Teachers have high expectations for the children's behaviour and attitudes and ensure that the children are aware of these expectations. They provide good opportunities for the children to develop their confidence in making independent choices. This is specifically exemplified in the session, known as 'planning time', when the children plan and consider their choices over a range of purposeful activities. All staff, including the nursery nurses and other assistants, provide good role models and contribute towards a caring and harmonious environment.

Communication, language and literacy

69. By the time the children leave the reception classes, most of them have reached standards that are above the expected level in this area of their development. Their achievements are good. The support given to children who speak English as an additional language, by the specialist teacher and regular staff, is consistently good. Similarly, teachers ensure that children with special educational needs are carefully supported, so that their language skills can develop in line with their ability. This ensures that they achieve well alongside others. The majority of the children in the reception classes are articulate and use a good range of vocabulary to talk about what they are doing. For example, children used building blocks describe how they intended to 'transform their rocket into a suitable boat'. They use a mature vocabulary to express their views and describe their experiences. When engaged in group activities, or the role-play area, they use their good speaking skills to talk and plan together. Lower-attaining children have less advanced speaking skills, but teachers carefully help them to consider what they want to say and this gives them confidence. The children's listening skills are consistently good. They listen to teachers and each other, and follow instructions carefully. The children approach reading with confidence and eagerness. The most

able children read with fluency and expression, noting features of punctuation and adapting the tone of their voice to match the text. The lower attaining children are keen to demonstrate their early reading skills and use the pictures in their books to help tell the story, and demonstrate their developing knowledge of the sounds that letters make. The children's writing skills are good, and many are keen to write. Some of the opportunities for writing are planned and guided, and others are as a result of individual choice. One child, following the teacher-directed work on sentence making, decided to use this to help her write to her mother for Mother's Day. The most able children write independent sentences and use their knowledge of letter sounds to help them with their writing. Other children recognise the initial and end letter of words and try to use this in their writing. Lower-attaining children are at an early stage in the development of their writing skills, but their progress is good.

70. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is good overall, with some very good teaching seen. Teaching is providing worthwhile experiences for the children to develop the necessary skills in this area of learning. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to extend the children's desire and ability to write even further, but, overall, teachers identify the different needs within the class, and ensure that all groups have worked matched to their ability.

Mathematical development

71. The children's attainment in mathematics is average when they enter the reception classes. They make good progress so that, by the time they leave reception, most are exceeding the expectations for the age group. They recognise that zero comes before one, and they count up to 20, and down from ten competently. Many are able to go further, and accurately order higher numbers. The lower-attaining children need rather more guidance, as seen for example, when they arranged cut out 'eggs' in a 'nest', and some of them needed specific support to help them count accurately to seven. When estimating how much different size containers can hold, many of the children are perceptive and reveal their good understanding of number with their answers. When counting the 30 pieces of pasta held in one container, for instance, the most able children stated that the smaller container would hold less than 30. Their use of mathematical language such as 'more than', 'less than' and 'one more' is good. They can order objects according to length, and have a good understanding of shape and pattern. Some of them successfully used repeated flower patterns to help them create designs for their Mothering Sunday cards. Children for whom English is an additional language achieve well because teachers and learning support assistants are very aware of their needs and ensure that they receive the support they need to understand mathematical ideas and learn correct mathematical vocabulary. Any children identified as having special educational needs are also supported well and make good progress relative to their prior attainment.
72. The quality of teaching is consistently good with one very good lesson seen. Teachers make good use of a range of strategies and resources to motivate the children and so provide a good grounding in numeracy skills. The tasks are planned to meet the needs of the children, showing good use of on-going assessment. Teachers use a good blend of teacher direction and opportunities for children to explore mathematics, through carefully planned links with other areas of learning, so that mathematical learning is an integral part of a wide range of activities.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. Most children enter the school with a sound knowledge of the world in which they live. They make good progress so that, by the time they enter Year 1, they attain standards that are above expectations. During their time in reception, they broaden their understanding of the world around them considerably, and acquire a good start for work in Year 1 for subjects such as science, history and geography. The children achieve well. They become aware of their immediate environment through exploring the area around the school, taking note of the different types of buildings, and reconstructing their route. Visits to places, such as the zoo, further develop their awareness of other environments and wildlife. Through such occasions they are able to talk about their likes and dislikes, for example, of different animals, and confidently give reasons for their choice. Through classroom observations and discussions, they become aware of the changing seasons and, for example, the new life of spring symbolised by a magical investigation of different eggs. They also develop their knowledge of various cultures, through reference to festivals and

celebrations during the year. The children use a range of materials and construction kits competently to construct their own animals and vehicles. The children were not seen using information and communication technology during the inspection, but they have regular access to computers, tape recorders and other technological equipment.

74. The teaching in this area of learning is consistently good, with a very good lesson seen that combined the development of language skills, with an exploration of a range of tools and equipment. The rich and colourful displays help the children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world, alongside their skills in other areas of the curriculum. The range and nature of experiences provided by teachers are stimulating, and frequently capture an element of awe. They provide the children with good opportunities for active participation in what they are learning, giving good support to children who need extra help with vocabulary because English is not their first language.

Physical development

75. The children develop sound skills and achieve the expected levels of attainment in their physical development before they leave the reception classes. Within the classroom, children handle small tools well. They use pencils and scissors correctly and competently and their paintings and models reflect good control when using paint and other materials. They handle and manipulate equipment with ease, for example, when building models with construction kits. In physical education lessons, they understand the need for safety and are beginning to develop an awareness of space. With help, they begin to understand how to move in different ways and in different shapes, showing sound co-ordination and balance. Many of them have the self-assurance to use the more challenging equipment, but a number are more hesitant and need reassurance and support on the apparatus.
76. The teaching in this area of children's learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers pay good attention to the development of finer skills within the classrooms and provide plenty of opportunities for children to practise and develop these. In physical education lessons there is thorough and sound teaching of skills, but the structured teaching does not provide enough opportunities for the children to explore for themselves and develop their own ideas. The children lack enthusiasm in their approach because the teaching is not often lively and challenging, so that many of them are not making the good progress of which they are capable.

Creative development

77. By the time the children enter Year 1 their attainment exceeds that expected for the age group. Their achievements in this area of their development are good. They are particularly creative when engaging in role-play and co-operate well in this, suggesting ideas and listening to those of others. They use their imagination and vocabulary extremely well, when using construction toys or when playing with sand, making, for example, 'a volcano on top of a cave'. The paintings displayed show a maturity and an ability to create bold, confident and colourful images. These are frequently used imaginatively to consolidate and extend their perceptions of what they are learning about the world around them, such as their paintings of very recognisable animals of the zoo. They produce two-dimensional work of a good quality, and use keen observational skills to produce accurate drawings, for example, of spring flowers. In music, they show satisfactory achievement. They follow simple rhythmic and repeated patterns, and show a developing sense of timing. They show good control when using instruments, and listen carefully to the teachers' instructions, or to the music they are playing. They sing tunefully and have a sound repertoire of songs, which they sing as part of classroom activities and during the allocated singing time.
78. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers use effective strategies and ensure that the children are given good opportunities to develop their imagination and creativity in a variety of situations linked carefully to what is happening in other areas of the curriculum. Musically they improve their skills well, but although they strive to meet the teacher's high expectations, the confines of the planned lessons at times hamper joyous and spontaneous participation.

ENGLISH

79. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below the national average overall at the end of Year 6. Very significant improvements have been made since that time. The findings of this inspection are that standards are currently above average in reading, speaking and listening, and average in writing, at the end of both Years 2 and Year 6. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2, and very good progress in Years 3 to 6, relative to their prior attainment. The results of the national tests in 2002, taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, were well above average in reading, reflecting the high proportion of pupils who achieved the higher Level 3 in this year group. The results of the national tests in English, in 2002, taken by pupils at the end of Year 6 were average overall. The school has worked hard to get the pupils currently Year 6 up to a similar standard in writing, and to attain higher standards in reading, speaking and listening. Current standards in writing in Years 3, 4 and 5 are above average, and support the school's targets, which indicate a steady improvement over the next few years.
80. At the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are higher than expected. At the end of Year 2, pupils listen attentively to their teachers, and to each other, and they show a clear understanding of what they have heard. Most answer clearly and confidently, providing, on many occasions, extended answers. They successfully use a range of very appropriate vocabulary, to add detail to their comments. A very small number of pupils lack some confidence in speaking at length, tending to answer either in single words or short phrases. At the end of Year 6, pupils listen carefully in a variety of contexts, including teacher instruction and class discussion. Many pupils are articulate speakers, who provide detailed answers, explanations and arguments. They speak clearly, and put their points confidently and concisely. They are generally most happy to speak in front of other people.
81. At the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' reading skills are above the standards expected nationally. By the end of Year 2, most pupils read texts fluently and accurately, with a high level of understanding. They have a secure knowledge of letter sounds, as well as having a good sight vocabulary. Pupils show a clear understanding of the books they read, and most are able to express opinions about their contents. At the end of Year 6, most pupils read with fluency, accuracy and evident enjoyment. They talk confidently about what they read, making very appropriate reference to characters and events in the stories. They identify key events and themes, and use relevant information to support their views. Pupils regularly use reference books, and many of them have mastered the skills of skimming and scanning texts to help them find the information for which they are looking.
82. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment in writing is in line with that expected nationally. At the end of Year 2, most pupils successfully write factual information, sometimes as news, as well as imaginative writing in the form of stories and poems. The most able pupils produce extended pieces of clear and logical writing. The pupils often use a good range of vocabulary to bring writing alive, although some pupils find this aspect of writing more difficult. Capital letters and full stops are generally used correctly, and pupils' spelling is usually accurate, or at least phonetically logical. The handwriting of most pupils is neat, legible, and of a consistent size, and a number of pupils are beginning to join their letters. At the end of Year 6, many pupils successfully write for a variety of purposes, using parts of speech, such as adverbs, adjectives, and similes, to add detail and interest to their writing, as well as using an increased range of punctuation, including inverted commas. The writing of the most able pupils has depth, is sustained and imaginative and captures the reader's interest, although standards of spelling, grammar and handwriting are broadly average. Some lower attaining pupils lack confidence in producing extended pieces of writing. Most pupils join their letters in a clear and neat handwriting style, and they usually maintain this quality of writing in other subjects. Pupils' spelling is usually good, and they use dictionaries and a thesaurus to improve this aspect of their work still further.
83. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and very good in Years 3 to 6. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching was relatively weak in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have a good subject knowledge overall. Lessons are suitably planned and organised, with teachers carefully following the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to listen to stories and various forms of instruction, and they make good use of intonation in their voices, as well as humour, to help maintain pupils' interest. In the lessons where the teaching is very good, the teachers provide

opportunities for pupils to speak at length, and help them to improve their speaking skills, for example, by making particularly good use of questioning. In other lessons, however, teachers do not always provide pupils with enough chances to speak, tending to only require one or two word answers.

84. Teachers ensure that all the pupils have books suitable to their needs. Detailed records are kept of the books read, and the pupils are regularly provided with new ones. Many of these books are interesting, and often challenging, and this is contributing significantly to the progress that the pupils are now making. Teachers plan many opportunities for the pupils to read, and along with the learning support assistants and parent-helpers, provide suitable support and encouragement. Pupils are usually most keen to read, and are very prepared to tackle difficult texts.
85. Throughout the school, teachers provide a very appropriate range of writing opportunities for their pupils, during lessons both in English and in other subjects, such as history, geography and religious education. However, on occasions too long is spent on the introduction to the literacy lesson, which limits the time available for pupils to write. The pupils respond positively to the writing opportunities provided, and all the pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, make at least satisfactory gains in their knowledge and skills. In the lessons in Years 3 to 6, where the teaching of writing is very good, teachers have high expectations of their pupils and provide challenging activities. As a result, the pupils work well for extended periods and make very good progress. Teachers and learning support assistants have good relationships with the pupils throughout the school, and provide good support with writing during lessons. Most teachers also add helpful comments to pupils' work in their exercise books. Others, however, add little more than ticks, which do not help the pupils to improve. The pace of lessons is usually brisk, and the pupils are kept busy throughout. The pupils' attitudes to English are always good, and often very good. Most work well on their own, and in groups when required, and they persevere with the work set. They generally know what to do, but readily turn to adults for help and advice if necessary. Most pupils are now keen to produce a neat and careful standard of presentation in their books, although a small minority take insufficient care in their work.
86. The school uses the National Literacy Strategy, very successfully, as the basis for its scheme of work, so that all the various aspects of English are suitably covered. The coordinator is well informed and a very good practitioner, and she provides appropriate support to her colleagues when it is requested. Through studying samples of pupils' work, she has gained a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in standards and has monitored lessons in order to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning. This has enabled her to make a very important contribution to the improvement in standards now being seen. A very good, and much improved, range of assessment procedures is in place, with teachers keeping a variety of information about each pupil's performance. The information that is recorded is used effectively to identify pupils' current attainment, and the progress they have made, and to help the planning of appropriate future work. Very good use is now made of other subjects to help develop pupils' literacy skills. In particular, the pupils are provided with regular opportunities to use computers to word-process their work. Although there are opportunities for pupils to use the library, the current provision and quality of books in the junior library in particular is unsatisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. The school is fully aware of this, and plans are in place for future improvement. Lessons often make a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual understanding. A particularly good example of this arose in Year 6, when pupils were asked to reflect on, and write about, death. Some of the resulting poems were very moving, as well as very accomplished.

MATHEMATICS

87. Standards in mathematics have risen overall since the last inspection, improving steadily in Years 1 and 2, but more rapidly in Years 3 to 6. Standards are currently above average by the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 to 6. The national test results in 2002 showed a slight fall in standards by the end of Year 2. The previous year group contained a higher percentage of the most able pupils, so that test results were well above average. The test results in 2002, for pupils at the end of Year 6, confirmed that standards in mathematics have remained fairly similar for the last two years. Compared with similar schools, standards in 2002 were well above average at the end of Year 2

and average at the end of Year 6. The school's targets reflect the fact that standards are rising and that pupils' achievements are higher in Years 3, 4 and 5 than in the current Year 6.

88. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards that are above average overall, having been given a good start in the reception classes. They make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 in their learning because teaching is generally sound and appropriately matched to their stage of mathematical development. However, there is a reasonable proportion of the most able pupils who are not sufficiently challenged by the work set in lessons, many of whom have the potential to achieve at an even higher level. In Years 3 to 6 pupils make good progress, even though standards are not as high, in national comparative terms, as those in Years 1 to 2. The school has had a legacy of underachievement in Years 3 to 6, which is steadily being eradicated. The quality of teaching has improved quite significantly in the last two years and the performance of pupils in mathematics is gradually rising through the upper part of the school. Evidence from the inspection shows that in Years 3, 4 and 5 standards are generally above average because pupils have been exposed for a longer period to sustained, good teaching. However, the full potential of the most able pupils is still to be realised, because teachers do not always set consistently challenging work for them.
89. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress throughout the school, especially when they are supported by learning support assistants. The work set is matched well to their level of ability and is often of a practical nature, which helps to build their confidence as well as their mathematical understanding. Those pupils for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to their classmates. Generally, they are not given additional support in lessons, but teachers are mindful of their needs. Boys achieve better than girls in national tests in Year 2 but, by Year 6, the position is reversed, and girls achieve better than boys. However, there is no overall pattern, because there are variations from year to year, depending on the particular year-groups of pupils.
90. In Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of division and multiplication for their age. They know that when odd numbers are divided by even numbers it will produce a remainder, and they complete division sums such as 27 divided by 4 to prove this hypothesis. Lower-attaining pupils do not have the same understanding of division and, with adult help, solve simple calculations, such as 8 divided by 2, using apparatus to help them with their calculations. Most pupils have a thorough knowledge of the number pairs that add together to make 20, and only a small number of pupils in the year group find it difficult to add together two numbers less than 10 accurately. When investigating different ways of using coins to make sums of money that total 50 pence, pupils quickly solve the problem by combining different value coins, the most able setting out their work logically, for example $4 \times 10p$ and $2 \times 5p = 50p$.
91. In Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge of imperial and metric measurements and select appropriate measures for capacity, mass and length to suit the problem being addressed, such as kilometres or miles to measure the distance from Bristol to London. They are generally competent in the multiplication of decimals to two places and have a good understanding of place value. Some lower attaining pupils are less confident. For example, they find it difficult to count forwards and backwards in quantities of 0.5 in mental mathematics sessions. Pupils with more advanced mathematical skills quickly work out the angles at a given point, deducting from 360 degrees to find the correct answer, whereas, the less able pupils struggle to calculate the total number of degrees of the three angles within a triangle. Pupils have a secure understanding of how to find the area and perimeter of rectangles, and more capable mathematicians find the areas of complex, irregular straight-sided shapes.
92. Teaching has improved quite significantly since the last inspection. Overall, the quality of teaching is now good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching of mathematics in the school and there are many examples of good and very good teaching, especially in Years 3 to 6. This results in greater gains in pupils' learning and is gradually having a beneficial impact on raising standards.
93. All teachers form good relationships with pupils and use effective management strategies to ensure pupils work hard and listen carefully to the input to lessons. The basic skills of numeracy are taught well, especially in Years 3 to 6. This was illustrated in a lesson in Year 5 in which the teacher outlined a range of strategies to aid calculation skills that could be used to solve challenging addition problems. Teachers also encourage the pupils to use and improve their literacy skills in mathematics lessons. For example, in a data handling activity in Year 3, the teacher made it clear

that full sentence answers were required to questions related to a bar graph. Teachers assess pupils' work well in lessons and when marking books. They circulate around the classroom whilst pupils are working on their tasks; they check progress and clarify pupils' thinking by discussing the suitability of the strategies being used and by giving further advice. The marking of work is thorough and positive. There are some astute comments about the progress being made, although more could be done to tell pupils what they need to do next in order to improve yet further.

94. Most teachers provide an appropriate match of work for pupils in lessons, but some teachers underestimate the ability of the most able pupils and do not provide tasks, which challenge their intellectual capacity and encourage them to explore and extend their own ideas independently.
95. Generally, pupils show good levels of interest in mathematics lessons. Their behaviour is usually very good and they collaborate very well in problem-solving activities. They demonstrate good, mature attitudes to their work although some pupils' presentation is a little untidy, because they are keen to complete their work quickly. Overall, pupils' attitudes are more positive than they were at the time of the last inspection.
96. The National Numeracy Strategy has been thoroughly imbedded into the school's curriculum and modified sensibly to meet the pupils' needs. All the pupils have equal access to all lessons and activities. Good opportunities exist for pupils from all ethnic backgrounds to learn and make progress in mathematics. The subject is well led by an experienced and knowledgeable co-ordinator. Good systems are now in place for monitoring and analysis, which are used profitably to shape the future direction of the subject. Assessment systems are very good and much improved since the last inspection. Teachers use the information from evaluations well to modify their weekly planning but the targets they set for pupils within the class are too general and not consistently applied throughout the school.
97. The subject has been developed very well since the last inspection, across a range of aspects, including teaching, leadership, curriculum and assessment. The strong team spirit within the school indicates that the capacity for further improvement is also very good.

SCIENCE

98. Pupils in currently in Years 2 and 6 are reaching the standards expected for their ages in science. The results of the national tests in 2002, taken by pupils at the end of Year 6, painted a similar picture. Pupils in both key stages have made satisfactory progress, over time, but some teachers do not expect enough of the most able pupils. Teachers' assessments in 2002 showed that the pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 was well below the national average, indicating unsatisfactory progress. The inspection found that these assessments were inaccurate, as these pupils are now reaching the expected standard, with a significant number at a higher level, because the teaching is good and the pupils have made good progress.
99. There are no significant differences between the performance of girls and boys. Most pupils who use English as an additional language are fluent English speakers and have no particular difficulties in science lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
100. Standards attained by pupils currently in Year 2 are broadly average, although pupils in one class are achieving higher standards than in the other, due to better teaching. In their work on how heat changes things, most of the pupils showed a good understanding of what happens to materials, such as clay, and to toast and eggs, when they are heated. They are also able to suggest what sources of heat should be used in order to make the changes. In the lessons where the teaching is very good, pupils make significant gains in their understanding of scientific procedures. For example, in a particularly effective lesson, the pupils were encouraged to look really carefully at a raw egg, whole, and then broken, and record accurate descriptions. Pupils then said how they would heat the egg and predicted what would happen to it. The teacher's high expectations were evident, as the most able pupils were challenged to repeat the process with water as the material. At the end, there was a real air of excitement, as the pupils discussed the next lesson when they would be heating various materials, including eggs and cake mixture. Pupils took care with their spellings, which reinforced the teaching in literacy. The lower-attaining pupils were supported effectively by the teacher and her skilled questioning constantly assessed pupils' understanding.

Some pupils' knowledge and understanding of electrical circuits is above average for their age, and they can explain why some circuits will work and others will not, but the least able pupils are still struggle to understand very simple circuits. Work on forces is above average and most pupils understand how to make a ball go faster or slower. The most able pupils also explain that gravity makes it harder to ride a scooter up hill.

101. By Year 6, pupils have extended their knowledge and understanding satisfactorily in all areas of science and teachers have ensured that appropriate attention has been given to scientific enquiry. In their written work most pupils in Year 6 show, through clearly labelled diagrams, an appropriate understanding of complex electrical circuits. They use correct symbols for cells, bulbs, switches and motors and refer to conductors and insulators. In work on life processes pupils' knowledge and use of scientific vocabulary is broadly in line with expectations for their ages. For example, pupils write about reproduction, nutrition, respiration and excretion. In work on food chains they effectively use terms such as 'predator' and 'herbivore' and describe how organisms adapt to their environment and habitat. However, there is little evidence of individual pupils having explored their own ideas or tested their own theories, limiting the progress the most able pupils make towards higher levels of investigative skills. Pupils use the library occasionally for research purposes, but do not fully exploit this resource.
102. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall, taking into account the lessons seen and the progress made by pupils since the start of the year. The quality of the teaching in the lessons seen was inconsistent, ranging from unsatisfactory to very good, within year groups, but being generally better for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 have good subject knowledge and it is made clear to pupils what they will be learning in each lesson. The majority of pupils make good progress and achieve what is planned. However, in a number of lessons the most able pupils are given insufficient opportunities to extend their learning and move on at a faster pace. In a Year 6 lesson on light, for example, all the activities were basically the same for pupils of all abilities. Most of the pupils reinforced their understanding of how light travels and learnt that it can be directed by the use of mirrors. The least able pupils made good progress through the good support of an additional teacher, but the most able pupils could have achieved more in the time available. In some lessons, teachers give the pupils insufficient time to reflect on what they are doing, make predictions and explain their observations. For example, in a lesson on evaporation in Year 5, the pupils were given too much information before carrying out the experiment, and insufficient opportunity to explain what would happen to the water in wet garments on a clothesline.
103. The pace of learning for pupils in Year 3 is better than in most year groups and they develop a good understanding of fair testing. In one very good lesson the teacher's questioning ensured that the pupils understood the need to follow their plans carefully and measure accurately in order to carry out a fair experiment. One pupil explained clearly that plants need nutrients just like we need vitamins, whilst others reasoned that, although seeds placed in a refrigerator would be denied warmth, they would get light every time the door was opened, and, therefore, the test would not be measuring the effect of a lack of light fairly. Good attention is paid to the use of correct scientific vocabulary in written work and, in most lessons, teachers carefully use it themselves. Some teachers are very good at this, as was observed when pupils in Year 6 were expected to describe the torches they were using as '*the light source*' and to use the terms '*transparent*', '*translucent*' and '*opaque*', as appropriate.
104. Teachers manage the pupils very well and, consequently, they work hard and enjoy all aspects of science lessons. Even in lessons where the teaching is unchallenging, they are keen to participate and stay well focused on their tasks. Pupils behave consistently well and only rarely become bored and fidgety. Pupils' social development is encouraged through the opportunities provided for them to work with partners, and in small groups, and some science lessons have a real spiritual element. For example in Year 3 the teacher's very good rapport and interaction with the pupils created an air of genuine excitement with regard to their seed experiments. A number of other lessons did not create that extra sparkle to make them very good. Good attention is paid to the reinforcement of literacy and numeracy skills. In addition to the use of a wide range of writing styles for recording, most teachers have high expectations of spelling, punctuation and handwriting. Pupils therefore take pride in the presentation of their work, though there is still a legacy of untidiness amongst some of the older pupils. Numeracy skills are reinforced through accurate measuring and good

use of graphs. Teachers do not yet make enough use of computers, however, to enrich and extend the pupils' learning experiences in science.

105. Informal observations and regular assessments of pupils' attainments are used well to track individual progress, but some teachers need to pay more attention to these assessments when planning work for the most able pupils. Overall satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection. The co-ordinator, who provides good leadership and management, has played an important role in these. There have been good improvements in some areas of the subject, such as planning, assessment and teaching in Years 3 to 6, but the inconsistent quality of teaching, especially in Year 1 and 2, and the lack of challenge for the most able pupils, are still issues which need to be addressed.

ART AND DESIGN

106. Standards at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection and are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Pupils achieve satisfactorily.
107. By the end of Year 2, pupils use pencils, crayons and paint in producing a variety of artwork. Most understand how to achieve the shades they require for their paintings, and they readily attempt to mix their own colours. Still life drawings by pupils in Year 2, such as those of branches and leaves, demonstrate appropriate observational skills. An appropriate number of pupils manage to produce some detail in their work, but others do not have the pencil control, or the ability to observe closely enough, to produce accurate representations. The pupils successfully undertake work in three dimensions. Pupils in Year 1, for example, have produced sand sculptures, adding shells and cones. The pupils have studied the work of famous artists, and a number of them have successfully produced their own work in the style of Van Gogh.
108. By the end of Year 6, the pupils show some increase in their skills in using pencils to produce observational drawings. However, as at the time of the last inspection, only a minority of pupils produce the closely observed and carefully reproduced images that are expected from pupils of this age, especially in relation to line and tone. For example, the gargoyles drawn in Year 6 show wide variation in the detail added. Some of the pupils' work in other aspects of art and design is better in different parts of the school. For example, in Years 4 and 5, the best examples of drawings of three-dimensional figures and chairs show some accuracy. Further, the work produced in Year 4, based on that of Chinese artists, and that done in Year 6, in the style of Bridget Riley, shows suitable appreciation of the skills of the artists. A number of pupils throughout the school are not yet fully confident in reflecting on their work, observational work and then identifying how it might be improved.
109. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some good practice also being observed during the inspection. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Lessons are adequately planned, with pupils, for example, being provided with a range of items to observe and copy, and appropriate materials with which to work. For instance, in the lessons observed in Year 5, the teachers had taken the trouble to provide a range of willow-pattern plates and dishes for pupils to study before they began their own work. Teachers have sound subject knowledge, and provide suitable explanations and demonstrations for pupils. However, they do not always emphasise, adequately, the need for pupils to observe closely, to work slowly, and to take particular care with their work. This results in pupils tending to rush their work, which reduces the quality of the finished product. Pupils enjoy the subject, and they work with interest and enthusiasm. Teachers provide much encouragement and support, enabling all pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, to make satisfactory gains overall in their knowledge and skills. The good teaching is evident when the teacher emphasises the need for careful observation, time is allowed for discussion and evaluation, and pupils make good progress. The pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They work well with each other, when required to do so, and they happily share the resources provided. Teachers take pleasure in producing displays of pupils' work; these suitably enhance the learning environment.
110. Lesson planning is based on the government's curriculum guidelines to ensure that all areas of work are covered. The coordinator has only recently taken over the subject, but he is enthusiastic and well qualified, and he provides advice for his colleagues when required. He has had some

opportunities to see the work being undertaken in class, and he collects samples of pupils' completed work to illustrate the progress being made. The coordinator is fully aware of the current weaknesses in pupils' artistic skills, their limited ability to undertake observational work in particular, and plans have been drawn up to tackle this. The assessment of pupils' work is an element of teachers' planning, and suitable evaluations are now being made to assess pupils' current attainment. There has not yet been enough time for this information to be used to help improve key skills, however. Resources for the subject are barely adequate, although, through careful sharing and taking of turns, teachers and pupils manage to cope with the demands of the curriculum. Art and design contributes significantly to pupils' cultural development, through their study of art in other countries in general, as well as the work of famous artists in particular.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. Standards in design and technology are as expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall throughout the school. Those pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress when they are supported by learning support assistants. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to their classmates. They receive no specialist support, but teachers ensure that they understand the tasks set and monitor their progress in lessons.
112. There has been a good level of progress since the last inspection; standards have improved in Years 3 to 6 and pupils now make satisfactory progress. The co-ordinator has improved the quality of learning opportunities by ensuring that skills are developed systematically in lessons. The subject is monitored and developed much better than it was at the time of the last inspection and teachers are more confident and knowledgeable.
113. Pupils in Year 2 produce their own designs from computer-generated templates. They select their own materials and cut out their own shapes with reasonable precision, for example when decorating Joseph's coloured dream coat. In a focused practical task that was observed, they learned how to sew, glue and staple together different materials in preparation for making a finger puppet. Pupils know that the finished item needs to be evaluated and comments made about how improvements could be made. The higher- and average-attaining pupils completed this task well but lower attaining pupils found it difficult, because they could not read the instructions and needed additional adult help in order to complete this task successfully.
114. In Year 6, the pupils generate their own designs for a shelter in the school playground. They base their designs on the work of other well-known artists and designers, such as Bridget Riley. Designs are imaginative and well annotated with descriptions of the materials to be used and their particular functions. Their work is shared and evaluated maturely with a partner, and modifications are made in the light of their discussions. In practical work, they make a variety of joints with straws to find the most suitable joints for the structure. They practise sewing techniques to develop their making skills; most pupils are reasonably successful, although some pupils find it difficult to work with precision. The pupils know the importance of safety when working with tools and glue.
115. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but there is some excellent teaching in Year 6, which enhances pupils' levels of achievement. Lessons are usually well prepared and organised, so that there is little loss of time through distributing materials, and work on practical activities is maximised. Classes are managed well, and there are very good relationships between pupils and teachers, which ensure that pupils behave very well, listen to instructions and work hard in lessons. Pupils present their work well and generally enjoy practical activities. They collaborate well and usually tidy away maturely at the end of lessons.
116. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and use the school programmes of study well to plan lessons based on clearly defined learning outcomes. The development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills, are generally incorporated well into lessons. The teachers assess work and check pupils' progress, by moving around the room and giving advice and encouragement to spur pupils on to higher levels of achievement. The very best teaching is stimulating and enthusiastically delivered and allows pupils to use their imagination; weaker, but nevertheless, satisfactory teaching fails to spark pupils' creative interest and lessons move along at a slower pace.

117. The knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator for the subject has skilfully re-shaped the school curriculum and has wisely focused on the development of skills in order to improve pupils' progress. This is steadily raising pupils' achievement and interest levels.
118. The monitoring of teachers' planning and the quality of pupils' work is also providing useful information about how the subject can be developed further. As yet, however, there have been insufficient opportunities to assess the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. A standardised approach to the assessment of pupils' work is gradually being imbedded into school routines to provide valuable information on pupils' progress throughout the school. Although learning resources have improved, there are still a number of shortages in small tools and food technology equipment, which limits the scope for some learning opportunities.

GEOGRAPHY

119. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 are in line with expectations for this age group. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be below the expected level. Although only one lesson was seen, discussions with the pupils and an examination of the work they have done show that their achievements are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In the previous report, attainment at the end of Year 6 was judged to be in line with that that expected for their age. No lessons were seen in Year 6, but the lack of work in pupils' books, and discussions with pupils, show that standards have declined and that attainment is below national expectations. This is mainly due to the lack of adequate curriculum time for geography in Year 6, which limits the progress they make. However, the achievements of pupils in Years 3 to 5 are satisfactory. Their work shows that they are acquiring a broad band of knowledge and understanding across the subject.
120. Pupils' knowledge of planning simple routes is begun in Year 1 and is successfully built upon in Year 2. Through learning about other places and countries pupils in Year 2 compare and contrast how the environment and climate have an effect on people's lives. They are fascinated with life in Bangladesh, and compare how houses are built, what work people do and how they dress. Their knowledge of geographical vocabulary is good. They understand the effect of the monsoon, and explain the meaning of words such as 'humid'. In discussion, pupils are eager and proud to talk about the knowledge they have gained, although the knowledge of one group of pupils in Year 2 was more detailed than that of another. However, from the evidence available, pupils' learning is stronger in the content of the subject than in the use of skills.
121. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 show that they have limited recall of previous learning. With prompting they recall their work on the 'water cycle', but are vague when talking about other aspects of their learning. For example, their ability to discuss the use of land or physical features and their knowledge of geographical terminology is weak, and they display a lack of enthusiasm for the subject. They are more confident when identifying features on a world map, but even this is not at the level expected for Year 6. The on-going discussions of 'What's in the News?' keeps pupils' awareness of geography alive, and ensures that they consider a range of issues, but is not sufficient to consistently develop their knowledge and skills. The progress made by pupils in Years 3 to 5 is better; the pupils are encouraged to develop opinions and consider important issues from different angles. This was exemplified in a very good lesson in Year 4 where pupils showed that they understand why and how lifestyles can vary within a city.
122. The teaching of geography is satisfactory, which matches the judgements of the previous inspection. Although in the two lessons seen, teaching varied from satisfactory to very good, the standards seen, and discussions with pupils, reflect satisfactory teaching and learning overall. The very good teaching observed demonstrated effective challenge, and tasks carefully matched to the pupils' needs, so enabling all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, to make good progress. This lively teaching animated and motivated the pupils and resulted in very good learning. All teachers use visits effectively to support what the pupils are learning, and they ensure that the pupils use and improve their literacy skills in lesson discussions and in their written work. Most pupils organise their work well and take pride in its presentation. Information and communication technology has been used successfully to research information on life in other localities. The consideration of global issues, together with the

study of other cultures and the range of visits, ensures that the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

123. The scheme of work and timetabling now ensures that there is consistent coverage of the areas of the National Curriculum in Years 1 and 2, which was a weakness in the previous inspection. The recently appointed curriculum co-ordinators are showing good leadership and are fully aware of the need to address the balance of time in other year groups, particularly in Year 6. They have already monitored pupils' work and teachers' planning, in order to identify strengths and weaknesses, and have provided exemplars of good planning. They have developed sound assessment procedures, although these have not yet been fully implemented. They are knowledgeable and have a good capacity to instigate further improvements. Resources are in need of renewal. There is a lack of good quality photographs and reference materials to support pupils' learning.

HISTORY

124. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were judged to be in line with expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6, and pupils were making satisfactory progress. It was possible only to see two lessons during the inspection and neither of these was in Years 2 or 6. Inspection judgements are, therefore, based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, photographs of previous work, and discussions with staff and pupils. Standards in Year 2 are in line with those expected for this age group and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. There has been a decline in the standards in Year 6, since the previous inspection, as standards are now below expectations. This is because of the lack of adequate time spent in history during Year 6, as teachers have focused on improving standards in writing. Although this has impeded the pupils' progress in Year 6, such constraints do not apply in Years 3 to 5, where standards are at least in line with expectations and the pupils achieve well. Their work reflects a broad band of knowledge and a developing confidence in the use of history skills.
125. Discussions with pupils in Year 2 show that their knowledge of history is sound. They are animated when talking about John Cabot, and his ship *The Matthew*, for example, and compare this ship with what they have learned earlier about the *S.S. Great Britain*. One group in particular made perceptive observations on the differences between the two. Pupils have a sound sense of the past and discuss how life has changed in aspects of transport, clothing and housing over the years. The pupils in one group showed a good grasp of the idea of the passage of time by differentiating between 'long ago' and 'very long ago'. A good start is made in Year 1, where pupils are eager to talk about what they know about key figures, such as Grace Darling and Louis Braille.
126. The pupils' knowledge in Year 6 is insecure, and lacks depth. They identify the main eras of history and carefully put events in chronological order. They recognise and name key figures from different eras. They know that Winston Churchill and Hitler were important but they are not confidently aware of the significance of these people. They show little understanding of cause and effect in history or of different ways to find out about the past. They have an ability to empathise with situations, as was clear in their discussions about evacuees, which they attempt to relate to the current war in Iraq. In contrast, some examples of pupils' work in Years 3 to 5 reflect levels of knowledge and understanding that are above what is expected. Many of the pupils use different sources of information to find out about the past, as they did in a Year 3 lesson in preparation for writing a report on the poor children of Victorian times.
127. Teaching overall is good. The two lessons seen were well planned, with a good balance of skills and knowledge being developed. Effective strategies ensured that pupils were animated and involved in all the tasks, with active participation by all groups. Those with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, are supported well to enable them to acquire new learning. Pupils are encouraged to work together and talk about their work. Overall, teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory; discussions with pupils show that teaching is more thorough in some areas than in others. Teaching is good overall in Years 3 to 6, though there has been insufficient teaching in Year 6 to secure good learning. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills and present their work thoughtfully in different forms, and pupils are beginning to use the library and information and communication technology for research. Teaching and learning is supported by worthwhile visits to places related to the topics and these are having a beneficial impact on pupils' learning, contributing much to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

128. Two resourceful co-ordinators have only recently been appointed, but they already show effective leadership. They have made an evaluative assessment of the subject, through monitoring pupils' work and teachers' planning and have correctly identified the main strengths and weaknesses in provision. Assessment procedures are being developed, but are not yet fully implemented. The co-ordinators understand the effect of the lack of curriculum time on the attainment of pupils in Year 6 and have the necessary knowledge and vision to remedy this weakness and to continue raising standards in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

129. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was unsatisfactory and the school was failing to deliver all the required elements of the National Curriculum programme of study. Resources for information and communication technology were inadequate and there were limited opportunities for pupils to develop and use their skills in other subjects or to explore the Internet. The school has worked hard to successfully eradicate all of these weaknesses and pupils are now matching national expectations, at the end of both Years 2 and 6, and are using their skills in a range of practical situations. This improvement has been achieved by developing resources and establishing a computer suite that is large enough for class lessons. The school provides a broad and balanced programme of studies, with an emphasis on the systematic development of computer skills, and their use, to help learning in different subjects. Most teachers have undergone training and this has increased their subject expertise and confidence within lessons. The curriculum co-ordinator and her assistant co-ordinator work well as a team and give good support to the staff.
130. By the end of Year 2, pupils use the 'mouse' and keyboard accurately and have a suitable range of basic technological skills. They enter, save and retrieve their work and discuss the various functions of certain keys. They talk with confidence about their experiences within the subject, enjoy their regular access to the computer suite and can identify the advantages of using computers. One pupil, for example, explained that he liked writing on the computer because 'ordinary writing makes your hand ache', whilst another appreciated the opportunities to correct his work 'without having to rub out and make a mess'. As well as developing keyboard skills, work in information and communication technology lessons is frequently linked to other subjects, particularly to literacy, mathematics and art and design. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils were able to develop their data-handling skills, by sorting objects into groups according to a range of criteria, whilst, in another lesson, pupils in Year 2 used different coloured fonts to highlight rhyming words as part of their literacy studies. Pupils in Year 1 have used the computer to construct self-portraits as part of their artwork, and pupils in Year 2 described how they had researched the Internet for information about animals and Bangladesh and explained how to insert pictures into text. Almost all pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs, show great confidence when asked to 'log-on' to programs, and are able to print out their completed work. Pupils make good use of digital cameras, and computer-generated pictures are on display in all classrooms in Years 1 and 2. The wide range of experiences that pupils now have in Years 1 and 2, and their regular access to the computer suite enables them to make good progress, representing a considerable improvement from the time of the previous inspection. However, there remain insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of control technology in the areas of planning and giving instructions to make things happen.
131. Standards of attainment in Years 3 to 6 have improved considerably since the last inspection; by the end of Year 6, the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are typical for their age. They use computers confidently for a range of purposes, such as inserting their own verses into the poem 'Jabberwocky', by Lewis Carroll, writing letters to persuade their parents to buy them a skateboard, and using a wireless writing tablet, linked to a data projector, to make informed responses within their literacy lesson. Throughout the key stage, pupils use their skills in many different subjects. For example, pupils in Year 3 retrieved information from a database, outlining facts about the teachers in their school. These pupils made good use of height conversion charts to support their numeracy skills and were able to classify and sort the relevant information as well as ensuring that the information retrieved was reliable and appropriate. Pupils in Year 4 used the 'cut and paste' facility to report on scientific experiments, and pupils in Year 6 have carried out independent research into the beliefs of major faiths as part of their work in religious education. Some aspects of the curriculum for Years 3 to 6 still need further development, however. Although

pupils use the Internet, for example, to find out about the village of Chembakolli, as part of their studies in geography in Year 4, opportunities for independent research are under-developed and the school has yet to provide pupils with opportunities to readily exchange information through the use of e-mail links. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved by pupils of different gender or ethnic backgrounds. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make the same good progress as all the other pupils because of the support given to them by teachers and learning support assistants.

132. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. As a result of training, most teachers are becoming increasingly confident in the use of information and communication technology and the marked improvement in resources is having a positive impact on curriculum delivery. Teachers plan lessons effectively and set appropriate targets for their pupils. All classes have regular weekly lessons in the computer suite when teachers focus on developing pupils' computer skills. Pupils enjoy these lessons and work successfully as individuals and in pairs. This helps their social and moral development and contributes significantly to the good attitudes and behaviour that is seen throughout the school. However, the decision to organise pupils into mixed-ability pairs for all lessons in the computer suite restricts the opportunity for them to work at their own pace and limits the progress that higher-attaining pupils can make. Almost all pupils are highly motivated by the developments in this subject and discuss their work enthusiastically. Pupils in Year 6, for instance, reflected on recent times when there was only one computer in each classroom and access to information and communication technology was very limited. They talked enthusiastically about recent improvements and were appreciative of additional opportunities that teachers provide, such as the voluntary revision club, which is organised every lunchtime, and the writing club that takes place after school. In some lessons, however, small groups of pupils are unable to participate because they are removed for additional literacy and numeracy support and this restricts their entitlement to the curriculum.
133. The school has invested heavily in resources in order to ensure that there are greater opportunities for pupils to work regularly on computers, and this has improved their attainment considerably. Although teachers make very good use of this new facility, they are not helped by the unreliability of the system. In the week preceding the inspection, the system had crashed, with the loss of much saved work, and during the inspection, some monitors were not functioning and certain programs could not be loaded. These problems clearly restrict the progress that pupils make. In addition to the computer suite, there are individual computers in every classroom and many of these are networked. However, these computers are not used sufficiently, and this represents a missed opportunity for learning within lessons.
134. The management of the subject is good overall. The subject co-ordinator and her assistant co-ordinator have worked hard to improve standards in information and communication technology. They have implemented a scheme of work to ensure secure coverage of the National Curriculum and progression in the development of knowledge and skills. They have supported staff to enable them to develop in confidence, make good use of the regular opportunities that they have to teach in the new computer suite and to raise pupils' standards of attainment. Some monitoring of the subject has taken place but this has not yet included regular observation of teaching. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop and implement assessment procedures to enable teachers to monitor the progress of pupils and to plan work accordingly. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory; in particular, the school fulfils its obligations to pupils about safety and security when using the Internet.

MUSIC

135. Standards are below expectations overall at the end of Year 6, as they were at the time of the last inspection, but are now in line with expectations at the end of Year 2. An enthusiastic co-ordinator has provided teachers with a scheme of work that covers the National Curriculum, but lessons are still not providing enough challenge for pupils of all abilities to make good progress in each area. Also, music, including singing, as well as listening to, appreciating, composing and performing, is not enriching the pupils' education and contributing to their personal and creative development sufficiently.

136. The pupils are enthusiastic about music and singing, and reach good standards when the work is challenging. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 sang well, including rounds in two parts, under the direction of the visiting voluntary singing teacher, who is also a governor. However, such lively and challenging teaching is not evident in other lessons, and standards, therefore, do not rise above the ordinary.
137. Pupils in currently in Year 2 sing tunefully and enthusiastically, with sound pitch and good awareness of timing and rhythm, demonstrating a potential for achieving even higher standards. They provide a rhythmic accompaniment to familiar songs with percussion instruments, but without much enthusiasm or evident enjoyment. They follow a simple musical score under the teacher's direction, for example to play a steady rhythm on percussion instruments, with good control to produce quiet as well as loud sounds. No judgement is possible on the standard of singing in Year 6, as none was heard during the inspection. Standards in composing and performing music are below expectations. Pupils compose and play pieces, for example, to interpret a poem selected by the teacher. They do this competently enough under direction, but show a good deal of inexperience in organising themselves, selecting instruments to produce the desired sound effects, performing their pieces independently, and evaluating and refining their own work. The pupils' progress in lessons in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory, overall, but pupils do not have enough opportunities to express themselves creatively and evaluate and improve their work. The most able pupils do not, therefore, achieve as well as they could, and standards are not high enough by the end of Year 6.
138. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. As was found at the time of the last inspection, most teachers lack confidence in teaching music. This is evident in the degree to which they keep the whole class working at the same level under their direction, instead of getting the pupils to work more at their own pace and explore their own ideas. Teaching was seen in Years 3, 4 and 5 in which the teachers worked hard to deliver the planned lessons, but did so in too uniform a way. For example, in Year 5, pupils played percussion instruments to interpret musical notation for 'loud' and for 'getting louder'. They understood the difference between the two signs, but did not make much progress in refining their interpretation of this distinction, because they did not evaluate their playing in order to improve it. One pupil commented on the distinction between the dynamics and the tempo of a piece, but his remarks went unheeded instead of being seized upon as an opportunity for creative exploration during the lesson and adding richness to the finished pieces. In most of the lessons observed, the pupils worked at the same pace together under the direction of the teacher. Few opportunities are provided for them to work in groups with the teacher helping them to critically evaluate and improve their work. Behaviour is good in lessons, reflecting the pupils' very positive attitudes to their work and the potential for higher achievement. The teaching of recorder to those pupils who choose to pay for lessons is good. It is lively and encourages the pupils to develop their own ideas and have fun as well as learn the basic skills. It was impossible to observe any violin tuition. During one music lesson, six pupils came in just a few minutes before then end, having been withdrawn for extra teaching in English, so missing out on whatever creative opportunities the lesson had provided. Facilities for pupils to record their work, for subsequent evaluation and improvement, are limited and little use is made of computers to enrich the pupils' learning in this subject.
139. The scheme of work helps teachers to plan lessons that ensure coverage of the National Curriculum, but does not ensure that lessons meet the needs of all the pupils in each year group. Some of the teachers feel constrained by the prescriptive nature of the guidelines and deliver much less effective lessons in music than in other subjects. The co-ordinator works hard to manage the subject from her position as a reception teacher, but does not have a clear overview of how effectively music is being taught throughout the school. Resources are good, but are not readily accessible for pupils to select them independently, or to get used to the range and quality of sounds that each instrument can produce. This inhibits the development of their composing and performing skills. Pupils sing in local events, and are coached in preparation for this by the visiting specialist, who is very effective. However, singing is not a prominent feature of assemblies and music does not play as prominent a role in them as it does in many schools. This is a missed opportunity for pupils to explore and extend their tastes in music and to appreciate the musical aspects of their own and other cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

140. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6, in games and gymnastics, and above expectations in dance. Although this is a similar picture to that seen at the time of the last inspection, there have, nevertheless, been considerable recent improvements in the subject's provision and co-ordination that are beginning to improve standards.
141. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 to reach expected standards in dance and gymnastics by the end of Year 2. They have a good awareness of space and demonstrate a sound degree of precision in the control of their movements. They show creativity in the ways they travel on different parts of their body, by using pushing and pulling movements, and have appropriate poise for their age, as they hold a variety of different positions. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils produced a sequence of movements including a balance and a roll with control and co-ordination. The pupils worked independently with confidence and enthusiasm to achieve their objective. The pupils identify why they like a particular sequences of movements. For example, one pupil said that a boy's balance 'showed good control', whilst another commented that a girl's 'starting position was 'very good'. Progress is good in dance, gymnastics and games in Years 1 and 2. In a dance lesson in Year 1, for example, pupils very successfully 'put away' imaginary toys using stretching movements at different levels and then linked their movements to music. The pupils are beginning to be aware of the need for warming up and cooling down activities and can say why this is necessary. One pupil, for instance, noticed that her heart was pumping faster, whilst another said that her body was getting 'very, very hot'.
142. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 are achieving satisfactorily overall, reaching average standards by the end of Year 6, and above average standards in dance. By the end of Year 6, almost all pupils achieve the national standard of swimming unaided for a distance of 25 metres. In the swimming lesson observed during the inspection, pupils made very good progress as a result of very good teaching and support. Pupils achieve good standards in dance and enjoy this aspect of the curriculum for physical education. In a Year 3 lesson, for instance, pupils worked well in groups to develop their own country dance, whilst, in Year 4, pupils demonstrated good skills of improvisation when developing sequences of action to represent well-known expressions, such as 'all hands to the pump' and 'laugh your head off'. This was a very good lesson, which was planned and managed very well, had strong links to literacy activities, and resulted in very good levels of performance. Pupils are encouraged to develop performance for a range of audiences. They do this well, as when pupils in the upper school performed their dance in an assembly.
143. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although in most of the lessons observed during the inspection most lessons were taught well and enabled the pupils to harness their enthusiasm for physical activity and make good progress in acquiring new skills. A recently introduced scheme of work includes individual lesson plans for all year groups and for all aspects of the curriculum for physical education. This enables all teachers to teach with growing confidence and has helped to eradicate the inconsistency in teaching that was seen during the previous inspection. As a result, all lessons are now planned and structured well, with a clearly identified progression of skills and as a result, all pupils now make good progress over lessons. Teachers set the right tone for lessons by changing into appropriate clothing and through their willingness to participate in physical activities. Teachers generally give appropriate attention to health and safety aspects, such as warming up at the start of a lesson and ensuring that pupils wear appropriate footwear. They are very aware of possible dangers, such as when a teacher in Year 2 stopped a lesson temporarily because the floor had become unsafe due to lunchtime spillages. Pupils are supervised closely when moving mats and putting apparatus away safely, but, as apparatus is stored in small storerooms, teachers often have to leave pupils unsupervised for short periods while they get the equipment out, which creates a safety issue. A particularly strong feature of all lessons is the opportunity that teachers provide for pupils to perform and to evaluate both their own performance and that of others. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils were able to watch others perform their dance and then say which performances they particularly liked. Most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes in their lessons and during after-school activities. The standard of behaviour reflects directly the standard and quality of teaching. Good class control has a major impact on lessons. In most lessons, teachers retain firm control, but are warm in praise for good behaviour and performance and, as a result, pupils have a very clear understanding of what is expected and respond appropriately. They co-operate happily in paired and group activities and enjoy the opportunity to perform and to comment on the performance of others. For example, pupils in Years

4 worked together in group situations well when developing a mini-game, based on the skills that had been developed during their lesson on tennis activities. On the rare occasion that standards of behaviour fall, teachers are quick to take remedial action, such as when a teacher in Year 6 omitted the final games activity after discussing the inappropriate behaviour that had developed over the lesson. Pupils generally concentrate well when others are demonstrating and, in listening carefully to the evaluations of their teacher and other pupils, they are able to make good improvement in their learning.

144. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, because they are supported well by learning assistants. In one Year 3 lesson, for example, an autistic pupil achieved a good level of performance within a dance group as a result of the good support that he had received during the lesson. Teachers also ensure that pupils who speak English as an additional language understand all instructions, so that they can participate fully. In some lessons, however, small groups of pupils are unable to participate because they are removed for additional literacy and numeracy support and this limits their curriculum entitlement.
145. The management of the subject is very good. Although relatively new to her post, the co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has already worked hard to improve the provision for the subject. She has been particularly successful in implementing a new scheme of work that secures coverage of all aspects of National Curriculum for physical education, and assessment procedures to monitor the progress of all pupils. She has monitored planning and teaching in some lessons and given developmental feedback to other staff. She is currently working very hard to raise the profile of physical education by securing the 'Active Mark Gold', which is a national standard recognising high achievement in sport. She has developed very close links with the local secondary school and ensures that the physical education programme is enriched by various after-school activities such as clubs for football, netball, dance, rugby and cricket. Pupils in Years 3 and Year 6 have opportunities to attend residential centres as part of a programme of study in outdoor education. Links with other subjects are being improved, particularly through music, and pupils regularly use digital cameras to record sporting activities, and stopwatches to compare levels of performance. Displays around the school include a programme of suggested activities for playtimes and lunchtimes. Although the school works hard to provide to an interesting range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for pupils, they do not have the benefit of good facilities for physical education. Pupils do not have access to a school field, have limited hard-surfaced outdoor play areas and although there are two halls, one is too small for whole-class physical activity and a quarter of the available floor space in the other hall is taken up by a portable stage.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

146. At the end of both Years 2 and 6, pupils reach standards which are broadly in line with those expected for their age according to the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Although this is a similar judgement to that at the last inspection, there have been good improvements in many areas of the subject. Pupils in some year groups, particularly Years 4, 5 and 6, are now making good progress and reaching standards above those expected in certain aspects of study. This improvement has been brought about through increased teacher knowledge and expertise and, during the last six months, improved monitoring by the new subject co-ordinators. Despite this, there is still wide variation in the quality of teaching, ranging from unsatisfactory to excellent, creating gaps in the systematic building up of pupils' knowledge and understanding.
147. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are introduced to aspects of Christianity, Judaism and other faiths, helping them to accept that people do things in different ways according to tradition and belief. Although planning of lessons is the same across year groups, the quality of learning, particularly by pupils in Year 2, is very variable depending on the quality of the teaching. A group of mixed-ability pupils from one class clearly and enthusiastically recalled the creation story from the Bible, and from a Chinese source, the Hindu story of Rama and Sita, and Jesus' visit to the temple when he was 12 years old. The amount of detail recalled and the level of knowledge and understanding were beyond expectations for their age. However, the pupils from the other class had only vague recollections of these topics, and their knowledge and understanding was below expectations.

148. As pupils move through Key Stage 2 the overall good teaching is ensuring that their respect for and understanding of a variety of beliefs and cultures is nurtured and extended. By Year 6, pupils have a strong awareness of similarities between most of the major religions of the world, such as:
- a belief in one supreme being, called by different names such as God or Allah;
 - places of worship, such as Christian churches, Jewish synagogues, Islamic mosques and Sikh gurdwara;
 - holy writings – Jewish Torah, Muslim Qu’ran, Christian Bible;
 - the importance of prayer.

This level of awareness contributes to the school’s good provision for ethnic minority pupils.

149. Pupils in Year 6 also greatly value the respect that the teachers show for the right of individuals to have their own beliefs and faith and to share these and other personal feelings only if they wish. In previous years pupils’ learning lacked continuity, which has resulted in gaps in their knowledge, particularly of Christianity, resulting in standards which are average overall. Since the introduction of systematic planning, these gaps have been eradicated and pupils in other years in the key stage are achieving well, and, frequently, very well. In an excellent lesson in Year 4, for example, pupils increased their awareness of moral dilemmas, such as temptation, through developing a greater understanding of how Jesus was tempted in the desert. Speaking, listening, writing and drama skills were important features of this lesson, as was the pupils’ previous understanding of Lent. Opportunities were skilfully seized by the teacher to raise awareness of similarities between Lent and Ramadan, and the class sensitively shared a Muslim pupil’s knowledge to illustrate the importance of Jesus as a prophet in the Islamic faith, compared with the Christian’s belief in Jesus as the Son of God.
150. One of the particular strengths of the subject is its contribution to pupils’ spiritual and personal development. Being special and considering special times, special objects, and special people, is a theme which runs through, from year to year, creating opportunities for discussions about differing values and beliefs. This has a significant effect on how pupils relate to each other and promotes mutual respect. In another excellent lesson in Year 5, the pupils were given time and space to reflect on their own special person. The teacher created a very serene atmosphere through her calm, confident introduction and high expectations of the pupils. The pupils sat for several minutes in complete, but comfortable silence, thinking about six thought provoking questions, attractively displayed, with peaceful background classical music. The resulting poems and paragraphs were a moving tribute to the very high-quality teaching. In Year 6, pupils have also produced very spiritual writing, including poems, on the subject of *‘Death’* following a visit to the local cemetery, which proved to be an inspirational source of Victorian values and beliefs surrounding the death of family members. In addition to the good links with literacy, this long-term project involved good opportunities for historical research. Primary and secondary sources, such as family members, books and the Internet, were used to discover how people from many different religions and cultural backgrounds expressed feelings and beliefs.
151. Aspects of religious education, including Christianity, are satisfactorily reinforced through assemblies, and good displays around the school enhance the relevance of the subject to the pupils’ own life experiences. The new co-ordinators are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and are already beginning to raise standards. Through their own high quality teaching and subject expertise, they are in a very good position to make significant improvements in the future. Satisfactory plans are in place to assess the pupils’ progress in order to tailor lessons more closely to their emerging needs and ensure that high standards are reached throughout the school.