

INSPECTION REPORT

THE WILLOWS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Basildon

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 132084

Headteacher: Mrs J Amran

Reporting inspector: Mrs E Pickford
23128

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th June 2003

Inspection number: 248894

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary and nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Road Basildon
Postcode:	SS14 2EX
Telephone number:	(01268) 470880
Fax number:	(01268) 450051
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J A Lutton
Date of previous inspection:	First inspection of an amalgamated school

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23128	Mrs E Pickford	Registered inspector	Science Religious education	The school's results and achievements How well is the school led and managed?
9542	Mr B Jones	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
14756	Mr J Lovell	Lay inspector		
15971	Mr M Pye	Team inspector	History Geography Physical education	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?
10144	Mrs M Marriot	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology	
24027	Mrs B Kutty	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Special educational needs Equality of opportunity	
21103	Mrs V Ives	Team inspector	English Art and design Music	How well are pupils taught?

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd
7 Hill Street
Bristol
BS1 5RW

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33 Kingsway
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WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Willows is an above average sized community primary school and nursery for pupils aged three to 11. It is situated on the Fryerns estate, close to Basildon town centre. Most of the pupils live close by in local authority and housing association property and a small number in privately owned houses. An above average percentage of pupils are eligible for free school meals, although only 11 per cent of pupils take advantage of this. There are high levels of unemployment and youth crime in the area. The 529 pupils are organised into 18 classes and are grouped according to age, except for one mixed age class. In addition there is a Nursery class for 52 pupils who attend a morning or afternoon session daily. There are 106 pupils on the register of special educational needs, which is average. These pupils are given extra support in some aspects of their learning, which include moderate learning difficulties, dyslexia, autism and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Six pupils have statements of special educational need, which is below average. A below average number of pupils come from ethnic minority groups. Attainment on entry to the Nursery shows a range of ability, but is well below that expected for that age in speaking and listening, number and social skills. There have been very high levels of staff turnover, absence and difficulty in finding teachers to fill posts since the amalgamation of Manor Infant and Junior Schools in 2000. An arson attack at the end of 2001 necessitated the school being accommodated on three separate sites for the following term, whilst the building was restored.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Willows is an improving school. The majority of pupils enjoy school and attendance has improved. Most pupils show interest in their work and behave well. Good leadership and management have enabled the school to tackle the many difficulties it has faced since amalgamation. In Year 6, standards are still well below average. Some of these pupils are underachieving as a result of frequent disruptions to their learning over the last four years. In other year groups standards are below average overall but are rising because teaching is improving and there are fewer staff changes. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their attainment when they start school. Good caring support is provided for the small percentage of pupils with considerable problems. The school is effective in promoting strategies to make sure pupils are included in all lessons and have equality of opportunity. As part of an Education Action Zone the school has benefited from additional funding and working closely with other schools in the area to improve achievement. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The Nursery and Reception classes provide children of all abilities with a secure and happy start to their school life which enables them to achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good across the school and standards are rising.
- The excellent range of extra-curricular activities and the very good provision for pupils' social development and good provision for moral development contribute to the good relationships which exist within the school community.
- The good support provided for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress.
- Classroom support staff are well trained and contribute significantly to the improvement in pupils' behaviour and the learning of basic skills.
- The school provides a safe and caring environment for its pupils.

What could be improved

- Better use could be made of assessment to raise standards in English, mathematics and science and for setting the school's targets.
- The teaching time of the special educational needs co-ordinator is not used efficiently.
- The timetabling of assemblies towards the end of the afternoon does not make best use of pupils' learning time.
- Pupils are given insufficient experiences to help them prepare for life in a multicultural society.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This is the first inspection of the new school formed by the amalgamation of Manor Infant and Nursery and Manor Junior in September 1999.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In the national tests for 11 year-olds in 2002, standards were well below average in relation to national figures for English, mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools (based on the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals), standards in English were average, below average in science and well below average in mathematics. These results were well below the targets set for improvement. Standards of pupils' current work are well below average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Standards in reading are below average. Many pupils in the current Year 6 are underachieving as a result of disruptions to their learning since the age of seven. In Years 3 to 5 standards are below average overall but improving due to the better quality of planning and teaching and greater staff stability. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their earlier attainment. Higher attaining pupils are challenged well in mathematics.

In 2002, the results for pupils at the end of Year 2 were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics compared to all schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools, standards were also well below average. In science, the teacher assessed results were well below average. Standards of pupils' current work in reading, writing and mathematics are below average and show improvement. Standards in science are improving considerably and are just below average. Standards of speaking and listening are well below average and limited vocabulary restricts progress in other areas. Standards in writing show considerable improvement. There is good challenge for higher attaining pupils in English, mathematics and science. Average attaining pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. Many children enter the Nursery with basic skills well below those expected of their age especially in their communication, language and literacy and in their personal, social and emotional skills. They make rapid progress and by the end of the Reception Year their attainment in their knowledge and understanding of the world, their creative and physical development and their personal, social and emotional development meet the nationally expected standards of the Early Learning Goals. Standards in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development are below those expected. Children with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils achieve well.

Pupils' achievements in information and communication technology (ICT) are as expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In art and design, geography, history, physical education and religious education standards are as expected for pupils at the age of seven but below in music. At the age of 11, standards are below expectations in music, art and design, geography, history, physical education and well below in religious education. Standards in many of these subjects are as expected for age in Years 3 to 5 because skills and knowledge are being developed systematically as pupils move through the school. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in design and technology.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory overall. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes towards their work. Some older pupils display indifferent attitudes to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Behaviour is improving and is well managed by staff. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and show initiative. Relationships are good.
Attendance	Poor in 2001/2. Attendance has improved considerably over the current year but is still below average. Punctuality is also improving.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and promotes consistently good learning in all year groups except for Year 6 where learning is satisfactory overall. Out of over a hundred lessons observed during the inspection, over half were good, a fifth were very good, a quarter were satisfactory and one lesson was excellent. Unsatisfactory teaching occurred in three lessons where the organisation and management failed to involve all pupils in the activity and insufficient learning took place.

Teaching is consistently good in the reception classes and good overall in the Nursery. This enables children of all abilities to develop good attitudes to learning and achieve well. The high standards of teaching across the school have been achieved as a result of intensive training, the sharing of expertise, good monitoring and year team planning. Teachers have good all round subject knowledge. Staff have a common secure approach to teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, which are developed well in a variety of curriculum areas. All staff give pupils good encouragement to develop vocabulary and be involved in discussion. There is particular expertise amongst the staff in information and communication technology (ICT) and teaching is good. Pupils confidently use their ICT skills as a tool for learning. Teachers use very good strategies to manage pupils, especially those presenting challenging behaviour. Classroom support staff are also well trained to manage behaviour and are used effectively to develop pupils' learning. They give a number of pupils across the school regular support to prevent them falling behind with their reading and writing. Lessons in English and mathematics are good and planned well to meet the needs of the different abilities within the class. Grouping is based on assessment in these subjects but elsewhere groupings are generally literacy based. Higher attaining pupils are identified in science and offered additional challenge in some classes. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support through their individual education plans and teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to meet their targets within lessons. The majority of pupils make good progress and achievement is appropriate for ability.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced, emphasising the requirements for literacy and numeracy, whilst giving pupils good access to other subjects through the creative curriculum. A good range of visits, visitors and excellent additional activities enrich the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Provision for pupils on the special needs register, including statemented pupils, enables them to make good progress. They have appropriate individual education plans and good support in class which enables them to achieve well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall. Provision for social development is very good, moral development is good and spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory. The school provides opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their actions, work co-operatively, show tolerance and respect for the feelings and beliefs of others and value themselves as part of the community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Staff show a keen interest in the care and welfare of all pupils. Procedures for monitoring child protection and health and safety are good. The monitoring of attendance and punctuality has resulted in some improvement. The systems for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are satisfactory. The school has an effective policy for promoting racial equality.

The school provides good information for parents through newsletters and written reports. Staff are accessible to parents at the end of the day. Good information is given to parents about how they can help their children achieve their targets. Many parents have developed their understanding of the school curriculum through attending courses and open evenings.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and senior management team have successfully led the amalgamation to create a new school which has the confidence of the community. They have been successful in improving standards of work and behaviour. The staff team are highly valued and encouraged to develop.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The range of experience and expertise within the governing body enables it to fulfil its duties effectively. It offers strong support to the school in times of crisis and is becoming more effective in shaping the future of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring is well organised and enables co-ordinators to have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their areas. Expertise and good practice is shared well within the staff. Data is not analysed well enough to inform planning and decision making.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses the funding it receives to support the priorities for development and give pupils good support in class. Governors monitor spending regularly and best value for money is sought. The teaching time of some senior staff is not used efficiently.

The school is well staffed with suitably qualified teachers to teach the Nursery and Reception classes, the

National Curriculum in Years 1 to 6 and religious education. Administrative and caretaking staff contribute considerably to the smooth running of the school. Resources are of good quality and adequate to teach the planned curriculum. The accommodation is very good and well utilised.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school. • Teaching is good. • Parents are happy to approach the school if there are any problems. • The benefits and improvements of the new school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework set. • The school working more closely with parents.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. The team consider the school tries very hard to work with parents by arranging meetings, training and workshops which are not always well supported. The homework policy is implemented effectively although there is some variation between classes in the quantity and regularity with which work is set. Parents require further clarification on this matter.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Many children enter the Nursery with basic skills well below those expected of their age especially in their communication, language and literacy and in their personal, social and emotional skills. They have limited experiences of the world around them. The well organised learning opportunities and the good quality interactions by the both the teaching and non-teaching staff in these classes help children to make rapid progress in their basic skills. By the time children enter Year 1 their attainment in most areas of learning except in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development meets the national expectations of the Early Learning Goals. A small number of older and higher attaining children meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of learning, but overall attainment is below that expected by the end of the reception year. Children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. A significant number of children are set to attain standards that are beyond the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Children with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets.
2. In the national tests in 2002, the results for seven-year-olds at the end of Year 2 were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics compared to all schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools (based on the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals), standards were also well below average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. In science, which is assessed within the school, the results were well below average with only a very small percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3. These results show a fall in standards from the previous year but reflect the considerable disruption caused by the fire and the effect of the frequent changes of teaching staff and high levels of staff absence.
3. Standards for pupils age seven are rising. The school's results for the end of this academic year suggest that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 in reading and writing has improved considerably and a higher percentage of pupils achieved the higher Level 3. In mathematics standards have also improved. In science, teacher assessments also show a marked improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving the expected grade and overall standards to be just below average. The standards of Year 2 pupils' work in lessons and their books in reading, writing, mathematics and science during the inspection were below average. Pupils were found to be learning well and making good progress in relation to their attainment when they started school. Higher attaining pupils, although few in number, were also making good progress, especially in mathematics where they were well challenged. Individual targets are set for pupils in English and mathematics but pupils are not always clear what they have to learn in order to progress to the next stage, particularly in writing.
4. In the national tests for 11 year-olds in 2002, standards were well below average in relation to national figures for English, mathematics and science. Results were similar to those in 2001. When compared with similar schools standards in English were average, below average in science and well below average in mathematics. Almost a quarter of pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in English and science and 16 per cent in mathematics. The school did not even approach the targets that were set for the percentage of pupils who would reach Level 4 in English and mathematics. These were unrealistic and not based on the predictions for the year group. There were no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls at the end of Year 6. The school has not yet analysed results with regard to pupils' ethnic background.
5. Standards in the current Year 6 are well below average in English and science. In mathematics standards are below average and showing improvement because there is good challenge for the higher attainers. An increasing percentage of pupils are working at the higher levels. Although pupils in the current Year 6 are making satisfactory progress, there is considerable underachievement in relation to their attainment at the end of Year 2. Most are not achieving their potential. The indifferent attitudes and challenging behaviour of a significant number of pupils limits their progress. This year group have suffered considerable disruptions to their learning since they were seven years old because of the significant problems both schools encountered. A significant percentage of the most

able pupils in this year group were moved to other schools in the area at the end of Year 2 when confidence was lost in the junior school. For the first time this year they have benefited from stable staffing and good teaching, however this has not been sufficient to make up for gaps in their learning. In Years 3 to 5 standards are improving and are below average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils in these year groups make good progress in their learning as they move through the school as a result of structured planning, good teaching, staffing stability and improving assessment. Teachers in Year 5 work successfully to compensate for the disruptions caused to pupils' learning prior to amalgamation.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets. This is because the tasks are well matched to pupils' needs. The high quality of support and challenge they receive in lessons from the class teachers and the learning support assistants in general are very effective in extending their learning. Their progress is carefully monitored by class teachers and the co-ordinator for special educational needs. Most pupils achieve the targets set for them in the specified time. Nevertheless, the standards attained by the majority of pupils with special educational needs who are in the advanced stages of the Code of Practice in Years 1 and 2 are well below the national expectations in English, mathematics and science. In Years 3 to 6, their attainment in English is very low compared to what is expected for their age nationally. Scrutiny of work and lesson observations indicate that many pupils who are receiving specialist special educational needs support in Years 5 and 6 are working at Level 2 in their writing. Although many attain slightly better in mathematics, their attainment by the age of 11 is well below that expected of their age nationally.
7. Standards in speaking and listening are well below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Younger pupils have very limited vocabulary and poor grammatical knowledge. Many lack the confidence to speak to adults in front of others. They are given good encouragement by staff and as a result older pupils show increasing confidence. Many find it difficult to explain ideas in depth and share their feelings with others. Staff work hard to develop subject vocabulary, display key words and give pupils opportunities to use these in their answers. Overall, standards of reading are below average at the ages of seven and 11, however an increasing proportion of pupils attain the expected standard. Pupils enjoy reading and books are promoted well. Younger pupils develop a variety of strategies to read unfamiliar words, such as sounding out the letters and looking for clues in the pictures. Older pupils in Year 6 show understanding of the main ideas in the story but find it difficult to discuss inferences and make deductions. Higher attaining pupils are appropriately challenged. Pupils can use information books well and confidently access ICT reference sources. Skills in writing are below average at seven and well below at 11, but pupils are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. This has been a recent focus of development and the benefits are beginning to show. By the age of 11 most pupils develop a legible joined handwriting style but the presentation of their work varies according to teachers' expectations.
8. In mathematics, pupils throughout the school make good progress in number, shape and space and measures and develop their mental agility through quick recall sessions at the start of lessons. Attainment is below average throughout the school. Good practice is regularly given to all pupils to develop their skills individually using the computer and this improves confidence and attainment. Younger pupils have difficulty explaining to the class how they work out their answers, but usually the answers given are correct. They also have difficulty using their knowledge to solve every day problems. By Year 6 pupils develop a variety of strategies to solve everyday problems and investigate number. Mathematical vocabulary develops well as pupils move through the school and older pupils use it with increasing confidence in their answers.
9. In science, standards at the end of Year 2 are just below average. Progress in their knowledge of living things, materials, light, electricity and forces is good. They are able to carry out simple investigations and experiments and predict the outcomes. They begin to observe carefully and record for themselves. Their subject vocabulary begins to develop, although lack of oral confidence limits progress to some extent. Good progress is made in Years 3 to 5 in all these areas. Pupils are able to plan their own investigations in Year 4 and have a satisfactory understanding of a fair test. In Year 6 attainment is well below average. Pupils' knowledge is very basic in most areas of the science curriculum because of the lack of structure and disruption to their learning in previous years. For the same reasons pupils' investigative skills have not developed to the expected level. Progress over the

year has been satisfactory for most pupils. Higher attaining pupils have not been sufficiently challenged and a lower percentage of pupils are likely to achieve the higher Level 5.

10. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, geography, history, physical education and religious education are as expected for pupils at the age of seven but below expectations in music. At the age of 11 standards in ICT are as expected for the age group but below in music, art and design, geography, history, physical education and well below in religious education. Standards in many of these subjects are as expected for age in Years 3 to 5 because skills and knowledge are being developed systematically as pupils move through the school. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in design and technology at seven and 11.
11. The school has only recently used its assessment system to identify higher attaining pupils and is developing strategies to improve opportunities to challenge them. This is helping pupils to achieve the higher levels in some subjects. Currently insufficient information has been collected on the school database to monitor the progress of all pupils closely enough to identify trends and influence planning. This is an area for development. The commitment of staff and the governing body to raising standards, the structured planning and improved attitudes of pupils, provide a secure basis for this to happen.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Despite recent periods of disruption, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory. They respond to very good management by the teaching and support staff. In the large majority of lessons seen during the inspection, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good or better. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents say their children want to come to school and that they enjoy their learning. Inspection findings confirm this positive opinion. For example, a Year 4 class watched with fascination a video on how Jewish children celebrate the Shabbat. At the end of the lesson a pupil said, "I've got a lot of things in my head now".
13. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. It has improved significantly within the past year. Pupils are keen to win rewards for good work and behaviour at the celebration assemblies each week. They move around the school in an orderly manner. They welcome visitors with friendship and courtesy. They hold doors open for adults and other pupils. They bring the school credit when they are on visits outside the school. The school has admitted pupils who have had behaviour difficulties at other schools. In most lessons, very good management by teachers and assistants helps these pupils to improve their behaviour. On a very few occasions in junior classes, unsatisfactory behaviour disrupted learning for part of the lesson. In the past year, the school made one permanent and five fixed period exclusions. Bullying is rare. Parents are confident that the school resolves it effectively when necessary. However, respect for other people's feelings, values and beliefs has been unsatisfactory during the past year. There were examples of racist language in autumn 2002. The school took vigorous action and resolved this issue successfully. There was no racist language nor any other aggressive behaviour in the week of the inspection.
14. Pupils relate well to one another and to staff. This is the result of the school's very good social provision. Pupils learn very well together in pairs and groups. They look after new pupils when they arrive, making sure they have friends and someone to play with. They welcome pupils from different heritages and backgrounds. If pupils fall in the playground, other pupils comfort them and take them to the office. Older pupils are considerate of the younger children in the outside areas. Pupils of all ages support children who have physical or emotional difficulties. In one lesson, a pupil with learning difficulties gave a correct answer. The other pupils applauded happily and spontaneously. A young child was very upset during an investigation of mini-beasts. A spider ate 'his' caterpillar. Other children in the class were sympathetic and successfully cheered him up.
15. Pupils show satisfactory personal responsibility. In turn they take the registers to the office. They keep their classrooms tidy. However, the school has not yet established a school council nor a 'buddy' system. This restricts pupils' opportunities for citizenship within their school. Pupils collect for established charities such as Poppy Day and Red Nose Day. Individual pupils and small groups show initiative in gifted and talented activities. They achieve success in dancing and with local

soccer clubs. The school runs its own chess club, which competes strongly against other schools. One pupil has won her way into the county team. A major triumph came in the present term. A Year 6 pupil, researching on the Internet, found that J K Rowling was to launch the fifth Harry Potter book at the Albert Hall. With persistence and great good fortune, the school obtained 50 tickets for the event.

16. Children in the Nursery settle quickly into school routines. They become confident and are able to choose what they want to do. They begin to learn how to share, take turns and play alongside others. In the Reception classes their concentration improves, they begin to work and play with others and show responsibility for putting away equipment. The behaviour both indoors and in the outside areas is very good in all three Foundation Stage classes.
17. The majority of pupils with special educational needs show positive attitudes towards their learning. They listen carefully to instructions and are generally enthusiastic about their work. The good relationships between pupils and staff and the high expectations teachers have of their pupils in most classes help them to be active learners. Pupils identified as having special educational needs in the Reception class show very good attitudes towards their learning. They are confident to choose and explore the various activities set for them. Although there were one or two instances where extreme behaviour has resulted in disruption to the rest of the class, their behaviour in lessons and around the school is generally good. The expectations of behaviour are made clear to pupils in lessons and appropriate actions are taken when they are not followed.
18. Attendance in 2001/02 was poor. The fire in December 2001 caused severe disruption. During the rebuilding work in spring 2001, pupils had to go to three different sites. The school did not have an educational welfare officer during that difficult year. Attendance fell to 87.5 per cent. In 2002/03, all pupils are in their school and within easier reach from their homes. In this current year, attendance has recovered to 92.7 per cent. A few families take excessive holidays in term time, as well as days off for birthdays and family events. This produces a high rate of unauthorised absence. Similarly, a few pupils are often late and this adversely affects their learning. Most pupils arrive punctually each morning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. Teaching is good overall and as a result most pupils appropriately learn new skills, work hard on tasks set and generally show much interest in their learning. There is little significant variation in the quality of teaching across the school. Of the lessons observed, just over 70 per cent were good or better, while over 20 per cent were very good or better and less than five per cent were unsatisfactory. This good quality teaching is in part the result of the good monitoring of the work of teachers, the carefully targeted support and advice that they are given and the sharing of expertise and ideas through planning in year teams. In the last two years, there has been a significant turnover of teaching staff. There has often been a need for long-term supply teachers, pending new appointees taking up their post, which, the school believes has adversely affected standards.
20. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in the Reception classes and it is good overall in the Nursery. Learning is based on first hand experiences with emphasis on developing children's communication skills and their personal, social and emotional development. All staff set high expectations of their children. They have a good knowledge about individual children and they use this knowledge well to extend their learning through skilful interactions. Consequently, children make good and sometimes very good progress in most areas of learning and they show very good attitudes to learning and behaviour.
21. The quality of learning is generally good, especially when lessons are planned with appropriate objectives for what pupils are to learn and when these are made clear to the pupils at the start of the lessons and reinforced throughout. This is especially notable in literacy and numeracy, where the teaching of basic skills is good. The literacy hour has been implemented successfully and other sessions of reading and writing contribute to the good progress now being made; the teaching of literacy is good throughout the school. For example, there were clear objectives for a Year 5 literacy lesson where the pupils learn how to identify the features of rap poetry. These objectives are shared with the class so that pupils know what they are expected to achieve. These characteristics are also

seen being used to good effect in Years 2, 3 and 4. Resources are well prepared and used effectively to stimulate interest. Teachers' plans usually take into account the differing needs of pupils with special educational needs, although they do not always specify how work will be adapted for pupils of higher ability and the gifted and talented pupils; this is an area for improvement. When the teacher has a secure command of the subject, as in a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils are responsive and collaborate well in pairs to share ideas. Teachers and support staff work well together as an efficient and hard-working team and this has a good effect on learning.

22. The National Numeracy Strategy is effective in promoting pupils' skills in mathematics. The quality of mathematics teaching is a particular strength across the school, with instances of very good teaching in Years 2, 3 and 4 and an instance of excellent teaching in Year 4. Teachers in the most successful lessons have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and how they should behave. This helps to generate a purposeful atmosphere and challenge to which most pupils respond by working hard and are keen to succeed. For example, the teacher's high expectations in a Year 3 mathematics lesson are evident from the range of challenging activities set; very good questioning of the pupils probes their understanding. An excellent atmosphere for learning is also generated by the teacher in a Year 4 mathematics lesson. High standards of work and behaviour are expected and achieved.
23. Classroom management skills are very good overall and teachers use a wide range of strategies to interest pupils. They usually control pupils well and deploy support staff appropriately to work with individuals and offer clear guidance and encouragement to them. Most lessons move along at a good pace and teachers change activities frequently to gain and maintain pupils' interest and attention. An appropriate amount of homework is given; there is regular marking of pupils' work, but teachers' written comments are often too brief to help pupils improve their work and assessment is not used consistently to help raise standards in the other subjects.
24. Many staff have a high level of subject expertise, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, which they use well to give lively and confident explanations of new work. For example, the teacher in a Year 2 science lesson on health and growth reinforced suggestions from the pupils and asked further probing questions. This resulted in very good development from the previous lesson's work, as pupils recalled, for example, the disadvantages of only eating one kind of food. The contributions from all pupils are valued and as a result they are very keen and enthusiastic. In a Year 3 science lesson about teeth, the teacher monitors the pupils' progress well; praise and encouragement are used very effectively so that new skills are learnt in an atmosphere where all pupils feel confident. Enthusiastic and confident teaching in ICT in Years 3, 4 and 5, shows secure command of the subject material.
25. In sharp contrast to the secure subject knowledge and teaching expertise of most teachers, in some lessons that were observed uncertain knowledge resulted in unsatisfactory teaching and slow learning. For example, the whole year group teaching in music observed in Year 2 slowed the pupils' learning because the group is too large to effectively involve all of them. This leads to some lack of concentration and teachers having to repeat explanations and demonstrations for pupils who either have not been listening or have not been positioned where they can see. Unsatisfactory management and organisation was a feature in a geography and ICT lesson in Year 6. There was a lack of a clear focus to the lesson which resulted in pupils losing concentration, becoming very noisy and showing very little respect for the teacher.
26. The teaching in science, information and communication technology and art and design is good. In most other subjects, geography, history, music, PE and religious education, where there was evidence to make judgements, teaching is satisfactory, overall. In design and technology there was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching.
27. The school has invested considerably in support staff. They are well deployed and have a considerable influence on the learning that takes place in all classes. They are particularly effective in guiding the learning of pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good, but it is only satisfactory when individual pupils are withdrawn for short sessions of focused work in literacy. Teaching is based on detailed assessment and careful planning to meet individual needs. Support staff are deployed effectively in lessons to offer pupils with

special educational needs more focused support related to their specific targets. The support staff use a range of strategies to engage pupils' attention and to extend their learning. Pupils' responses and their progress are recorded systematically in their individual record books. A secure learning environment is achieved and good relationships are established, enabling pupils to become confident and wanting to improve. In addition, clear instructions build confidence and enable pupils to sustain concentration and complete the work set for them. There is no time allocated for class teachers and support staff to discuss and plan the work together. The school has already identified this as one of the areas for further development.

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

28. The curriculum provided for children across the school is good and meets the legal requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. A well-organised curriculum framework exists that both meets the needs of pupils and reflects the overall aims of the school. As a result of a thorough curriculum review the school introduced a more creative approach to delivering the non-core subjects. The new curriculum has had a good impact on work in science, history and geography, where there are now units of work that emphasise cross-curricular links, whilst giving more time for in-depth work in these subjects. The school is working to extend this creative approach to other subjects. The school has adopted national guidance on teaching in all subjects and these provide teachers with a good framework for their planning. Planning of work modules is carefully designed to avoid repetition of work for pupils and consequently they are able to build on prior learning and improve their knowledge and skills. In most core lessons attention is paid to planning work for pupils of all abilities. Teachers follow their planning frameworks carefully and these include the incorporation of the principles of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, into their lessons. Whilst pupils have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum, the extent to which teachers plan work for pupils of all abilities in lessons, is inconsistently delivered across the subjects.
29. The organisation of the learning environment in Nursery and Reception classes is very good. The planning is detailed and is based on different areas of learning using a topic approach. Particular attention is given to incorporating aspects of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. However, the objectives identified in the medium-term planning about what staff want children to achieve by the end of the term is too broad, especially for the children in the Nursery. There is a good balance between children's own choice and adult focused activities in all the sessions observed. Staff use time during the activities children choose well to interact with children and to develop their curiosity and independent skills. More clearly defined adult roles during these sessions would enable staff to monitor how children access particular areas as well as the progress they make in specific aspects.
30. There is a good quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils across the school. The provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory and includes appropriate sex and drugs education. The school has recently planned to include areas of the personal, social, health and citizenship programme in the curriculum themes. Religious education is covered fully and appropriate use is made of the locally agreed syllabus. Arrangements for collective worship meet statutory requirements, although in the afternoon collective worship results in an unsatisfactory disruption to lessons. A lesson was foreshortened and pupils left unaware of the main concluding learning points in geography, when their teacher left for assembly duties. On regular occasions teachers are removed from their lessons to participate in the two afternoon periods of collective worship. These arrangements inevitably have a detrimental effect on pupils' learning.
31. The school has recently introduced a rigorous framework for the monitoring and evaluation of curricular plans by the subject co-ordinators. This monitoring helps to ensure that progression takes place. Co-ordinators use their specialist subject knowledge effectively to give advice on how the planning can be improved. However there is no formal arrangement for the non-core subject co-

ordinators to receive feedback from teachers about how effective the delivery of the planning had been. This limits the extent to which good practice can be recognised, shared between staff and built upon in future planning.

32. A guiding aim of the school is that all pupils should be encouraged to take part and the excellent numerous extra-curricular activities provide such opportunities. Pupils are able to take part in competitive sports, such as football and athletics in the school sports day. The curriculum is further enhanced by an excellent range of clubs that are on offer to pupils across the entire school. The chair of governors has developed a thriving chess club, while other subject areas such as art, drama, music, ICT and a very good variety of sports activities are well attended. Pupils also receive visitors such as authors, artists, musicians and poets. Pupils visit local museums and can take part in musical and drama performances. Such activities promote personal and social development well.
33. Pupils with special educational needs, a number of whom have extreme challenging behaviour and moderate learning difficulties, are encouraged to be involved in all aspects of school life. This is a clear indication of the school's approach to meeting the needs of all pupils. Pupils' progress towards targets in their individual education plans is regularly reviewed.
34. Pupils learn well that they are part of a wider society as a result of the good links with the community that the school has developed. These further enrich pupils' learning and help them to appreciate that communities consist of different groups. This message is well developed through visits by the police and the fire brigade. In history, a nurse helps pupils to understand the differences between modern hospitals and those in the days of Florence Nightingale. Senior citizens speak about their Second World War memories and pupils sing at Christmas time in a local senior citizens' home. In addition to the good range of local visits, pupils in Year 6 go farther afield and stay in an outdoor adventure centre on the Isle of Wight. Such visits broaden pupils' awareness of a community outside the school but also help to develop their independence and confidence. As part of its membership of the local Education Action Zone, the school runs a popular Summer University during the holidays. However, links with the local business community are underdeveloped. The school has developed very good links with its partner institutions and as a result, has benefited from in-service training in using information technology, subject co-ordinator training, as well in physical education. Good links with the local secondary schools have been developed, and pupils visit before transfer at the end of Year 6. During these visits they participate in specially prepared activities, whilst older pupils visit from the secondary school to help in the classes and reassure pupils about the next move in their education. Links between primary and secondary subject areas are underdeveloped.
35. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The school promotes reflection, religious beliefs and moral values in lessons and in collective worship, although these opportunities are inconsistently delivered. In lessons pupils are encouraged by staff to contribute and the pupils are well aware that their contributions are valued. Pupils are given satisfactory opportunities in daily acts of worship and religious education lessons to develop their spiritual awareness. The impressive habitat display around one of the libraries is very effective in encouraging pupils to think more deeply about and appreciate, the world beyond their day-to-day concerns.
36. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The headteacher, deputies, teachers and non-teaching staff provide positive role models, actively praise good practice and reward pupils for their efforts. Pupils consequently have a clear appreciation of the difference between right and wrong and have a good understanding of the reasons for the school rules. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on ethical issues, such as when they consider the principle of fair play in physical education and when they consider in English lessons whether television is a good or bad thing.
37. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school consistently reinforces the message of mutual respect and good relationships exist in most lessons and around the school. There are good opportunities for pupils to work together in lessons. The pupils' sense of belonging to a wider community is well developed by participation in such events as the local music festival and the swimming gala, as well as the opportunity to attend a water sports day and a residential visit. The pupils benefit from and react maturely, to the satisfactory chances on offer, to exercise responsibility within lessons. However the lack of a school council, together with a more consistent approach to

this aspect of pupils' personal development across the school is an area for development. The excellent provision of extra-curricular activities provides further opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting and social activities. Pupils also take part in a range of charitable fund-raising activities that heighten their sense of social responsibility, although they do not have consistent opportunities to decide for themselves which charities to promote.

38. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Knowledge of the pupils' own culture is well delivered through various activities such as the visiting artists as well as in music, stories and in poetry work. Their awareness of the cultures of others is satisfactorily extended through their studies of different artists in art, different faiths in religious education and when they learn about life in China, for example, in geography. However in lessons and around the school, there are missed opportunities to further promote pupils' awareness and consequently they are insufficiently prepared for their life in a modern multicultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school cares well for its pupils. It is committed to high standards of welfare. It has a good, recently updated health and safety policy. It completes an internal monitoring checklist each year for approval by the governing body. It regularly carries out risk assessments and safety checks of equipment and electrical appliances. There are whole school procedures to ensure the safe use of the Internet. The two caretakers and the cleaning staff keep the school clean and safe day-to-day. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection. She works closely with local agencies and makes sure staff are aware of requirements. Ten members of staff have first aid training. An assistant takes specific responsibility for first aid each day.
40. Monitoring and support of pupils' personal development are very good. Class teachers and assistants know their pupils well. The reward system means that teachers keep records of good behaviour of individual pupils and of their class, as well as when a pupil causes concern. The annual reports to parents start with a review of the child's personal progress. For example, a pupil "is a hard working, friendly, kind and considerate girl. She has the confidence to talk to adults and her peers and does this in a sensitive way. She has regularly completed her homework." The reports include social targets, such as listening to other people's points of view. Unusually, the school produces a "pupil profile sheet" each term. This summarises pupils' strengths in English, mathematics and attitudes to learning. It gives specific targets and suggests ways in which parents can help. The school's emphasis on social provision helps pupils to work together effectively as they learn. Awards at the celebration assemblies encourage pupils to work hard and behave well. The school is planning to introduce a school council and a system whereby older pupils act as buddies for younger pupils joining the school.
41. The care and support offered to pupils with special educational needs is good and this is helping them to gain self-confidence and they try their best to achieve their full potential. The strategies to support pupils with challenging behaviour have been very effective in identifying and supporting potential difficulties at an early stage. As a result, the percentage of pupils identified as having challenging behaviour has reduced by half this year. However, in some classes the number of pupils with challenging behaviour is too high. Although teachers are generally very good in dealing with such behaviour in lessons, additional specialist support and guidance are needed.
42. The school works hard and effectively to improve attendance. Teachers take the registers promptly. Office staff contact parents who have not notified the reason on the first day of absence. The front door closes promptly at 9.00 each morning and pupils arriving after this time report to the office. The school gets good support from the educational welfare officer. It has a computerised system with which it monitors annual totals. However, it is not yet checking differences between absence rates of year groups and classes. This would have the potential to reduce the rate of unauthorised absence.
43. The school has good procedures to improve behaviour. It has a positive behaviour policy. It presents

rewards for good behaviour to two pupils per class each week in the celebration assemblies. Guidelines for dealing with poor behaviour are clear. There are effective procedures against bullying. Most teachers manage their classes very well in lessons. In a district where racist graffiti is evident, the school has a good policy for racial equality and strong anti-racist procedures. These are effective against racist behaviour and language.

44. There are a wide range of different ways in which the school monitors pupils' attainment and progress. Children are assessed at the start of the Nursery and Reception classes. Observations are planned systematically and staff use this information effectively to plan for the next step in children's learning. The school has introduced an assessment tracking system to gauge pupils' progress from Nursery to the end of Reception Year. This is fairly new to yet show any impact on children's standards. Staff in reception classes compile a detailed assessment profile for children at the end of the Foundation Stage. As well the statutory National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6, optional tests are used in English, mathematics and science in Years 3, 4 and 5. Individual pupils' results are recorded and this information is used well in English and mathematics to guide planning and raise attainment. In science, history and geography end of unit assessments are starting to be used. However this data is not consistently used for planning and to set individual targets. In Year 2, assessment information is carefully collated and effectively supports teacher assessment in science. In subjects such as ICT and religious education, assessment systems are just starting to develop. Very recently assessment information has been transferred to a database and when embedded into the school organisation, is intended to assist the headteacher and staff to analyse results, monitor progress more effectively and generate individual targets for pupils. The system is developing steadily as data is collected and where there is a stronger body of information, for example in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 it is starting to be beneficial. However, the potential uses have yet to be explored: to measure overall performance, track pupils' progress on a termly basis, identify any differences between the achievements of boys and girls and to explore variations in the progress and results of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.
45. The assessment and tracking of pupils with special educational needs is good. Assessment procedures are used effectively to identify potential difficulties early and to target groups for specific support. All pupils have effective individual educational plans with long and short-term targets. The targets are specific to pupils' needs and are linked to the National Curriculum and the curriculum guidance for children who are under the age of five. Pupils' progress towards their short-term targets is monitored and recorded systematically by the support staff. This information is used effectively to plan for the next stage in their learning. Staff take particular care in seeking pupils' and parents' views during special educational reviews. However, there is very little evidence of pupils taking responsibilities for their own learning in lessons by checking their work and actions against the targets set for them. Many pupils failed to identify their targets when questioned. Pupils' progress towards targets in their individual education plans is regularly reviewed.
46. The school makes good provision for pupils with statements of special educational need. The special educational needs co-ordinator commendably ensures that the school meets the requirements of the new Code of Practice.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Parents' views of the school are satisfactory overall. In reply to the questionnaire, nine out of ten parents say their children like the school and are making good progress. Several parents sent letters and cards to thank the school for its success in helping their children. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents welcomed the new computer suite and its effect on their children's learning. There are concerns. Thirty eight per cent of parents answering the questionnaire do not agree that the school works closely with them. Inspectors judge that the school tries hard to do so, but has not yet "sold" its ideas to all the parents. Year 6 parents, in particular, expressed concern about frequent changes in teaching staff and the lack of informative marking. They complained about a lack of homework, which meant that their children did not prepare sufficiently for secondary school. Inspectors accept these concerns. However, staffing has stabilised and the school now implements its homework policy effectively.
48. There are good arrangements for children and parents to visit the school prior to children attending the Nursery and Reception classes. The school also offers these parents guidance and support through

workshops and training so that they can be involved in children's learning. The special educational needs co-ordinator has regular contact with the parents of pupils on the register of special educational needs and invites them to take part in the reviews of their child's progress.

49. The school has very good links with parents. In the autumn term, the class teacher meets them and tells them what their children will be learning. In the spring term, there are parents' evenings to review their children's progress. The school invites parents to discuss the end of year report in the summer term. In addition, class teachers provide a one-page "pupil profile sheet" in every term. This is a very effective and unusual feature. It includes individual targets and ideas about how parents can help their child improve. One suggestion was "to encourage her to complete her homework as neatly as her work in class". Parents say they find it very helpful. The prospectus makes it clear that parents are welcome to discuss concerns at any time. The school runs a variety of courses for parents. Recent examples include parenting and computing skills. Workshops with parents and children together are popular. Over 200 parents came to a recent display of their children's work in the curriculum.
50. Parents' involvement in the work of the school has a satisfactory impact on their children's learning. Six parents help regularly in class. More parents accompany visits out of school. The friends' association now has only one official member, but she gets support for one-off events from other parents. In fact, it raised over £1, 000 in the past year. This money helps to improve learning facilities. For example, the association recently funded a quiet garden where children can read and reflect.
51. Information to parents is good. Annual reports cover in detail what the child knows and can do in English and mathematics. Teachers specify targets for improvement. There are shorter comments on science and the other subjects. There is space for the child's annual attendance record. The reports close with a sensitive section on the child's personal development. The "pupil profile sheet" is especially valuable because it helps parents to work with their children as they make progress term by term. The governors' annual report and the prospectus are clear and well presented. They do not, however, fully meet the statutory requirements, which have changed recently.
52. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning. Nearly all have signed the home/school agreement. There are big variations in the support that different families provide. Some parents do not yet realise sufficiently the value of education for their child's future happiness and success. At the pre-inspection meeting, there was some concern about the consistent setting of homework and the school's home reading policy. The inspection judgement is that the school's policy for both home reading and homework needs further development, followed by clear communication to parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. Overall the leadership and management of the school are good. Prior to the amalgamation the current headteacher was head of the successful infant school. When the school was amalgamated in April 2000, she had been acting as head of the junior school for a while because the school had serious problems. As a result of her good leadership and commitment to successful amalgamation, the new school is now well established and has gained the confidence and support of the community. The headteacher has responded well to the challenges resulting from the difficulties of staff recruitment and a serious arson attack. She held onto her vision for the creation of the new school and has successfully achieved her goals before retirement at the end of this term. The school's aim to develop the potential of pupils within a tolerant, supportive and co-operative community is successfully reflected in its work and ethos. The leaders are committed to running a school which ensures that pupils are included in all lessons and each individual is valued.
54. The headteacher set up a management structure with responsibilities clearly delegated for the key developments in the life and work of the new school. In the three years since the school has been established some of the original senior staff have been promoted. The role of the assistant heads has evolved in response to the changing needs of the school, for example they provided good leadership on the three different sites following the arson attack. The longest serving assistant head was given a clear brief to raise standards in literacy and provide training for staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning. She has led very well and successfully developed strategies which have helped the

school progress. The emphasis placed on involving pupils in extra-curricular activities by the other deputy is showing success in the improvement of pupils' attitudes and their involvement in school life as well as their social development. The other four senior managers show good leadership and contribute well to the team.

55. Subject co-ordinators manage their areas of responsibility effectively and make significant contributions to good curriculum planning. Co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science have had considerable influence on the development of their subject over the last two years, supporting staff and raising of standards of teaching and learning across the school. This has been achieved through very good monitoring and the sharing of expertise and good practice. They provide good role models for other staff. Over the last year co-ordinators new to post have been well supported to develop their management skills and have been well trained in classroom observation. Their subject files show that they have worked conscientiously, have a clear idea of what needs to be done to improve and are taking effective action. Co-ordinators have strong beneficial links with staff in the other schools in the Educational Action Zone.
56. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has worked hard to improve the provision and the management of this is good, overall. There is effective liaison between the co-ordinator and the governor in charge of special educational needs. The co-ordinator provides a clear educational direction for the staff, pupils and parents. The resources to support pupils with special educational needs are adequate. Support staff also make good use of the resources available from the central service. The special needs co-ordinator, the support staff and the class teachers work well together as a team to provide the best opportunities for pupils with special educational needs. The school has effective systems in place to monitor and support the work of learning support staff. Part of the co-ordinator's time is spent in supporting pupils in lessons. At the time of inspection this was mainly one-to-one support for pupils with statements of special educational needs, with a few instances of supporting small group of pupils who are in the advanced stage of special educational needs. At present no member of staff is delegated the responsibility for higher attaining pupils.
57. The management of nursery and reception provision is good. The co-ordinator, with the support of the rest of the early years team, has worked hard to develop an effective Foundation Stage. The systems to monitor and support the quality of teaching and learning are good. He is very clear about the strengths and areas for improvement.
58. The governing body is a very supportive team and several members are regularly involved in the daily life of the school. Governors have been responsive and determined to overcome the many problems and difficulties that have arisen since the amalgamation. They are proud of what has been achieved and are optimistic about the future. The committee structure ensures that governors' expertise is utilised well for the benefit of the school and that the statutory requirements are fulfilled. Good channels of communication are established which enable governors to have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are beginning to have a greater influence in shaping the future of the school and challenging the senior management team. Governors have a good understanding of the school data and assessment information but the annual targets they set do not take account of this and are unrealistic.
59. Staffing is good and all are valued. The school has achieved significant success in improving the quality of staffing. It has consistently recruited and trained teaching staff to ensure good teaching and learning for all its year groups. There is a good range of expertise and experience to meet the demands of the curriculum and staffing has stabilised. All staff have job descriptions which are used for appraisal and performance management. The well trained classroom support staff have provided valuable stability for the school during times of high staff turnover. Administrative staff in the office are well trained and flexible and willing to stand in for other duties if problems occur. The caretaking staff are an efficient helpful team who take a great pride in their work and maintain the school to a high standard. The midday assistants and the kitchen contracted staff play a valuable part in the smooth running of the school. All staff show high levels of commitment to the wellbeing and happiness of pupils.
60. The accommodation is very good and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. Within the past three years, the school has faced and solved two major challenges in its accommodation. It

creatively linked the former infant and junior schools into a single school with a new identity. It responded positively to the arson attack of December 2001, getting the refurbishment done quickly and inviting the fire fighters to its Christmas dinner at Easter 2002. The accommodation is bright and attractive and much attention has been paid to colour co-ordination and the selection of classroom furniture. Pupils' toilets have been refurbished to a high standard. Although the outdoor area for nursery and reception pupils is limited, staff use the areas creatively to offer children opportunities to develop their interests and extend their physical skills. Further development of the outdoor area is identified for further improvement and a grant secured. Displays around the school are stimulating and appreciated by the pupils. Resources damaged in the fire have been replaced, are of good quality and presently adequate in quantity in most subjects. The school is not making best use of its computerised systems to collect, manage and analyse data to inform decision making. Staff make good use of their personal computers for administration and planning. There are an above average number of computers for pupils' use in comparison to national requirements.

61. Financial management is sound and very well monitored by governors. The school employs a finance officer who works in the school on a weekly basis and has a very good understanding of the system used. She provides the headteacher and governors with accurate and up-to-date information. The quality of financial control and planning for educational priorities is good and linked to the school improvement plan. Day-to-day financial management by the office staff is efficient. The school has not yet had a full financial audit although there are clear procedures to ensure security. Due to circumstances following the fire, the cost of replacing equipment, operating the school on three sites, the high costs of temporary teachers and outstanding insurance claims, the school has carried forward a high overspend into the current financial year. This is the first time this has happened. Major problems with the computer hub put the office system out of action for some time at the beginning of 2003 and made financial monitoring difficult. The school is operating a financial recovery plan to eliminate the overspend, which is closer to £60,000 (five per cent of the total allocation) once outstanding monies have been recovered.
62. Grants for staff training and special educational needs are used appropriately. Best value is sought on purchases made and governors get several tenders for improvements made to the premises. The timetabling of assemblies towards the end of the day does not make efficient use of learning time nor the accommodation available. During the inspection week it was evident that a significant percentage of the special needs co-ordinator's time is spent on administration or on other duties. This ineffective use of her valuable time prevents her expertise being fully used to support specific groups of pupils and raise the standards further. There is a need to review the use of the co-ordinator's time to evaluate how this is linked to the success of some of the priorities identified to improve the achievement, behaviour and concentration of pupils with special educational needs. Similarly, insufficient evaluation of the balance between the administrative duties and the teaching commitment of the assistant headteachers has taken place. Taking account of these factors, the well below average attainment on entry, the overall below average standards achieved, the good leadership and management and teaching and high unit costs, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors and the headteacher should consider the following when planning for school improvement:

- i. Make better use of assessment in order to:
 - raise standards in English, mathematics and science by providing appropriate work which will move pupils forward to the next stage of learning;
(Paragraphs: 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 73, 83, 90 and 99)
 - regularly challenge the most able, closely monitor their progress and delegate the responsibility for this;
(Paragraphs: 21, 79, 84 and 56)
 - set realistic targets for improvement in each year group and monitor progress towards these; and
(Paragraphs: 4, 58, 72, 73 and 83)
 - ensure that pupils' progress is tracked in all curriculum areas.
(Paragraphs: 44, 104, 108, 116, 121, 123, 130, and 143)
- ii. Review the use of the special needs co-ordinator's teaching time and evaluate how this is linked to the success of the priorities identified to improve the achievement, behaviour and concentration of pupils with special educational needs.
(Paragraphs: 41,56 and 62)
- iii. Review the arrangements made for assemblies to prevent lesson time being wasted.
(Paragraphs: 30 and 62)
- iv. Provide more opportunities to help pupils prepare for life in a multicultural society.
(Paragraphs: 38, 69 and 121)

Other issues the school should consider when drawing up the action plan:

- Improve the collection, management and analysis of school data so that it can accurately inform decision-making.
(Paragraphs: 11, 42, 44 and 60)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	102
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	1	21	51	26	2	1	0
Percentage	1	20.5	51	25.5	2	1	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	498
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	71

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	104

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	39
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	29

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	24	25	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	20
	Girls	16	17	18
	Total	31	33	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (84)	67 (95)	78 (91)
	National	85 (85)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	20
	Girls	17	17	21
	Total	33	34	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (91)	69 (90)	84 (95)
	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	39	23	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	20	29
	Girls	18	9	16
	Total	40	29	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (55)	47 (63)	73 (70)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	23	26
	Girls	14	10	16
	Total	31	33	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (69)	53 (69)	68 (72)
	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	464	6	1
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	22
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25: 1
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR - Y6

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	333

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9:1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	19
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	25
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	1,176,030
Total expenditure	1,284,300
Expenditure per pupil	2,548
Balance brought forward from previous year	51,493
Balance carried forward to next year	-70,046

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	501
Number of questionnaires returned	77

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	40	51	3	6	0
My child is making good progress in school.	29	53	10	3	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	51	13	5	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	44	22	5	9
The teaching is good.	31	55	5	5	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	17	47	25	6	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	35	49	9	5	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	34	56	4	1	5
The school works closely with parents.	22	34	32	6	4
The school is well led and managed.	16	60	8	10	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	26	60	6	3	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	43	12	3	21

Other issues raised by parents

Concerns about the high turnover off staff in the last two years.

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

63. The provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is good and is a strength of the school. Children are admitted to the Nursery and Reception classes at the beginning of each term. The school offers 26 full-time equivalent nursery places. At the time of the inspection a significant number of children attending the Nursery and Reception classes have been only just transferred to their current class in either the spring or summer term of this year. At the time of the inspection 52 pupils were attending the Nursery on a part-time basis and 56 children full-time in the two reception classes. All the teachers in Nursery and Reception classes are new to their current post. The teachers and support staff in these classes have worked extremely hard as a team to create a safe, secure and effective Foundation Stage unit where learning is made fun and care and respect for each other are valued and nurtured. Together they provide a good start to children's education and children are happy and settled.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. Children enter the Nursery class with skills in personal and social and emotional development well below those expected of their age. They make very good progress in this area of learning and by the time they leave the Reception Class the majority are well on their way to attaining the Early Learning Goals in this area with a significant number attaining beyond this. The exciting learning environment and the care and trust staff offer, enable children to settle in to the general routine of Nursery very quickly. They become confident to choose what they want to do. The snack times are used well to develop children's independence and to learn about social skills. Children take turns to distribute the drinks and snacks and they are very good in responding by saying 'please' and 'thank you' as they choose what they want. They are beginning to learn how to share things and to take turns as they play. However, many of the children are still at a stage of playing alongside others. A small number of older and more able children in the Nursery are beginning to play together developing a theme to their play. The confidence they gain in the Nursery to choose and explore the activities is effectively extended in Reception classes where the children are given opportunities to attempt the activities in small groups and in pairs. They do this very well; the older more confident children in the reception classes support the younger ones and this helps the younger ones to gain confidence. Children in Reception classes concentrate well and persevere with what they want to achieve. Children in both Nursery and Reception classes are good in taking responsibilities such as putting away resources after use and getting dressed after PE. The staff in both Nursery and Reception classes provide very good role models for children, always treating each other and children with respect. They listen to children's ideas and help them to develop these further through skilful questioning. Children in all the three classes know what is expected of them. Their behaviour in and outside class is always very good.

Communication, language and literacy

65. The teaching and learning in communication, language and literacy is good in Nursery and Reception classes and this enables the children to make good progress. Many children when they start Nursery have skills in communication, language and literacy which are well below what is expected of their age. Therefore although they make good progress many fail to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the Reception class, especially in the reading and writing aspects of this area of learning. A small number of older and higher attaining children are well on their way attaining the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1.
66. The opportunities to develop children's talk are good in the Nursery and Reception classes. The staff in the Nursery seek opportunities to develop children's talk whether it is encouraging them to talk about the different kinds of bread they have tasted with the rest of the class or discussing the models they have made on their own when playing with the construction toys. However, in a few of the whole class sessions observed the time spent on the carpet was too long for young children. Most children could follow teacher's instructions but many children find it hard to talk about their experiences. Staff

use these situations effectively by giving prompts to initiate the conversation. The skills they have learned are effectively extended in Reception classes through careful choice of resources and activities which will encourage children to develop their talk. For example, in one of the sessions observed a group of older children playing with the props related to the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears could use the appropriate tone of voice and speech as they recreated the story. In another session observed the teacher used the questioning strategies effectively to engage children's talk as they went about making their model houses. Most children could talk about what they are doing and many are confident in initiating talk. Although there were some examples of developing children's ideas and spoken language through role play, there were missed opportunities where the staff could have used these situations to model language and develop children's understanding of how to use talk to imagine and recreate roles and experiences.

67. The opportunities to share books with each other and with adults are good in Nursery and Reception classes. Children are encouraged to take library books home to develop children's interests and enjoyment in reading. Children in the Nursery listen to stories and books read to them. Staff encourage children to listen to the rhyming words as they sing nursery rhymes and songs. Children know how to handle books and they are treated with care. Most children in the Reception classes can identify the title of the book. The older and higher attaining children can read simple known text confidently. All children respond to stories read to them and they show enjoyment in reading. The shared reading times and the story times in the Reception classes are used effectively to involve children to retell narratives in the correct sequence and to develop their reading skills. Most children are beginning to recognise familiar words and initial sounds as they share books with adults. The specific reading programme (ERR) is helping children to learn the initial sounds and words. Although most children use pictures and initial sounds to make sense of simple text, many of them needed help in remembering what they read. Opportunities to learn about writing for different purposes are well organised in both Nursery and Reception classes whether it is making a book about their homes in the Reception class or writing postcards and letters as they play in the post office in the Nursery. In the Reception class elements of National Literacy Strategy are used effectively to develop children's reading and writing skills. The more able and some of the older children in reception class are attempting to use their knowledge about initial sounds and known words to write simple sentences with some prompt from the adults. They are well on their way to attaining the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave reception. However, the majority of the children are only beginning to use initial letters and marks to record and communicate ideas independently. Their attainment in this aspect is below that expected of them nationally.

Mathematical development

68. Children are provided with a range of activities to support their learning in this area. Teaching of mathematical development is good throughout the Foundation Stage and children make good progress. Although some of the older and higher attaining children are well on their way attaining the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave reception, the majority of children will be still working towards the expected levels of Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. The staff in Foundation Stage use nursery rhymes, action songs and games to make the learning of mathematics fun for young children. Questioning strategies are used effectively to develop children's understanding of numbers and number relations. But they are less well used in whole class sessions in Reception classes to challenge higher attaining children's mental recall and reasoning about numbers. Most children in the Nursery listen and join in with number rhymes and number games. Some of the older and higher attaining children can count confidently up to five. A large proportion of children can recognise some of the numbers but they find it difficult to count three or four objects. In one of the sessions observed in the Nursery, the teacher used questions such as 'which number comes after 3?' to challenge the higher attaining children's thinking. They can choose the appropriate shapes when building models with construction toys. Children in the Reception classes are learning about how to use money as they take the role of shopkeepers and customers in their supermarket. Staff in the Reception classes use aspects of the National Numeracy Strategy effectively to build on and extend these skills. The more able and some of the older children are confident in counting to ten and beyond. Most of them know how to work out one more than or one less than a number. They are beginning to work out addition as combining two groups together. Many children including the older children are only beginning to record numerals correctly. The younger children can sort sets of five objects. They are beginning to count and order numerals one to six. Teachers use different areas

effectively to develop children's understanding of shape and space. However, their understanding of measure is less well developed. Although they make good progress, their attainment by the end of Reception Year is below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. Children at the start of Nursery have very limited understanding of the world around them. They are regularly challenged through activities such as observing and discussing the animals they have seen, the different breads they have tasted, and the sounds they have heard around the school grounds. Staff raise children's interest and enthusiasm to learn about the world around them. The older and higher attaining children in Reception classes could record the sounds they have heard and the smells they have experienced through words and pictures. The children in the Nursery could draw and paint pictures of some of the animals they have seen, while children in Reception class use their drawings to record their route from home to school. The staff in all the classes support and guide the children very well on how to overcome problems as they go about exploring ideas. For example, in one of the lessons observed in one of the Reception classes, the class teacher used the questioning strategies to develop their ideas about adding details such as the number of windows and the shape of the door as they went about building the different homes. Their models show that the majority of children in Reception class can choose the appropriate resources and techniques to construct with a purpose in mind. The children in both reception classes are confident in taking on challenges and they work together well in solving them. Children in the nursery know how to use the listening centres. Children in the reception classes are confident in using the computer to draw pictures. They can use the different icons to add details to their picture. A number of children can use the programs effectively to print out their work. The majority of children are confident in using the computer to draw pictures and to play games. They learn about the life of Jesus through stories. Reception children's work on the story of Easter is a good example of this. There is some evidence of children being given opportunity to learn about the cultures and beliefs of others. However, this aspect of the knowledge and understanding of the world is less well developed. There is need to further develop children's understanding of other cultures through carefully selected resources and activities. At the end of the Reception classes children's knowledge and understanding of their world is below that expected for age despite the good quality teaching and variety of experiences they are given.

Physical development

70. Children are set to reach the expected levels of the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception classes. The teaching in this area is good throughout the Foundation Stage. Although there are some constraints in using the outdoor areas, staff use these areas well by organising the activities during different times to offer children maximum opportunities to develop their physical skills and enjoyment in games. Children in the Nursery can use the large equipment like climbing frames with confidence. Teachers use the PE lessons well to develop children's positional language. Children in the Reception classes show a growing awareness of space and safety as they use wheeled toys and other equipment outside. Further developing the outdoor area is one of the priorities identified in the action plan. The children in Reception can find different ways of moving around and are beginning to combine different movements and gestures in response to the music. They use small implements such as pencils, paint brush, scissors and glue spreaders with increasing control and confidence.

Creative development

71. Children start the Nursery with skills that are well below those expected of their age in this area of learning; they make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage due to the good teaching they receive. From very early on in the Nursery children are given the opportunities to experiment with different materials and tools to create pictures and models of what they have seen and experienced. In the Nursery, children can use lines and shapes to draw pictures of their favourite animals. They are given opportunities to use different materials and techniques such as painting, drawing and shaping. Children in Reception classes can choose the appropriate colours and materials to create the texture and feel of things they have observed. Their camouflage paintings of animals in their habitat are a good example of this. Children in the Nursery are beginning to join in with the singing whereas in the reception classes they are beginning to sing in tune, responding to cues given by the teachers. They

are beginning to identify which part of the songs they like best and why. Well organised role-play and small world areas in all the classes enable children to develop their ideas and experiences. In the Nursery, children use this well to create from their imagination but the majority of their play is solitary, whereas in Reception classes, children can use the resources as props and negotiate roles to create a theme to their play. Although there is some evidence of planned interactions in these areas, there were missed opportunities where lack of adult support has resulted in children not being able to continue their play. The good and sometimes very good teaching in this area helps children to achieve well and the majority are well on their way to attaining the expected Early Learning Goals by the time they start Year 1.

ENGLISH

72. Overall, standards of pupils' attainment are below average at the end of Year 2 and well below average in Year 6. The quality of teaching is good, but stronger in Year 5, where some lessons were very good.

The key factors contributing to the strengths of the subject are:

- Good teaching across the school;
- Very good leadership and management;
- The effective implementation of the school's literacy strategy;
- The school's appropriate priority on improving pupils' writing skills; and
- Pupils' positive attitudes to work.

Areas for improvement:

- To implement a whole school policy to reflect consistent practice of recording pupils' progress;
- To ensure the consistent use of the marking policy throughout the school;
- To promote pupils' self-evaluation skills;
- To analyse national test results to understand what needs to be improved; and
- To ensure consistency of practice in the setting of individual and group targets.

73. Inspection findings for the current Year 6 pupils indicate that by the time they are 11, they are attaining well below the national average, with only a very small number achieving above the level expected nationally (Level 5). Taking account of the well below average attainment when they were in Year 2, these pupils have made satisfactory progress since then. There is evidence that the National Literacy Strategy is having a very beneficial impact on attainment and that good progress is made across the school. The targets set for the current Year 6 pupils are very high and unlikely to be met.
74. Standards in speaking and listening are well below expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Although by the time pupils are 11 most begin to show increasing confidence when speaking to adults, many find it difficult to explain their ideas in any depth. Throughout the school, speaking and listening skills are appropriately developed through planned discussions. For example, in a geography lesson in Year 5 about 'The Middle River' pupils are challenged to discuss as a group and report to the class what they already know about rivers. Pupils do not have the breadth of vocabulary or the knowledge of grammar to sustain a discussion. For example, pupils in Year 1 are encouraged to talk about happy and sad memories. Initially, the pupils could think of nothing and then one pupil thought of only a sad memory about his cat. The majority of pupils are attentive when their teachers give explanations. When they answer questions, many teachers affirm pupils' responses by asking additional questions to extend pupils' thinking further, but often they just give one-word answers. Overall, progress in speaking and listening across the school is satisfactory. Teachers are good role models for pupils to follow in valuing and respecting the ideas and opinions of both pupils and adults. Teachers effectively build up an atmosphere of trust in which self-esteem and self-confidence is enriched and pupils are confident to make contributions. All staff, including teaching assistants, make an effective contribution to the progress of all pupils. They clarify questions, explain new vocabulary and encourage pupils to offer answers.
75. Overall, standards in reading are below average by the ages of seven and 11, although a significant number of pupils attain expected standards. Younger pupils are beginning to build on a number of skills in order to read the text. For example, pupils in Year 2 use strategies to work out words they find difficult, such as sounding out the letters and finding clues in the pictures. The majority of the

- oldest pupils in Year 6 are beginning to show that they understand the notable ideas from the story, but not all refer to the text to talk about their thoughts. Their inference and deduction skills are weak. However, the majority of pupils across the school clearly enjoy reading. Higher-attaining pupils are appropriately challenged. Effective time is allocated during the school day for pupils to read quietly either individually or guided in groups and teachers and teaching assistants carefully monitor pupils' progress and choice of books.
76. Skills in writing are below average by the time pupils are seven and well below average in Year 6. The combination of a well-structured literacy hour together with the good and sometimes very good teaching has a positive impact on pupils' attainment in writing and means that they achieve well considering their prior attainment. Improving standards in all aspects of English, particularly in writing, have been a major focus of the school, with the strategies introduced meeting with some success. The additional literacy strategies are used well to boost pupils' learning in Years 1, 2 and 6. Pupils enjoy these additional lessons and make good progress as a result.
 77. Pupils enjoy the good quality texts that they share in class. They practise a good range of writing skills during literacy lessons, including narrative, poetry and descriptive writing. As pupils move through the school they write more imaginative stories but often make careless spelling and punctuation errors and much of their written work lacks depth. Higher-achieving pupils in Year 6 are beginning to structure their stories well, regularly use paragraphs and improve their work by using more complex sentences, for example, *"It all started on Ben's eleventh birthday, when he was resting on the sand on a warm summer morning..."*. Pupils are developing the use of descriptive vocabulary when writing a letter home about their feelings on being evacuated during the Second World War. For example, one pupil wrote, *"...The sheets were uncomfy. I was squashed in a crowd of children and worst of all I couldn't get to the toilets..."* while another said, *"...On the train I was scared and happy at the same time, because I was going to a farm with lots of animals..."*. This makes a good contribution to their spiritual development.
 78. Pupils regularly learn spellings for homework and practise spelling strategies in lessons as was seen in a Year 2 class, which was effectively using individual white boards to check them. By the time pupils are 11, the majority are developing a fluent handwriting style; they join letters correctly and it is usually legible. Presentation of work varies considerably from class to class, dependent on the teacher's expectations. Information and communication technology successfully enhances the pupils' learning in this subject: they benefit greatly from regular lessons taught in the computer suite.
 79. Overall, the quality of teaching is predominantly good. Teaching is always at least satisfactory, with instances of very good teaching. This has a positive effect on pupils' attainment, particularly in Year 5. In the most effective lessons teachers' good subject knowledge is shown in the setting of challenging work that is carefully matched to pupils' differing capabilities. Lesson introductions are used well to promote discussion and kindle pupils' interest so that they listen attentively. Skilful questioning and explanations ensure that pupils understand their work. Behaviour is good and is based on the positive relationships amongst pupils and between adults and pupils. Praise is used well to show pupils that their work is valued and to encourage higher standards. Appropriate group and individual targets are set termly for writing, providing a constant reminder of what pupils need to do to improve. However, this good practice in target setting is inconsistently applied across the school. There are good relationships in most classes and personal development is fostered well. In some lessons teachers have to work hard to ensure that the behaviour of a minority does not disrupt the learning of others but the majority of pupils co-operate and collaborate agreeably in small group work. Teachers often use the final part of the lessons effectively to assess the progress their pupils have made and to affirm their learning by revising the main features of the lesson. Where teaching is weaker, the management and organisation of the lesson provides few opportunities to challenge higher-attaining pupils so that their progress is limited; low expectations of the quality of pupils' written work results in their lack of care in writing and overall presentation skills are poor. This was particularly evident in a Year 6 class.
 80. The scrutiny of pupils' work in books indicates overall satisfactory teaching. Marking is inconsistent across the school. It is good, particularly in Years 5 and 3, where it is constructive and encouraging and where written advice is given to pupils on how to improve their work. A scrutiny of pupils' work on display shows few examples of their written work in the subject.

81. There is good provision for pupils who have learning difficulties. They make good progress, as group activities are well organised. They are effectively supported by the teacher and teaching assistants and appropriately included in all aspects of the subject. Their progress is carefully recorded so that the next steps in learning can be carefully planned.
82. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator is a very good role model for other staff and pupils. There is a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in English across the school. There are appropriate assessment procedures and pupils' progress is monitored regularly, although not all teachers make the best use of these. Test results are not yet analysed to identify targets for improvement. The two libraries are used well; pupils have a weekly library session to further develop their library skills. Resources are good; they are well organised, accessible and in good condition.

MATHEMATICS

83. The results of the National Curriculum tests for pupils aged seven in 2002 were well below the national average. Evidence from this inspection indicates that standards are improving in the present Year 2 but still below average. The results of the National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 11 in 2002 were well below the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that the standard in the present Year 6 is below the standard expected nationally but shows improvement due to improved teaching and more stable staffing. The targets set for 2003 are unlikely to be met and are unrealistically high.
84. Samples of work demonstrate that pupils in all classes undertake an appropriate variety of work on space, shape and measures and tackle a range of problems involving handling data and investigation during the course of the year. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. A good number of classroom assistants provide teachers with very good support and make a valuable contribution to the pupils' progress. At present very few pupils reach the higher levels possible by the ages of seven and 11. The school is beginning to implement strategies to provide greater challenge for its higher attaining pupils. These are not fully effective throughout the school.
85. Pupils in Year 1 make good gains in their learning and cover an appropriate range of work. They count reliably forwards and backwards and understand the operations of addition and subtraction. They use mental strategies that they have been taught to solve problems. They are beginning to understand two-dimensional shapes, but their knowledge of shapes is very limited and they do not recognise terms such as sphere or ball and are unable to describe the features of a triangle. Pupils are able to visually compare length but lack the necessary mathematical vocabulary. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to have secure understanding of repeated addition and confidently count in ten's, two's and three's to 30. They work hard to solve simple word problems in real-life situations. Pupils work together in pairs and small groups to find answers to money problems as they buy items at an imaginary auction. The high quality of support given to pupils with special educational needs enhances their learning and ensures that they achieve as well as their peers. Pupils use information and communication technology well as they interpret information collected of their favourite sea animals onto a graph.
86. In Years 3 to 6, eight classes were observed. Although their work is still below the standard expected, four of the classes made very good progress and one exceptional lesson in Year 4 where pupils made excellent progress. Pupils in Year 3 were working on improving the mental recall of number bonds, the three number operations and to improve their skills knowledge and understanding of the properties of shape as they investigated right angles. In Year 4, pupils develop their skills well; they can add or subtract one, ten and 100, to and from whole numbers and count on and back in ten's, 100's and 1000's from any whole number. They solve addition sums using the column addition process. In an excellent lesson pupils confidently explored column addition and were becoming secure in their understanding. Pupils in Year 5 recall number facts in their four and eight times tables and begin to understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate their skills in solving problems as they identify known facts and starting points in a problem. Other pupils effectively investigate number sequences. Information and communication technology is well used in all classes to support learning and pupils access a range of programs to develop and improve their knowledge, skills and understanding.

87. The majority of pupils enjoy their mathematics and have good attitudes to their work. With notable exceptions, they behave well, listen attentively and show interest in the tasks they have been given. Where attitudes are satisfactory a small minority of pupils who have short concentration spans, disrupt the progress of other pupils in the class. Most pupils are trustworthy and show respect for property. Pupils in all year groups form constructive relationships and work collaboratively when required. Pupils showing initiative are few in number, but many are willing to take responsibility by helping in different ways, for example by giving out books and equipment if required.
88. The overall quality of teaching is good. One lesson was excellent, five were very good, six were good and two were satisfactory. In most classes pupils are managed effectively with praise and encouragement and a purposeful learning environment for learning is created. Throughout the school teachers use their knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy and of their pupils to plan interesting, relevant activities. Lessons have clear learning objectives that are usually explained to pupils so that they know what to do. Staff, work closely as a year group team. Support staff are deployed effectively, making a considerable contribution to successful learning, especially for pupils with special educational needs. Most teachers' personal enthusiasm for the subject, as well as their high expectations for pupils' work and behaviour, harness pupils' energies so that they make good progress.
89. The curriculum is broad and balanced and satisfies statutory requirements. The teacher responsible for co-ordinating the subject works very hard and leads well. The subject has appropriate links to other subjects including literacy and ICT, where programs to support data collection, symmetry, shape and space and logo are well used. ICT in mathematics is also effectively used in geography, science and design and technology. The co-ordinator undertakes lesson observations in which particular year groups are targeted. Planning is monitored on a termly basis. Assessment is on-going and takes the form of national tests at Years 2 and 6 and optional tests at Years 3, 4 and 5, so that all year groups are assessed on a regular basis. However currently assessment just records where pupils are and is not tracking progress over time. It is not being used to set individual targets to move learning on to the next stage. Marking is inconsistently applied across the school and is an area for development, as it does not always inform pupils how they might improve their work. The co-ordinator has worked extremely hard to promote the subject and has identified strengths and areas for development. Resources are good. The school is in a strong position to continue this improvement in mathematics.

SCIENCE

90. By the end of Year 2, standards are just below average and show considerable improvement since 2002, where they were well below average. This is due to the improved quality of teaching and curriculum planning which builds effectively on the work covered in Year 1. At the end of Year 6 standards are well below average, with a lower percentage of pupils expected to reach the higher Level 5. Pupils in Year 6 still have large gaps in their knowledge resulting from the disruptions to their learning prior to the amalgamation and a high turnover of teaching staff since.
91. By the end of Year 2, pupils are developing a satisfactory understanding of living things through a variety of practical experiences and the visits they make. Pupils grow seeds, observe the development of frogspawn and visit the zoo and sea-life centre to widen their knowledge and develop their vocabulary. They sort foods into groups and gain a good understanding of a healthy balanced diet. Pupils know about the dangers of electricity and make their own circuits. They go to the park and use the playground equipment to investigate pushes and pulls. In the classroom, pupils experiment to find out how the height and surface of a ramp affects the distance travelled by a car. They are encouraged to make predictions before they investigate. The most able pupils draw conclusions from their results. Most pupils can record results on tables. Good use is made of ICT to draw graphs and pie charts when displaying information. There are good links with learning in other subjects, for example, large information books are used for research about food. Pupils learn well because lessons are exciting and varied. Good challenge is planned for higher attaining pupils and good assessment and evaluation is used when planning future lessons.
92. In Year 1 the work builds well on the knowledge and understanding gained in the Reception class.

Pupils observe plants carefully as they grow and use a variety of methods to measure and record growth. They experiment to learn what a seed needs to grow into a healthy plant. Pupils experiment with different sources of light and understand why it is important to wear luminous clothing at night.

93. All pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. They develop their experimental and observational skills and many are able to predict and some are able to plan their own experiments by the end of Year 2. They co-operate well in pairs and small groups and show a good level of independence in drawing and writing for themselves. Pupils are introduced to special subject vocabulary and are encouraged to use this when answering questions orally and as a result their confidence and vocabulary improves.
94. In Year 6 there is evidence that most pupils are able to make predictions and some can design their own experiments. Most can record their results in a table or as a graph. Observation skills are developing as pupils grow sweet chestnut seeds and record changes, but standards are below what is expected for their age. Over half of the pupils can sort living things into groups and show some understanding of how animals are adapted to their environment. Pupils show more enthusiasm when working with mixtures and solutions and demonstrate a good understanding of the specialist vocabulary used. They have a satisfactory understanding of the differences between gases, liquids and solids. Knowledge and understanding of magnetism, electricity, light and sound is still at a basic level as these topics have not received sufficient emphasis in the past. Not all pupils in Year 6 have a positive attitude to learning and do not fully apply themselves to the interesting practical tasks provided and this limits their progress.
95. Year 5 pupils enjoy investigating and show enthusiasm for learning about solids, liquids and gases through a range of activities. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress as a result of good planning for their learning. Higher attaining pupils are challenged and achieve well at a higher level. During the year pupils have covered work currently taught to younger pupils in order to fill gaps in knowledge. Good opportunities are being given to learn through activity and plan experiments and as a result standards are improving.
96. There is good evidence in Year 4 that pupils' investigative skills are developing well. Pupils show a good understanding of a fair test and through skilful teaching are encouraged to think how to apply this to their own experiments. Pupils behave most sensibly and co-operatively in their groups when investigating the best habitat for wood lice. All pupils treat the creatures with respect and are keen to ensure that they are returned to the wild after the experiments. Teachers insist on the correct use of the appropriate vocabulary. Good quality displays in classrooms show that pupils have studied the human body earlier and they are keen to discuss what they have learnt about the skeleton and the systems of the body. Pupils' knowledge and understanding is getting close to what is expected for age but there is still some reluctance to contribute ideas orally to class discussion.
97. Year 3 pupils are currently learning about teeth. Pupils have good knowledge of the different kinds of teeth and their uses. They are able to make a chart of the teeth in their own mouth using a mirror and use symbols to show which are milk or permanent teeth. They experiment with plants to understand how these take in water. Materials are examined and tested to understand their properties. From the information collected pupils say why, for example, a bicycle frame is made of metal. Displays show that pupils have carried out investigations with snails to find out what kind of food they prefer and talk about the results enthusiastically.
98. Overall, teaching is good and enables pupils in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 5 to learn well. Good challenge is provided for the higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs are given good support. Work is generally well matched to the needs of average attaining pupils. Teachers share the focus of the lesson with pupils but not all staff encourage pupils to evaluate their learning at the end. Some staff are reluctant to allow pupils the independence to experiment for themselves. Assessments are starting to be used to test knowledge and understanding at the end of units of work. In some classes information is used effectively to support future planning. Progress in the development of investigative skills is not monitored regularly nor closely enough. Classroom support staff are used well during group activities but opportunities are missed during the whole class sessions to monitor pupils' responses and assess understanding. There are good links with other subjects, such as ICT, history and design and technology.

99. The co-ordinator works hard and leads well by setting high standards in her teaching and relationships with pupils. She monitors planning to ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject through the analysis of data and classroom observation. As a result, teaching and planning for pupils of different abilities has improved considerably. Teachers are developing a clearer understanding of pupils' levels of attainment but not all are using this in their planning to move learning forward. Resources are adequate and of good quality.

ART AND DESIGN

100. Attainment in art and design for pupils at the end of Year 2 is in line with that expected nationally. Standards of attainment for pupils in Year 6 are below national expectations. Additional evidence has been gained from scrutiny of sketchbooks and discussions with the co-ordinator. The key factors contributing to the strengths of the subject are:

The key factors contributing to the strengths of the subject are:

- Good teaching in the lessons observed;
- Good leadership and management; and
- Effective learning from famous artists' work.

Areas for improvement:

- Introduce more resources to promote the pupils' multicultural awareness;
- Support teachers with insecure subject knowledge through building up techniques; and
- Provide effective support for those pupils identified as gifted and talented in this area.

101. Overall, the quality of teaching seen is good with some very good features and as a direct consequence, pupils achieve well across the school. No direct teaching was observed in Year 6 owing to the timetable arrangements. An analysis of pupils' work in sketchbooks in Year 6 shows that the pupils' skills and techniques are underdeveloped for their age. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls.
102. Effective teaching is characterised by clear expertise and the lucid demonstration of techniques to achieve the desired effect. For example, pupils in Year 3 pleasingly use water-colours to create a poppy picture in the style of Monet, while pupils in Year 4 build up a collage picture, successfully combining paints and a variety of materials to give pattern and texture. In Year 2, the pupils try out different techniques to create, for example, a fruit picture in the style of a famous artist, Arcimboldo. Pupils respond well and are very often inspired by their teacher's interest and enthusiasm in art and design. The overall good quality teaching has a significant impact on pupils' learning. Pupils are always ready to apply intellectual and creative effort in class, as a result of their own positive attitudes and the good relationships that teachers maintain and foster. The majority show interest and sustain concentration well. They understand what they are doing and know how to improve their work because of the clear explanations and instructions that their teachers give them. They are given an appropriate amount of individual support; at the same time the teachers encourage the pupils to be independent and to use their skill, for example, in developing their ideas in drawing a story of the river to be translated on to textile in Year 5.
103. Art and design effectively supports other areas of the curriculum. For example, in ICT where Year 6 pupils research information on Matisse and produce good examples of work in his style, while pupils in Year 2 compose a picture of straight lines and blocks of colour in the style of Mondrian. In Year 4, good links are made with religious education when pupils effectively use chalk and pastels to produce a picture to illustrate Moses and the burning bush, while in history in Year 3, pupils find out about a famous Victorian, William Morris and produce patterns in his style. Worthwhile extra-curricular activities, including an art and sewing club, take place at lunchtime and after school and usefully enhance pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs in a Year 5 class spoke with enthusiasm about the work of Turner and his love of the sea.
104. The subject is well managed. There is an appropriate scheme of work that helpfully supports teachers' planning and builds on pupils' skills and techniques from year to year. The effect of this is providing a more consistent approach and standards are improving. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and learning through occasional lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work on display and examination of teachers' planning. The display of pupils' work has a positive impact on the school environment and it is clear that they take pride in their work. Art makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development through working with visiting local artists and looking at famous artists' work. Currently, new assessment procedures are being introduced to appropriately provide key points of learning and future action to be taken. This is not yet being used to challenge the most able pupils in this area. Resources to support the subject are good, accessible and of good quality.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. It was not possible to give a judgement on standards for design and technology because of the very limited amount of work provided by the school, very limited planning and very few displays in classrooms. Most of the work goes home when completed.
106. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection, due to timetabling arrangements. The evidence that was provided showed that although there is consistent coverage of the curriculum over time, some of the elements of the subject are left out, for example, the requirements to use structures and to disassemble have been removed. Direct links to English, mathematics, information and communication technology and science are made. This is because the school has a creative curriculum. Although the school has used the nationally recognised scheme of work to support planning and assessment, the lack of an established system of assessment which can be used to move learning forward in a structured way has hindered the development of the subject.
107. It was not possible to give an overall secure judgement of the quality of teaching and learning as only a very limited time was spent observing a lesson in Year 1 and one lesson in Year 6. In the Year 6 lesson where pupils were making Elizabethan slippers, teaching and learning were very good and standards of attainment were average. Pupils showed the ability to focus on the practical task of stitching two pieces of felt together as they created their slippers. They worked sensibly together, listened carefully as the teacher demonstrated the skill of sewing and worked hard, showing very good attitudes to their work. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 investigated and made a range of items for playground equipment. In Year 4, pupils make houses and in Year 5 pupils make a harvest loaf. Other pupils in Year 6 made Elizabethan cookies as part of their topic work.
108. There was very limited evidence of recorded work, either written or diagrammatically and the skill of evaluation and modification being used. No evidence of appropriate levels of research, accurate measurement or development through evaluation was seen in the work samples. The use of information and communication technology is used to enhance the learning, for example, computer aided design, use of drawing software and ICT control program. However none of these elements were seen during the inspection.
109. There are relevant cross-curricular links with science where pupils make biscuits and learn the importance of health and safety.
110. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop the subject and has put together a good subject file, which includes an action plan. She has carried monitoring of planning, has discussed with teachers and evaluated finished work. Resources for the subject are appropriate.

GEOGRAPHY

111. Pupils' standards and achievement are satisfactory by the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6 standards are below average, although in work sampled and in lessons in Years 3 to 5 there is evidence of satisfactory achievement and average standards of work. This situation is the result of disrupted learning in earlier years for Year 6 pupils, as well as the improvements in teaching and learning in more recent times and the introduction of a good curriculum. With the help of some good support pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
112. Some aspects of the subject are covered well. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have knowledge of and understand that some environments are different from others when they study island areas. This is satisfactorily developed in later years when they study life in China and different climates and environments such as Trinidad. Similarly pupils in Year 1 are beginning to make simple observations about what are human features and physical features in the local area. Pupils in Year 5 satisfactorily extend their knowledge when they examine river landscapes. They make good links with history when they describe the importance of the River Nile to the ancient Egyptians. Pupils in Year 1 conduct field work outside the school looking at road use and in Year 6 make satisfactory progress in learning about how different demands on a Zimbabwean village can result in pressure on the physical and human environment. However the knowledge of pupils about environmental change and

sustainable development is unsatisfactorily developed across the school. Similarly, the pupils' ability to raise questions and to use mapping skills to aid their learning is unsatisfactorily developed. In Year 2, the majority of pupils draw simple but accurate plans and label maps of the locality with simple symbols. However, by Year 6, pupils have worked with different types of maps, but their mapping skills have not progressed satisfactorily. They still use simple symbols and have no knowledge of how to use simple grid references, for example.

113. Teaching is satisfactory overall and examples of good teaching were observed in almost half of lessons. Teachers' planning and preparation is good, which together with clear teacher explanations, helps to ensure that pupils can quickly start their work. The management of pupils is good and contributes to the establishment of good relationships in class and the establishment of a positive learning environment. As a result pupils enjoy the subject, feel confident that their contributions are valued and are unafraid to have a go at answering questions. The pupils also respond well to the introduction of different activities and good challenging questioning in lessons.
114. In the less successful lessons, teachers' learning objectives were vague and this resulted in the loss of focus about exactly what key learning points should be emphasised, particularly in plenary sessions. Teacher-led sessions, on occasions, become too long, with the result that pupils become restless and lose concentration. In some planning, work for pupils of different abilities concentrated on literacy and insufficiently on subject-specific knowledge and skills and key words were not highlighted for pupils.
115. Pupil attitudes are, overall good, with the majority of pupils being motivated and wanting to contribute in lessons and learn. However there is a significant minority, particularly in the older age group, that call out and disrupt the learning of others.
116. The co-ordinator is keen to improve the subject. A good curriculum has been developed that gives time for pupils to examine geographical work in more depth, as well as encouraging cross-curricular links. Good use is made of ICT for research. Standards are monitored through book sampling and evaluating some satisfactory medium-term planning. However there is no formal way whereby they can establish, for future use, how successful the planning has been and share good practice amongst staff. Pupils' work is assessed at the end of the work unit, but the use of this data to inform future planning is unsatisfactory. There is little information about the strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils' work and the pupils have inconsistent levels of knowledge of how to improve their work. A much-needed portfolio of work to guide teachers' assessments is being developed.

HISTORY

117. Pupils' standards and achievement are satisfactory by the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6 standards are below average, the result of disrupted learning in earlier years for these pupils. In work sampled and in lessons in Years 3 to 5 there is evidence of satisfactory achievement and average standards of work. Improvement in standards are due to better teaching and learning in more recent times and the introduction of a good curriculum. With the help of some good support pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
118. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 listen to stories so as to build their knowledge about famous people from the past. Pupils use their studies about the life of Florence Nightingale in the Crimean War to begin to understand the implications of change. A visiting nurse helps them to identify the differences between hospital conditions then and now. They learn satisfactorily about the passage of time through their work on family trees and time lines. In Years 3 to 6 pupils make good progress in their knowledge of the Tudors, Victorians and events since 1939. However the development of more refined history skills such as the ability to raise questions about the topics covered is insufficient. Time lines in Year 6 are rushed and unsatisfactorily progressed. Pupils do not know how to distinguish primary from secondary evidence and the opportunities for them to use such interpretative skills are insufficiently planned for. Many pupils in Year 6 found problems with vocabulary when using a source document about Tudor food.
119. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with two in five lessons being good. In the best lessons teachers give good written reinforcement of the key learning points in the lessons and the key

vocabulary to be highlighted. Good subject knowledge results in good questioning that challenges pupils' understanding. Teachers have very good pupil management skills and positive learning environments and good relationships are established. A good range of resources is used and pupils benefit from handling and examining photos and written materials. Although artefacts are used to the benefit of pupils' learning, there are insufficient opportunities to do so. In lesson planning, learning objectives are often unfocused and this leads to lessons that insufficiently develop the skills associated with history. The overemphasis on the knowledge aspect of the subject often results in teacher-led sessions becoming too long. The teaching approach of a short, sharp, teaching input, regularly consolidated through reference to specific learning objectives and reinforced by a testing plenary is inconsistently applied. Teachers do not plan consistently work for pupils of differing abilities.

120. Pupil attitudes are, overall good, with the majority of pupils being motivated and wanting to contribute in lessons and learn. However there is a significant minority, particularly in the older age group, that call out and disrupt the learning of others.
121. The leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator monitors the subject well through lesson observations, checking medium-term planning and suggesting improvements. There is no formal system whereby the co-ordinator can obtain feedback about how effective the planning has been, where improvements might be necessary and how the good practice can be shared. The use of work samples is intended to monitoring of standards. Very appropriate development plans have been established although more interim dates would help monitor progress towards the target. The policy for the subject requires review if the teachers are to fully benefit from the subject guidance it can give. Assessment procedures are only just satisfactory and the use of collected information is unsatisfactory. Teachers do not consistently record the strengths and areas for development of individual pupils and therefore have little information to inform future planning and to set targets for pupils. The recent move towards a more creative curriculum has ensured that pupils have time to develop their knowledge. However, the planning for the progression of subject skills is unsatisfactorily emphasised. A very good range of visits and visitors enhances the curriculum. Pupils' learning is very well enhanced by visits to a range of museums in London and the local area. A Tudor travellers group visits the school to portray life in Tudor times, and a senior citizen talks to the pupils about life during the Blitz. However, opportunities within the subject curriculum are missed to further develop the multicultural experiences of pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

122. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 meet national expectations. By the end of Year 2, pupils' use information and communication technology to assemble text. They use ICT packages skilfully to interpret a graph. Pupils in Year 1 collect information and use it to make different charts; they begin to understand that data can be collected and presented as a pictogram. Progress is good and skills have been acquired quickly over the last three years. By the end of Year 6, pupils routinely interrogate databases and use spreadsheets. They can present information in different ways and are aware of their audience and the need for quality in their presentations. Pupils' work on control, monitoring and modelling is at nationally expected levels. The Internet is regularly used for research. Pupils routinely use ICT as a tool to help their work in other areas of the curriculum and classroom computers are well used. Younger pupils confidently use a range of equipment such as listening stations and programmable robots in their lessons. Pupils of all age groups have good access to digital cameras, electronic microscopes and projectors which they regularly use.
123. Learning is good in both infant and junior phases, including for those with special educational needs. It was possible to see eight lessons in this subject and all but one were taught well. The overall quality of teaching is good. The school makes very efficient use of the ICT suite; all classes are timetabled for use each week and the machines are networked to the computers in classrooms, enabling further work to be carried out in class. Assessment is at a very early stage of development and is beginning to monitor pupils' progress in this subject but not yet being used to match tasks to pupils' different needs. The school has made very good progress in ICT since the amalgamation in 2000, when standards were well below average.
124. Pupils' response is very good. They show great eagerness for and interest in this subject. Pupils'

work hard practising their skills, and work co-operatively sharing equipment and taking turns. They are not afraid to volunteer their own suggestions; relationships are very good.

125. The co-ordination of the subject is very good. The co-ordinators are very knowledgeable and keen to spread their skills through the school. Training is provided for all staff and co-ordinators are given time to monitor and evaluate their work. There are an appropriate number of computers in every classroom which are all networked to the suite. The school is linked to the Internet and is moving towards developing e-mail systems. The school has made very good improvements in the provision of ICT and these include the wireless connection, broadband, installation of a server, staff completion of national training and continued development of central storage of key programs on the server. Currently the school does not have a scanner or a video camera for pupils' use.

MUSIC

126. Attainment is below national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6 in all of the strands of music. Pupils' progress is satisfactory, overall.

The key factors contributing to the strengths of the subject are:

- Experienced and knowledgeable co-ordinator;
- A number of staff with musical expertise; and
- Extra-curricular provision for choir and recorders.

Areas for improvement:

- To build up teachers' skills and knowledge so that they are all secure in teaching the subject;
- Separate whole year group sessions into individual lessons in order to build up pupils' skills in composition, performing and listening and provide more effective pupil involvement; and
- Use ICT to support the pupils' learning.

127. Teaching is satisfactory overall; it ranges from unsatisfactory to good. Most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress. Pupils' music skills are not well developed. Pupils in Year 6 have had insufficient experiences of the key musical skills of singing and playing instruments, composing and appraising music throughout their time in the school.

128. When teaching is effective it ensures that pupils listen attentively, are well behaved and persevere in the tasks set. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, useful opportunities are provided for the pupils to recognise the variations in a musical composition and to identify different instruments playing in it. In Year 4, the pupils are appropriately introduced to notation and clapping a rhythm. This lesson had a good balance of demonstration, practice and performance. In most lessons the pace is suitable and this challenges pupils of all abilities and keeps them focused. Music makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. For example, one pupil records his feelings on listening to a visiting steel band, *"It was the best steel band ever. At one point we even got up to dance."* A music tape is effectively used during an art lesson in Year 5 that creates a calm and purposeful atmosphere as the pupils draw river stories. A significant minority of pupils in another Year 5 class experience difficulty in consistently keeping a steady five beat rhythm. Teaching is unsatisfactory when the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is insecure and pupils' skills are not built up adequately. Whole year group sessions limit progress. Although pupils are eager to participate, they are given very little opportunity to do so because of the time it takes to go round all the groups. This was particularly evident in a Year 2 session. A great deal of time is wasted; individual involvement of pupils is restricted.

129. There is no specialist instrumental tuition provided for pupils. However, appropriate provision is made for pupils to learn to play the recorder during lunchtime and after school. Visits from music specialists to demonstrate, for example, brass instruments, a steel band and provide a percussion workshop have a significant impact on the pupils' learning and effectively enhance the music curriculum. Pupils are given useful opportunities to perform publicly through concerts and celebrations of religious festivals. Music is appropriately used to support assemblies and a singing assembly is held each week. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support pupils' learning.

130. The subject is competently led and managed. A national scheme has been adopted and adapted with a published programme to support teachers' planning. Assessment procedures are now in place and their use is being developed throughout the school. Resources are being built up again after the recent arson attack on the school. Currently, the school is using instruments on loan and from teachers' own collections to support teaching in the subject. The subject contributes effectively to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

131. Pupils' standards and achievement are satisfactory by the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6 standards are below average, although in work sampled and in lessons in Years 3 to 5 there is evidence of satisfactory achievement and average standards of work. This situation is the result of disrupted learning in earlier years for Year 6 pupils, as well as the improvements in teaching and learning in more recent times and the introduction of a good curriculum. By the end of Year 6 the national swimming requirements are met. With the help of some good support pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
132. The pupils acquire and develop their skills satisfactorily. Pupils in Year 2 practise dribbling with a football and demonstrate satisfactory skills, with high attainers consistently controlling the ball. In Year 3 the pupils develop their striking skills to average levels, although less secure are the fielding skills of the average attaining pupil. They do not adopt the correct fielding position and bunch rather than use space effectively. In Year 6, pupils have not developed these fielding skills, are not consistently holding the bat properly in cricket and operate at below average standards. Pupils' knowledge of the rules of rounders and cricket are basic and only developing. When selecting and applying their skills the pupils demonstrate average skills as they choose different levels in their Year 2 work in the gymnasium. They develop satisfactory performances as they link movements together. By Year 5 the standards have been maintained as pupils, in pairs, use benches and forward rolls to build their sequences and mirror their partners moves. In discussions with pupils they are able to demonstrate that they have an average knowledge of the effects of exercise on the body. The use of evaluation to improve the performance of pupils is unsatisfactorily progressed. Opportunities within lessons to perform for others and then evaluate their own and others' performance are inconsistently applied.
133. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are overall positive. The majority of pupils change quickly for their lessons, listen to instructions carefully, persevere and support one another well when working in small groups. They treat the equipment well.
134. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. Teachers make use of very good pupil management skills, they have established good relationships and consequently pupils feel secure in attempting the drills asked of them. Time in lessons is used well and pupils benefit from having prolonged periods in which to practise and improve their skills. The subject knowledge of teachers is secure although opportunities are lost in lessons to reinforce learning through more challenging questioning and coaching. Warm-up exercises and cool-downs are well matched to the lesson activity. Work for pupils of different abilities is not consistently planned for. Moreover, when planning, teachers develop learning objectives that fail to highlight, in sufficient detail, the specific skills and knowledge that they wish to progress during lessons.
135. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. A nationally recognised planning framework and an assessment system have been introduced. The framework needs development so that it more accurately meets the skill needs of these pupils. While teachers assess to National Curriculum levels of attainment there is insufficient written analysis of how an individual pupil can improve their subject specific skills and knowledge. The subject policy and other documentation give good guidance to teachers. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and gives valuable advice on how to improve it. There is no formal system of feedback about what might need to be improved and what worked very well and should be shared with staff. Good development planning has taken place although there is a further need to prioritise points for development and to give more interim target dates so that progress can more easily be tracked in action plans. The staff provide a very good range of extra-curricular clubs, including girls' football and clubs for Years 1 and 2. Staff subject knowledge is satisfactory, appropriate in-service training has been organised, although there is a need for a skills audit to take place so that future training needs can be addressed. Accommodation is good overall with the subject benefiting from two halls and a sizeable school field.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

136. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. No lessons were timetabled during the inspection period in Year 6 but discussions held with pupils and book samples seen, found standards to be well below those expected. In Years 3 and 4 standards were found to be as expected for these ages and in Year 5 below expectations for age. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have gaps in their knowledge due to the unsatisfactory planning and teaching of the subject prior to amalgamation. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 are making good progress, including those with special educational needs. In Years 5 and 6 progress is satisfactory in relation to pupils' prior attainment.
137. In Year 2 pupils know Jesus was a teacher who lived 2003 years ago and he told wonderful stories to help ordinary people learn about God. After listening to the story of the Good Samaritan pupils show that they can empathise with the characters, saying who was the kindest character in the story and give reasons why others may have passed by an injured man. Pupils are also able to suggest good ideas as to how Jesus could have got his message across if he was teaching today. Suggestions included, television, Internet and theatre. They think of their own celebrations, such as their birthdays and link this with the Christian celebration of Christmas and the birth of Jesus. They are just becoming aware that other religions exist through stories and the celebration of festivals such as Divali and the Chinese New Year.
138. In discussion, Year 6 pupils show limited knowledge of the Bible, although this has been covered in some depth during the year. They have a better knowledge of the New than the Old Testament but have difficulty recalling any Bible stories in detail. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Christian celebrations of Christmas and Easter. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of other religions is very basic. They are able to describe some aspects of Judaism, the religion currently being studied, but are not yet able to make links and comparisons with Christianity. Pupils are able to recall details of festivals they have celebrated, such as the Chinese New Year.
139. Pupils in Year 1 show awareness of some features of Christianity that they have experienced, such as Christmas, Easter, weddings and baptisms. They can say what they wear, what they eat and how they celebrate birthdays in their families. They know that the Bible is a holy book and hear stories of how Jesus healed a blind man. They are given the experience of coming out of darkness and being able to see. Some are able to say what they appreciate being able to see such as their families, flowers and the rainbow.
140. In Year 3, pupils extend their knowledge of Christianity with stories from the Old Testament about Moses. They also learn about the Hindu religion and use artefacts to draw the different gods. Pupils also think about reincarnation and animals they would like to be reincarnated as. For example one pupil wrote, 'I would like to be a cheetah because I am good at sport'. Work in Year 4 builds on and develops this knowledge and understanding. Pupils are currently learning about how Jewish families celebrate Shabbat. They are able to observe artefacts and think what they are used for, watch a video about the special meal and recall knowledge later. Pupils enjoy acting out the lighting of the candles and passing round the spices at the end of the meal. During Year 5 the majority of the work has focused on Christianity. During the inspection pupils were learning about meditation and why it is practised by many religions. Pupils were given a good opportunity to experience meditation with calming music, candles and dimmed lights being used to provide the right atmosphere. The teacher talked them through the activity well. In one class pupils responded positively to the atmosphere but were reluctant to share their feelings and thoughts orally with others at the end of the session. Written follow up activities showed that pupils had gained more from the experience than was immediately apparent. This activity made a good contribution to their spiritual development.
141. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory overall and good when the teacher shows enthusiasm for the subject. The subject has a low profile in some year groups. Religious education is not included in the creative curriculum and many opportunities are missed to make links with other subjects. A good variety of methods are used for recording work and generally pupils present their work well and it is marked appropriately. Pupils lack oral confidence and find it difficult to express themselves in whole class discussions and this is restricting the progress of many older pupils. Teachers in Years 1 and 2

are good at encouraging pupils to make oral contributions in lessons, sometimes by giving an answer of their own as an example to develop ideas.

142. From pupils' past work and the lessons seen, teaching is satisfactory overall. During the inspection examples of good teaching were seen where a variety of methods were used to involve pupils. Interest was stimulated through the use of drama, religious artefacts and video. In these lessons teachers questioned pupils well in order to develop their speaking skills, to encourage them to use subject vocabulary and to share their feelings with others. As a result pupils behaved well and showed interest in their learning. In a poor lesson the behaviour of a minority of pupils made it impossible for the teacher to provide a suitable atmosphere for meditation. ICT and the library are used in some classes to research information about world religions.
143. The co-ordination of the subject is good. One co-ordinator has developed a scheme of work which is used in the Nursery and Reception classes which leads well into the work in Year 1. The two staff who work in different key stages have good subject knowledge and are fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. Effective monitoring of planning and teaching takes place. There is a clear plan for raising standards through staff development and ensuring a consistent allocation of time in all year groups. At present there is no assessment system in place. Visits to the local church have been arranged and local clergy have been along to year group assemblies. There are a few attractive displays of religious artefacts around the school but very little of pupils' own work.