

INSPECTION REPORT

FORSBROOK CE CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Blythe Bridge

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 132260

Headteacher: Mr W A Durose

Reporting inspector: Mrs J E Platt
11565

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th May 2003

Inspection number: 248975

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Cheadle Road Blythe Bridge Stoke-on-Trent
Postcode:	ST11 9PW
Telephone number:	01782 392 577
Fax number:	01782 392003
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr V Elkin
Date of previous inspection:	No previous inspection of Forsbrook CE Controlled Primary School.

© Crown copyright 2003

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11565	Mrs J E Platt	Registered inspector	English Art and design Music Physical education Religious education Educational inclusion English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9504	Mrs S Gurney	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22740	Mrs M Leah	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Design and technology Geography History Special educational needs	
23081	Mrs C Waine	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

North West Education Services
Cheshire House
164 Main Road
Goostrey
Cheshire
CW4 8JP

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	5
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	7
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	9
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	12
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	14
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	14
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	16
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	18
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	22

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This average sized Church of England controlled primary school was opened in September 2000 following the merger of Forsbrook Church of England Controlled Infant School and The Beeches Junior School. One hundred and ninety seven pupils are on roll and the school provides pre-school care for a further 17 children on a part time basis. There are 14 pupils of minority ethnic origin, two speak English as an additional language but are fluent English speakers and do not need extra help. A below average number of pupils (8%) are entitled to receive free school meals. Twenty per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, a broadly average number. Most have moderate learning difficulties. Two pupils have formal statements of special educational need. Almost half of the pupils travel a distance to attend the school and their overall social and economic background is similar to that seen nationally. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. Its main strength is in its warm and friendly atmosphere which leads to very good relationships between all involved with the school. The headteacher and governors give strong leadership and have been successful in bringing the two schools together and providing a clear direction for the future. Achievement is good in the infants and pupils reach above average standards in English and mathematics. Overall standards in the juniors are average and achievement is satisfactory. It is improving in response to the good teaching which is accelerating the learning of the older pupils. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English and mathematics are above average in Year 2. Standards in information and communication technology and design and technology are above average in Year 6. Swimming is good throughout the school.
- Teaching and learning are good and effectively boost achievement.
- Leadership of the headteacher and governors is good and they have worked as a team to overcome many difficulties in the early stages of the merging of the two schools.
- The curriculum is rich and relevant to pupils' needs and interests. An excellent range of extra-curricular activities is available for all pupils and this makes the school a more exciting place to learn.
- There is very good provision for pupils' personal development.
- The school has very close links with parents and the local community.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing in the juniors.
- The allocation of management responsibilities and the opportunities staff have to carry out their management duties.
- The use of assessment information to match work more closely to pupils' needs and set them targets which clearly tell them how to improve.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has not been inspected since it opened in September 2000. A good start has been made and the school has received a nationally recognised Achievement Award for improvement in national test results. The school has also achieved Investors in People Status which has been instrumental in developing a team approach to raising standards in the school.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	N/a	B	A	C	well above average A above average B
Mathematics	N/a	B	C	D	average C below average D
Science	N/a	B	B	C	well below average E

These results show pupils performed well in the national tests in English and science. Most pupils reached the level expected for their age and in English many exceeded this level. Compared with similar schools results were not as high but show pupils are doing as well as expected. Results were not as high in mathematics because fewer pupils reached above average levels and so results were below average when compared with similar schools. Although insufficient evidence is available to make a judgement on long term trends results last year improved and overall were above the national average. Current standards in Year 6 are not as high because more pupils are identified as having special educational needs. Pupils reach the level expected for their age in English, mathematics and science although writing is below average. Considering the attainment of these pupils in the national tests in Year 2 their current standards represent satisfactory achievement. However, in response to strong teaching in Years 5 and 6 pupils have started to make better progress. The school achieved its targets last year and is coming close to reaching this year's challenging targets.

National tests in 2002 at the end of Year 2 were above average in writing, average in reading and well below average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools pupils did not do as well as expected in reading and mathematics and standards were below average. Teachers' assessment in science was well above average. In fact, results were in the top five per cent in the country with every pupil reaching the level expected for their age. Current standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Factors leading to this improvement include good teaching, better planning and a focus on learning through practical activities. The overall standard in science is average. This is not quite as high as the results last year because of the ability of the group. Overall achievement in the infants is good although higher attaining pupils could achieve more.

Children in the Reception class make sound progress and reach the level expected for their age. They exceed this level in reading and their personal development because these skills are taught especially well.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress related to their prior attainment. They receive extra help to enable them to play a full part in school life. The school is in the early stages of working with gifted and talented pupils. They provide well for talented pupils linking them to expert help in music and physical education to enhance their skills.

In response to enthusiastic teaching standards in information and communication technology and design and technology are above average in Year 6. Swimming is a strength in the school and the vast majority are confident swimmers. Standards in all other subjects are wholly satisfactory and pupils reach the expected levels.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very proud of their school and eager to be involved in all activities. They enjoy school and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are friendly and welcoming to visitors.

Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships are very good. Pupils respect the views of others and work and play happily together. Older pupils welcome opportunities to take responsibility. They help the younger ones so that they settle happily in school.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is in line with the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good and promotes effective learning. Good teaching was seen in most years and was best in the infants and in Years 5 and 6 and this boosts progress in these classes. All of the teaching seen was satisfactory or better. In two lessons seen teaching was excellent. These were in Years 5 and 6 and showed the teachers determination to raise standards and get the most from their pupils. As a result, pupils work hard in the latter years in school and much is achieved.

The teaching of English and mathematics is good. Literacy skills are taught well in the infants. Pupils have a good knowledge of their letters and sounds because these are taught well through interesting activities. Writing is not taught as well in the juniors and pupils are not checking their work for errors or always joining up their handwriting. The teaching of numeracy is good. The problem solving activities at the start of lessons help pupils to practise their skills. Teachers encourage pupils to explain their methods of calculations so that they learn from each other. Planning is good and literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well in many subjects.

The needs of the pupils with special educational needs are fully met. Their needs are identified early and they have detailed individual education plans which guide teachers in their planning and they learn well. In the best lessons teachers challenge their pupils but occasionally higher attaining pupils are set tasks that are not high enough and they could work at a faster rate.

Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach. This is especially the case in lessons in the information and communication technology suite. Pupils grow in confidence using computers because they can rely on the advice provided. However, teachers do not make enough use of the computers in their classrooms. In the Reception class tasks are not always sufficiently imaginative to capture the children's interest and this does not encourage effective learning. When marking pupils' work teachers do not always make it clear how they can improve. A positive feature in most lessons is the warm relationships and positive management which leads to pupils working in an orderly atmosphere and striving to please their teachers.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is carefully planned to maintain a good balance between academic, physical and creative activities. All statutory requirements are met. An excellent range of extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Learning difficulties are spotted by careful assessment. Pupils have detailed individual education plans and well planned support enables them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The pupils who speak English as an additional language are fluent in English and do not require additional support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural	Very good. Spiritual development is good and staff are alert to opportunities which will raise pupils' self-esteem and increase their feelings of self-worth. Moral, social and cultural development is very good and is fostered well in

development	lessons and assemblies. Pupils celebrate their own culture as well as gaining respect for other traditions and learning about life in a multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Health and safety are paramount in the school and procedures to ensure this are in place. Arrangements for assessing progress are good but the use of the information is not as effective as it could be. Pupils have individual targets but some have too many or they lack sufficient clarity to help pupils.

The partnership with parents is very good and they value the many positive changes which have taken place since the two schools merged.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. A strong management team is in place and all are working together with a clear direction to achieve the aims of the school. They are successfully improving standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors have a good understanding of what is happening in the school because they visit school regularly and have close links with subject co-ordinators. They carry out their duties in a meticulous manner and fulfil their statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Teaching and learning are evaluated and adjustments made when a weakness is identified. The role of the subject leaders to monitor standards is not yet fully developed. The headteacher and governors review the results of national tests to check on overall performance but not in sufficient detail to identify specific areas needing more attention and the achievement of different groups.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes good use of staff and resources to help pupils learn. Governors check that money is spent wisely to meet the school's identified priorities. Good systems are in place to apply the principles of Best Value.

The school successfully overcomes the split site situation and benefits from spacious accommodation and very attractive outdoor fields and play areas. Staffing and learning resources are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school expects the children to do their best. • Children can take part in an exciting range of activities outside lessons. • The school is well led and managed. • The teaching is good. • They feel comfortable approaching the school with concerns or problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents had no significant concerns. • A small number of parents felt there was an inconsistency in the amount of work set to be completed at home.

The inspectors fully support the parents' positive views of the school. The amount of homework set is in line with national recommendations. Pupils are advised to inform teachers if they cannot complete it in time because of other commitments.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards in Year 2 are above average in English and mathematics and average in science and overall achievement is good. In science and mathematics higher attaining pupils are not always doing as well as they could and could achieve more. Pupils in Year 6 have made satisfactory progress and reach the level expected for their age in English mathematics and science.

Standards and achievement in the Foundation Stage¹

2. Children start school with attainment that represents the full range normally found but is generally in line with the level expected for this age. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and reach the early learning goals² in all of the required areas of learning. They exceed this level in their personal, social and emotional development because teachers focus on extending these skills and promoting independence. Children also get off to a good start in reading because letters and sounds are taught well and children use them successfully in their early reading. Teachers are not always making full use of assessment information and so tasks for higher attaining children are not always sufficiently challenging and they could achieve more.

Standards and achievement in Years 1 and 2

3. Standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement is good although higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in mathematics and are not achieving as well as could be expected. These standards are higher than the most recent tests in English and mathematics. Results were above the national average in writing, average in reading and well below average in mathematics. In mathematics, the low number of pupils exceeding the level expected for their age held down overall standards and compared with similar schools results were well below average. This was not the case in reading and writing when the number of pupils reaching the higher standards was more than usually seen. However, in reading too many failed to reach the level expected for their age or only just reached it. This had an adverse effect on the results when compared with similar schools which were below average. In the teacher assessments in science last year all of the pupils reached the level expected for their age and these results placed the school in the top five per cent in the country. Current standards reflect a small drop because of the ability of some of the group. Overall achievement in science is satisfactory but the higher attaining pupils are doing similar work to other pupils and so are not achieving as well as they could. This year the infant department has been reorganised and now provides a stimulating learning environment, which is boosting achievement. Although fewer pupils are reaching the higher levels this year more are reaching the level expected for their age and this has improved the school's overall performance. The teaching of literacy is especially good and all of the pupils are on track to reach the level expected for their age. Many pupils are enthusiastic readers and enjoy talking about their favourite books. Pupils are now confident handling number and solving simple problems. Factors leading to the improved standards in mathematics include:

- the focus on practical activities and numeracy skills are taught well;
- additional training has led to good teaching;
- improved assessment procedures giving teachers a more informed picture of pupils' progress;
- the use of information and communication technology to support learning;
- parents have attended workshops and so are better informed about ways to help their children;
- parents loaning numeracy games to extend pupils' learning at home.

Standards and achievement in Years 3 to 6

¹ Foundation Stage- this begins when children reach the age of three and finish at the end of the Reception year. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development.

² Early learning goals are the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Reception year.

4. The majority of pupils in Year 6 reach the level expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. However, standards in writing are below average and many find it difficult to express their ideas in writing. Handwriting is not always joined up and pupils are not checking their work for errors. Pupils are more confident reading and most read with understanding and many enjoy a good story. Given that the attainment of this group of pupils at the end of Year 2 was average their achievement in the intervening years has been satisfactory. Previous difficulties with staffing have had a negative effect on the continuity of learning, and pupils in Year 6, have not avoided the disruptive effect of some weaker teaching and changing teachers. Progress seen currently is good in response to the good and better teaching now being seen in Years 5 and 6. This class contains a large number of pupils with special educational needs. Consequently, current standards are not as high as the most recent tests which were well above the national average in English, above average in science and average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools pupils did not do as well as expected and results were average in English and science and below average in mathematics. However, the number of pupils reaching the average level was high in all subjects and a nationally recognised Achievement Award rewarded this success.

5. The most recent test results suggested boys in Year 6 are doing better than girls especially in mathematics. However, insufficient data is available to see if this is a significant concern for the school. During the inspection there was no evidence of inequality and girls and boys performed equally well in lessons

6. Insufficient evidence is available to judge the school's trend in results. The school is well aware of the ability of the current Year 6 and has set targets accordingly. These are realistic, with an element of challenge, and with the good teaching and additional support available for lower attaining pupils the school is well placed to achieve them.

7. Since the appointment of the special educational needs co-ordinator in September 2002 the school has improved its provision for pupils with special educational needs. The vast majority of pupils with special education needs are currently making good progress towards the clear targets in their individual education plans. This is due in the main to well-directed support in class and small group work led by trained and knowledgeable teaching assistants, and carefully organised by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Basic literacy skills are broken down into small steps of learning which meet the pupils' needs. There are several pupils whose special educational needs include mathematics. Their progress has been less certain because their individual education plans do not outline targets to meet specific needs in mathematics.

8. The school is collaborating with other local schools to provide for pupils identified as being gifted or talented. Currently, no pupils are assessed as academically gifted. Talented musicians and pupils skilled in sport are linked to local clubs and benefit from specialist teaching in school to meet their needs. This enables them to make good progress and improve their specialist talents.

9. Standards in information and communication technology are above average and achievement is good. The subject has been an area of development for the school, resources are good and teachers are confident teaching in the information and communication technology suite.

10. Standards are at least average in all other subjects including religious education. They are above average in design and technology in the juniors because teachers plan exciting activities and focus on planning and evaluating work. The school benefits from the use of the swimming pool at the secondary school on the same site. Consequently, standards in swimming are above average throughout the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. Almost all parents say their children like coming to school. Parents and pupils alike are proud of their school. Pupils like the teaching staff and appreciate

the school environment and the interesting range of resources. In most lessons they are keen to participate, eager to answer questions and responsive. When the teaching is at least good pupils show great interest and enthusiasm. Only when the teaching lacks pace or does not fully engage the children, do they tend to become a little restless. Most pupils present their work neatly and concentrate and try hard. They carry out practical activities sensibly and co-operate and collaborate well.

12. Behaviour is almost always good in lessons and often very good. In the assemblies seen during the inspection behaviour was excellent. Pupils are friendly, polite and help each other. Bullying is rare and swiftly dealt with. This good behaviour supports pupils' learning and helps them to make progress. The headteacher has never had to exclude a pupil.

13. Pupils' personal development is very good and parents agree the school is helping to make their children become mature and responsible. The School Council is a very good example of this and extend the pupils' understanding of citizenship. Councillors feel ownership of the school and are able to initiate changes and fund-raising activities. For example, one of the charities they support is Water Aid. Councillors discuss this with their classmates and canvass their support. Pupils, particularly from Year 6, readily undertake a range of duties such as house captains and prefects. Librarians are appointed for the year and help to train their successors in Year 5. Year 6 children act as class supervisors during wet play times and older pupils help younger ones with playground games. The school's sporting successes give further scope for pupils to develop a sense of responsibility. Pupils are offered an excellent range of extra-curricular activities in which they are eager to take part. Almost all belong to at least one club. Personal relationships are very good. Pupils show a good understanding of the impact of their actions on their peers and treat them with respect. This respect extends to property and the school's resources and environment.

14. Attendance is satisfactory and very slightly above the national average. Unauthorised absence is at the national average but has improved considerably during the current year. Punctuality is good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The overall quality of teaching is good and leads to effective learning. In the 49 lessons seen, teaching was excellent in two, very good in 12 and good in 18. Teaching was satisfactory in all other lessons and no lessons seen were less than satisfactory. The best teaching seen was in the infants and in Years 5 and 6. Many changes have taken place in the infants and teachers have created a vibrant learning environment. This combined with consistently good teaching has had a significant effect on pupils' progress. This can be seen especially in the current standards in mathematics which have dramatically improved. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is very strong and the excellent teaching was seen in these classes in geography and information and communication technology. This strength in teaching has a major influence on the good achievement now being seen in Year 6 which is boosting learning and enabling these pupils to make up for lost time when teaching was less effective.

16. The strengths in teaching and learning are:

- the very effective management of pupils;
- teachers' knowledge and understanding;
- the teaching of basic skills;
- support for pupils with special educational needs;
- the variety of methods used to make lessons interesting;
- the consultation with support staff and the support they provide in lessons;
- the brisk pace of lessons which maintains pupils' attention.

17. Areas for development include:

- the use of computers in class to support learning;
- marking of pupils' work and reference to their individual targets;
- expectations of work in some lessons are not high enough.

Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage

18. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. It is good in the teaching of letters and sounds and this is having a positive effect on the good progress children make in reading. Activities are practical and good fun and so children not only learn the new sounds but also remember them. Another strength is in the sensitive way staff help children to extend their independent skills. They keep a watchful eye and are ready to support if required. A common strength is the warm manner and the way they respond to children's ideas. Staff provide good role models and so children make good progress in their personal and social skills. Planning is satisfactory but tasks are not always sufficiently imaginative to hold children's interest and this does not encourage effective learning. For example, there is an overuse of worksheets instead of encouraging children to try writing down their own words. Expectations of work are not always high enough because assessment information is not used effectively to match tasks to children's ability.

Teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6

19. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. They use the correct technical terms and appropriate language and as a result pupils correctly use this language in their explanations. Pupils benefit from music and swimming being taught by specialists and much new learning takes place in these lessons. Teachers have many specific strengths, notably in art and design and physical education, and their enthusiasm is shared with pupils in lessons and after school activities. This enriches pupils' experiences and boosts their motivation to learn.

20. Teachers are putting to good use the guidance of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies when planning their lessons. This leads to good teaching and activities are planned to build carefully on prior learning. The teaching of numeracy is good and lessons open with quick problem solving or counting activities. Pupils respond well and are able to explain their methods of calculations so that they appreciate there are different ways to solve problems. Literacy skills are taught well and pupils make good use of their letters and sounds in their early reading and writing. Writing is not taught as well in the juniors and insufficient attention is given to drafting work and applying the school's handwriting policy. Basic information and communication technology skills are taught thoroughly and teachers are confident advising pupils as they work on computers.

21. Planning is good. In the best lessons teachers have clear learning outcomes which they share with pupils so that they understand the overall purpose of the lesson. Teachers revisit these in the conclusion of lessons and so check on pupils' understanding. This good practice was observed in a mathematics lessons and led to adjustments to the next day's lesson because pupils had not fully understood the topic taught. Teachers are good at promoting literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects so that pupils gets lots of relevant practice in these essential skills. For example, in Year 4 on the topic about water pupils calculate and compare the different lengths of rivers and write poems about water. These included imaginative language including *waves coming from the sea, colourful fish dancing in the water.*

22. Teachers make good use of the information and communication technology suite to support learning in other subjects. This makes learning relevant for pupils as they practise their skills in a variety of ways. It is particularly good in supporting mathematics and pupils use spreadsheets and often present their findings in a variety of graphs and grids. Computers are available in classes and these were not used as much as expected during the inspection. Opportunities were missed to use computers for research and to draft writing.

23. Expectations of work are satisfactory but are not always high enough. Where teaching showed weaknesses, these were due to tasks not matching pupils' ability and not extending their learning. For example, in science when tasks are not sufficiently matched to ability, higher attaining pupils in Year 2 could achieve more. Similarly, in writing in Year 3 there is too much copying rather than encouraging pupils to write their own sentences. This weakness is linked to teachers not always making effective use of assessment information to check work is linked to pupils' current ability. When teaching was

excellent pupils were challenged to produce high quality work and extension tasks were provided for the higher attaining pupils to ensure they learnt at a fast pace.

24. Pupils enjoy school because most lessons are interesting and this boosts learning. Teachers plan a variety of activities and include visitors, collaboration, role-play and videos to maintain pupils' enthusiasm. When teaching was excellent in geography in Year 6 the video really brought to life the power of volcanoes and effective questioning led to much new learning taking place.

25. A positive feature in most lessons is the pleasant relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils. Humour and repartee are seen in many lessons and pupils are eager to please their teachers. Only occasionally do teachers appear to be too strict or comments are not as positive as usual and this is often linked to teachers' determination to achieve the best for the pupils.

26. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are fully met and they benefit from good support from teaching assistants. Individual education plans of good quality set a reasonable number of clear targets together with appropriate criteria for achievement. Teachers check these targets are being met and provide positive feedback which raises pupils' self-esteem. Currently, numeracy targets are not always included and support for numeracy is not as evident as the help pupils receive to improve their literacy skills. Lower attaining pupils benefit from additional support in small groups. Support staff lead these groups well and the focus on practical activities and progressing in small steps leads to effective learning. There is close liaison between teachers and teaching assistants to ensure continuity of learning.

27. In the best lessons the pace is brisk and keeps pupils on their toes and accelerates learning. In art and design, music and religious education lessons are sometimes too short for teachers to accomplish all they set out to do. For example, in a sketching lesson observed in Year 6 pupils had to leave their sketches incomplete and it is doubtful whether many had sufficient drawing to enable them to complete their work.

28. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall. Some marking is very detailed with comments that clearly tell pupils how to improve. However, a few examples are unmarked or contain a brief remark that is not helpful to pupils. The school has started to set individual targets in literacy and numeracy and pupils have record cards of these targets. Again inconsistency in the use of this system means it is not as effective as it could be. In Year 5, the teacher marks the pupils' record card when a target is achieved and this encourages pupils to work at the remaining targets. However, this is not always the case and leads to pupils having too many targets. Consequently, they pay little attention to them and when questioned are unable to recall them.

29. The work set to be completed at home is in line with national recommendations. It is used well to consolidate and extend pupils' learning in class. Teachers are aware many pupils have a wide range of other interest and are willing to accept work submitted at different times to accommodate pupils' different circumstances.

30. Parents are very happy with the teaching their children receive and inspection evidence supports their positive views.

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

31. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus for religious education. It provides a good range of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 to 6, with a suitably strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good and contributes well to their personal development. An equal opportunities policy is implemented

satisfactorily, with no significant difference in provision because of gender, disability, race or culture. However, some pupils miss some aspects of the curriculum when they leave lessons for the extra support that they need in literacy.

32. Strengths in the curriculum are:

- the good allowance of time for English and mathematics;
- lessons are interesting and provide many links between subjects;
- the excellent range of out-of-lesson activities;
- a good range of trips and expert visitors makes learning real;
- the very good links with the church, the community and other local schools.

33. Areas for development are:

- the use of computers as a learning tool in classrooms;
- there is some disturbance to lessons as pupils leave and enter from their additional literacy support time.

34. The children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a good curriculum that develops their skills, knowledge and understanding in all the recommended areas of learning. There is a good emphasis on teaching children their letters and sounds to help them make progress in their early reading skills. The focus on developing children's personal skills and confidence is relevant to their needs and enables them to settle happily in school. The range of practical activities is satisfactory but is not always sufficiently varied or challenging especially in mathematics.

35. The amount of teaching time for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 matches the nationally recommended teaching time and time during the school day is used well. However, a few lessons, such as music and religious education, are short or the allocated time is divided into two shorter lessons and teachers find it difficult to complete all they set out to do. Since the school opened, there has been good improvement in producing new whole school policies and schemes of work for all subjects to promote unity following the amalgamation. This is successful in ensuring that pupils gain knowledge and skills progressively as they move through the school. The school correctly places a strong emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics and implements the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. In literacy, this is more successful in reading than in writing where teachers do not always give enough attention to the skills of handwriting and editing work. There is a good range of additional support for pupils who are lower attainers, or who have special educational needs in English. However, some disturbance to lessons is created as pupils leave and re-enter the room and they miss some other aspects of the curriculum. Good links between subjects help teachers maximise their use of time and provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subjects. For example, in their geographical studies of rivers, pupils collect mathematical data and enter it into a computer spreadsheet, displaying their results in graphs.

36. Teachers plan good opportunities to use computers for work in many subjects in the computer suite and for lower attaining pupils to practise their spelling and mathematical skills. However, teachers do not make enough use of classroom computers for research and recording of work. For example, pupils type up their English work on computer after they have drafted it in the classroom by hand and so miss the opportunity to gain understanding of how useful computers are in this process.

37. The school makes good overall provision for pupils with special educational needs. The Code of Practice³ is in place and the vast majority of pupils have detailed individual education plans to guide teachers and teaching assistants in planning and teaching to meet their needs. Considerable training ensures staff are skilled offering help and the school has achieved Dyslexia Friendly School status. However, in the few cases where mathematics has been identified as a weakness, little reference is made in individual education plans and no targets in mathematics are set. As a result, the needs of a

³ The Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools about their responsibilities and tasks ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

few pupils are not always fully met. The provision for two pupils as outlined in their statements of special educational need fully meets requirements.

38. Teachers give good attention to pupils' personal, social and health education. Pupils learn about citizenship as they support those less fortunate than themselves. Every class has a carefully planned lesson which often includes Circle Time⁴ and pupils learn to respect each other's points of view. Sex education is included in the school's health education programme and is taught according to agreed practices. Older pupils learn about the use and misuse of drugs. Pupils are made aware of a healthy diet and the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and the school has received a Health Promoting School's Award.

39. The school enriches its curriculum by taking pupils on a very good range of visits, which enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding and bring learning to life. There is an excellent range of clubs and events, covering a wide range of topics, such as art, music, sports and mathematical games and they are well supported by pupils. A very good range of expert visitors, such as professional artists, musicians and storytellers also adds interest to learning. Very good links with the church and the local community promote learning very well. For example, the vicar and other local faith group leaders, such as a Jewish rabbi, support teaching in religious education, sharing their beliefs and customs with pupils. Local businesses and associations are very supportive, either through sponsorship or by encouraging visits. For example, pupils in Year 2 visited a local garden nursery when studying the life cycle of plants and planted seeds and seedlings. Other local schools make a strong contribution to the curriculum through providing joint training for teachers and experience days for pupils. For example, pupils undertake design and technology projects with students from the adjacent high school and other students support the lunchtime sports clubs. The school benefits from many students on work experience from several training establishments and they give valuable support in lessons.

40. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, overall. That for spiritual development is good and that for moral, social and cultural development is very good.

41. Strengths in the provision are:

- clear and consistent approach of staff to promoting the principles of right and wrong;
- very good relationships promoted within the school community and with the church and wider community;
- the social opportunities provided by opportunities to take initiative, collaborate on work and accept responsibility;
- the social opportunities provided by the out-of-lesson activities;
- the very good opportunities for cultural development, particularly the development of local culture.

42. Areas for improvement are:

- planned opportunities for spiritual development within lessons;
- opportunities to pause and reflect about the focus of assemblies.

43. Provision for spiritual development is good. There is no whole school policy for the development of spirituality in pupils' learning and teachers do not plan systematically to develop it across the whole curriculum, so missing some opportunities to do so. However, the conclusions to lessons are used suitably for pupils to reflect on what they have learned. Staff encourage pupils to develop a sense of self worth through praising their efforts and successes, which encourages pupils to do their best. This is reinforced by stickers and rewards, with a merit assembly each week to celebrates pupils' efforts and achievements. Good work is celebrated in many displays around the school to raise self-esteem and provide a model for other pupils to aspire to. The school meets the statutory requirements for a

⁴ Circle Time- during these sessions pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. All pupils agree that no interruptions should occur and only one person will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and so pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease free from interruption.

daily act of collective worship, providing time for prayer and praise. There are few opportunities for personal reflection in collective worship but the school provides two quiet areas where pupils can reflect during breaktimes. For example, pupils can sit in Lucy's memorial garden, which celebrates the life of a former pupil. Visiting faith members, particularly church ministers lead acts of worship make an effective contribution to spirituality. This work is enhanced by services held in the church, such as on Remembrance Day and at Christmas.

44. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Staff consistently implement the school's positive code of conduct and remind pupils how to behave well. This leads to the good behaviour of pupils, which shows that pupils have a clear sense of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils know the rules regarding acceptable behaviour at lunchtime, playtimes, and in lessons. In assemblies, they are taught about the importance of making the right choices and how the way they behave affects others. They learn about moral issues in subjects such as geography, when studying life in poor countries and about pollution in the environment. This work is reinforced in the eco-club and the many contributions that pupils make to charities, including Operation Christmas Child. These activities extend pupils' understanding of citizenship and their role in society. For example, when raising money for "Water Aid", pupils gained a strong understanding of the need for their contributions by carrying water across the extensive school field, on their heads. They learned how hard life can be for children and adults in other countries when they have to walk long distances to find clean water. Staff set a good example for pupils of respect and care for others and pupils reflect this in their own actions. For example, when new pupils enter the school they are given a partner who cares for them in class and around the school and playground. Two trophies for courtesy are awarded each term to pupils who are unfailingly well behaved, polite and helpful to others and these are highly prized by pupils. Teachers give pupils opportunities to take on responsibility across the school as they grow older, and they accept these happily. For example, Year 6 pupils undertake a wide variety of tasks around the school, such as collecting attendance figures and house points. Pupils show a good level of responsibility to the wider community by contributing to charities. They are encouraged to show initiative, such as through the work of the School Council. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own work and to work collaboratively in many lessons, such as when investigating in science or discussing possible solutions to problems in mathematics. The excellent range of out-of-lesson activities provides invaluable social opportunities for pupils. These include residential visits in this country and in Europe, where Year 5 and 6 pupils develop independence and the social skills of living together away from home.

45. The provision for cultural development is very good, particularly the study of pupils' own culture, which is enhanced by the strong ties with the church and local community. For example, pupils learn folk dancing, take part in local May Day celebrations and Well Dressings. They put on musical performances for others, such as church members and older members of the community. Local artists and musicians work with pupils in school. The school has begun to plan opportunities to focus on multicultural aspects of life in modern Britain. For example, Year 5 pupils use specific literacy texts, such as Grandpa Chatterji, which extend their understanding of the beliefs and customs of others. Visits from leaders from other faiths talk about their lives and this promotes this aspect of development. Pupils learn about life in other countries through their links with schools in Malta and Greece. Exciting visits to Western European countries, such as France, The Netherlands and Belgium, also widen at first hand pupils' understanding of life in other countries.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The school makes very good provision for the personal support of its pupils. The ethos of the school is warm and caring yet orderly, disciplined and purposeful. There are good procedures to ensure child protection. All staff have had some basic training and are aware of the need to be vigilant. Teachers know their pupils well and are good role models. Parents find them very approachable. Pupils feel confident that teachers will listen to them and respond to their concerns. Parents agree the behaviour policy is very effective. Lessons in personal, social and health education,

assemblies and good supervision ensure that bullying is rare and swiftly resolved. Pupils value the system of awards which does much to encourage success in every field. An ethos of care permeates the school. For example, staff have raised money to buy medical equipment. A teaching assistant gave time to accompany a disabled child on a residential visit. Personal development is tracked effectively through teachers' knowledge of their pupils, records of awards for success and the comments on annual reports to parents.

47. Provision for pupils' health and safety is very good. Strong emphasis is placed on safety with a fire safety week and a road safety week. Year 6 pupils take part in the "Crucial Crew" course on safety. Regular risk assessment takes place within the school. There is very good first aid cover. All staff have had some basic training and four are fully qualified first aiders. There is a medical room on site. Forsbrook is a health promoting school with a focus on healthy eating. Fruit is provided for all pupils in the infant department and no snacks are sold.

48. The school has good induction procedures with the youngest children being allowed to attend part-time. Children joining later in their school careers are given a "buddy" to help them settle in quickly and easily.

49. Attendance is well monitored and unauthorised absence is rigorously recorded. However, there are some inconsistencies in the way registers are completed so the reason for absence is occasionally unclear. When a pupil's attendance causes concern an education welfare officer helps and advises.

50. Overall the school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment. There are a wide range of regular assessments in English and mathematics. Writing, spelling, reading and numeracy are tested against National Curriculum levels on a frequent and regular basis. In science and all other subjects, end of unit assessments are made so teachers are aware of the progress pupils are making. These assessments provide teachers with useful information for pupils' end of year reports.

51. The information that assessment yields is not always used as effectively as it might be due to a lack of clarity and focus on the way the data is handled. In English, assessments are used well to adjust the curriculum in literacy and to identify groups of lower attaining pupils for extra small group support. In mathematics, however, the half-termly tests do not provide reliable information to enable teachers to assess the overall rate of progress across the year. Nor do they aid the identification of real difficulties. Up-to-date information on progress relies on teachers completing evaluations on their weekly planning sheets. These are not always sufficiently detailed and lead to some tasks not matching pupils' ability. This is evident in Year 2 when higher attaining pupils are not always being sufficiently challenged in writing, science and mathematics. Assessments are used to track progress and set targets in English and mathematics. However, these targets are often confusing and frequently too general. Some pupils have two sets of targets. They are used inconsistently by staff and some pupils are unaware of what is expected of them.

52. New national pupil profiles are fully in use in the Foundation Stage. Assessments based on observations of children at work are closely linked to the early learning goals and provide a good all round picture of the standards reached. Careful records are kept of children's development in reading skills and these are used to plan new work. In other areas, whilst data is collected it is not used as efficiently as it could be to plan work for differing attainment levels in the class. As a result potential higher attainers are not always fully challenged.

53. The school has an efficient system for the day-to-day monitoring of progress of pupils with special educational needs, and for liaison between all staff involved. Regular reviews of individual educational plans indicate that the progress of individuals is monitored carefully. Statutory reviews for pupils with statements of special educational needs fulfil statutory requirements and involve all agencies, school and parents appropriately.

54. The school does not analyse how pupils performed in the National Curriculum tests in enough detail and so opportunities are missed to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the school's performance. Consequently, the school does not have a clear view of the effectiveness of its intervention strategies or pinpoint areas of the greatest need for development. The school is in the process of refining its procedures to make it easier to access data and to monitor progress by gender, ethnicity or ability.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

55. Parents are very pleased with the standard of education and care the school provides. Almost all say their children are encouraged to work hard and achieve their best. They say the teaching is good and their children make good progress. Parents feel the school works closely with them and they are comfortable approaching teachers with questions or concerns.

56. Parents are very well informed about their children's progress, the curriculum to be studied and school events. There are three consultation evenings per year which are very well attended. Parents, children and teachers together agree the targets which are set. Annual reports are clear, informative and suggest ways the pupil can improve. These are supported by interim reports and letters to parents to keep them up to date with their children's progress. All letters to parents have a tear off receipt and children gain house points for returning signed receipts. This is a very effective way of ensuring the efficiency of *pupil post*. The governors' annual report is very informative as is the prospectus. Both broadly meet statutory requirements though fully to comply, information from the early years booklet needs to be included within the prospectus. The school combines a prize giving ceremony with the governors' annual general meeting for parents. This helps to ensure more parents attend and become better informed about the workings of the school.

57. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved at a very early stage in identifying their children's needs. Most parents attend and contribute to review meetings. The school provides good written advice on how parents can help at home.

58. Despite the fact that the school's parents and friends association has temporarily lapsed, parents have very close involvement with the school. They generously help with school funding and support charities. For example, every child was able to fill a shoebox with gifts for deserving families in Eastern Europe. All parents have signed the home/school agreement and home/school diaries are a useful method of communication with class teachers. Working parents find the on site *Happy Hours Club* that provides childcare a great boon. Parents of the younger children are encouraged to arrive ten minutes early so that pupils can share their work, giving parents a clearer understanding of how they can be of help. A number of parents and friends regularly give voluntary help in the classroom and two were responsible for cataloguing the library. This help is greatly appreciated by the school.

59. Most parents support their children's learning very well. It was at their request that the school provided information about the curriculum to be studied. Some have bought computers specially to help their children. The school opens the library after school so that parents can choose books to read with their children. Standards in mathematics in the infants have improved because parents loan numeracy games and play them at home with their children. Overall the school's links with parents are very effective.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The overall quality of leadership and management by the governors, headteacher and key staff is good. A strength is the effective leadership from the headteacher who has successfully overcome the many challenges of merging two schools. To unite the staff, the headteacher wisely chose to apply for Investors in People status. This has been a successful vehicle for gaining consensus about many areas of development as well as recognising all staff's individual skills and valuing their contribution to the school. This good management ensures the school is making the best use of all staff. Success is evident in the recent award of Investors in People status with a very positive judgement on the leadership of the school.

61. The school has identified the need to improve the management roles of subject leaders. These are good in English, mathematics and science and co-ordinators have put in place clear action plans to raise standards in the subjects they lead. Management of information and communication technology is

very good and the co-ordinator leads by example being an excellent teacher of the subject and inspiring and motivating other staff. Consequently, standards are good in this subject. In other subjects co-ordinators have put new planning guidelines in place but have not had opportunities to check these are being implemented successfully in lessons. As a result, they are less well informed about the standards in their subjects and the interventions required to improve them.

62. The school benefits from the hardwork of the assistant headteacher. She willingly accepts responsibility and has successfully introduced new assessment procedures and re-organised the provision for pupils with special educational needs. These tasks are carried out willingly and combined with full time teaching of Year 6 pupils. However, the assistant headteacher shoulders too many responsibilities and limited non-teaching time is available to carry them out. This restricts the opportunities for the development of management skills linked to the position of assistant headteacher.

63. Management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of the school's procedures, and personally monitors the progress of the pupils on the special educational needs register. She manages the system efficiently to provide suitable support for the vast majority of pupils. The small amount of non-teaching time is used appropriately to liaise with staff, parents and outside agencies as well as to assess individual progress. The budget for special educational needs is spent appropriately on maintaining support staff and providing additional resources. Close links are made with the nominated governor for special educational needs who is well informed about the school's support for these pupils.

64. The governing body is effective and works through an organised system of committees. They ensure all statutory requirements are fulfilled including a policy on racial equality. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development because they are regular visitors to the school. Every governor is linked to one or more subjects and this enables them to be aware of the current situation in the school. Many have visited lessons and recorded their observations which are shared with the full governing body. Together with the headteacher and staff they have resolved the concerns of parents who were anxious about the merger of the schools. The number of pupils dropped at this time but with the obvious strides forward made by the school numbers are now increasing. Parents are very happy with the leadership and management of the school and the education their children receive.

65. Teaching is closely monitored and support offered when a weakness is spotted. This has been effective in ensuring the school now has a strong team of teachers all working together to further unite the school and provide the best for the pupils. The evaluation of the school's performance is satisfactory. The headteacher analyses the national test results and with governors agrees targets for the future. However, test results are not analysed in sufficient detail to discover specific areas requiring more attention and so further enhance the school's performance. More use could be made of assessment information to get a clearer picture about the progress of different groups including analysis by ethnicity, gender and ability.

66. The school development plan is satisfactory. It is cross-referenced to the school's aims and targets for improvement. However, in its present format it does not identify priorities further than one year ahead and is too brief. This makes it difficult to check when targets have been achieved. In practice, the plan is working better than expected because it is based on the co-ordinators' detailed action plans which identify activities and criteria for success. The plan does not identify the financial implications of the school's priorities. The governors and the headteacher make these decisions in the meetings of the finance sub-committee. Minutes from these meetings show due attention is given to allocating funds based on the curriculum co-ordinators' requests. Overall financial management is good and money is spent wisely with regular checks to see that the budget plans are being followed. Specific grants are spent correctly. The headteacher actively searches out additional funding to ease the school's financial

pressure. For example, Seed Challenge⁵ funding has been obtained and used efficiently to improve the outdoor space for the Foundation Stage.

67. The school applies the principles of best value well. Parents and pupils are consulted over major decisions and are supportive of the school. They are keen to help provide a linkway between the two sites and so governors know if funding becomes available they will have the backing of the parents. Advice is sought before any major spending to check that good value for money is assured. Governors are aware of the need to link spending to improvement in standards. They recognise the positive impact teaching assistants have on the good progress the pupils with special educational needs make.

68. Performance management is firmly in place. Staff training is given priority in the school and is linked to individual needs and the school's priorities for improvement. The school provides placements for students training to be teachers. This is managed well to the benefit of the school and the students.

69. The school uses new technology well. There are computerised systems to check on recent spending. A recent financial audit confirms that financial management is good. The smooth day-to-day running of the school owes much to the efficient and good humoured work of the school administrative staff who know the pupils and their families well.

70. The school benefits from spacious grounds and separate play areas for younger and older pupils. Although on two sites the buildings are very close together and the next aim is to provide a linkway to make it possible for pupils to move between sites unsupervised. In the governors' endeavours to make the school accessible to all ramps have been put in place at some doors although the steps to the infant department still create an obstacle for wheelchair access. Classrooms are spacious and well decorated and enhance learning. The attractive library has been classified so that pupils can loan books using the electronic scanner and this enables teachers to check on the books pupils are reading. Most books are of good quality but an audit needs carrying out to remove some reference books which are out-of-date and in poor condition. Good use has been made of additional space to provide an information and communication technology suite which is large enough to accommodate whole classes for lessons. Other rooms have been used for the *Happy Hours Club* that provides for pupils before and after school. The school receives much needed funding from the letting of these rooms and also benefits because children are prepared well for school.

71. The school has a good number of teachers and support staff for the needs of this age range. Support staff have been trained and offer effective support especially for pupils with special educational needs.

72. Resources are good. The school has a good number of computers and has plans to improve those in classes to encourage more use of these resources. Reading books are good in quality and quantity and many pupils are discerning readers. The school checks that resources are available to enable all to have full access to the curriculum. For example, there are additional computer programs to enable those struggling with mathematics to have additional practice.

73. The school's aims include *providing the best education for every child in a positive and friendly atmosphere where the school can share the responsibilities of a broad education for each individual child with their parent or carer*. Much has been done since the schools merged and with the current strength in the management team the school's aims are clearly reflected in the daily life of the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

⁵ Seed Challenge. All school can apply for this funding. It is to encourage investment in capital projects and must be matched funding from private sector, donations or other sources.

74. In order to continue the improvement and raise standards the governors, headteacher and staff should:

(1) improve standards in writing in the juniors by:

- following more closely the school's handwriting policy;
- teaching the skills of drafting and editing more thoroughly;
- checking that pupils use the skills taught in literacy lessons in their independent writing.

Discussed in paragraphs 4, 20, 35, 36, 88, 89, 93, 95, 107.

(2) improve management by:

- ensuring that the allocation of management responsibilities is evenly spread between staff;
- improving the management of subjects by providing subject leaders with more opportunities to gain an informed picture of the subjects they lead.

Included in schools' improvement plan

Discussed in paragraphs 61, 62, 103, 105, 109, 116, 123, 125, 131, 133, 137, 144, 150, 152, 157.

(3) make more effective use of the information gained from assessment by:

- carrying out a more detailed analysis of pupils' tests to identify specific areas of weakness and then adjusting the curriculum accordingly;
- checking more closely on pupils' progress so that tasks are more closely matched to their ability;
- analysing assessment information to check progress by ethnicity and gender;
- checking that pupils are not set too many targets and that they are written in language pupils understand so that they are clear what they need to do to improve.

Discussed in paragraphs 2, 18, 23, 28, 51, 52, 54, 65, 76, 80, 88, 92, 95, 96, 98, 101, 103, 105, 106, 109, 125, 126, 129.

In addition to the key issues above, the governors may wish to consider including the following minor issue in the action plan:

- audit the books in the library and remove the ones which are old and in poor condition;

See paragraphs 70, 88.

- when a need is identified including numeracy in the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs.

See paragraphs 7, 26, 37, 101.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

49

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	12	18	17	0	0	0
Percentage	4	24	37	35	0	0	0

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

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)	Na	197
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	Na	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	Na	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	Na	39

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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	16	11	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	9	10	10
	Total	22	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (89)	85 (89)	89 (89)
	National	84 (84)	86 (89)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	16
	Girls	10	10	11
	Total	23	24	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (89)	89 (89)	100 (100)
	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	17	24	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	16	17
	Girls	23	19	23
	Total	37	35	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (82)	85 (85)	98 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	13	16
	Girls	18	17	22
	Total	31	30	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (76)	73 (82)	93 (85)
	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	189	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	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	5	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23:1
Average class size	27.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	109

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
----------------	---------

	£
Total income	528,690
Total expenditure	465,610
Expenditure per pupil	2376
Balance brought forward from previous year	40,540
Balance carried forward to next year	22,000

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	197
Number of questionnaires returned	138

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	42	3	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	53	41	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	43	4	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	46	7	1	2
The teaching is good.	65	31	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	35	7	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	28	6	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	28	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	51	44	4	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	65	30	3	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	36	4	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	72	24	3	0	1

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer and may not total 100.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

75. Strengths in the Foundation Stage are:

- children attain above average standards in personal, social and emotional development and in reading;
- the vast majority are in line to reach the early learning goals in all other learning areas by the time children start in Year 1;
- teaching in the areas of personal, social and emotional development and basic reading is good;
- relationships are good. Children are happy and enthusiastic learners.

76. Areas for improvement are:

- the use of assessment;
- challenge for higher attainers;
- teaching of early writing skills;
- the range of practical activities, particularly to support mathematical development.

77. Children are admitted full-time to the Reception class in the September of the year before their fifth birthday.

78. There is a well-organised part time pre-school class for four-year-olds. Depending on the child's birthday he/she may spend up to two terms in this class before starting full time in the Reception class in the September of the school year before their fifth birthday. Children who are born in the summer term start full time in the Reception class with the others, in the September after their fourth birthday and miss the experiences in the pre-school class. There are currently 17 children in the pre-school class and 27 in the Reception class. Pre-school staff work closely with the Reception teacher to provide a broad curriculum which meets the children's needs well. Despite the disadvantage of being accommodated in the school hall, the pre-school class prepares children effectively for full time education in the Reception class. Staff promote good initial links with families so that children settle quickly into school. Pre-admission visits are carefully organised to introduce school staff and procedures. A useful booklet is provided to help parents prepare their children.

79. Whilst there is a wide range, children's attainment on entry to school is broadly average. Children achieve soundly in the Foundation Stage due to satisfactory teaching and a broad curriculum. Consequently, the vast majority of children are likely to reach the level expected for their age (the early learning goals) in most of the areas of learning by the time they start in Year 1. Children achieve particularly well in the area of personal, social and emotional development and in reading and standards in these areas are above average. This reflects the good relationships established and the effective teaching of the basic skills of letters and their sounds. Children with special educational needs are identified promptly and receive appropriate support. They make satisfactory progress alongside their peers.

80. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. All staff work closely together to plan a suitable curriculum rooted in the six areas of learning, and leading children towards the early learning goals. Assessment systems, including regular observation of children at work, are good but information gained is not always used to plan work to match the full range of attainment in the class. Sometimes expectations are not high enough. As a result, potential higher attainers do not always receive challenge and sometimes could do better. Relationships are good and children are managed positively with praise and encouragement.

Personal, social and emotional development

81. Almost all children enjoy coming to school. They join enthusiastically in class and group activities. Most are eager and confident to demonstrate to the rest of the class. A few are even willing to perform a song for others. Children respond to established routines to listen with increasing concentration and to follow instructions, for instance, at tidy-up time. They take turns to speak at Circle Time and share equipment as when playing at the sand or water trays. All are eager to take responsibility to be leader of the day or chair monitor. They carry out their duties sensibly. At snack time, most are well mannered and considerate of others with little prompting. They relate positively to each other when engaged in role-play in the *hairdressers* but can become boisterous in *the jungle*. Teaching and learning are good. Consequently, children achieve well in this area. Staff

build good relationships and display attitudes of care and consideration. They take time to respect children's ideas and display their work. Routines are consistently established and rules clearly displayed and carefully explained so that all are aware of the school's expectations. A good range and number of opportunities are provided for individuals to take responsibility. Much emphasis is rightly put on raising self-esteem, for example, through the *special person of the week*. When an individual is chosen to take the class mascot home, other pupils must think of something positive to say about him. These comments are written down by the teacher and taken home by the *special child*. Statutory regulations concerning the teaching of religious education are fully met.

Communication, language and literacy

82. Almost all speak articulately with increasing vocabulary. In the main, they listen attentively to the teacher but less well to each other. They enjoy stories and concentrate well when listening independently to a tape and following the story from the pictures in a book. Most listen carefully to hear the first sound in a word and relate it to its letter as in *w* for *wellies*, although a few still find this difficult. Many children recognise most letters by shape and sound. They recognise familiar words and are able to read simple text in the first readers. Most orally compose a sentence of their own news and copy under the teacher's writing. They copy labels for pictures but few are able to build up their own words from the letters they know. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with good step-by-step teaching of letters and their sounds. Staff use questions effectively to help children articulate and extend their ideas, and good opportunities are provided across the curriculum to promote speaking and listening skills. Insufficient attention is given to the development of early writing skills. There is too much emphasis on copying writing and children are not given enough opportunities to build up words independently through their own knowledge of letters. Intervention in role-play activities is not sufficiently focused to be fully effective in promoting language development.

Mathematical development

83. Most pupils can recite numbers to 20 and some to 30, when counting along a number line. They accurately fill in missing numbers, but not all are confident in finding one more or one less. Most count objects one-to-one and label with the correct number. They are beginning to perform addition by counting two sets of objects. They understand *positional* language like *before* and *after* and are becoming confident in concepts of *full* and *empty*. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Activities have clear focus and teaching assistants are well deployed to provide good support for groups. Plenary sessions at the end of lessons are used effectively to reinforce learning. There is sometimes too much emphasis on paper and pencil activities and not enough on practical activities where children learn from direct first-hand experience to solve problems for themselves. Occasionally, instructions are unclear and the pace of learning slows. For instance, children counting small toys on a plate try to count them without moving them and become confused in knowing where they started, instead of lifting them off one at a time!

Knowledge and understanding of the world

84. Children talk about their families, distinguishing between those who live with them and their wider family of aunts and uncles. With help, they use large bricks or construction toys to build a house for their family. They carefully observe change when baking cakes and when observing potatoes. They use words like *hard* and *cold* to describe raw potato, *soft* and *hot* for baked potato and *squishy* for mashed potato. They are developing observational skills in watching their seeds grow. Most pupils are confident in using the computer to support their learning. They use the mouse to control objects on screen and are learning to log on using the keyboard. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Staff plan activities with a clear focus and ensure that children know what is expected. Groupwork is well prepared to follow up whole class teaching sessions but children are often directed to specific tasks and do not have enough opportunities to select activities for themselves and to develop their own ideas. The teacher's questions sometimes do not extend children's ideas and expectations of the higher attainers are not always high enough. Whilst good use is made of the computer suite in two lessons per week, not enough use is made of the school grounds as a learning resource.

Physical development

85. Children have frequent access to a secure outdoor area and a good range of attractive large wheeled toys and play apparatus. They move with control and co-ordination and are aware of others in the main. They scramble, climb and balance, travelling around, over and through the tunnel, with confidence and enjoyment. All children in the Foundation Stage take part in physical education lessons in the hall. Most children are becoming increasingly adept at using tools like paintbrushes and scissors to fulfil specific purpose. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Staff manage children well. They make clear their high expectations of behaviour so that

children remain on task. Outdoor activities are not always sufficiently focused and it is sometimes unclear how skills will be developed over time.

Creative development

86. Children enjoy exploring a range of creative media. They explore colour and pattern in their painting. They respond appropriately to happy and sad music and with help are beginning to associate happy words with fast and loud and sad feelings with slow and quiet. They sing simple songs from memory. Children are imaginative in their role-play in the *hairdressers*. With help, boys and girls co-operate to play out scenarios as hairdressers, customers and receptionists. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Resources are well prepared so that children quickly settle to tasks. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support groups and provide a high level of purposeful adult/child interaction. Sometimes in music lessons insufficient time is allowed for children to enjoy making music with percussion and children are disappointed when they do not have the opportunity to play instruments on display.

ENGLISH

87. Strengths in English are:

- the standards in Year 2 are above average;
- teaching and learning are good;
- pupils enjoy reading and the computerised loan system in the library shows many read for pleasure;
- assessment procedures are good and teachers plan work to match the needs of all abilities;
- additional literacy sessions for the lower attaining pupils are carefully planned and taught well and effectively boost the progress of these pupils;
- management of the subject is good.

88. Areas for development are:

- standards in writing in the juniors;
- pupils have too many targets for improvement are some lack clarity so pupils do not recall them;
- some books in the library are old and in poor condition.

89. Current standards are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6 although writing is below average. Achievement in Year 2 is good and standards are the same as last year's national test results in writing and have improved in reading. Compared with similar schools these results were average in writing but were below average in reading. Current standards are higher than last year and pupils are reaping the benefits of letters and sounds being taught well in the Foundation Stage. Recent achievement of pupils in Year 6 is good in response to effective teaching which is accelerating pupils' learning. Progress over an extended period of time is satisfactory in reading and speaking and listening but is less evident in writing. This group of pupils had their learning disrupted by some ineffective teaching as they moved into the juniors and this slowed down their progress. This situation has now been resolved. The pupils have also been taught in a large class which has made it difficult for all pupils to be suitably challenged. As a result, standards are not as high as the results of the most recent national tests which were well above the national average and average when compared with similar schools. Test results are available for only two years so it is not possible to make a judgement on the overall trend of results. However, the performance for the two years are higher than the national average. Current targets reflect the ability of the current Year 6 and with the good teaching are likely to be reached.

90. The progress made by the large proportion of pupils with special educational needs is generally good because of the effective support they are receiving in lessons. Additional help is available and when necessary an individual plan is drawn up which gives staff clear guidance on how best to help these pupils. Occasionally, pupils miss parts or all of the literacy lessons for additional support. However, this is only when assessment shows the needs of the pupils are such that they will not easily cope with the focus in the literacy lesson. Learning is good in these sessions because teaching is effective. A brisk pace and practical activities make these sessions interesting as well as beneficial.

91. In speaking and listening standards are good in Year 2. Many are very confident joining in discussions and have a clear understanding of the need to take turns in class discussions. They are articulate and not afraid to express their opinions. One pupil was quick to say *I know that is wrong because.....* Many are eager to talk to visitors about their school and their favourite activities. Vocabulary is imaginative and they suggest an imaginative list of alternative words to write a class tongue twister. Most listen carefully both to each other and to the teacher. Overall standards in Year 6 are similar to those expected for their age. A good proportion contribute interesting ideas to the class discussions. The higher attaining pupils are effective at leading a group

discussion. This was most effective in a personal and social education lesson and pupils were able to explain different feelings. *I feel humiliated when...* Most listen carefully and show respect so pupils feel secure sharing their feelings. A few of the lower attaining pupils find it difficult to maintain concentration and listening wanes and they leave responses to other pupils. Not all pupils understand language changes in different situations. Even following a role-play by the teacher to demonstrate the use of informal language on the playground a few still did not appreciate this point.

92. The majority of pupils enjoy reading and make good use of the opportunity to loan books from the school library. Standards are above average in Year 2 and are broadly in line with those expected in Year 6. Pupils in Year 2 are all confident joining in the shared text as part of the literacy lessons. They enjoy the tongue twister *Peter Piper* and are quick to spot the repeating letters. When reading the book they show a good knowledge of the order of the alphabet. Most are well launched in their reading and are often able to explain their favourite stories. They make good use of pictures and the higher attaining pupils who read to the inspectors were checking to make sure the reading made sense. Pupils enjoy using non-fiction books and go promptly to the back of a book to use the index when asked to locate some information. Pupils in Year 6 access information from books and many read accurately and with understanding. They refer to the text to support their answers. Most can scan a page to locate facts and higher attaining pupils read silently and then explain what they have read in their own words. Higher attaining pupils have favourite authors. They recognise how J K Rowling has created suspense in the adventures of Harry Potter. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are less enthusiastic because they have struggled with reading in the early stages. This hampers their ability to read between the lines and predict what might happen next in the story. Because they are still working their way through the school's reading scheme books they are not always reading texts which are capturing their interest. The effective classification of the library means that the school can monitor pupils' reading and encourage those not reading sufficiently. While the range of fiction books in the library is good a significant number of non-fiction books are out-of-date, in poor condition and need replacing.

93. In writing, standards are above average in Year 2. Pupils make good progress in the infants because letters and sounds are taught well and pupils are confident using this information to try out new spellings of more difficult words. For example, the higher attaining pupil writes *complayning* and *camrars* showing good use of letter sounds. Higher attaining pupils produce some extended well structured stories which are clearly above average. Dialogue is used correctly and some imaginative description adds interest for the reader. Lower attaining pupils are able to communicate in writing but their work still relies heavily on spoken language and is less imaginative. All appreciate that writing changes for different purposes and have written instructions to get ready for physical education using numbered points. Many use capital letters and full stops accurately and write in sentences. In Year 6 standards are below average and many have not made as much progress as they should have. Although learning has now improved many have gaps in their knowledge and are not using grammar and punctuation correctly. Pupils are forgetting to use the skills taught in literacy lessons in their writing and so work often includes errors in punctuation and spelling. They are unsure about the correct use of words, such as *know* and *no* and are not using dictionaries to check their work. Handwriting is generally neat and well presented but not all have a neat joined-up script although this is taught in the school. Many are starting to use paragraphs correctly to organise longer pieces of work because teaching has focused on planning work. Higher attaining pupils are good at linking paragraphs and their ideas and use phrases such as, *the next day this kept happening* and *on the other hand*. Some work is of a high quality and a book review shows very mature writing and includes, *this poem would be a wonderful read for younger children with no hard words and rhyming words but with wonderful personification, adults would appreciate it too*. Pupils are not editing their work because this skill is not taught thoroughly and so pupils do not spot and correct their own mistakes.

94. The school effectively promotes literacy skills in other subjects. The scrutiny of work from other subjects and evidence on display shows pupils are encouraged to write at length and in different styles in many lessons. For example, in Year 2 pupils use sensitive language when writing prayers and in Year 6 pupils have incorporated information and communication technology in their written debate about the advantages and disadvantages of school visits.

95. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and no teaching observed was less than satisfactory. Teaching was best in the infants and in Years 5 and 6 and much new learning occurs in these classes. These teachers are confident in their knowledge and this enhances pupils' enthusiasm. Through the effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, good attention is given to the teaching of letters and sounds. Games and practical activities make these sessions enjoyable and help pupils to retain the information. Homework always includes spelling and these are tested regularly and most pupils spell correctly. A few lower attaining pupils are successful in tests but have difficulty retaining this information. Planning is good and in the best lessons teachers make it clear to pupils what they are going to learn. For example, the introduction in Year 2 quickly caught pupils' imagination with a shared tongue twister and a detailed explanation of what made it funny.

Most teachers challenge their pupils with effective questioning which make pupils think as well as revise previous work. This was effective in Year 6 when the teacher asked *what is emotive language?* This was followed up with examples relevant to pupils' experiences so that learning was consolidated successfully. The teachers are generally alert to the needs of the all the different groups in the class. However, a weakness in some lessons was the lack of challenge in the writing tasks with too much copying and higher attaining pupils could achieve more. Most of the pupils' work is marked and positive comments included. However, targets for improvement are not always included and so pupils are not clear about how to improve. A positive feature in all lessons is the management of behaviour which is based on very good relationships and lessons are rarely disturbed by any misbehaviour. Teaching assistants make an effective contribution to pupils' learning by working unobtrusively alongside pupils and feeding back to teachers at the end of lessons so that their progress in lessons is closely monitored. Not all teachers use the computer as a learning tool in lessons not based in the information and communication technology suite.

96. The management of the subject is good. Assessment procedures are good and the school is well aware of the needs of the pupils in Year 6. Many interventions have been put in to help the pupils to close the gap caused in previous years. Individual targets are given to pupils but these are not as effective as they could be because they are sometimes too general. Teachers include new ones before others have been achieved and this starts to overwhelm pupils. Detailed analysis of pupils' test papers is not carried out to find out specific areas needing further attention.

MATHEMATICS

97. Strengths in mathematics are:

- the standards that pupils attain in Year 2;
- the good teaching of the basic skills of numeracy;
- the very good attitudes of pupils to their learning;
- the very good opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in other subjects;
- the subject is well led.

98. Areas for development are:

- the use of assessment information to identify areas for improvement and to set targets for the school and individuals;
- when necessary including numeracy targets in the individual education plans for pupils identified with special educational needs;
- the management role of the co-ordinator.

99. Standards in Year 2 are above average and in Year 6 are average. This reflects a very significant improvement on the test results of 2002 in Year 2, when standards were well below average. This improvement has been brought about by:

- good teaching of numeracy skills so that pupils are grasping numeracy concepts earlier;
- the subject has been a focus for the school and the local authority has provided additional training;
- the National Numeracy Strategy is now fully established and has greatly improved teachers' planning;
- the curriculum is now good and pupils undertake a variety of relevant and interesting activities;
- a number of parents have attended workshops so that they are more informed about helping their children;
- the progress pupils make has been checked more closely;
- the effective use of information and communication technology to make learning exciting for pupils.

100. Evidence from work in both Years 1 and 2 shows that standards are continuing to rise, with many Year 1 pupils already working at the level that might be expected in Year 2. Overall achievement is good. Standards in Year 6 are average and are similar to those recorded in the test results of 2002, despite the fact that this is a year group with fewer higher attaining pupils and many more lower attainers. Achievement of the Year 6 pupils is satisfactory, overall, since they entered the juniors. However, this year group has been affected by an unsettled pattern of teaching in previous years, which has affected their progress, particularly that of the lower attaining pupils, some of whom could achieve more. The current good teaching, particularly for the older pupils is promoting good progress for most pupils, but there are a few lower attaining pupils whose specific mathematical needs have not been identified and supported at an early enough stage. They do not work with sufficient accuracy and understanding because of gaps in their previous learning. Some have lost confidence and make only slow progress, finding difficulty in recalling methods and strategies to use in their work. The recent introduction of a structured computer program is helping some of them develop more confidence, as they work independently at their own level.

101. Most pupils make good progress in learning the basic skills of numeracy because these are taught well. Many in Year 2 work confidently with numbers to 100 and higher attainers work with larger numbers. They recognise sequences such as odd and even and use the four rules of number, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, in solving problems. They recognise angles, including right angles, as measures of turn, measure with reasonable accuracy in centimetres and millilitres and begin to tell the time. Lower and average attaining pupils achieve well but a few potentially higher attainers could achieve more. They often work at the same level as the average pupils, simply completing more work. The current system of formal assessment does not help the teachers to identify their needs precisely and so offer consistently good levels of challenge. Pupils with special educational needs, or who are lower attainers, make good progress. In Year 6, most pupils are competent in the four rules of number and have a sound knowledge and understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages. They apply their knowledge and skills appropriately in solving problems and check the reasonableness of their answers. They have secure mental recall skills and explain their strategies for working out answers to problems proficiently. Higher attaining pupils use and interpret first quadrant co-ordinates and use all four methods of calculation to several decimal places. They have sound knowledge and skills in shape and space and in measuring. Pupils have good skills in collecting numerical data and presenting it in the form of graphs and this work is reflected throughout the curriculum. For example, in science, pupils collect temperature measurement when studying boiling points of liquids, enter it into a chart and produce a line graph. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with extra support although staff do not have the benefit of detailed numeracy targets in individual education plans. These pupils are now making good progress but the gaps in their knowledge and understanding and low levels of confidence are making it difficult for them to attain the level expected for their age and this affects the overall standards of the year group. All pupils have individual targets for mathematics but some are not as sharp as they need to be to raise standards. They are not as effective as they could be because teachers rarely refer to them when marking work and so many older pupils are unaware of their targets.

102. The quality of teaching is currently good overall, and most pupils are eager to improve. These are important factors that help pupils to learn effectively in lessons. Teachers plan and organise their lessons very well and use questioning effectively to challenge pupils' thinking and develop their mathematical knowledge and understanding. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and use it well to plan interesting lessons. They make good use of time and resources to motivate pupils and deepen their understanding. Explanations are clear and teachers demonstrate techniques well, so that pupils are clear about what they are to learn and how to set about their activities. Teachers usually make good evaluations of their lessons and identify any problems that pupils have had so that they can rectify these in the next lesson. A very good example of this was seen in a lesson for pupils in Year 5 and 6, when the teacher displayed common problems on an overhead projector and asked pupils to identify mistakes and explain how they might be avoided. In this lesson, as in most others, pupils listened attentively, behaved very well and showed a great deal of interest and enjoyment in their work. They use resources and equipment with care, sharing them fairly with others, and make purposeful use of their many opportunities to discuss their learning with a partner. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology in lessons in the computer suite to enhance pupils' work but during classroom lessons observed during the inspection, only lower attainers used a computer program to support their learning. There is a sound focus on teaching the extensive range of mathematical vocabulary to help pupils' understanding and a natural integration of mathematics into other subjects so that pupils apply and develop their skills well in meaningful situations. For example, pupils compared census information from 1951 to that of 2001 in history, using percentages and extracting information from bar charts. Pupils are given opportunity to use their literacy skills effectively to support their work when they read questions and then discuss strategies for finding solutions. Mathematical displays support pupils' learning and celebrate their achievements well.

103. The subject is led well but the co-ordinator's management role does not provide her with first-hand evidence of progress and standards across the whole school. The school recognised a need to improve its provision for mathematics following disappointing test results, particularly in Year 2, and took effective action, improving quality and raising standards. The procedures for assessing pupils' learning are satisfactory overall, but the tests used at the end of topics do not provide the required information to help teachers check sufficiently on progress from term to term. The school does not analyse its results in national tests to identify common problems and areas for curriculum development.

SCIENCE

104. Strengths in science are:

- the current good quality of teaching is promoting good progress;
- pupils' opportunities to investigate independently;
- opportunities to apply literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in science lessons;
- the attitudes of pupils to their learning;
- the assessment procedures in Years 3 to 6.

105. Areas for development are:

- the assessment procedures in Years 1 and 2 are not as good as those in Years 3 to 6;
- higher attainers in Year 2 could achieve more;
- the management aspect of the co-ordinator's role is under-developed.

106. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are average. This reflects a dip in standards for both year groups from the national assessments of 2002, when standards were above average. In Year 2, this is because of a natural yearly variation in pupils, with a small number of lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs who are currently not working at the level expected for their age. Their scientific knowledge is below average and they are not applying what they know when carrying out investigations. As this is a small year group, it has a significant effect on overall standards. Although the achievement of most is satisfactory the few higher attaining pupils could achieve more. They work on the same topics as other pupils at the same level, partly because the current system of assessing work in Years 1 and 2 records success on a particular topic, rather than using assessment to enable pupils to progress to the next level of the National Curriculum. Most pupils in Year 2 make sensible predictions before carrying out experiments although are less sure at suggesting ways to carry out their investigations. They show secure skills in carrying out a simple, fair test independently. They know and understand that there are similarities and differences in living creatures and recognise variations in humans, such as eye colour and sizes of parts of the body. For example, Year 2 pupils investigate the size of hand spans in their class and observe that this usually, but not always reflects the heights of pupils. They also note that there is no usual pattern to the comparative sizes of hand spans and shoe sizes. They carefully record the growth of their seeds and observe the changes at different stages of the life cycles of plants and animals. Pupils know that pushes and pulls as forces that change the shape of some materials when applied to them. They understand that materials can be changed and that not all changes are reversible, such as when they mix ingredients and bake cakes.

107. Standards in Year 6 are lower than the results of the most recent tests because of a significant group of lower attaining pupils who find it difficult to recall and apply their previous learning in predicting and drawing conclusions about their investigations. Overall achievement for this group is satisfactory but has increased as pupils have moved into Years 5 and 6 where teaching is strong and is helping them to overcome past difficulties. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the practical aspects of the subject and with help from friends and teachers are making good progress. Most pupils have sound knowledge and understanding of living things and know about the requirements for healthy living. They understand how the body works and how exercise or the misuse of drugs such as alcohol and nicotine affect the body's health and efficiency. They have sound understanding of the differences between solids, liquids and gases. Pupils know that shadows are formed when an object blocks a light source and which materials are good thermal insulators. Average and higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of how to devise and conduct a fair test, understanding that only one of the conditions can be changed at a time. They draw sound conclusions and record their work well in a good variety of scientific ways. Pupils communicate their findings clearly and use their literacy skills effectively in their report writing, as well as in their labelled drawings and diagrams. Some pupils do not apply the skills taught in their literacy lessons and so handwriting is not joined-up and errors made in spelling and punctuation. They apply their mathematical skills well in measurements and understand the need to repeat some measurements to ensure that results are reliable. Pupils make sound use of information and communication technology in producing graphs of their work and in measurements, such as of temperatures. Lower attainers and those with special educational needs find it difficult to devise a fair test and the weak writing skills of some impede their ability to record their findings accurately.

108. Good teaching and the very positive attitudes of pupils of all abilities result in effective learning. Teachers prepare their lessons thoroughly and share the learning targets with pupils so that they are clear about what they are to learn. Teachers have good subject knowledge and ask relevant questions to find out what pupils know and then develop their scientific understanding further. Over time, the achievement of those pupils currently in Year 6 is satisfactory because of the previous unsettled pattern of teaching. The current focus on developing pupils' investigative skills and the use of a specialist teacher in Year 6 are now promoting good and often very good progress in lessons. This was observed in a revision lesson in Year 6, just before the 2003

national tests. Pupils made rapid gains in understanding how to devise a specific test because the teacher firstly helped pupils to identify and rectify common weaknesses in their own work and then provided an exciting team competition. The pace was brisk and there was very good collaboration and enthusiasm from pupils. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of what they could do and, consequently, set challenging and interesting work. The activities build well on previous work so that pupils use their prior knowledge to support their learning. They maintain their concentration, behave very well and are interested in the opinions of others when discussing their work in group and whole class sessions. This is especially helpful for the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs because they are included in the discussions and so learn from other pupils. Expectations of the higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently high in Year 2 and pupils are not always being given work that extends their scientific knowledge and understanding. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their literacy and numeracy skills in relevant situations.

109. Management of the subject is good and ensures the curriculum is broad and enables pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills through carefully structured investigative activities. An audit of the subject has been carried out and there is a useful action plan to improve provision. The management aspect of the co-ordinator's role is underdeveloped and this means the co-ordinator has no direct evidence of the quality of teaching and pupils' work across the whole school. A good policy and programme of work matched to national guidelines, provides teachers with clear information about the knowledge and skills to be taught. Assessment procedures are good in Years 3 to 6 and are used well to highlight areas for further development, through the co-ordinator's analysis of test questions. They provide good information that enables teachers to check pupils' progress and identify the next steps in learning. Assessments in Years 1 and 2 are not linked to the National Curriculum and do not provide such clear evidence but materials are now being put into place to rectify this situation.

ART AND DESIGN

110. Strengths in the subject are:

- the range of interesting activities planned;
- the experiences gained from visiting artists;
- the opportunities to be involved in more imaginative work in the art club.

111. Areas for improvement are:

- assessment procedures which give a clearer picture of the pupils' development of skills;
- the use of sketch books to practise and refine ideas;
- the opportunities available for the subject leader to find out about standards in the school.

112. Most of the evidence is based upon a review of examples of pupils' work which show pupils are working at levels expected for their age. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and make the same progress as other pupils. Talented pupils have the opportunity to attend the art club which is currently working on a large scale sculpture representing Van Gogh's bedroom. This is a competition pieces and pupils have gained new skills as well as much enjoyment as they have worked together to complete an impressive piece of work.

113. Pupils in Year 2 were very impressed by the teacher's demonstration of how to make a stained glass window and were eager to try out their own ideas. They are confident making suggestions, such as *you could fold the paper, add extra colours and use different shapes*. However, when they started to work, their enthusiasm took over and few remembered to make patterns or to plan their ideas. Comments included *mine is just squiggly* and *I am just filling in the shapes*. Pupils are starting to evaluate their work although only a few suggest how they could make it better. Pictures in Year 2 show pupils have given close attention to detail in their observational drawings of fruit and they include segments and seeds. Colours have been mixed to create different shades and this is effective in acquiring a suitable skin colour in their portraits.

114. Observational skills have improved in Year 6 and pupils are giving more attention to the line they want to achieve. Work is planned and this resulted in some imaginative masks using a wide variety of materials. Pupils have art books but they are large and have a soft cover and so are not really suitable as sketch books. Pupils are using them to collect ideas and some have started to try out their ideas but they are not using them to test and practise their ideas before moving onto their pictures. When pupils in Year 6 were sketching in the school grounds they did not really give enough attention to what they could actually see and were not confident in planning the rough shape of their observations before putting in the detail. A few achieved good work showing an understanding of shading to create three-dimensional figures but others were less secure with this technique.

115. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good features. From the variety of work available it is clear teachers plan interesting lessons and encourage creativity. Very few examples showed repetitive or undemanding tasks and the majority showed high expectations and variety. In Year 1, teaching was very good because pupils were motivated by looking at picture of the work of A Goldworthy. Also, they had collected their own natural resources and were eager to try out their ideas. Skills of critical analysis are developing well in this class because the teaching is very effective and encourages pupils to explore their ideas and to speak about the way they were all different. Lessons are organised well and pupils quickly get on with the activities so that lessons are enjoyable. In Year 6 the visiting artist offers guidance and great encouragement to pupils. Examples of her work, including sketches, provide a good stimulus. In the lesson seen there was some confusion between the different groups about what was expected which could have been clarified if the sketches had been reviewed more closely before the pupils started work. Pupils were not reminded about the correct sketching pencil to use or the skills of sketching and shading before they started work. Many had forgotten these and could have achieved better results. Teachers ensure the subject promotes pupils' spiritual and cultural development. In lessons in Years 1 and 6 pupils are encouraged to appreciate art in the natural world and famous artists are used as a stimulus in other lessons.

116. The new co-ordinator has made a good start by a thorough audit of resources and identification of what is needed to add to the experiences available. Overall management is sound and the next step is recognised by the school, namely to provide more opportunities for the leader to discover standards throughout the school. Pupils have used a computer program to draw bold patterns in the style of Mondrian and the future plan is to increase the programs available for art and design.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

117. Strengths in the subject are:

- standards in Year 6 are above average and achievement is good;
- teaching and learning are good;
- relationships are very good and pupils are enthusiastic learners;
- the curriculum is rich and relevant;
- there are very good cross-curricular links.

118. Areas for improvement are:

- opportunities for children to make choices and select their own techniques;
- occasional slow pace in parts of lessons.

119. Standards in Year 2 are securely in line with those found in most schools. The vast majority of pupils including those with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily over Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are above those of most schools. Achievement overall is good. Steady progress in Years 3 and 4 accelerates in Years 5 and 6 due to the high quality of teaching in the upper junior stage. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively and make good progress. There are equal opportunities for boys and girls.

120. In Year 2, pupils use graphics programs to explore pattern, shape and colour, when designing *Joseph's Coat*. They investigate and practise ways of joining materials before setting out to make the coat. With varying degrees of adult help they carefully mark and cut round the pattern, using staples to joint front and back. Most are thoughtful in adding decoration but take little account of their earlier designs. They are not perceptive in evaluating their finished product. In Year 6, pupils design and make slippers. They draw up and follow step-by-step instructions and prepare useful labelled diagrams to show suitability for purpose. They are generally successful in measuring their feet and producing a suitable pattern. They select appropriate techniques to manufacture a slipper to their own size and design. Most pupils modify their ideas to overcome difficulties as they arise. They evaluate their products thoughtfully and suggest improvements.

121. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is better in the juniors and more progress is made because pupils are encouraged to work independently and try out new ideas. This is not always the case and in some classes, teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to select techniques for themselves. For example, pupils in Year 2 discuss a range of ways of joining materials. They practise with sticky tape, with glue and with staples. However, they are not given the opportunity to use this experience to choose an appropriate way to join up their Joseph Coat. All follow instructions to use staples. All teachers plan their work thoroughly to build up skills through well-organised practical projects, which capture the pupils' interests. Lesson objectives are usually shared with pupils so that all know how to succeed, and direct their efforts

accordingly. Very good relationships are built up and purposeful working atmospheres established in class. As a result, pupils concentrate hard and collaborate successfully. Older pupils are sensitive in their criticism of each other's work. Teachers manage pupils successfully and pay particular regard to hygiene and safety issues. For instance, in Year 2 the teacher gives clear demonstrations on the way scissors and staplers are to be handled. Resources are imaginatively and efficiently prepared so that pupils waste no time in settling to tasks. Occasionally the pace of learning slows. For instance, in Year 3 when pupils were given too long to explore the taste, smell and feel of different types of bread, they became noisy and rather silly, losing concentration on the purpose of the task.

122. The curriculum is particularly well planned with a wide range of experiences in all elements of the subject. There are very good cross-curricular links especially with English, mathematics, science and information technology. For instance, teachers use subject specific language carefully to extend pupils' vocabulary, and encourage writing in different styles like instructional writing in design and technology lessons. Pupils in Year 6 investigate a range of materials as to their heat insulating properties, considering fair tests and recording their results in line graphs, before choosing material to keep their feet warm. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through opportunities to work collaboratively and to be sensitive to the views and needs of others. Pupils in Year 3 extended their cultural development when tasting bread, including naan and ciabatta, from around the world.

123. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The curriculum leader has only been in place a short time. Due to the school's recent focus on design and technology valuable training has taken place and the co-ordinator has already provided good support for colleagues in planning and extending the curriculum. The opportunity to monitor standards and teaching is not sufficiently developed.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

124. Strengths in the subjects are:

- teachers make lessons interesting and pupils are keen to learn;
- the subjects make a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- the curriculum is enhanced by interesting educational visits and visitors.

125. Areas for improvement are:

- provision for higher attainers;
- quality of group tasks, overuse of work sheets;
- use of assessment information when planning lessons;
- the development of the role of the curriculum leaders.

126. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are securely in line with those found in most schools. The vast majority of pupils achieve soundly in acquiring skills of geographical and historical enquiry and in developing their knowledge of places and of the past. Pupils with special educational needs and lower attainers are usually supported effectively in class so that they make satisfactory progress alongside their peers. Work is not always planned specifically to match the needs of the potential higher attainers. As a result, these pupils do not consistently reach the high levels of which they are capable.

127. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that the vast majority of pupils in Year 2 can identify differences between their urban surroundings and the typical rural landscape of a Scottish Isle. They note differences in life styles, for instance, in job opportunities and in types of transport. Whilst their drawings of the island show basic human and physical features, pupils do not use symbols or a key. With help, pupils in Year 2, use globes, maps and atlases to extend their knowledge of the world. They are becoming aware of some of the characteristics of life in China and Italy. In Year 6, pupils have sound knowledge of the different stages in a river's journey to the sea. They are just beginning to learn about mountainous regions. Whilst most can pick out mountains and deserts on a relief map of the world, they are unsure of the names of main mountain ranges such as the Himalayas or the Rockies. Many are not confident in locating specific ranges on the map. They are learning of different ways in which mountains are formed, and are beginning to understand and use specific terms such as magma, lava and tectonic plates when discussing volcanoes.

128. Pupils in Year 2 are developing a sound sense of chronology through considering the changes in themselves from babyhood, and through drawing up a time line of the life of Florence Nightingale. They make relevant comparisons between a nurse's life in the middle of the 19th century and in the present day. Most pupils can suggest reasons for the way Florence Nightingale acted as she did. They have sound knowledge of the

events of the Great Fire of London. In the main, pupils are not aware of the different sources available to find out about the past. In Year 6, pupils show satisfactory recall of earlier work on societies such as the Victorians and the Tudors. They speak knowledgeably of the traditions and characters associated with the culture of the Aztecs, studied more recently. They are just beginning to appreciate the role of archaeologists in researching the past. With adult support they use a range of resources including the Internet, CD-ROM, artefacts and books to carry out independent research. They do not however, carry out an independent in-depth study of a topic of their own choice.

129. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. During the inspection one excellent lesson was seen in Year 6 and this boosts progress in this class. Teachers' planning follows national guidance and promotes the step-by-step development of skills and knowledge. However, marking of pupils' work in books, whilst encouraging does not tell pupils how they can improve. Assessment at the end of each unit of work is carried out conscientiously but data gained is not always used to plan new work to meet the full range of attainment in each class. Consequently, some higher attainers are not fully challenged and could do better. In some lessons, group tasks are uninteresting and there is over reliance on worksheets. For example, in Year 3, after the teacher's input all pupils filled in missing words to complete sentences about ancient Egypt, when many could have been better challenged to carry out their own research. In the best lessons, teachers make very good use of practical activities, artefacts or role-play to bring the subject to life. For instance, in Year 1, pupils were enthralled when acting out the weekly bath-time of families 'long ago'. This considerably increased their awareness of the quality of life for some children in Victorian times. In Year 6, well organised, clear practical demonstrations graphically increased pupils' understanding of how mountains are formed. Relationships are very good and teachers manage pupils successfully but unobtrusively. Praise and encouragement are used to good effect to promote confidence and enthusiasm. Pupils respond very well. They are keen and interested in the subjects and generally work hard.

130. The subjects make a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For instance, the showing on video of parts of a volcanic eruption filled pupils with a sense of awe at the tremendous power of nature unleashed. Frequent opportunities to work in groups are promoting pupils' ability to co-operate and collaborate. Good cross-curricular links with literacy and mathematics are successfully incorporated in work in all age groups. Older pupils use information and communication technology effectively to carry out research in class. Good use is made of educational visits, for instance, to Shugborough Hall or walks in the locality, to extend learning beyond the classroom.

131. Management of these subjects is satisfactory and the curriculum leaders have produced action plans for the future. However, their roles are not well developed. They do not monitor the school's performance and do not have a clear overview of standards of pupils' work, or of teachers' planning and delivery of the curriculum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

132. Strengths in the subject are:

- standards are above average at the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well;
- pupils make good use of computers to locate and record information in other subjects in the computer suite;
- pupils have very good attitudes to learning;
- the subject is very well led and much improvement has been made in provision of a programme of work, resources and staff training since the school opened;
- resources are good.

133. Areas for development are:

- the use of computers in the classrooms as an everyday tool for learning;
- the opportunities the co-ordinator has to monitor teaching and standards.

134. In Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve well and attain average standards in all aspects of the subject at the end of Year 2. They operate computers confidently and co-operate very well when working in pairs or small groups. Pupils enter writing onto computers competently and alter the size, style and colour of text. They enter data into simple databases and produce graphs. They learn how to control the movements of a programmable toy to make it go in a direction of their choosing. Pupils produce pictures on computers using a bank of pictures and shapes and also by drawing their own pictures, using the line, fill and brush tools on a simple graphics program. They understand the use of information and communication technology in everyday life and begin to apply their skills in other subjects. For example, they enter the measurement of their hand spans into a database, with minimal help and interpret information from the graph that is produced.

135. Standards are above average at the end of Year 6. Pupils make good progress, particularly in the lessons where skills are taught directly and in the lessons in other subjects in the computer suite. Almost all pupils work at the levels expected and a small proportion works at a higher level. Skills in word processing and use of the Internet to locate information and send e-mail are good and pupils are confident in this work. They use word processing skills well to record work in other subjects, although in their classrooms they usually type up their work after drafting by hand rather than use the computers for their first attempts. This means that they do not learn how much easier this is on computers, and so gain better understanding of their value as everyday tools for learning. Pupils enter data into databases confidently and develop their own spreadsheets, displaying their results in a variety of different types of graph such as block graphs, line graphs and pie charts. They set up their own databases, devising formulae for calculations, such as when they work out and apply a formula to calculate multiplication tables. They create spreadsheets to solve problems. For example, Year 6 pupils devise formulae to calculate the perimeter and area of different rectangles to build the biggest pen possible for a pig, when the farmer has only a limited amount of fencing materials. Pupils use digital cameras to record their practical experiences, and measure events, such as weather changes using electronic equipment. They write simple programs to control events through computers, such as switching lights, buzzers and motors on and off in a timed sequence. For example, pupils in Year 5 learn how to set the controls for traffic lights, with higher attainers considering how to incorporate additional devices, such as a pedestrian crossing button with its associated green and red man and warning sound. Pupils in Year 6 create good quality web pages with hyperlinks and hotspots and are confident in editing and extending the content of their work. Some act as library monitors, scanning books with a bar code reader to enter them into the library loans database. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to use programs that help them to develop problem-solving skills. Those with special educational needs or who are lower attainers make good use of computers to support their learning in spelling and numeracy and Year 6 pupils use a revision program prior to the national tests. However, other pupils have less opportunities to use computers on a day-to-day basis. This is partly because some classroom computers are outdated; new ones began to arrive during the inspection.

136. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are confident in using computers and advising pupils as they work. Three lessons were observed during the inspection and teaching in two of those lessons was good. In the other lesson, teaching was excellent and promoted rapid progress for pupils. They were very highly motivated and worked with deep concentration to plan a program to control devices with a partner. They were excited about their achievements when their programs were shown to work. Weekly lessons in the computer suite are used effectively to teach computer skills directly and there are also weekly lessons in the suite where pupils apply their skills in other subjects, such as when:

- Year 1 pupils classify different types of animals and label parts of a plant in their science topics;
- Year 2 use simple graphics programs to design Joseph's coat of many colours in religious education and create Mondrian style pictures in their art studies;
- Year 6 build a database about spending money and learn how to balance a budget, with credits and debits in mathematics.

137. Leadership is very good and the co-ordinator shares his enthusiasm and skills willingly with all staff. Effective management has led to good levels of resources and training for staff. Resources have improved considerably since the school was opened and are continuing to be extended. The school has invested heavily in computers, including some laptops, and employs a part-time technician, which is proving cost-effective in maintaining the reliability of equipment. A new system for connection to the Internet is soon to be installed to provide better access. There is a good programme of work to support teachers in planning. However, the co-ordinator relies on teachers' seeking advice because limited opportunities are available to monitor standards or observe teaching. A very clear security policy is in place to ensure that pupils use the Internet and e-mail safely. Assessment procedures are sound. Staff share a high commitment to improving the subject further and raise its profile in the school by providing good examples of work in displays. For example, there are digital photographs taken by staff and pupils to celebrate the life of the school and the school council uses computers to write up good minutes to display for the information of other pupils. In the computer suite, good work from all year groups celebrates achievement and provides a clear picture of the good progress made through the school.

MUSIC

138. Strengths in the subject are:

- all classes benefit from being taught by music specialists;
- pupils have many opportunities to learn to play an instrument and to take part in school concerts and a larger music festival;

- pupils enjoy the practical activities.

139. Areas for development are:

- the length of lessons is short;
- the co-ordinator has limited opportunity to extend teachers' skills to teach music because of only working in the school for one day a week.

140. Insufficient evidence is available to make an informed judgement on standards, achievement and teaching in the subject. In the short lesson seen in Year 2 pupils were working at the level expected for their age with some good listening skills. They listened attentively to the music of *Peter and the Wolf* and appreciate that the instruments represent different characters. They know the names of the instrument in an orchestra and eagerly link the oboe to the duck and compare this to the stealthy movements of the cat that they can hear being played by the clarinet. Through effective use of pictures pupils understand symbols can represent sounds. Only a short lesson in singing was observed in the juniors and this was enjoyed by all. A real feeling of belonging to a community is evident in these sessions which is very beneficial for the pupils with special educational needs who play a full part. Pupils can sing tunefully, maintain and repeat a rhythm and copy a given pattern. A review of a video shows good work as groups of pupils have collaborated to produce small compositions, imaginatively combining percussion instruments, vocals and movements.

141. The small amount of teaching seen was good and led to effective learning. The teacher's enthusiasm for the subject shone through and led to a genuine eagerness to learn from the pupils. Unfortunately the limited time available meant that the lesson observed was not completed according to the teacher's plan and pupils did not have the opportunity to play the musical instruments.

142. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator leads by example by good teaching and providing opportunities for pupils to learn the recorder, sing in the choir and take part in concerts both locally and further afield. Pupils have many opportunities to learn to play different instruments and this is especially beneficial for talented pupils to increase their skills. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development as they grow in confidence and extend their knowledge of a range of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

143. Strengths in the subject are:

- swimming is above average;
- the variety of carefully planned experiences;
- the range of extra-curricular activities.

144. Areas for development are:

- the role of the subject co-ordinator;
- the large apparatus for gymnastics.

145. It was only possible to see dance in the infants and games in the juniors. Standards in these subjects are as expected for this age group and overall achievement is satisfactory. The opportunities for pupils to extend their skills in after school clubs and teams leads to talented and more physically able pupils reaching standards that are higher than usually seen. The school has links with local football and athletic clubs to further extend the talents of these pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. They are fully involved in lessons and benefit from working in a group or with a partner. Parents are very pleased that their children are taught swimming from an early age and standards are above average and achievement is good.

146. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy working with a partner and observe closely when copying actions. They combine different movements to make a small sequence and move in time to the music. A few pupils are starting to think about their movements and respond well to the teacher's advice to change direction and level. Their movements are more creative, whereas other pupils' actions are very simple. Pupils successfully copy their partner but are not giving enough thought to the quality of their actions. The teacher asks pupils to suggest how actions can be improved and pupils are at an early stage of evaluating their performance. The pupils understand that exercise is good for them and helps to keep them healthy.

147. It was only possible to observe swimming in Year 2 but it was very clear from this lesson that pupils are taught well and reach high standards. Seventeen out of the 22 pupils in Year 2 are already confident swimmers. They are successful swimming on their backs and eager to improve the quality of their strokes. The rest of the class is in the early stages of learning to swim and the great majority can swim a short distance unaided.

148. Pupils in Year 6 take it in turn to plan a warm-up activity for the rest of the class and this instils in them the importance of exercising carefully. They are very aware of the effects of exercise on the body because the teacher reminds them in lessons and the planned warm-ups include stretching of all muscles. In the lesson observed in Year 6, pupils were trying to improve their speed when sprinting 100 metres. The focus was very much on personal performance and pupils compare their times with their previous efforts. Although the teacher reminded pupils how to run faster by using their arms, many did not do this in the excitement of the event.

149. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with good features in the focus on performing safely. In the dance lesson seen in Year 1 teaching was good and pupils quickly grasped the idea that movements can change to represent different animals. The choice of music was good and pupils moved lightly when copying penguins and then changed to heavy strides for the polar bear. Demonstrations are used effectively to celebrate good work. However, teachers often move too quickly to the next activity and do not always allow sufficient time for pupils to reflect on the demonstration and try to improve their own performance. Throughout the school, lessons are structured well and include warming up and cooling down activities. Time is generally used well. However, in the athletics lesson some pupils started to lose interest as they had to wait a long time for their turn to run. Management of pupils is effective and pupils behave well and enjoy physical activity.

150. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Since the merger of the two schools the co-ordinator has successfully adjusted planning to improve continuity between the infants and the juniors. All elements of the National Curriculum are taught and pupils experience a wide range of activities. The older pupils benefit from a residential visit to Standon Bowers Outdoor Education Centre where the focus is on learning to live with others as well as experiencing a range of outdoor activities including studying rivers and weather. The subject co-ordinator has not had an opportunity to see how skills are taught and to identify areas in the subject which require more attention. This is recognised by the school as the next step in extending the management role of subject leaders. Resources are adequate although the large apparatus in the infants is ready to be replaced for lighter equipment so that pupils can take on more responsibility for getting it out. The school benefits from excellent outdoor playing fields and the luxury of being able to walk to the swimming pool at the secondary school which is on the same site. Many staff give generously of their time to organise after school activities. These include netball, football, rounders, cross country and basketball. Teams play against other schools and have been successful in several competitions. These activities are very effective in extending pupils' social and moral skills as they learn to work as a member of a team and understand the importance of fair play.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

151. Strengths in the subject are:

- the very good contribution the subject makes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- the focus on discussion so that pupils with special educational needs are fully involved;
- the opportunities provided to acquire knowledge about other faiths as well as Christianity;
- visits to several places of worship so that learning is more relevant.

152. Areas for development in the subject are:

- lessons are not always long enough and learning is disrupted when the subject is taught in two short lessons;
- pupils miss out on aspects of the subjects when they leave lessons for extra literacy support. When they return they disturb the lesson for other pupils;
- leadership of the subject so that a more informed view is gained of standards throughout the school.

153. For pupils in Years 2 and 6 standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Overall achievement is satisfactory. It is good in the aspects which link the subject to pupils' own experiences and guides them in applying knowledge to the way they live their lives. The curriculum is varied and the focus on discussion means that pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and progress at the same rate as other pupils.

154. Pupils in the infants learn about stories from the Bible. Having heard the story about the leper who returned to say *thank-you* pupils in Year 1 appreciated the importance of expressing gratitude. Teachers effectively promote literacy skills and pupils write sensitive thank-you prayers. Pupils in Year 2 have an understanding of Christian values and recognise what is special to them and how they can help each other. Pupils are aware of the traditions of other faiths and recognise the importance of different symbols and celebrations. For example, in Year 2 pupils listened to different music and with prompting from the teacher linked

it to the different religions they have studied. From a visit to the local church, pupils can name the special features including the font, the pulpit and the pews.

155. Pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of Christianity reflecting the school's Christian foundation. Many recognise that people get great comfort from their faith and know this originates with Jesus and that his resurrection was the start of Christianity. They appreciate what it means to belong to a community because this is promoted across the school and especially in whole school assemblies. Their knowledge of the Bible has increased and they can interpret the messages and relate them to their own experiences. For example, the story about the Prodigal Son was followed up with an understanding that *everyone makes mistakes but it doesn't always mean they are wrong*. Pupils have some understanding of other faiths including Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism although this is more linked to facts than a deeper study of the beliefs of the followers of these religions. The school has plans to further extend this with more resources and celebration of the special days of other religions.

156. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. It is good in Year 6 when pupils are challenged to analyse their own feelings in depth and to question how the Christian messages affect the way they behave. Learning is enhanced by visits to a synagogue and mosque as well as making effective use of the close links the school has with the local church. Teachers plan interesting lessons to make the learning more enjoyable. This was effective in Year 2 when the use of music created an immediate response and pupils tried hard to link the music to other religions. More time for reflection would have increased the learning in the lesson. The use of a video in Year 6 also accelerated learning and pupils were enthralled and identified closely with the emotions of the disciples at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus. Sensitive questioning led pupils on to share their own experiences of loss and to empathise with people's situations. Unfortunately, the atmosphere needed for this was disrupted as pupils returned or left for additional literacy support. Pupils feel secure discussing their feelings because of the warm relationships evident in most classes. Many opportunities for discussion and collaboration are planned and these enable pupils to share their own experiences and so learn from each other.

157. The management of the subject is satisfactory. Future plans are relevant and include extending resources for information and communication technology and artefacts for other religions. The subject is a focus for development next term so that the co-ordinator can get a more informed picture of standards throughout the school. The subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as they learn about other traditions, what is acceptable behaviour and the importance of making the right choices. Spiritual development is evident in the promotion of self-esteem but opportunities to pause and reflect are not provided as much as they could be.